



IGF Internet
Governance
Forum



Internet
Governance
Forum
RIYADH
2024



IGF 2024

ANNUAL MEETING SUMMARY REPORT

Nineteenth Meeting of Internet Governance Forum
15 - 19 December 2024 | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



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IGF 2024 SUMMARY

Nineteenth Meeting of
Internet Governance Forum
15–19 November, 2024
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



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Glossary

BPF Best Practice Forum

CSTD Commission on Science and Technology for Development

DC Dynamic Coalition

DPIDG Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government

GDC Global Digital Compact

IGF Internet Governance Forum

IoT Internet of Things

ITU International Telecommunication Union

MAG Multistakeholder Advisory Group

NRI National, Regional and Youth Initiatives

PN Policy Network

PNMA Policy Network on Meaningful Access

PNIF Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation

PNAI Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence

LP Leadership Panel

UN United Nations

UN DESA United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UNOG United Nations Office at Geneva

WG-Multilingual Working Group on Multilingualism

WG-Youth Working Group on Youth Engagement

WG-WSP Working Group on Workshop Processes

WG-Strategy Working Group on IGF Strategy

WSIS World Summit on the Information Society

Internet Governance Forum

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is a global multistakeholder platform that facilitates the discussion of public policy issues pertaining to Internet governance.

The IGF was one of the most important outcomes of the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). The Tunis Agenda, which was adopted on 18 November 2005, mandated the UN Secretary-General to convene a new forum for multistakeholder policy dialogue.

The convening of the IGF was announced by the Secretary-General on 18 July 2006, with the inaugural meeting of the Forum being held from 30 October to 2 November 2006.

The existing mandate of the IGF, as set out in paragraphs 72 to 78 of the Tunis Agenda, was extended for a further 10 years in a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16 December 2015 (70/125), the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the

General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The Forum's mandate will be subject to a review in 2025 as part of the 20-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society.

Institutionally, the IGF is supported by the IGF Secretariat, which is administered by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). The programme of the annual IGF meeting is developed by its Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG), whose members are appointed by the UN Secretary-General. An IGF Leadership Panel, with members also appointed by the Secretary-General, supports IGF strategic improvements since 2022.

So far, nineteen annual meetings of the IGF have been hosted by various governments. The twentieth annual IGF meeting will be hosted by the Government of Norway in Lillestrøm from 23 to 27 June 2025.





Mr. Li Junhua

United Nations Under-Secretary-General
for Economic and Social Affairs

Digital technologies have empowered humanity to tackle global challenges with innovative solutions, expanding access to essential services while enhancing efficiency in delivery. Breakthroughs in big data, artificial intelligence, blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT) have transformed critical sectors like energy, agriculture, and healthcare, driving sustainability and resilience. Yet, these advancements are accompanied by growing security and privacy concerns as well as persistent digital divides. Over 2.6 billion people remain offline, excluded from the progress digital innovation offers.

The United Nations has recognized the transformative power of digital technologies, including in accelerating momentum for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This recognition was also recently reflected in the Global Digital Compact that recognizes digital technologies as a global public good further supporting the vision of leveraging digital tools to serve humanity – as championed for nearly two decades through follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the multistakeholder processes of its Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

The IGF's people-centered, multistakeholder approach has created a dynamic ecosystem of 175 national, regional, sub-regional, and youth IGF initiatives. This robust community, supported by year-round intersessional work and the annual meeting of the IGF, includes a growing network of legislators representing parliaments worldwide, and other policymakers.

The 19th annual IGF meeting, hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh, demonstrated the strength of this multistakeholder approach to

digital governance. Through 307 sessions, more than 10,000 stakeholders from 144 countries and every continent, engaged in vibrant discussions. Topics ranged from access and connectivity to digital inclusion, emerging technologies like AI, data governance, human rights online, cybersecurity, and sustainability.

The Riyadh IGF Messages captured critical takeaways. These include the urgent need for responsible, fair, and accountable AI development, fostering trust in its adoption. Collaboration on green technologies, energy efficiency, and eco-friendly practices is essential to mitigate the Internet's growing environmental impact. Achieving meaningful and universal connectivity requires affordable access, digital literacy, and inclusive participation by all—regardless of gender, age, or geography.

The 19th IGF sets a record for participation, with over 200 high-level delegates, including ministers, CEOs, and other leaders, uniting under the theme: Building Our Multistakeholder Digital Future. Participants emphasized the need to harness digital technologies for peace, stability, and prosperity, highlighting the importance of capacity development and digital inclusion.

This success is a testament to the dedication of the IGF's Multistakeholder Advisory Group and Leadership Panel. It positions the IGF as a multistakeholder driving force for a better digital future, building momentum for the implementation of the Global Digital Compact and setting the stage for the upcoming 20-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2025 by the UN General Assembly.





IGF 2024 Host Country Foreword

IGF Riyadh 2024 extends its sincere appreciation to the 11,000 in-person participants from 170 countries who contributed to making our event the largest and most impactful gathering in the forum's history.

We also express our gratitude to the United Nations and all stakeholders who have played a vital role in shaping the IGF into a truly global platform for meaningful discussions and collaboration. With 1,000 international speakers, 300 sessions, and representation from governments, international organizations, businesses, the technical community, and academia, IGF Riyadh 2024 marked a historic milestone, and Saudi Arabia was honored to host this pivotal event.

Under the theme "Building Our Multistakeholder Digital Future," IGF Riyadh 2024 underscored the importance of collective action and inclusive governance in the intelligent age. At the opening of the forum, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced the Riyadh Declaration—a call to action for inclusive, innovative, and impactful AI for all in the Intelligence Age. This declaration serves as a roadmap for strengthening global partnerships, fostering responsible AI development, and ensuring that digital technologies benefit humanity equitably.

The Riyadh Declaration highlights AI's role in bridging the digital divide, expanding digital access and literacy, addressing global challenges, and driving economic inclusion. AI must be leveraged to promote

environmental sustainability, public health, and economic opportunity, reinforcing the global commitment to an inclusive digital future.

Under the leadership of His Royal Highness Crown Prince, Prime Minister Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continues to adopt an innovative and proactive approach to AI development and governance. Recognizing the disparity in access to algorithms, data, and computing resources, Saudi Arabia is collaborating with global partners to address these challenges—ensuring that no nation or community is left behind in the Intelligence Age.

Saudi Arabia has prioritized responsible AI governance, ethical data practices, and inclusivity in technology development. By harnessing the transformative power of AI and digital innovation, the Kingdom remains dedicated to advancing sustainable development at both regional and global levels.

Beyond the discussions and collaborations at IGF, we hope all participants experienced Saudi hospitality and the warmth of a country rich in history, culture, and values. IGF Riyadh 2024 was an honor to host, and we look forward to welcoming you back in the future.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through Vision 2030, remains committed to leading the global transformation into the Intelligence Age—ensuring that digital progress is inclusive, innovative and beneficial for all.



IGF 2024 at a Glance



When

15-19 December 2024
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and online



IGF 2024 in Numbers

- 11,749 participants registered from 75% of UN Member States
 - 7,343 onsite participants from 144 countries
 - 2,800+ stakeholder online participants
 - 307 sessions
-



Overarching Theme

Building our multistakeholder digital future



Sub-Themes

- Advancing human rights and inclusion in the digital age
 - Enhancing the digital contribution to peace, development, and sustainability
 - Harnessing innovation and balancing risks in digital space
 - Improving digital governance for the Internet We Want
-



IGF Focus Engagement

- IGF multistakeholder community sessions
- IGF High-Level Leaders Track
- IGF Youth Track
- IGF Parliamentary Track
- IGF Intersessional Work
- IGF Newcomers Orientation
- Engaging businesses and judiciary



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IGF 2024

Introduction

In 2024, the forum held its 19th annual meeting in a hybrid format, hosted by the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh.

Under the overarching theme [Building our multistakeholder digital future](#), the meeting featured discussions on some of the most pressing Internet and digital policy issues, from access to the Internet, human rights, to Internet fragmentation, cybersecurity, and Artificial Intelligence and emerging technologies.

The [IGF 2024 Multistakeholder Advisory Group \(MAG\)](#), with members appointed by the UN Secretary-General from all stakeholder groups, supported the planning of the 19th annual IGF meeting.

The [IGF Leadership Panel](#) met in person to exchange views on approaches to strengthening the Forum and enhancing its visibility.



IGF 2024 Quotes

Opening ceremony

The meeting opened with addresses by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and the Minister of Communications and Information Technology of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, followed by remarks from experts from different stakeholder groups.

“ Digital technology has fundamentally reshaped our world and holds enormous potential to accelerate human progress. But unlocking this potential for all people requires guardrails, and a collaborative approach to governance.... Dear friends, The Global Digital Compact also recognizes the Internet Governance Forum as the primary multistakeholder platform for discussing Internet governance issues. As the world implements the Compact, the work and voice of your Forum will be critical. Together, let’s keep building an open, free and safe Internet for all people.



Mr. António Guterres,
United Nations Secretary-General

“ We are talking about a gap of compute capacity of about 63GW, where only a handful of nations can be able to deliver that. We are talking about a 10 million shortage between data scientists, cybersecurity professionals and AI professionals to close down the divide. And we are talking about 7.5 billion that will be left behind. Now, it is not about the Global North or the Global South, it is about all of us, eight out of ten people would be left behind in the intelligence age. And this is why this divide is relevant to all of us. If we did not achieve multilateralism and multistakeholderism in the past, we must agree on consensus in this IGF, and we need once again to tackle the algorithmic divide, the data and the compute divide. We need an algorithm to make sure that we are helpful, honest and harmless, to make sure that there is no bias that leaves anyone behind or an AI or a data scientist that is inserting and hard coding a guardrail to exclude any of us.



H.E. Mr. Abdullah Alswaha,
Minister of Communications and Information Technology of Saudi Arabia

“ Digital infrastructure, including mobile networks, fiber optic networks, subsea cables, and satellite Internet, has been vital in helping more people connect than ever before. Even so, challenges continue to escalate. Cyberattacks are increasing 80 per cent year-on-year. In 2023, over 200 subsea cables were reported damaged worldwide. In the face of a worsening climate crisis, nature and natural disasters are increasingly impacting physical infrastructure. Which is why we need to address the issue of resilience through the lens of coverage; redundancy; security (physical and cybersecurity); and robustness. With the Global Digital Compact as a key milestone on the journey to the WSIS+20 Review next year, we now have a critical opportunity to strengthen the foundation for a more resilient and sustainable digital future.



Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin,
Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union

“ Without cybersecurity, it is impossible to safely develop innovation to run business activities or to provide active public services online. For this reason, we need strong international cooperation. I'm sure that we will achieve these goals only by working together. 2025 will be important from the point of view of Internet and Internet digital space governance. Together we will reveal the 20 years of the World Summit of the Information Society and we will develop recommendations and action lines for the coming years.



H.E. Mr. Krzysztof Gawkowski,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Digital Affairs, Government of Poland

“ And as we are addressing today, AI from an ethical perspective, I must mention that Morocco has been a key player in AI international ecosystem. Morocco has launched two months ago the national strategy Digital Morocco 2030, a strategy which has received the blessings of His Majesty the King. The strategy encourages stakeholders to develop high value-added services and offer based on AI, as it supports companies and start-ups in the field of AI operating in high value-added sectors. I'm confident this panel will be fruitful, and I hope that the discussion and exchanges will enable us to foster concrete international cooperation to create a unified approach to AI ethics and regulation.



H.E. Ms. Amal Seghrouchni,
Minister of Digital Transition and Administration Reform, Government of Morocco

“ Next year the WSIS+20 review will be conducted by the UN. This is an opportunity to reflect on the digital era’s achievements, challenges and evolving needs. It is a moment to re-evaluate and to set new goals for a more inclusive rights based and equitable digital future. Beyond WSIS+20, the IGF should remain the primary global arena for the multistakeholder dialogue and open inclusive and informed discussions on Internet Governance challenges and opportunities. The IGF should continue to develop policies and practices that ensure that the Internet remains a force for positive change, innovation and global connectivity. Norway wishes to contribute to further develop the IGF as a vital and inclusive arena for all stakeholders. Next year the IGF will be convened in Norway. On behalf of the Norwegian Government, I wish you all welcome to the IGF that also marks the occasion of the forum’s 20th anniversary, which is a pivotal moment for shaping and enhancing the multistakeholder dialogue for the years to come.



Mr. Torgeir Micaelsen,
State Secretary of the Ministry of Digitalization and Public Governance,
Government of Norway

“ Looking forward, we must build on our achievements to create a future that is inclusive, equitable and accessible for all. Today 5.6 billion are connected to the Internet, yet billions remain unconnected. Many who are online still face barriers such as affordability, accessibility, and digital literacy. Innovative approaches, collaborative effort and renewed commitment to inclusivity are required to overcome these obstacles. For the Internet to remain globally connected, secure and resilient, it is essential to include the technical community including organisations that safeguard and manage critical resources and components, in these conversations. The IGF provides a unique opportunity to address these challenges collectively. It’s a space where diverse perspectives come together to shape the Internet’s future.



