IGF 2020

MAG WG – IGF STRENGTHENING AND STRATEGY

The first meeting of the IGF Strengthening and Strategy Working Group was held on June 4th 2020.

The meeting summary below is organized according to the agreed agenda (Annex I).

1. **Introductions**
   List of participants can be found in Annex II, and participants agreed to the meeting being recorded.

2. **Charter/purpose/objectives**

   The main objectives of the working group were discussed by participants. It was observed that some of the issues covered by the IGF Strengthen and Strategy working group were already discussed by other MAG working groups in previous years (e.g. IGF Improvements and Multiyear Strategy working groups) but as the MAG has a rotating structure it was difficult to reach concrete results. Most of participants agree that the current context presents a challenge and opportunity to link the discussion of the working group to the digital cooperation architecture discussion (HLPDC). There were several comments on the rationale and objectives of the working group and a request to modify the charter, using a more analytical and functional approach and to include the gaps identified by the HLPDC and the CSTD report on IGF improvements. These gaps are listed in annex III.

   Participants noted the ongoing trend for Internet governance topics to be dealt with in unconnected silos, citing the example of cybersecurity and the Open Ended Working Group. Several participants agreed that the IGF should be **the** place where different communities come together to achieve a higher level of communication so that there is more coordination or cooperation among them. The IGF should play a clearing house role and this should be defined so that the meaning of the concept is clear. It was observed that not only people dealing with security are working in silos, but also those dealing with trade and other IG issues.
   There was general agreement that even if IGF is not a decision-making body, it could be a place for debate where people and institutions from different silos come together and exchange views. In particular the IGF should bring together people and institutions from different fora as this would expand the visibility and diversity of voices involved in IG issues .
   It was agreed we need practical steps and practical changes the MAG, the Secretariat and the MAG chair can implement to strengthen the IGF.

Possible activity areas:
   1) IGF program focus
   2) Producing and communicating outputs and outcomes
   3) Financial security and sustainability
   4) Inclusion and participation

5) Communication and identity
6) Website

Somebody suggested a discussion on how to position the IGF strategically in the emerging frameworks for digital cooperation, underlining the need for a coordinated vision and to find a new mechanism for the relations between the MAG and the UNSG.

It was agreed that there is no need (or possibility, at this point) to revise the Tunis Agenda, as the current IGF mandate already provides the necessary flexibility for responding to the increasing complexity of the IG ecosystem. A broad interpretation of para.72 allows for an enhanced IGF.

3. Current context: digital cooperation architecture
It was pointed out that the roadmap to be be released by the Secretary General next week (week of 8 June) will include good ideas for strengthening the IGF. This working group can play an important role in linking suggestions and ideas that will come from the Secretary General with what the IGF community has discussed for many years. The importance of preparing for WSIS +20 was mentioned in the light of how difficult it was to secure renewal of the IGF mandate during WSIS +10 in 2015. Therefore it is important to demonstrate that the IGF has taken criticism on board and that changes were made.

4. Activities
Anriette shared the initiative to commission a paper that would analyze trends in participation in the IGF since its inception as a contribution to IGF strengthening, current debates on digital cooperation, and the IGF being midway through its 10-year renewal. The importance of improving the IGF website in order to strengthen the IGF was emphasized. The website could become much more than a website, and grow into a more effective platform for collaboration.

5. Priorities and next steps

1) Revise the charter to keep it simple and based on the existing IGF mandate, but without being constrained by the past. Agreement on the charter to be reached by email.

2) Participants to comment on the Google doc and to propose implementable activities.

3) Next call to take place shortly after the June IGF MAG meeting and OC.

Annex 1: Agenda

- Introductions
- Charter/purpose/objectives
- Current context: digital cooperation architecture
- Activities
- Priorities and next steps
- AoB

Annex II: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1) Anriette Esterhuysen (MAG chair, WG co-chair)
2) Concettina Cassa (Mag Member, WG co-chair)
3) Chengetai Masango (IGF Secretariat)
4) Susan Chalmers (NTIA, MAG Member)
5) Ben Wallis (Microsoft, MAG Member)
6) Fiona Alexander (US Government)
7) Paul Blaker (UK Government)
8) Jorge Cancio (Swiss Government)
9) Wolfgang Kleinwächter
10)   Giacomo Mazzone (in a personal capacity)
11)   Jody Pandey (Georgia Institute Electronic, India)
12)   Matthew Shears (ICANN Board, in a personal capacity)
13)   Wai Min Kwok (UNDESA)

Annex III

GAPS identified by HLPDC report

Gap 1
Digital technology and digital cooperation issues remain relatively low on many national, regional and global political agendas. Only recently have forums such as the G20 started regularly to address the digital economy.195 In 2018, the UN Secretary- General for the first time delivered an opening statement in person at the IGF in Paris

Gap 2
Digital cooperation arrangements such as technical bodies and standard-setting organisations are often not inclusive enough of small and developing countries, indigenous communities, women, young and elderly people and those with disabilities. Even if they are invited to the table, such groups may lack the capacity to participate effectively and meaningfully.

Gap 3
There is considerable overlap among the large number of mechanisms covering digital policy issues. As a result, the digital cooperation architecture has become highly complex but not necessarily effective. There is no simple entry point. This makes it especially hard for small enterprises, marginalised groups, developing countries and other stakeholders with limited budgets and expertise to make their voices hear

Gap 4
Digital technologies increasingly cut across areas in which policies are shaped by separate institutions. For example, one body may look at data issues from the perspective of standardisation, while another considers trade, and still another regulates to protect human rights.199 Many international organisations are trying to adjust their traditional policy work to reflect the realities of the digital transformation, but do not yet have enough expertise and experience to have well-defined roles in addressing new digital issues. At a minimum there needs to be better communication across different bodies to shape awareness. Ideally, effective cooperation should create synergie

Gap 5
There is a lack of reliable data, metrics and evidence on which to base practical policy interventions. For example, the annual cost of cybercrime to the global economy is variously estimated at anything from $600 billion200 to $6 trillion.201