Mr. Kurtis Lindqvist,
President and CEO, Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

“ Ladies and gentlemen, digitalization also presents profound challenges to the democratic principles and human rights, particularly within governance processes such as elections, public debate, and trust in institutions. It is imperative that we as parliamentarians and leaders move beyond merely sharing these challenges. We must make tangible commitments to address these socioeconomic issues through laws and policies that prioritize inclusivity, accountability, and people centred outcomes, especially in the face of transnational complexities and governance gaps.



Ms. Palwasha Mohammed Zai Khan,
Senator, Senate of Pakistan

“ Our gathering today right after the adoption of the Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact, offers a bold vision for the principles that we all share, human rights, openness, accessibility, and inclusivity. We believe that IGF 2024 will facilitate a collaborative implementation of the transformative agenda of the Global Digital Compact... Ladies and gentlemen, the digital future we envision, one that is inclusive, sustainable and human-centred will not build itself by itself. The IGF provides multistakeholder platform to foster collaboration and drive meaningful change. Let’s continue leveraging this unique forum to build an Internet of trust, an Internet that empowers us all, that bridges divides, and that advances truly human-centred digital future.



Mr. Tawfik Jelassi,
Assistant Director General,
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

“ In the days ahead, we aim to contribute unique perspectives and voices of engineers to policy making and standard setting processes, particularly on the discussions about digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, and the pivotal role of engineering in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals... Just as the electromagnetic theory laid the groundwork for the electrification, we must acknowledge that many challenges we face today stem deeply from the lack of solid, comprehensive, theoretical foundation to explain the ever-evolving Internet and the sophisticated models of Artificial Intelligence. Therefore, it is imperative to invest more attention, more resources, and more efforts into fundamental research in this domain. All of us know only with collective efforts we could better develop and govern the Internet as a global resource that benefits all people and the globe.



Mr. Ke Gong,
President, World Federation of Engineering Organisations

“ Governance of AI is not a “nice to have”. Fair, accountable, and transparent AI is key – that means the possibility for people to access meaningful information about how their information is processed and used through Artificial Intelligence. For example, the possibility for people to know that if they have been prescribed a medicine, or had an operation with AI, what the liability is. All of these things are fundamentally important to build the trust in AI that we need if we want to innovate and transform for the public good. We all have an opportunity to shape a digital ecosystem so that it brings benefits to everybody and helps towards creating a better world.



Ms. Ivana Bartoletti,
Global Chief Privacy and AI Governance Officer, Wipro

IGF 2024 Highlights

Hybrid IGF

The 19th IGF was held as a fully hybrid meeting, with participants joining onsite, in Riyadh, and online. With the overall objective of making participation in the meeting meaningful and inclusive for all attendees, the hybrid format included several features:

- Through the [IGF website](#), serving as a primary entry point, all online participants, including those with active roles such as speakers, moderators and rapporteurs were able to engage and contribute equally to those participating onsite.
- A [3D Venue](#) was created as an equivalent to the onsite venue. Like onsite participants, the online participants could enter the meeting rooms and connect to the participation platform.



- The [IGF Village](#) booths, hosted by over 80 organisations at the venue, had their online equivalents.
- [Remote hubs](#) facilitated the participation of those unable to travel.
- [Bilateral meetings](#) could also be organised with online participation.
- A dedicated [website landing page](#) and adjusted [mobile app](#) were also made available to support easier navigation of the IGF 2024 content.

Involvement of UN Agencies

The Forum saw over 35 entities from the UN system, represented both as organisers and speakers in many sessions.

Focus on Youth

To effectively engage youth, a dedicated [IGF 2024 Youth Track](#) was designed and implemented throughout the year. In cooperation with all Youth IGF coordinators, as well as international youth-focused organisations, the track was designed and delivered through four capacity development workshops hosted in conjunction with [regional IGFs](#), namely [EuroDIG](#) in Lithuania, [Youth LACIGF](#) in Chile, [APrIGF](#) and [African IGF](#) in Ethiopia. Additionally the [IGF 2024 Global Youth Summit](#) was hosted at the 19th IGF in Riyadh. The track focused on unpacking various aspects of AI governance and engaged thousands of young people.

Thematic Approach

The IGF 2024 themes were closely aligned with the priorities identified by the community through a traditional public call, ensuring they reflected the community's expressed priorities.

The programme's structure aimed to encourage discussions that delve more deeply into specific issue areas, thereby potentially leading to more focused outcomes.

Capacity Development

Throughout 2024, the IGF Secretariat has been engaged in a series of [capacity development activities](#), including organising workshops, providing grants to NRIs, supporting youth engagement and schools on Internet governance, engaging with members of parliament, providing travel support for IGF 2024 participants and remote hubs. Specifically, capacity development included several activities:

- Workshops organised in conjunction with the NRIs, to foster cooperation and develop capacity. Among these, some were specifically organised as part of the youth and parliamentary tracks.
- Training sessions for IGF 2024 session organisers and participants, focused broadly on explaining mechanisms of hybrid participation.
- [Newcomers session](#) for orienting first time IGF participants.
- Grants support to 12 [NRIs](#) and 5 [remote hubs](#) serving communities from developing countries.
- [Travel support](#) to 128 participants coming from developing countries.

Among the 128 supported participants, journalists from Global South countries were included as part of this year's IGF strategic focus on developing the capacity of professional journalists covering Internet governance.

Below are testimonials shared by two participants:

IGF Supporting Global South Travel

Participants sharing experience

In September 2024, a friend of mine (Cecilia Danesi, an Argentinian lawyer, researcher and author working on AI and gender bias) sent me a link to apply for the Global South Journalist Program. It was a surprise! I didn't know I could participate as a journalist.

The 19th IGF in Riyadh came to me at the perfect moment. I've been covering tech and digital culture as a journalist since 2008. I was motivated by my desire to gain new perspectives on the topics I research: AI, Web3 and the metaverse, parenting in the digital era (and over-sharenting), and digital democracy.

One of the main takeaways from the Riyadh IGF is the value of cooperation among multiple stakeholders. Education still cuts across all the topics discussed at the IGF. As a digital society, we need more information about Internet governance, and we must introduce new issues into the public agenda. There's so much clickbait about AI and the future of the internet, yet we do have content that truly matters. As a journalist, I have a mission.

I really appreciate the IGF's spirit of dialogue and the skill of listening and being heard. I could see (and feel!) the synergy among the stakeholders, and their networking and commitment. This is what I want to highlight as a journalist. We need new conversations about the Internet.

It was a pleasure to attend IGF 2024. I'm very grateful for the UN's travel support, and I truly appreciate how open the IGF is to the media.

The most important element of the IGF is its people, and I'll never forget the human support I experienced during those five days. As journalists, we worked hard attending conferences, conducting interviews at the media hub, participating in plenary panels, workshops, and more. Today, I'm working on IGF-related pieces for different media companies. I'm also writing my next book about parenting and preparing new material as a speaker for conferences. The IGF is relevant across all these areas. Thank you.



Ms. Julieta Schulkin,
Journalist at La Nacion, Argentina

The 19th annual Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was the highlight of my career in 2024. I applied, was selected, and finally travelled to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to participate in the IGF.

Before I go any further, let me explain how it all started. A friend text me a poster about this opportunity for journalists from the Global South to apply to cover the IGF. I was grateful but also skeptical; I doubted I would be able to secure such a rare opportunity.

My primary motivation for participating in the Riyadh IGF stems from my interest in writing about artificial intelligence, digital rights, inclusion, and Internet governance. This opportunity to cover the IGF was like an international opening for me, and I am certainly going to keep on the lookout for more opportunities to widen my spectrum. You won't fully understand the significance of the IGF until you have attended it. In today's Digital Era, which some refer to as the Intelligence Era, the impact of IGF is immense. For instance, this year's conference attracted over 10,000 participants from more than 140 countries. It featured 1,000 international speakers who led more than 300 specialized sessions, workshops, and panel discussions, including contributions from government officials, policymakers, and respected academics.

Every country I know of was represented at the event. It felt like a global village, with participants from various backgrounds, all well-versed in the subjects of the Internet, human rights, and inclusion. I asked questions, received answers, accessed multiple reports, made several contacts, and, most importantly, formed new friendships. After the Riyadh IGF, I now have more stories to write. The memories from the conference are close to my heart. The IGF mandate should be permanent, as it serves as a vital platform for dialogue. Ultimately, it plays a key role in shaping the future of Internet governance and AI.

I truly believe I wouldn't have the insights I have now if it weren't for the travel support provided to Global South journalists. I had the opportunity to be in the same room with many knowledgeable individuals. Travelling far from my home in Uganda wasn't just about covering the IGF; it was also an adventure. Having never left Africa before, I was amazed to find myself in the Middle East, where I admired the little I could see of Dubai and was left in awe of my experience in Riyadh.

I have definitely returned as a better journalist, and I am committed to improving in everything I do because the IGF served as my launch pad. I hope to attend every IGF in the future, not just as a participant, but as an active contributor. Thank you to the IGF Secretariat for this initiative. It has greatly benefited me and challenged me to become the best version of myself. Being one of the first six individuals to receive this support, out of more than 500 applicants, will always leave me feeling indebted to you.



Mr. Hannington Mutabazi,
Journalist at New Vision, Uganda



Leadership Panel

The Secretary-General appointed the [Leadership Panel](#) as a strategic high-level multistakeholder body in 2022. The 15-member Panel continued its work in 2024 through regular online meetings and two in-person meetings, hosted during the IGF open consultations and MAG meeting in February in Riyadh and in December at the 19th IGF in Riyadh. A number of members met at the Summit of the Future that was held alongside the UN General-Assembly High Level Week and where the Global Digital Compact was agreed.

At the 19th IGF in Riyadh, the Panel members engaged with many other initiatives and organisations through bilateral meetings and engaged with the wider community by actively participating in various sessions. A dedicated meeting between the Panel and MAG took place and focused on strategic improvements of the IGF in the context of the GDC implementation and WSIS+20 review.

The 19th IGF provided the Panel with an opportunity to further present their vision for good governance of digital technologies, as

outlined in their paper [“The Internet We Want’ paper”](#). This document highlights key priority areas of work for digital technologies to serve humanity.

The Panel is working toward the long-term sustainability of the Forum. In this regard, upcoming IGF host countries are being explored, as well as new partnerships and approaches to cooperation.

IGF and other processes

The IGF continues to plan for its contributions to the implementation of the Secretary-General’s [Global Digital Compact](#), as well as to the preparations for the 20-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The IGF 2024 Messages, reflecting key takeaways from the forum’s discussions, are expected to broadly inform the community and various processes - the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, WSIS+20 review, and GDC among them.

Communications

An opening press conference was held on Day 1, Monday 16 December, with the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Minister of Communications and Information Technology of Saudi Arabia, outlining key highlights of the programme and touching on digital issues of global and regional importance. The briefing was attended by Saudi and international media.

The opening of the IGF was announced by the UN Secretary-General's spokesperson during the [daily noon briefing](#) at UN Headquarters on 16 December. The entirety of the IGF's proceedings in the main plenary hall were streamed live on [UN WebTV](#).

Daily live [Media Hub](#) segments were held in a staging area in the IGF Village. Once a day, the Hub provided a recap and looking forward of IGF highlights and featured a special IGF guest for an interview. The public interviews were conducted by Global South journalists who successfully applied for travel support to attend the IGF.

Interviewees included Emma Theofelus, Minister of ICT of Namibia and one of the youngest government ministers in Africa; Ivana Bartoletti, Chief Privacy and AI Governance Officer at Wipro; Shivnath Thukral, Vice President of Public Policy at Meta India; and Audace Niyonkuru, CEO of Digital Umuganda. Media Hub interviews were posted to [UN WebTV](#).



The 19th IGF, supported by the hashtags #IGF2024 and #MSHDigitalFuture, was featured across UN social media channels - IGF channels as well as those of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and UN Secretariat.

Media monitoring during the event week showed extensive coverage of the IGF across major television outlets, including Asharq Bloomberg, Sky News Arabia, CNBC Arabia, Al-Ekhabariya and Saudi Channel, several print and online outlets such as Saudi Press Agency (SPA), Al-Madina, Okaz, Al-Jazirah, Sayidaty, Adwaa Al-Watan, Al-Rajol, and regional and international outlets such as Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), UN Sustainable Development Blog, Kurdistan24, GlobeNewswire, FinanzNachrichten, and outlets in Italy, Senegal and many other countries.

A press kit was prepared via [Trello](#), containing a [media advisory](#), essential details about the meeting, access to [photos](#) and [videos](#) and contact information in case of interest in interviews. Opening and closing press releases were issued.

Also via [Trello](#), communications materials were shared with the IGF session organisers to enhance the promotion of their sessions. The materials included thematic cards, social media guidance, powerpoint templates and high-resolution logos.

All sessions were streamed and transcribed. The high-level and main sessions were interpreted in the six official UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).



IGF 2024 Themes

The headline of this year's Forum is [Building Our Multistakeholder Digital Future](#). This title symbolises a vision in which all stakeholders cooperate for a sustainable and inclusive digital future for everyone.

The community-led sessions, including MAG-organised main sessions, as well as sessions organised by hundreds of other stakeholders, were built around the IGF 2024 sub-themes (selected on the basis of a public call for issues).

Stakeholders were invited to submit session proposals under one of the four sub-themes:

- Advancing human rights and inclusion in the digital age
- Enhancing the digital contribution to peace, development, and sustainability
- Harnessing innovation and balancing risks in digital space
- Improving digital governance for the Internet We Want

Over 400 [session proposals](#) were reviewed and evaluated for final adoption into the IGF 2024 programme.

Riyadh IGF Messages

The [Riyadh IGF Messages](#) provide a high-level overview for decision-makers of the most current thinking on key Internet governance and digital policy issues.

They are sourced directly from over 300 sessions held during IGF 2024. Session organisers were invited to self-identify key takeaways at the end of their session as input for the Riyadh IGF messages.

A set of draft messages, curated by the IGF Secretariat, are published for community review. The final IGF 2024 Messages are published as part of the annual meeting's outcomes.

The final output of the rich Forum's discussed feeds into [Riyadh IGF Messages](#).



Sessions Accommodated in the IGF 2024 Programme

The IGF 2024 Programme, in addition to the above-mentioned tracks, accommodated several types of sessions, including:

- [High-Level Sessions](#) organized by the Host Country and the UN;
- [Main Sessions](#) organized around priority issues related to the IGF 2024 programme sub-themes by members of the MAG;
- [Workshops](#) as community-organized multistakeholder interactive sessions;
- [Open Forums](#), sessions organized by governments, treaty-based international organisations, and global organisations with international scope and presence, with operations across regions, dealing with Internet governance issues;
- [Launches and Awards](#), sessions to present and discuss Internet governance-related academic and/or research initiatives or outputs such as research or think tank work, book launches and similar;
- [Lightning Talks](#), brief, to-the-point, prepared presentation on a specific Internet governance issue;
- [Networking Sessions](#), gatherings of stakeholders interested in a same or similar issue; icebreaker sessions; social gatherings; gatherings of people and organisations from a particular region, stakeholder group, or area of activity;
- [DC Sessions](#), as collaborative sessions organized by multistakeholder teams of different DCs;
- [NRIs Sessions](#), as collaborative sessions organized by multistakeholder teams of NRIs coming from different regions;
- [Intersessional work sessions](#), organized by the facilitators of IGF Best Practice Forums and Policy Networks;
- [Pre-events](#), sessions hosted on the day before the IGF official programme begins (15 December).

Many of the above-listed sessions focused on addressing the 20-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society. An overview of [WSIS+20 sessions at IGF 2024](#) is available at the IGF website dedicated page.

IGF 2024 focused on strategic engagement with [business](#) and [judiciary](#) through dedicated sessions, resulting in participating stakeholders calling for continuation of these practices.



IGF 2024 High-Level Leaders Track

Co-organised by the [Host Country](#) and [UN DESA/IGF Secretariat](#), the [IGF 2024 High-Level Leaders' Track](#) engaged experts and leaders from all stakeholder groups into discussions on a series of key questions such as trusted digital future, ethical AI governance, digital identities, WSIS+20, and protecting children online.

The track saw participation of twenty six high-level participants at ministerial level and over twelve vice ministers. Overall, over sixty five high-level experts took part in the track, with more than forty in an active role.

The sessions of the High-Level Leaders' Track were held on:

- Navigating the Misinformation Maze: Strategic Cooperation for a Trusted Digital Future
- Extending Digital Identity Verification to Protect Internet Transactions
- Exploring Transparency and Explainability in AI: An Ethical Imperative

- From Summit of the Future to WSIS+ 20
- Protecting Children's Rights in the Digital World

These sessions, interpreted into the six official UN languages, also broadcasted live, set the foundation for the subsequent main high-level sessions, treating the meeting's subthemes in a cross-cutting way.

The purpose of the track was to gather leaders from across the stakeholder spectrum, including governments, to engage in dialogue and knowledge exchange on issues that require critical multistakeholder and multidisciplinary effort to resolve.

The track also identified areas where digital technologies hold significant potential to advance sustainable development objectives.

The main takeaways from the High-Level Leaders Track are integrated in the Riyadh IGF Messages and its summaries are available at the IGF website.





IGF 2024 Youth Track

The [IGF 2024 Youth Track](#) was composed of four capacity development workshops and a Global Youth Summit, all focused on governing AI. It was designed and co-organized by the Youth IGF coordinators, IGF Secretariat and several international youth-focused organisations.

Capacity development workshops

Four capacity development workshops were hosted in conjunction with the [regional IGFs](#) ([EuroDIG](#) in Lithuania, [Youth LACIGF](#) in Chile, [APrIGF](#) and [African IGF](#) in Ethiopia), focusing on particular aspects of AI governance, such as responsible use of large language models, capacity development, human rights implications and building a responsible AI governance ecosystem.

IGF 2024 Global Youth Summit and Messages from Youth

The four workshops fed into the final activity of the track, the [IGF 2024 Global Youth Summit](#), hosted in Riyadh on 15 December. This session during the IGF aimed to facilitate dialogue between youth and senior stakeholders.

Youth from all five regions of the world engaged in a dialogue with senior experts from different backgrounds and countries. More details about the IGF 2024 Youth Track and the Summit are available on this [dedicated page](#). All discussions are consolidated in [Messages from Youth](#).

Messages from the Youth

Through intergenerational, multistakeholder discussion, several messages emerged from the IGF 2024 Global Youth Summit hosted in Riyadh on 15 December 2024 on the topic of AI in education:

- Develop and implement AI technologies to streamline educators' workloads, such as grading and student evaluation, while fostering student-centered AI tools that promote independent learning, skill development, and problem-solving capabilities.
- Implement targeted policies to address the digital divide, ensuring equitable access to AI tools and digital technologies for underserved and marginalized communities. This includes improving internet accessibility, infrastructure, and affordability, particularly in developing regions.
- Design AI-driven educational frameworks that encourage lifelong learning and empower students to continuously adapt and grow in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.
- Develop strategies and programs to ensure educators, students, and institutions can adopt beneficial AI tools early, enabling them to maximize the advantages of innovation in education.
- Leverage AI to create personalized learning experiences that cater to individual student needs and learning styles. Additionally, ensure AI tools are multilingual and culturally sensitive to overcome language barriers and promote inclusivity.

- Strengthen global partnerships between all stakeholders, including governments, private sector, technical community, and civil society to share best practices, resources, and frameworks that guide the ethical and equitable integration of AI in education, particularly addressing the needs of the Global South.
- Adopt ethical AI trade models that align with established principles, such as UNESCO guidelines, to avoid bias and reinforce transparency. Create clear accountability frameworks across the AI lifecycle, holding developers and stakeholders responsible for failures and misuse.
- Ensure AI systems in education remain equitable, accessible, and inclusive for all learners. AI solutions should respect cultural diversity and serve as public goods to benefit society as a whole.
- Involve young people in the design, development, and implementation of AI tools in education to ensure their needs are addressed. Youth perspectives are critical to fostering solutions that work for their future.
- Utilize generative AI, including tools like voice-assisted technologies, to create engaging and interactive learning experiences that enhance student participation and outcomes.
- Invest in robust digital infrastructure to ensure AI tools are accessible to all educational institutions. Address connectivity challenges to enable widespread and reliable adoption of AI technologies.
- Develop and enforce strong data privacy policies to safeguard sensitive student and educator information. AI systems must maintain transparency in their operations, ensuring accountability for their use in educational environments.
- Invest in creating local educational content tailored to cultural and contextual needs. Foster global collaboration to promote equitable sharing of resources and best practices between developed and developing countries.



IGF 2024 Parliamentary Track

Building on the past years' experience, the IGF further strengthened its [Parliamentary Track](#), in particular through expanding a set of intersessional activities dedicated to fostering inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation on key digital policy issues.

The engagement was also done at local levels throughout the year by cooperating with sub-regional and regional IGFs. Below is an overview of activities undertaken in 2024.

Parliamentary track at regional IGFs

To foster meaningful engagement with members of parliaments from different regions, the IGF Secretariat cooperated directly with Parliaments at regional IGFs.

At the Central Asian [IGF](#) hosted in Uzbekistan, at the [West African IGF](#) hosted in Senegal and at the [African IGF](#) hosted in Ethiopia, parliamentarians from respective regions gathered to discuss digital issues of interest such as digital transformation and cooperation, the regulation of AI, data governance and others.

The IGF also collaborated with the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina on a [Regional Summit of Parliamentarians on Artificial Intelligence and the Latin American Agenda](#) in June in Buenos Aires, as well as with the National Congress and the Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge and Innovation of Chile, on [dedicated activities](#) prior to the Latin American and Caribbean IGF (LACIGF) in November in Santiago de Chile.

Parliamentary Track at IGF 2024

During the IGF meeting in Riyadh, over 90 parliamentarians from more than 35 countries, as well as the European and the Pan-African Parliament, got together - on site and online - to exchange experiences and interact with other stakeholders on digital cooperation, including relevant international Internet governance processes, such as the Global Digital Compact and the World Summit on the Information Society review process.

Over nine very rich and engaging sessions, parliamentarians highlighted the importance of multistakeholder cooperation for empowering legislators to make informed decisions.

A firm interest was expressed by many parliamentarians to continue and strengthen their engagement with the IGF, take part in national and regional IGF initiatives, and consider the work carried out in these fora as resources to inform their parliamentary discussions and activities.

These and other messages are reflected in an [output document](#) which is intended to inform parliamentary action in the years to come.

Other Parliamentary Activities in 2024

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, in cooperation with UNESCO and the IGF Secretariat, organized three capacity-building workshops on Artificial Intelligence (AI) from January to March, for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff.

These workshops informed the IPU resolution “The impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law”. The resolution was adopted at the 149th IPU Assembly in October.

In parallel, UNESCO developed a consultation paper on AI regulation with the support of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Internet Governance Forum’s Parliamentary Track to engage parliamentarians globally and enhance their capacities in evidence-based policymaking for AI.

IGF 2024 Parliamentary Track Output

We, parliamentarians taking part in the Parliamentary Track at the 19th UN Internet Governance Forum (IGF), with the theme Building our Multistakeholder Digital Future,

Coming together with the shared ambition to strengthen digital cooperation nationally, regionally and internationally,

Welcoming the Global Digital Compact, adopted in September 2024, as a landmark achievement in the area of digital policy, Sharing the goal set out in the Compact of “an inclusive, open, sustainable, fair, safe and secure digital future for all”,

Acknowledging the numerous challenges to the realization of this goal, including but not limited to the digital divide that persists between and within countries, the ever-changing geopolitical environment, ongoing gender inequalities, disparities and gaps in society, and inequalities in labour markets, as well as the need to combat disinformation, to enhance cybersecurity, to promote effective data governance, to ensure sustainability and to avoid a situation whereby digital technologies further contribute to the climate emergency,

Underscoring the critical role of parliaments in protecting our societies and the rights and freedoms of our citizens,



Technological development presents particular challenges to the development of supportive legislation on digital policy,

Recognizing that it is now the responsibility of all stakeholders, including parliaments, to turn the objectives, principles and commitments set out in the Global Digital Compact into practical actions,

Committed to playing our part in this process, as political leaders, through the parliamentary functions of legislation, oversight and budget allocation,

Observing that artificial intelligence is too important not to regulate, but also that it is too important not to regulate well,

Encouraged by the willingness to work closely with parliaments demonstrated by stakeholders at IGF 2024, including civil society, academia, the technical community, the private sector and UN system organizations,

Further encouraged by the numerous recent examples of inter-parliamentary cooperation, including the growth in parliamentary involvement in regional, subregional and national IGF events, and the adoption, by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), of the Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology and the resolution The impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law,

Determined to further strengthen the momentum that has been built since the first Parliamentary Track at IGF 2019,

Guided by the goal of helping to build our multi-stakeholder digital future,

1. Call upon parliaments to advance digital cooperation by:

a. participating actively in ongoing discussions on the governance of digital cooperation, including at the 20th IGF, to be held in Norway in June 2025, and at the AI for Good Global Summit and the WSIS+20 review meeting, both to be held in July 2025;

b. working with the executive branch of their national government or region to push for consensus among UN Member States on an international governance framework for artificial intelligence;

c. exchanging information about national initiatives to review and update legislative frameworks regarding artificial intelligence;

d. working on a minimum code of ethics for new technologies, based on a human rights approach, that can be used and implemented by all countries;

e. supporting the IGF as a key venue for multi-stakeholder dialogue on digital policy, and advocating for additional resources for the pursuit of its mission;

2. Invite parliaments to work together, regionally and subregionally, in order to:

a. develop a shared vision of their common priorities on digital policy in their region, for example by selecting the recommendations from the Global Digital Compact that are most relevant to their context;

b. take action to advance these priorities within the relevant bodies and to bridge the gaps that persist between and within countries;

c. explore opportunities for developing common regulatory frameworks and interoperable legislation that works across national borders;

3. Call upon parliaments to continue to strengthen parliamentary processes, and to:

a. hold the executive to account for action towards the five pillars set out in the Global Digital Compact, including by holding committee hearings, asking questions of ministers and organizing plenary debates in parliament;

b. increase investment in building their own digital competencies, based on the needs of each parliament, including building the capacity of parliamentarians, the parliamentary administration, and the institution of parliament as a whole;

c. demonstrate commitment to multi-stakeholder approaches in parliamentary processes, including by ensuring that the perspectives of civil society, academia, the technical community and the private sector are taken into account in legislative initiatives;

d. emphasize efforts to address online gender-based discrimination and violence, and to empower women's participation in the tech industry;

e. create substantive opportunities for youth participation in lawmaking and decision-making processes, and take steps to facilitate youth engagement, including compensation for time invested in youth advisory councils and similar initiatives;

f. explore agile approaches to lawmaking that are suited to rapidly changing technology environments;

g. establish systems for the anticipatory governance of future technology shifts, and of emerging technologies such as quantum computing and neurocomputing;

4. Call upon the IGF to:

a. compile information on the numerous forms of capacity-building support that have been referenced at IGF 2024, and to share this information with parliaments;

b. make the expertise that exists within the IGF community available to parliaments upon request;

c. further integrate a Parliamentary Track into regional and national IGF events;



5. Invite all UN system organizations working on digital policy to:

- a. increase investment in building capacity and digital competencies among parliaments;
- b. raise awareness among parliaments about key international processes and forums for digital cooperation, including the Global Digital Compact, the WSIS+20 process and the IGF;
- c. report regularly on progress against the commitments made through these processes and in these forums;
- d. engage systematically with parliaments, as well as with governments and other stakeholders, in their international, regional and national activities relating to digital policy;

6. Call upon the IPU to:

- a. work closely with the IGF, UN system organizations and other stakeholders to develop guidelines for building capacity and digital competencies for parliaments and parliamentarians;

b. report, to the Parliamentary Track at IGF 2025, on parliamentary action in follow-up to the IPU resolution The impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law, adopted in October 2024, and to the Guidelines for AI in parliaments, published in December 2024;

c. convey the outcomes of the Parliamentary Track at IGF 2024 and 2025 to the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 29 to 31 July 2025;

7. Invite national parliaments, UN system organizations and all other stakeholders to report, to the IGF and the IPU, on progress and obstacles on the matters set out above;

8. Request that the IGF and the IPU compile a report on such progress and obstacles, and present this report at the 20th IGF, to be held in Norway in June 2025.



IGF 2024

Intersessional Work

In between annual meetings of the Forum, the IGF community works on a range of issues through three main types of intersessional fora – Policy Networks (PNs), Best Practice Forums (BPFs) and Dynamic Coalitions (DCs).

Policy Networks

The [Policy Network \(PNs\)](#) are dedicated to identifying status quo and current issues including the policy gaps, existing capacity and conditions, local specificities, good and bad practices and possible ways forward through actionable activities led by identified implementation parties.

- [Policy Network on Meaningful Access](#), focused on advocating for the implementation of policy solutions for meaningful access issues, monitoring ongoing and new practices, and fostering multistakeholder debates on connectivity, digital inclusion, and capacity development. It aligns efforts with the Global Digital Compact and WSIS+20 and IGF+20 processes.
- [Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation](#) explored policy, technical, legal and regulatory measures that threaten the open, interconnected, and interoperable nature of the Internet. It specifically focused on the commitment outlined in the GDC to prevent fragmentation and explored how the multistakeholder community can contribute to its operationalisation.
- [Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence](#) addressed policy matters related to AI accountability, environmental sustainability in Generative AI, effective governance and interoperability, and tackled labor issues across AI's lifecycle.

Best Practice Forums

The [Best Practice Forums \(BPFs\)](#) provide a platform to exchange experiences in addressing Internet policy issues. The objective is to collect existing and emerging good practices from community experience. BPFs are open, bottom-up and collective processes to produce community-driven outputs. BPF outputs intend to contribute to an understanding of global good practice, and to serve as a resource to inform policy discussions, standards development, business decisions, as well as public understanding, awareness, and discourse.

- [Best Practice Forum on Cybersecurity](#) focused on fostering cooperation to ensure the efficient and effective use of the limited resources for capacity building

Dynamic Coalitions

[Dynamic Coalitions \(DCs\)](#) are open, multistakeholder and community-driven groups dedicated to an Internet governance issue or set of issues. They emerged at the first IGF meeting in 2006. Currently there are 31 [active dynamic coalitions](#) focused on various topics such as environment, interplanetary Internet, gaming, AI, data and health, blockchain, network neutrality, Internet rights and principles, innovative approaches to connecting the unconnected, Internet of Things, accessibility and disability, child rights online etc. The activities of the DCs are coordinated by the [Dynamic Coalition Coordination Group](#) (DCCG) with aid from the IGF Secretariat.

Following consultations by the Dynamic Coalitions Coordination Group (DCCG) on the implementation phase of the UN Global Digital Compact (GDC), 21 of the IGF's current Dynamic Coalitions confirmed that their missions and action plans are directly relevant to commitments and actions under one or more of the GDC's objectives.

The Dynamic Coalitions' Main Session in Riyadh entitled "Contributing to the Global Digital Compact: Dynamic Coalitions Supporting Sustainable Digital Development" provided the opportunity for these DCs, grouped collaboratively in clusters

for each of the five GDC objectives, to present how they are able to leverage their members' expertise and to use their platforms for diverse multistakeholder collaboration, in support of the implementation phase of the GDC.

They were also able to showcase how they contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through their collaborative capacity building activities. Full details of these DCs' commitments are provided in the [report of the DCs Main Session](#).

The annual IGF meeting is an important opportunity for the growing number of Dynamic Coalitions of expert stakeholders from all regions, to demonstrate how their year-round activities contribute to the impact of the IGF in advancing the open, secure, inclusive and interoperable Internet that supports human rights, social wellbeing and sustainable development.

26 Dynamic Coalitions held altogether 15 either joint or individual [sessions](#) at IGF 2024 to discuss a diverse range of issues relevant to their specific areas of Internet policy focus and digital cooperation.

They were also able in these sessions to report the outcomes of recent research and analysis, including recommendations for policymakers and decision-takers in industry, guidance on best practice and capacity building initiatives.



Best Practice Forum on Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity and trust emerged as paramount concerns in the community consultation that was held to inform the planning and thematic focus of the IGF 2024 process and the 19th annual meeting in Riyadh. The topic breaks down into a complex array of issues, the Best Practice Forum (BPF) focussed on capacity building and fostering a culture of learning and continuous improvement to enhance cybersecurity and trust.

The BPF initially proposed to compile an overview of existing cyber-capacity building initiatives and present them in an informative database for those seeking such resources. However, when this work plan was presented to the stakeholder community, the feedback highlighted that such an effort would duplicate the work of several valuable initiatives that already map cybersecurity capacity building and provide tools to make these resources accessible. Instead, it was recommended that the BPF focus on facilitating access to the wealth of information available in mappings and inventories, ensuring it effectively reaches its target audiences.

This resulted in the formulation of a new problem statement as foundation for the BPF's work: 'While various mappings, inventories, and initiatives provide a wealth of information on cybersecurity capacity building offerings, overlaps and gaps in information exist and the information may not reach its target audience effectively.' Experts and stakeholders that took part in BPF discussions largely agreed that the statement is both valid and necessary but emphasized the importance of context and experience.

Consistency is essential to creating meaningful impact in capacity-building

efforts. Initiatives must be rooted in local contexts while being shared globally to ensure relevance and scalability. Localisation is pivotal to making resources accessible and fostering wider adoption. A commitment to building trust is key, achieved through actions like sharing knowledge, listening to feedback, implementing strategies, and embracing change.

Capacity-building efforts should make full use of existing mechanisms, processes, and practices. Existing mechanisms, including platforms such as the IGF should be utilised more effectively for capacity building activities. Cyber capacity building should be understood as an ecosystem of interconnected initiatives and practices that work together, and engagement on multiple levels, leveraging knowledge and know-how.

A participatory, multi-stakeholder approach is crucial for sustainable and inclusive cyber capacity building. Efforts should be optimized through mapping, coordinating, collaborating, and fostering dialogue, especially in low-resource environments. Cybersecurity should be demystified through accessible resources, framed as an investment in the resilience of future generations. Effective capacity-building should be consistent, localised, contextual, relevant, and well-resourced to ensure accessibility.

The recommendations outlined above are further expanded upon in the [BPF Cybersecurity 2024 report](#). Over the years, the BPF Cybersecurity has explored various aspects of culture, norms, and values in cybersecurity. These reports, based on insights from the IGF stakeholder community, offer valuable perspectives and are accessible on the [BPF's webpage](#).

Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence

In 2024, the [Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence](#) (PNAI) community concentrated its discussions and efforts on four key topics: Liability as a mechanism for supporting AI accountability; Environmental sustainability within the Generative AI value chain; AI governance, interoperability, and good practices; and; Labour issues throughout AI's life cycle.

This work resulted in PNAI Policy Brief 2024 report [The AI Governance We Want, Call to action: Liability, Interoperability, Sustainability & Labour](#) and recommendations addressing these areas. Overall, highlights of the PNAI 2024 Policy Brief are:

- Addressing AI liability and holding AI developers and deployers accountable for the harms caused across the AI lifecycle is essential for filling a critical gap in global AI governance. The unique characteristics and complexity of AI systems pose significant challenges for existing liability regimes. Robust liability frameworks are indispensable for promoting safe and ethical AI outcomes and providing recourse for harm. By prioritising this issue, policymakers can help build a more accountable and equitable AI ecosystem.
- The current global dialogue on AI governance and environmental risk mitigation tend to focus on improving energy efficiency. This narrow focus fails to address the broader sustainability and socio-technical challenges tied to the generative AI (Gen-AI) value chain. By developing comprehensive metrics, fostering multistakeholder dialogue, and leveraging high-quality data, stakeholders can collaboratively reduce the ecological footprint of Gen-AI technologies and ensure that the benefits of Gen-AI are realised without compromising environmental integrity.
- It is critical that global AI governance frameworks encourage interoperable AI systems and interoperable AI governance frameworks become imperative to promote a safe, secure, fair, and innovative AI ecosystem. Concrete mechanisms for regulatory, governance, technical, and data interoperability are needed to overcome existing barriers and tensions. Global multistakeholder cooperation and input are crucial for promoting inclusive governance frameworks and coordinating AI interoperability efforts across different regions and parts of the world.
- AI's impact on labour and employment is of critical concern. Workers-led AI governance, that promotes workers' rights in the AI era as well as innovation and productivity become critical. AI has the potential to boost worker productivity and competitiveness, create new roles and new career paths, empower education and reskilling for workers. The transformative capabilities of AI and its capacity to complement or substitute tasks previously handled by humans raise concerns of job loss and decrease of income, reskilling or upskilling large parts of the workforce around the world as the use of AI proliferates in the workspace.

The report and its recommendations were developed through extensive exploration and multi-stakeholder discussions within the PNAI community. In April 2024, PNAI established [four Sub-groups](#), each tasked with drafting a report on one of the focal topics.

These Sub-groups, led by volunteer team leaders, conducted information gathering, consulted with experts from the PNAI community and beyond, and held team meetings to debate and refine their topics.

Their work culminated in the preparation and editing of discussion papers. [PNAI Multistakeholder Working Group](#) held [nine online meetings](#) that guided the overall process.

These meetings provided updates, reviewed draft reports, and offered feedback and advice. In October 2024, the draft discussion papers were shared with the PNAI community for review and feedback.

Two online workshops were held to discuss the drafts, and additional comments were submitted in writing. Based on this input, the sub-groups finalised their reports.

The insights and recommendations derived from PNAI's 2024 work were presented and discussed in a session organized by the PNAI at the 19th annual IGF meeting.



Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation

The [IGF Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation \(PNIF\)](#) was set up in 2022 to address the question of Internet Fragmentation, to raise awareness of actions and measures that risk fragmenting the Internet, and to facilitate discussion on what could be done to avoid such fragmentation. In 2022 and 2023, the PNIF developed its [PNIF Framework for discussing fragmentation](#).

The Framework conceptualises three key dimensions of fragmentation: Fragmentation of the Internet User experience, Fragmentation of Internet Governance and Coordination, Fragmentation of the Internet's Technical Layer. The goal of the Framework is to serve as a general guiding tool for continuing the dialogue about fragmentation and technical, political and commercial developments that may have an impact on fragmentation.

In 2024, the PNIF continued to track the global discussion on Internet fragmentation and explore ways to contribute to fostering holistic multistakeholder dialogue on fragmentation. The year was marked by the UN Summit of the Future and the Global Digital Compact (GDC), which dominated many global Internet governance debates, and significantly influenced the PNIF's work plan.

At the first PNIF webinar ([summary](#)), stakeholders reaffirmed that Internet fragmentation remains a matter of concern and stressed that it is important to be clear about what one wants to achieve by avoiding fragmentation. The socio-economic benefits of an unfragmented Internet are, however, difficult to translate into concrete indicators. At the time of the first webinar, preparations for the GDC were in their final stages. PNIF participants concluded that it was too late in the process to make a meaningful contribution to the discussions and would be better to wait for the final outcome.

In September 2024, the UN Member States convened for the Summit of the Future and adopted a [Pact for the Future](#) that includes a Global Digital Compact (GDC). Under GDC Objective 3, Foster an inclusive, open, safe and secure digital space that respects, protects and promotes human rights, the UN Member States commit to:

'Promote international cooperation among all stakeholders to prevent, identify and address risks of fragmentation of the Internet in a timely manner (SDG16)' (GDC, Objective 3, art 29, (c)).

The second PNIF webinar ([summary](#)) explored how Internet fragmentation is addressed in the GDC and what this means for the multistakeholder dialogue on fragmentation. The general sentiment was that the GDC commitment represents an important acknowledgement by the UN Member States of the risk of Internet fragmentation.

However, the true measure of commitment will be the actions of governments and stakeholders. Currently, as it was pointed out, there is a notable lack of intergovernmental engagement and focussed dialogue on the issue.

A deeper dive into the interpretation of art. 29(c), amongst other at the third PNIF webinar ([summary](#)) and [PNIF main session](#) at the IGF in Riyadh, also examined other language in the GDC, including art. 26, under the same Objective 3. In this article, Member States 'recognize that the Internet is a critical global facility for inclusive and equitable digital transformation.



To fully benefit all, it must be open, global, interoperable, stable and secure.’ This raised the question of whether it can be concluded that preventing fragmentation of the Internet, as committed to in article 29(c), means preserving this open, global, interoperable, stable and secure character. It was also noted that further exploration of the link between Art.29(c) and SDG 16, ‘Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions’, would be meaningful.

In addition to focussing on understanding the GDC commitment, the PNIF invited stakeholders to reflect on how the multistakeholder dialogue on internet fragmentation can support the operationalisation of the commitment in art.29(c) and contribute to other relevant processes, such as the WSIS+20 Review. Participants agreed that the IGF and PNIF are well-positioned to continue to serve as central platform for multistakeholder discussions on identifying risks of fragmentation and ways to

address them. However, it was emphasized that the responsibility for preventing and addressing fragmentation ultimately lies with policymakers. Their actions should be locally driven but accountable to the commitments outlined in the GDC. Concrete ideas were proposed for the multistakeholder community to monitor and report progress.

The [PNIF Output](#) summarises the various discussions and is intended to serve as a foundation for further multistakeholder dialogue. A recording of the PNIF main session ‘Avoiding Internet Fragmentation. Understanding and Contributing to Operationalising the GDC Commitment’ is available on [UN Web TV](#).

Policy Network on Meaningful Access

The concept of meaningful access has emerged in response to the growing body of evidence that even when people have connectivity, they might not have been fully benefiting from the Internet. How one gets connected to the Internet and which contents and services one can access is an equally important challenge to the experience that a person will have once they are online, even more so to the community/country in which they live.

Since 2022, the Policy Network on Meaningful Access (PNMA) has worked on incrementally building knowledge, practice, and bridging communities around three overarching thematic streams: Connectivity (Infrastructure & Business Models), Digital Inclusion through a citizen-centric approach (accessibility & multilingualism: local services and contents in local languages based on local needs and resources), and Capacity Development (technical skills training).

Since 2022, the PNMA has been actively contributing both within and outside the IGF to identify a range of good practices and policy solutions aimed at achieving meaningful access and retain them as possible models to be scaled and/or applied in other regions of the world. Different stakeholders groups have joined such efforts: governments, international organisations, academia, private actors, non-profits, and local or language-based communities. In this aspect, it is important to note that the PNMA builds upon the efforts of the late Best Practices Forum on Local Content (BPFLC) and of the BPF on Gender and Access (BPFGA), which started the identification of such relevant solutions.

As the first of its series, the [PNMA 2022 Output Report](#) features a collation of selected cases for each of the above-mentioned focus areas. During 2023, the PNMA expanded

its analysis of said experiences with implementation and problem-solving of the issues previously raised. By building a [PNMA Repository of Good Practices](#), the network was able to assess reasons on why practices have or have not expanded, why digital divides persist, and which structural issues repeat themselves in different scenarios. The [PNMA 2023 Output Report](#) reflects the collaborative work and the group's list of recommended actions on meaningful access.

During 2024, the PNMA has contributed to assist and advocate for the implementation of policy solutions for the key issues previously raised, while monitoring ongoing experiences and welcoming new practices. The continuous multistakeholder public debate on the above mentioned focus areas took into account the Global Digital Compact (to which the PNMA has actively contributed, with its final text and recommendations adopting the concept of meaningful access), the deliberations from NETMundial+10, and the WSIS+20 and IGF+20 processes.

This year's [Process](#) was supported by a follow-up monitoring survey of previously presented cases, as well as a review of the key policy issues raised in earlier output reports; and a revamped selection of new, community-endorsed good practices. Additionally, the policy network engaged in discussions regarding this intersessional work and ways of collaboration – within the IGF – with the Leadership Panel, Dynamic Coalitions, and institutional partners such as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN); World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), UN DESA, International Telecommunication Union (ITU), UNHCR, UNESCO, Internet Society (ISOC), and Organisation of American States (OAS), amongst others.

The PNMA's key takeaways during IGF 2024 are:

- Meaningful access is a concept and practice rapidly expanding across all regions; as recognised by the approved Global Digital Compact back in September, 2024, this is the right way to ensure connectivity through the provision of content in local languages, and establishing services that actually improve the community's livelihoods.
- A "whole of society approach" while dealing with meaningful access is essential: connectivity, digital inclusion, and capacity development goals may only be achieved by multistakeholder cross-collaboration and multidisciplinary operating lenses.
- Reliable measurement tools are needed: after many years of discussing policy loopholes, it is now clear that reliable tools to frequently measure where the issues persist are still in demand, as well as to assess policy effectiveness. Alternative solutions for such measures, beyond direct regulation, can be explored in order to avoid unnecessary burdens.
- Access is not possible without affordability: the price of access (of services, devices, and infrastructure) persists as one of the main barriers to connectivity. This needs to be urgently addressed if we really want the other half of humanity to join the Internet.
- Good practices' acknowledgment: the success cases raised by the PNMA during its operation years – collated both in its Repository and presented at the Annual Meetings – shall be proactively promoted by the IGF and the Leadership Panel, throughout regions and institutions, so their impact is amplified.

The Policy Network on Meaningful Access reaffirms its commitment to the multistakeholder public debate on Internet governance; offers itself as a model for the implementation of the GDC built on policies based on best practices; and welcomes new likeminded partners to build together the future that will be defined during the ongoing WSIS+20 and IGF+20 processes.



National and Regional IGF Initiatives

[National and Regional IGF Initiatives](#) (NRIs) are organic and independent multistakeholder networks that discuss issues pertaining to Internet Governance from the perspective of their respective communities, while acting in accordance with the main principles of the global IGF. To date, 175 NRIs are recognized by the IGF Secretariat.

At the 19th IGF in Riyadh, over 100 NRIs co-organized five sessions, including three thematic collaborative sessions, a main session and a coordination session.

Specifically, the main session focused on the evolution of the multistakeholder model, while the coordination session looked into ways the NRIs could contribute to WSIS+20 review and GDC implementation.

The collaborative sessions unpacked local specificities on Artificial Intelligence and other emerging technologies, digital inclusion and disinformation. More information about the NRIs sessions is available at the [IGF website](#).



NRI Discussion Priorities In 2024

In 2024, 94 NRIs hosted their annual meetings. This is an increase of six meetings, compared to last year. It is an established procedure that the NRIs annual programmes are developed in a bottom-up manner through public calls for inputs issued to all stakeholders of their targeted communities.

Usually, issues received are clustered within thematic discussion areas, subject to further consideration by the NRIs multistakeholder organising committees. In order to understand global Internet governance issues' priorities, the IGF Secretariat analyses digital policy discussion areas through agendas of the NRIs annual meetings hosted during the mapped time period.

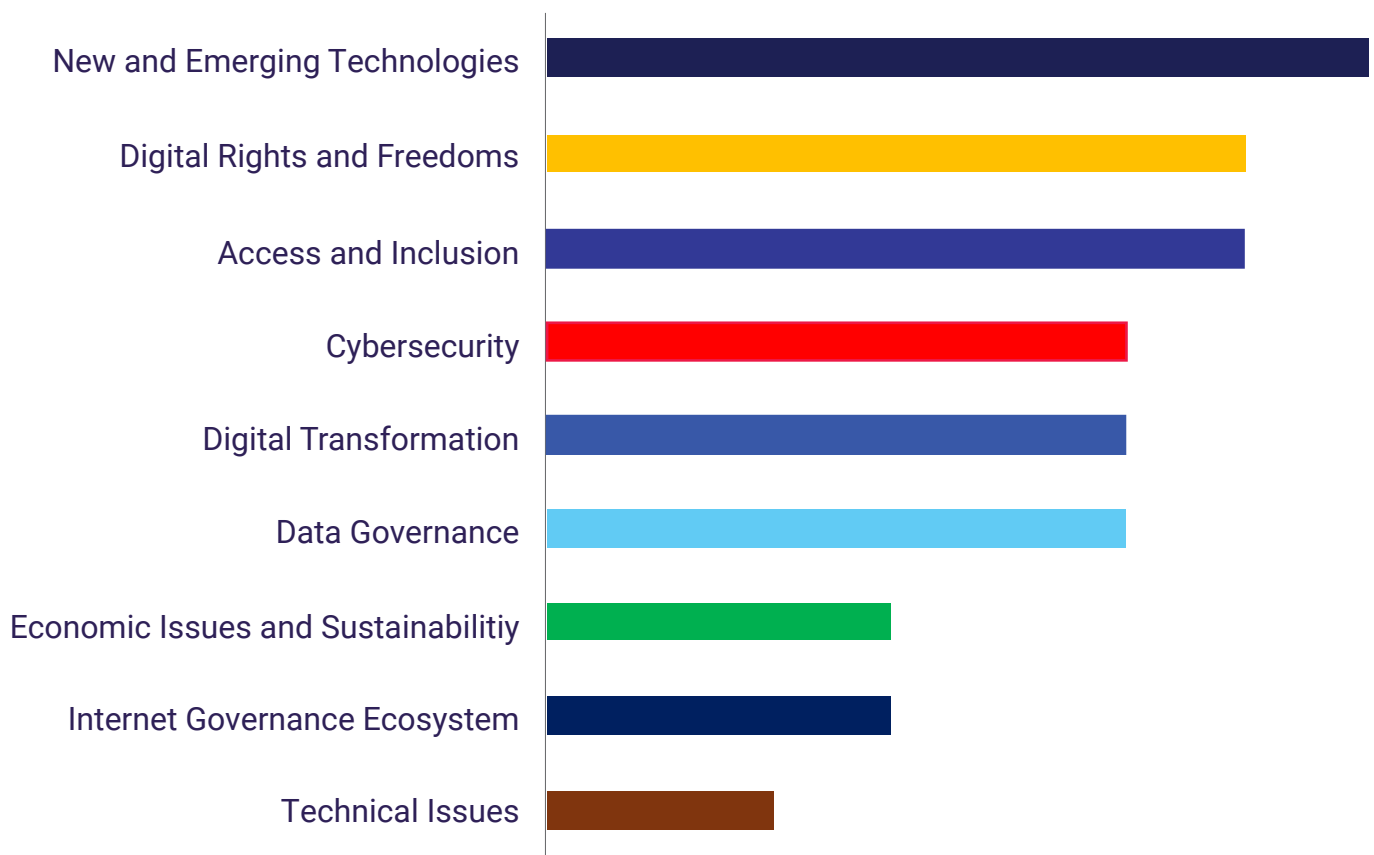
Below is an overview of the 2024 discussion areas gathered across 94 NRIs annual meetings for the 2024 IGF cycle.

Internet governance discussion priorities

Analysis of the substantive orientation of the NRIs annual meeting programmes, reveals a notable shift in thematic priorities compared to 2023. This year, discussions predominantly centred on digital transformation, closely linked with new and emerging technologies. Topics related to access and digital inclusion, as well as digital rights and freedoms, also featured prominently. In contrast, the previous year emphasized access, digital inclusion, and cybersecurity.

This transition underscores a growing focus on the transformative potential of digital technologies. It's important to note that many issues within these thematic clusters are interconnected and often discussed in relation to one another, depending on the specific context.





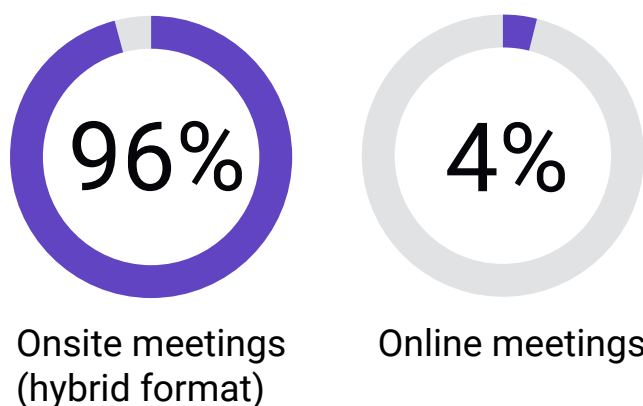
Discussion areas gathered across 94 NRIs annual meetings for the 2024 IGF cycle

Looking into specific issues discussed under the area of new and emerging technologies, many NRIs have prioritized discussions on Artificial Intelligence (AI), focusing on its role in driving innovation across various sectors, highlighting AI's transformative potential and its implications for different industries.

Within access and inclusion thematic cluster, NRIs have continued to prioritize digital literacy, capacity development, and skill-building, placing less emphasis on the technical aspects of connectivity. Notably, there has been an increase in agendas directly addressing the digital inclusion needs of specific stakeholder groups, such as youth and persons with disabilities. This reflects a growing recognition of the importance of tailoring digital inclusion efforts to meet the needs of diverse populations.

This year's NRIs discussions marked increase in the prioritization of topics related to digital rights and freedoms compared to the previous year. Discussions have predominantly focused on issues such as freedom of expression and the implications of generative AI, particularly concerning deepfakes. Additionally, there has been a notable introduction of concepts linking creativity and cultural expression with digital technologies, a focus that was less prevalent in past agendas.

The emphasis on data governance continues to cross-cut multiple thematic areas, with a notable focus on data privacy and protection, and leveraging data for innovation. This trend reflects the growing recognition of data as a critical asset, necessitating robust governance frameworks to balance accessibility, security, and compliance.



Discussions on technical matters encompassed issues such as Internet fragmentation, digital inclusion through the lens of the Domain Name System (DNS), and routing security, overall highlighting the importance of maintaining a unified Internet infrastructure.

Meeting Formats

Compared to last year, the NRIs 2024 agendas saw a decrease in cybersecurity as a standalone topic, though it remains prevalent across most NRIs' agendas. A closer examination reveals that cybersecurity discussions are increasingly integrated with other areas, focusing on general challenges countries face regarding existing cybersecurity policies for privacy online and data protection, highlighting the need for capacity development in this field.

Discussions prominently featured frameworks and procedures for discussing and deciding on Internet governance issues. This year, there was an increased emphasis on the multistakeholder model and global digital governance, particularly highlighting the implications of the Global Digital Compact and the upcoming 20-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20).

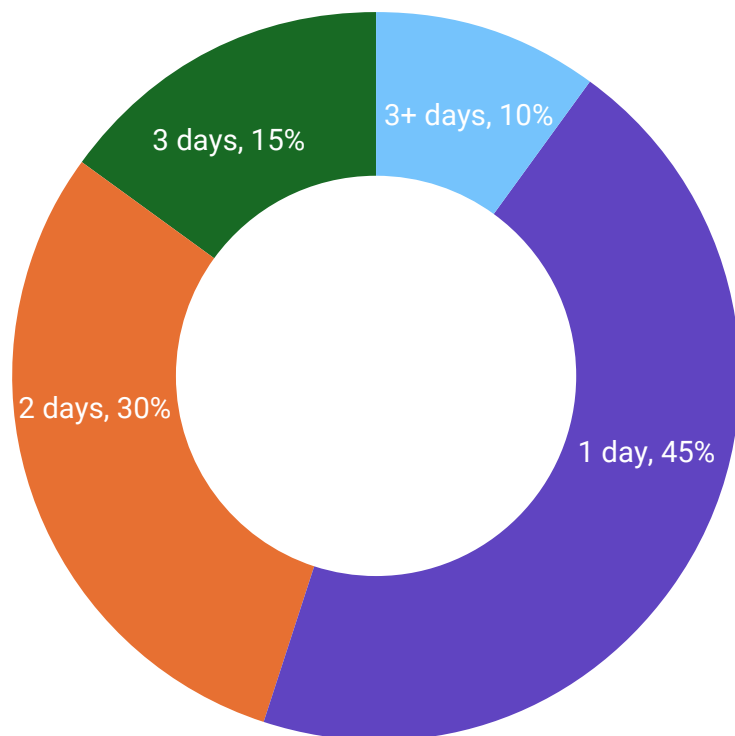
Issues related to the digital economy remained prominent across the NRIs' agendas. In 2024, discussions centred on investments and trade, reflecting a sustained focus on economic aspects of digital transformation. This emphasis aligns with global trends highlighting the importance of investment facilitation and digital government solutions in fostering economic growth.

Last year's trend continued and most of the meetings were hosted onsite in a hybrid format. Out of 94 NRIs meetings hosted last year, 88 were hosted onsite with an online participation component (hybrid format), while 6 meeting was hosted only online (Afghanistan IGF, Youth Afghanistan IGF, Myanmar Youth IGF, South-eastern Asian Youth IGF, Ukraine Youth IGF and Ukraine national IGF).

The majority of the NRIs annual meetings were hosted over 1 day, close to 45%, while 30% of the hosted NRIs meetings were hosted over 2 days. Meetings of 3 days were hosted by 15% while 10% hosted meetings that are 4 or 5 days long. Compared to last year, there has been a notable increase in the number of meetings exceeding three days in duration. Unlike last year, all meetings were hosted over consecutive days.

However, there has been an increase in intersessional activities conducted between the annual IGF meetings. Over 30% of the NRIs that hosted their meetings in 2024 were informed about the intersessional activities. These initiatives encompassed various formats, including Internet governance schools, capacity development programs tailored for first-time participants, children, youth, women, and parliamentarians, as well as the release of publications.

Growing tendency to host intersessional activities Schools on Internet governance, programmes for inclusion of children and youth, women; engagement of legislators; orientation for the first-time participants; publications etc.



Compared to last year, the proportion of meetings held outside capital cities decreased from 20% to 15%, indicating that over 75% of meetings were hosted in capital cities. This trend may be attributed to factors such as better infrastructure, accessibility, and availability of resources.

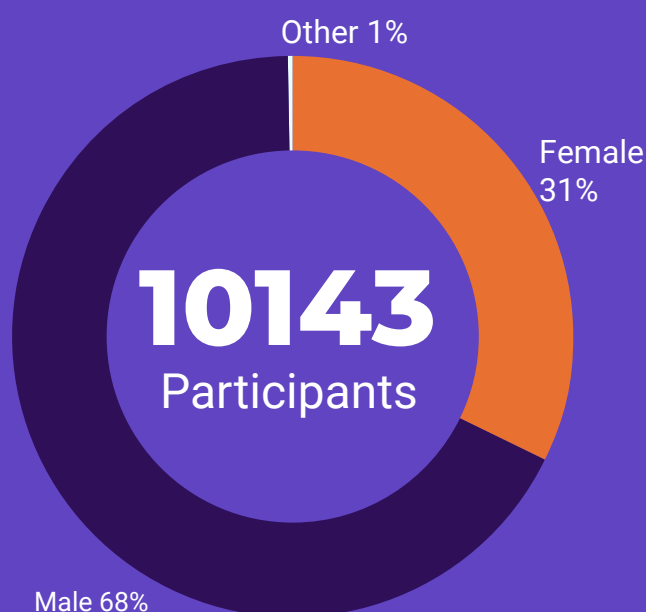
The average participation across all NRIs meetings in 2024, indicates that over 15,000 stakeholders directly participated in the IGF-like discussion processes around the world.



Annex A: IGF 2024 Statistics

Breakdown of Registrations

The 19th IGF annual meeting gathered 7,343 participants onsite in Riyadh coming from 144 different UN member states. Additional 2,800+ participated online, making the overall participation exceed 10,000. Below are the breakdowns by stakeholder and regional groups.



Compared to IGF 2023, this year's IGF saw a significant increase in the number of participants from the Governments, (+32%), and decrease in participation from civil society (-13%), as well as private sector (-12%) and technical community (-7%). There was an increase in representation of stakeholders from Africa (+3%) and decrease from GRULAC (-5%).

Newcomers (Percentage) 64%

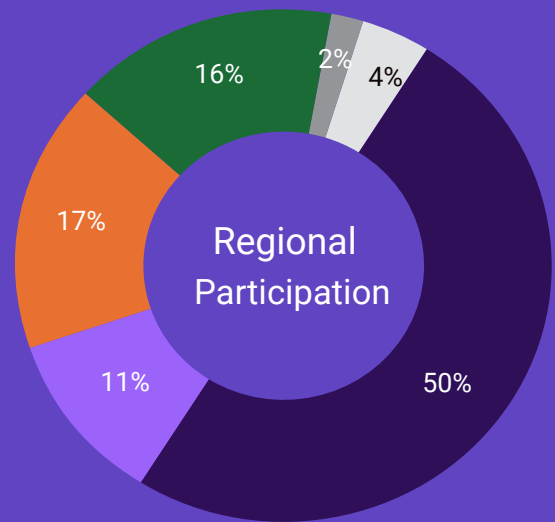
By Stakeholder (percentage)

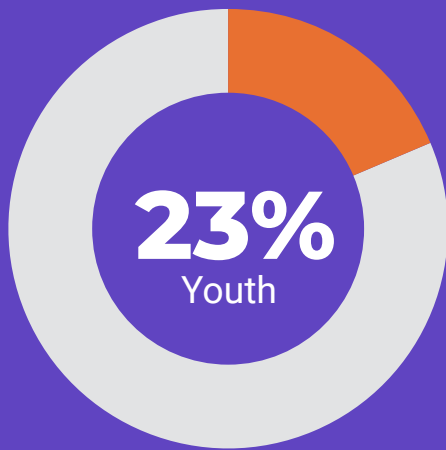
Government	48%
Intergovernmental organisation	7%
Civil society	11%
Private sector	25%
Technical Community	7%
Press/Media	1%
Children	1%



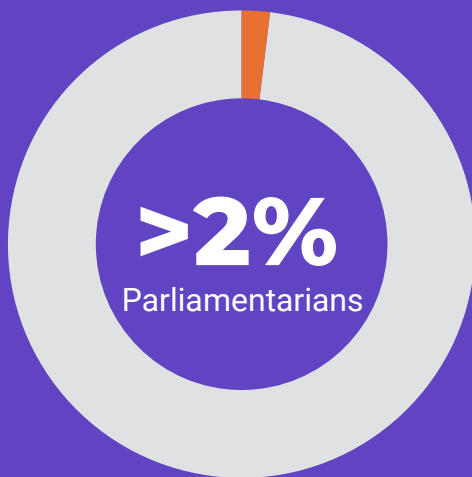
By Region (percentage)

Africa Group	11%
Asia-Pacific Group	50%
Eastern European Group	4%
Latin American and Carriibbean Group	2%
Western European and Others Group	16%
Intergovernmental organisation	1%





less than 30 years old



>2% from 27 countries

Global South Support

Estimated 1,800 stakeholders benefited from support	12 grants to NRIs
	5 grants to Remote Hubs
	128 received Travel Support

Remote Hubs

34 remote hubs at IGF 2024 from 19 Countries represented **5 regions**

50% from Africa

17% from Asia Pacific

17% from Latin America and Caribbean

5% from Eastern Europe

11% from WEOG

Sessions

307 Sessions at the IGF 2024

1 Opening Session

1 Opening Ceremony

4 Main Sessions

91 Workshops

45 Open Forums

11 Launches and Awards

46 Lightning Talks

11 Networking Sessions

15 DC Sessions

3 NRI Collaborative Sessions

51 Pre-Events (Day 0 Sessions)

5 High-level Leaders Track

9 Parliamentary Track sessions

1 Judiciary engagement session

5 Business engagement sessions

1 Global Youth Summit

1 BPF Session

3 PN Sessions

1 Open Mic

1 Closing Ceremony

IGF 2024 Preparation

40 Members of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG)

2 Open Consultation and MAG Meetings

Over 30 Virtual MAG and MAG-WG meetings

4 MAG Working Groups

4 Main Session Preparatory Groups



Media

YouTube Live stream 20,000+ views

240 Session videos uploaded on Youtube

The meeting's remote zoom participation attracted over 2,800+ delegates joining the plenary and workshop meetings. The zoom meetings were mostly attended by Saudi Arabia (52%), followed by the United States, India, Germany and France. The livestream service attracted over 20,000+ views for both the IGF YouTube channel and UN WebTV. Over 70% of viewers were between 18 and 44 years of age.

The livestream was mostly viewed in Saudi Arabia (49%), followed by the United States, China, Germany and India.

One press conference and four Media Hub sessions were held targeting all IGF-accredited journalists; notices of these were distributed to the IGF main press mailing list and media lists at the UN Secretariat through the Department of Global Communications. Media Hub interviews were posted to UN WebTV.

Thousands of stakeholders interacted with the 19th IGF hashtags #IGF2024 and #MSHDigitalFuture[Precise statistics will be made available in a few days.]. Week-of media monitoring showed that the IGF was covered in a very high number of major Saudi Arabia media outlets, in print and broadcast.

A press kit was prepared via Trello, containing a media advisory, essential details about the meeting, access to photos and videos and contact information in case of interest in interviews. Opening and closing press releases were issued.



Annex B: Documentation and Process

IGF 2024 Outputs

IGF 2024 outputs, including IGF 2024 messages, session reports, press releases, and IGF participant statements, can be found at [here](#).

Session Reports, Recordings and Transcripts

[Reports](#)

[Transcripts](#)

[Recordings](#)



Intersessional Work

The community-led [intersessional activities](#) that occur throughout the year offer the IGF community the opportunity to work on substantive and concrete longer-term projects in the field of Internet governance:

Policy Networks (PNs)

[Internet Fragmentation \(PNIF\)](#)

[Meaningful Access \(PNMA\)](#)

[Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#)

Best Practice Forums (BPFs)

[Cybersecurity](#)

Dynamic Coalitions (DCs)

The activities of the 31 DCs are coordinated by the Dynamic Coalition Coordination Group (DCCG).

[Accessibility and Disability](#)

[Blockchain Technologies](#)

[Children's Rights in the Digital Environment](#)

[Community Connectivity](#)

[Core Internet Values](#)

[Data and Trust](#)

[Data Driven Health Technologies](#)

[Digital Health](#)

[DNS Issues](#)

[Environment](#)

[Gender and Internet Governance](#)

[Innovative approaches to Connecting the Unconnected](#)

[Internet and Jobs](#)

[Internet of Things](#)

[Internet Rights & Principles](#)

[Internet Standards, Security and Safety](#)

[Internet Universality Indicators](#)

[Network Neutrality](#)

[Platform Responsibility](#)

[Public Access in Libraries](#)

[Schools of Internet Governance](#)

[Small Island Developing States in the Internet Economy](#)

[Sustainability of Journalism and News Media](#)

[Youth Coalition on Internet Governance](#)

[Dynamic Teen Coalition](#)

[Dynamic Coalition on Blockchain Assurance and Standardization](#)

[Dynamic Coalition on Data and Artificial Intelligence Governance](#)

[Dynamic Coalition on Open Educational Resources](#)

[Dynamic Coalition on Measuring Digital Inclusion](#)

[Dynamic Coalition on Gaming for Purpose](#)

[Dynamic Coalition on Interplanetary Internet](#)

National, Regional and Youth IGF Initiatives (NRIs)

National, Regional and Youth IGF Initiatives (NRIs) are organic and independent formations that are discussing issues pertaining to Internet Governance from the perspective of their respective communities, while acting in accordance with the main principles of the global IGF.

The status of NRIs in 2024:

- 175 NRIs recognised in total
- 100+ NRIs represented at IGF 2024
- 13 more countries/regions have established IGF processes since IGF 2023

Below are the sources to find more information about the NRIs and their work:

[About the NRIs](#)

[National IGFs](#)

[Regional IGFs](#)

[Youth IGFs](#)

[Preparatory work of the NRIs](#)

IGF 2024 Preparatory Process

The IGF meeting programme is prepared by the MAG and the IGF Secretariat over the course of the year. Key decisions on the programme are taken in the face-to-face meetings as well as regular virtual meetings of the MAG leading into the IGF.

Following a traditional approach, the process was triggered by a public call for inputs which helped identification of the main themes. These were developed by the MAG based on input and contributions submitted by the community.

The programme for IGF 2024 was then built around the four main sub-themes which were prioritised through the public call:

Key elements of the preparatory processes included:

- A call to [Take Stock of IGF 2023 and Suggest Improvements for IGF 2024](#) was open until 16 January 2024. The contributions were summarised in a [synthesis output document](#).
- A [call for thematic inputs](#) was open until 13 January 2024.
- The [list of received inputs](#) and an analysis are available.
- The MAG identified main themes during its first MAG meeting and open consultations.
- A [call for session proposals](#) was open until 5 May 2024, inviting all stakeholders to consider applying for the type(s) of session that best fit their interests.

In addition to the overall collective work, the MAG worked on particular segments of the Forum's preparations to advance the overall process through its working groups:

[Working Group on IGF Strategy \(WG-Strategy\)](#)

[Working Group on Workshop Process \(WG-WSP\)](#)

[Working Group on Youth Engagement \(WG-Youth\)](#)

[Working Group on Multilingualism \(WG-Multilingual\)](#)



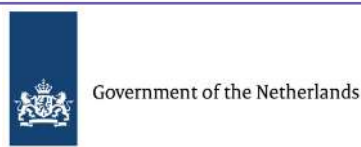
Annex C:

IGF 2024 Donors

The IGF project and its Secretariat is funded through donations from various stakeholder groups. While host countries bear the majority of the costs associated with holding the annual IGF meeting, the IGF Secretariat's activities are funded through extra-budgetary contributions paid into a multi-donor Trust Fund administered by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

IGF 2024 was primarily funded by the IGF Host Country – the Government of Saudi Arabia, as well as the Trust Fund and in-kind support.

In 2024, the following donors supported the IGF:





Riyadh IGF Messages

Disclaimer: the views and opinions expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Secretariat. The designations and terminology employed may not conform to United Nations practice and do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Organization.

The 19th annual meeting of the Internet Governance Forum was hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh from 15 to 19 December 2024.

The Riyadh IGF Messages provide a high-level overview for decision-makers of the most current thinking on key Internet governance and digital policy issues.

They are sourced directly from over 300 sessions held during IGF 2024. Sessions' organisers were invited to self-identify key takeaways and call-to-action points at the end of their session as input for these messages. The Messages were also informed by reports from National and Regional IGF initiatives.

A set of draft messages, curated by the IGF Secretariat, was published on 19 December for community review. These final IGF 2024 Messages are part of the annual meeting's outcomes.

The Forum was held under the overarching theme of Building Our Multistakeholder Digital Future. Sessions were organised within four main themes:

- Harnessing innovation and balancing risks in the digital space.
- Enhancing the digital contribution to peace, development, and sustainability.
- Advancing human rights and inclusion in the digital age
- Improving digital governance for the Internet We Want

The messages in this document are structured accordingly.



Overarching Issues

The 19th IGF annual meeting was held at a pivotal moment, shortly after the UN Summit of the Future and the adoption of the Pact for the Future and Global Digital Compact in September 2024, and in the lead-up to the twenty-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20) by the United Nations General Assembly in 2025, which will also assess the IGF's mandate.

Numerous sessions across the IGF tracks and four main themes referenced these processes or centred their discussions on issues outlined in the related documents.

Riyadh IGF Messages and other IGF outcomes

The Riyadh IGF Messages capture views expressed by the multistakeholder community during the IGF meeting. The reports that sourced these messages are available at <https://intgovforum.org/en/igf-2024-reports>.

The [Riyadh IGF Messages](#) are complementary to outputs and observations compiled by other tracks, they are listed at <https://intgovforum.org/en/content/igf-2024-outputs>.

Harnessing innovation and balancing risks in the digital space

The theme

The Internet and digital technologies are an intrinsic part of every country's development, spurring innovation in many areas such as healthcare, distance learning, and socio-economic growth.

However, this centrality of the digital space also creates global vulnerabilities that call for collective action, as individual actions alone cannot effectively address them.

This theme aims to foster dialogue and knowledge exchange on success stories and best practices in reaping the benefits of digital innovation for all, as well as efforts of all stakeholders to tackle the risks arising from this rapid transformation.

IGF Riyadh messages

Governing artificial intelligence

- Progress has been made in global AI governance, but significant work remains to ensure the responsible, fair, safe, accountable, inclusive and sustainable development and use of AI for all, and build trust for its widespread adoption. AI and its applications must uphold human rights, democratic values and the rule of law, while being inclusive, transparent and explainable.
- There is a critical need for trusted, inclusive, and secure digital identity systems as foundational infrastructure for global digital transformation. Privacy

and security must be balanced to foster user trust while leveraging emerging technologies such as blockchain, biometrics, and AI to enhance identity verification.

- Governance of AI is not a “nice to have.” Minimizing the risks of AI is crucial, but it is equally important to focus on tools that balance AI innovation and regulation. Overregulation can hinder AI's potential to benefit humanity and the environment, yet, we should not compromise on ethical standards, tackling biases or ensuring privacy.
- Public participation at the national and local levels should be an integral part of AI governance, as replicating international approaches without adaptation is not a sustainable solution.
- A comprehensive approach to the entire AI lifecycle—from development and deployment to usage and impact—is essential for ensuring accountability for AI-related harms and promoting responsible AI development. This involves examining the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, including developers, operators, users, governments, and civil society.
- Multistakeholder collaboration on AI needs to keep pace and adapt to the evolving technology landscape and support responsible innovation and governance. Beyond discussing principles of AI regulation, the multistakeholder community must also tackle specific risks associated with AI.

- Generative AI systems are evolving rapidly, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between human-created and AI-generated content. Ensuring their accountability and transparency is urgent. Today, children already grow up in a world where AI-shaped information influences their worldview.
- AI systems are transboundary, not patchwork, and their governance should reflect this reality. Achieving this requires a collective and comprehensive effort to prevent regulatory fragmentation, break down silos, and build trust. Effective AI governance must also align with the specific roles of actors across the AI supply chain to ensure it is actionable.
- AI fairness should be a key component of curricula to equip future technologists with the skills needed to develop ethical AI systems.
- Connectivity has the power to transform lives and is essential for the adoption of emerging technologies. Achieving universal connectivity requires multistakeholder collaboration and investments in both infrastructure and skills. Governments and the private sector must work together to expand connectivity's reach.
- Local communities are best positioned to understand the context specific needs and challenges. By involving them in designing and implementing technology solutions, one ensures that solutions are appropriate, effective and tailored to local realities, languages, and needs. This effort should include marginalized groups to prevent exacerbating digital exclusion.
- Governments, private sector, the technical community and civil society must collaborate to provide affordable internet access, digital literacy programs, and encourage community-driven AI innovations. Governments need to prioritize funding and policies that enhance digital infrastructure and promote equitable access to AI tools for underserved populations.

Technology for inclusion and empowerment

- Technology has the potential to drive inclusion, empowerment, and sustainable development, but significant challenges remain in ensuring equal and inclusive access. Greater efforts are needed to develop and adopt open-source technologies to make technology more accessible and affordable, especially for low-income populations.

As the AI divide exacerbates the digital divide, promoting equitable access to AI tools for underserved communities is crucial.



Enhancing the digital contribution to peace, development, and sustainability

The theme

Some of the biggest challenges facing the world are the need of improving sustainability and working together for peace, and at the same time working for social and economic development in our countries and regions.

Harnessing the transformative potential of digital technologies and the Internet can be an important ally to achieve global progress that promotes peace, drives sustainable development and addresses pressing environmental challenges.

This theme will explore the multifaceted ways in which digitalisation can drive socioeconomic change and development for present and future generations.

IGF Riyadh messages

Towards greener and sustainable Internet practices

- Collaboration, focusing on clean energy and green technologies, promoting energy-efficiency, using eco-friendly hardware, and encouraging recycling, is essential for a sustainable Internet. Providers, governments, manufacturers, and consumers must work together to manage the Internet's growing environmental impact. Governments must set clear sustainability benchmarks and incentivise renewable energy, while the private sector should invest in scalable, energy-efficient innovations that minimize environmental impact. Access to green and affordable energy is a critical element of digital transformation.

- Eco-friendly technologies and efforts to combat climate change must align with fostering inclusive progress. Local insights, regional studies, and academic contributions are essential for developing tailored, data-driven solutions, particularly in underserved areas. To ensure equitable access to sustainability, green and clean technologies and energy-efficient innovations must be both affordable and accessible.
- The amount of e-waste produced globally is alarming and poses significant environmental and health hazards when not managed properly. Despite its continued growth, only a small portion is currently being recycled. Collaboration is key: Effective and sustainable e-waste management systems require strong partnerships among policymakers, industries, civil society organizations, and end-users, with shared knowledge and coordinated action at the forefront. Designers, developers, and companies must prioritize ease of repair, recyclability, and the integration of refurbished devices in product development.

Making use of new technologies for peace, development, and sustainability

- AI and AI-powered solutions have the potential to play a significant role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Leveraging AI tools will enhance efficiency, decision-making, and innovation across sectors including the public sector, media, and judiciary. To harness AI for good effectively, there is a need for capacity building. Inclusive adoption requires special attention to underserved regions and resource-



limited communities. While AI offers significant opportunities, it also presents challenges like bias, misuse, and AI-driven misinformation. Transparency, accessibility, and human oversight help mitigate risks and ensure that AI serves the public good.

- Innovation and control need to be balanced through transparent policies for the use of AI that address operational challenges, define acceptable practices, and ensure human oversight to build trust and accountability. The Integration of AI safety standards may face challenges due to the fragmentation of ecosystems, sector-specific complexities, cultural and regulatory diversities, yet clear and unified standards are essential to ensure AI safety and reliability.
- Artificial intelligence is transforming government operations and optimizing administrative services, improving accuracy, and enhancing accessibility. A balance between openness and security is crucial. Open-source models enable

collaborative innovation, while data sovereignty ensures privacy, compliance, and public trust. By prioritizing both accessibility and control, governments can responsibly adopt AI solutions that align with their unique societal goals. Businesses can help governance in public-private partnerships, investing in open-source tools, and offering expertise in AI deployment.

- Common barriers to e-government development in local government are low digital literacy, limited funding, and a lack of specialized human resources. To foster meaningful progress, local governments must be encouraged to iterate, pilot, and test creative solutions, an approach that demands agility, learning from outcomes, and embracing failure as part of the innovation process.

Protecting critical infrastructure and essential services

- International peace and security forums and institutions must prioritize open, secure access to telecommunications infrastructure and the protection of the public core. The UN Security Council should monitor telecommunications in the conflicts, while peace and justice institutions ensure accountability for disruptions affecting fundamental rights and security. Collaboration among all stakeholders is essential to safeguard critical telecommunications and internet infrastructure, even during crises. To advance the Global Digital Compact guidance discouraging internet shutdowns, multistakeholder working groups and enhanced IGF Best Practice Forums should define the community's roles in protecting the public core and ensuring access during conflicts and crises.
- The interconnected digital space offers immense opportunities for development but also brings heightened risks to critical infrastructure and essential services, necessitating harmonized global efforts and multistakeholder collaboration for effective risk mitigation. Shared definitions of critical infrastructure and essential services, along with enhanced international collaboration to establish a global baseline for their protection, are vital.
- Cybersecurity is a shared responsibility that requires stakeholder alignment, strengthened public-private partnerships and leveraging industry best practices for enhanced resilience and establishing baseline cybersecurity standards.
- Cybersecurity and national security are deeply interconnected, requiring governments and stakeholders each in their respective roles and responsibilities to collaborate on frameworks to address transnational cyber threats while ensuring transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. Promoting cyber literacy and skill development through widespread educational initiatives is vital to empowering communities, fostering resilience, and enhancing national security. Additionally, cyber policies shall seek to prioritize decentralized infrastructure, open-source innovation, and hardware security-by-design to reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen overall cyber resilience.
- The key to cyberspace resilience lies in balancing innovation, ethics, and regulation. Emerging technologies like AI and blockchain offer immense opportunities for enhancing cyber resilience. Policymakers need to ensure ethical governance as well as foster innovation. Legal and ethical standards must be equipped to address the



challenges of emerging technologies, ensuring frameworks and legislation that uphold human rights.

- Cyber peace cannot be achieved in isolation; it is vital for governments, the private sector, civil society, and international bodies each in their respective roles and responsibilities to work together to share knowledge and build capacity to combat state-sponsored attacks, cyber warfare, and emerging cybercrime.
- Consistency creates impact in cyber capacity-building initiatives. Efforts must be contextual, rooted in local needs, and shared globally to ensure relevance and scalability. Localization plays a pivotal role in enhancing accessibility and driving broader adoption. Building trust requires a committed approach that includes sharing knowledge, actively listening, implementing solutions, and being open to change.
- Cyber capacity building should leverage existing mechanisms such as the IGF, established processes, and proven practices. Participatory multi-stakeholder engagement is recommended to be designed intentionally to optimize mapping, coordination, collaboration, and communication, even in low-resource environments. Education must focus on making cyber security accessible and demystifying its complexities, fostering resilience in future generations. Cyber security capacity-building should be approached as a culture and practice, prioritizing localization, contextual relevance, and adequate resourcing to ensure accessibility and long-term sustainability.
- Comprehensive capacity building should allow law enforcement and security agencies to use AI and new technologies to detect crimes and terrorist activities, as well as use them for counter-terrorism purposes. Parliamentarians have the important role of ensuring compliance with human rights standards. Additionally, literacy programs on AI and new technologies must empower both younger and older generations to navigate digital cyberspace, critically analyze information, and counter extremist propaganda.



Advancing human rights and inclusion in the digital age

The theme

The digital environment is an increasingly important facet of daily life all around the world. Therefore, discussions about how to empower all people and drive genuine inclusion of all communities in shaping its development is vital.

This includes efforts to connect and empower all populations, in particular marginalised communities and vulnerable groups to reap the benefits that the Internet has to offer and ensure that the same rights they enjoy offline also apply online.

This theme will delve into the innovative solutions, frameworks and initiatives that foster universal meaningful connectivity and ensure the protection of human rights in the digital realm.

IGF Riyadh messages

Meaningful Connectivity and Digital Inclusion

- Multistakeholder collaboration is key in tackling the pressing challenges of the digital age, such as the digital divide, cybersecurity, AI ethics, and privacy. Addressing these issues requires resilient and inclusive digital infrastructure, equitable access to technology, and governance frameworks that uphold human rights, transparency, and accountability. Initiatives like the Global Digital Compact and the WSIS+20 review present significant opportunities to advance these collective goals,
- emphasizing a shared commitment to ensuring that technology serves humanity and empowers everyone.
- Governments, tech companies, civil society, parents, and educators share a collective responsibility to safeguard children's rights in the digital world. While technology holds transformative potential to empower children, proactive measures are essential to protect them from risks such as cyberbullying, misinformation, and exploitation.
- Meaningful and universal connectivity is essential for advancing human rights and digital inclusion, allowing full participation in the digital economy, while also enabling other socio-economic rights. It can only be achieved with affordable access to services and devices, obtainable digital literacy and skills, and equal occupancy of the online space by both men and women, boys and girls, young and old, urban and rural, local and global communities.
- Long-term initiatives such as national broadband plans and digital gender inclusion strategies are needed to achieve systemic change. Significant investments, particularly through Universal Service Funds (USF), drive digital inclusion. A close collaboration between governments, private sector, and CSOs ensures transparency, effectiveness, and accountability in USF implementations. Governments should ensure regular proactive disclosures of USF project expenditures and evaluations for public monitoring.

- Smaller, targeted and localized interventions on meaningful connectivity can yield immediate benefits and build momentum for larger changes. Policymakers should engage with local communities to understand their unique needs and tailor access strategies accordingly.

The multistakeholder community should set measurable targets to close the digital divide with those that are marginalized (e.g., women and girls, persons with disabilities, rural and indigenous communities, displaced groups etc). A “whole of a society” approach is fundamental.



Case Studies and Frameworks

- Meaningful access is rapidly expanding across all regions. The Global Digital Compact recognises that providing content in local languages and offering services that really improve citizens' quality of life is a successful approach to promote access.
- Sharing examples, for example at the IGF, of digital inclusion initiatives and frameworks aimed at ensuring that no one is left behind can spark stakeholder engagement and cross-border collaboration. The good practices and cases presented and collected amongst others via the PNMA Repository must be proactively promoted throughout different regions and institutions, in order to amplify their impact across places and communities.

Human Rights Online

- The legal system must take care of the needs of all individuals, including marginalized groups and persons with disabilities. Legal frameworks should be creative and adaptable to ensure participation and protection for everyone in the digital age. Judges play a decisive role in shaping and interpreting digital rights, such as privacy, freedom of expression, and access to information. Equipping judges with the right tools and knowledge is essential to ensure justice keeps pace with technological advancements. Hence, initiatives that encourage cross-country collaboration among legal professionals should be implemented. The judicial officer should participate in the multistakeholder process.



- The enforcement of digital rights across borders requires harmonized legal frameworks and principles. Clear standards for handling digital evidence and cooperation mechanisms are needed to address issues like cross-border data flows and cybercrimes. Likewise, embracing AI in the judicial system requires proper training of court members and legal professionals to understand the tools, potential, and limitations. A significant reduction of algorithmic bias is achievable through training with robust, diverse, and jurisdiction-specific data and doctrinal materials. As a consequence, the conception of regulatory frameworks to ensure AI systems in the judiciary can be transparent, secure, and aligned with jurisdiction-specific legal and ethical standards.
- Moreover, dialogues with governments and regulatory bodies should be encouraged, to ensure they prioritize digital rights and understand the implications of evolving technologies. Additionally, collaboration between legal experts, civil society, technologists, academia, and policymakers can create well-rounded and effective digital rights strategies. It is recommended to establish a dedicated IGF judiciary track for ongoing discussions and solutions.
- Stakeholders should document the benefits of rights-respecting laws and the harms of authoritarian ones, and encourage governments to adopt approaches which ensure that cybercrime laws or content restrictions are grounded in transparency, proportionality, and protection of human rights.
- Technical standards are critical tools for embedding human rights principles into emerging technologies, ensuring interoperability, security, and inclusivity. Involving human rights experts in standardization processes and translating human rights principles into practical, technical guidelines can empower technical communities to implement rights-based standards and so bridge the gap between technical innovation and human rights safeguards.

Digital Infrastructure and e-government

- Trustworthiness and security are the key precursors to a functioning e-government architecture. Before attempting to implement e-government initiatives from a technical standpoint, legislators and decision makers need to map the needs of their communities and be on the ground to uncover nuances and current access limitations of their citizens.
- To address the needs of historically marginalized groups, including those with disabilities, e-government services should be proactive and provide an interface that seeks to accommodate those of all abilities. In designing e-government systems, one must ensure that channels for accountability and feedback are built-in by design, enabling citizens to be active stakeholders and keep agency on how their data is being used. The implementation of a standard digital identity for every resident should be prioritized as the foundation for e-government.

- The cost of Internet access remains one of the main barriers to inclusion of the unconnected. The affordability of devices and services is a key challenge to tackle. Persistent gender digital divides and gaps in gender data remain major obstacles. Without deliberate action, the transition to data-driven economies risks reinforcing, rather than addressing, gender inequalities.
- Developing reliable measurement tools to evaluate access and digital inclusion policies is essential. These tools will help determine the effectiveness of existing solutions and identify areas where challenges persist.



Improving digital governance for the Internet We Want

The theme

The very nature of the global Internet requires effective models of multistakeholder governance to be at its core, garnering continued efforts by all stakeholders to address digital issues and the promotion of greater cooperation.

This theme is about identifying ways to strengthen and support the open, transparent, inclusive and bottom-up governance process related to the use and evolution of the Internet, working towards the vision of achieving the Internet We Want.



IGF Riyadh messages

Global Digital Governance and Coordination

- The Global Digital Compact (GDC) must transition from a vision document to an actionable framework, strengthening and aligning with existing structures like the WSIS process, the IGF and, the STI Forum. Enhanced coordination among these platforms is essential to avoid fragmentation, foster synergies, and ensure cohesive, inclusive policy making.
- The IGF remains a pivotal agenda-setting platform, where critical issues like AI, cybersecurity, and digital inclusion are addressed, often before they gain traction in intergovernmental processes. Its agenda-setting power must deliver actionable outcomes to close gaps in connectivity, skills, and infrastructure, especially in developing countries and promote human-centric, rights-based digital governance.
- The WSIS+20 review presents an opportunity for the IGF to align with global priorities such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Strengthened engagement with national governments and policymakers will foster governance models that link global objectives to regional and national realities and shape a digital future that is equitable, resilient, and secure for everyone.
- Academic researchers contribute significantly to refining multistakeholder approaches. By advancing governance models through IGF discussions, they help ensure adaptability to diverse policy contexts and support the evolving digital landscape.

Inclusivity and Bridging Digital Divides

- Bridging the global digital divide requires urgent action to address gaps in connectivity, skills, and infrastructure, particularly in developing countries. Meaningful Internet access must prioritize underserved and marginalized communities with investments in capacity-building and empowerment to support digital literacy and economic inclusion.
- Addressing the gender digital divide is critical to equitable participation in the digital economy. Efforts to tackle emerging divides such as the AI skills divide and compute capacity divide, must involve global collaboration to ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities.
- Recognizing youth as stakeholders in

digital governance frameworks ensures that policies reflect diverse perspectives and the needs of future generations. Lessons from the GDC consultation process underline the importance of improving inclusivity in such initiatives. Ensuring balanced participation from diverse regions and stakeholder groups will make these processes more democratic and representative.

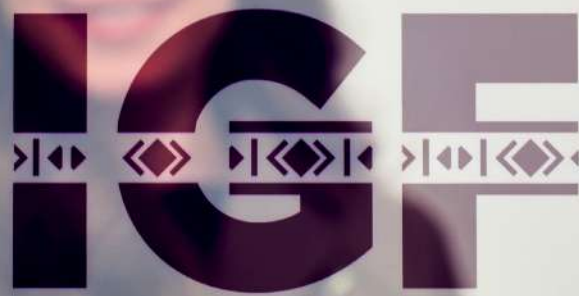
Cybersecurity and Resilience

- Transnational critical infrastructure (CI) faces growing cyber threats, including malicious ICT activities targeting essential systems like subsea cables and cloud infrastructure. Protecting CI requires stronger CERT-to-CERT cooperation, effective communication during ICT crises, and inclusive multi-stakeholder engagement.



- Governance frameworks need to balance innovation with human rights, embedding ethical and transparent guidelines into adaptable policies to support sustainable development without deepening inequalities. Using cybersecurity regulations for protectionism hinders global development and cooperation.
 - Oversight and accountability mechanisms are critical for clarifying responsibilities in the development and deployment of digital technologies. These frameworks will ensure the Internet remains a platform for empowerment and equitable development.
- Collaboration and Ethical Data Governance**
- Cross-sector collaboration is key to address online harms. Regulators, industry, and technical communities must develop harmonized regulations informed by technical expertise. Enhanced data-sharing and capacity building initiatives are necessary to empower stakeholders, strengthen global responses, and increase transparency across the Internet ecosystem.
 - Interoperable frameworks that balance national interests with the benefits of cross-border data flows are crucial for effective data governance. Multistakeholder approaches, promoted by the IGF can restore trust, reduce silos, and enhance policy interoperability to drive inclusive growth.
 - Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) within the IGF contribute to inclusive and accountable digital development through thematic expertise and collaboration, they address challenges like digital divides, promote accessibility for persons with disabilities, foster ethical AI governance and promote sustainable data practices.





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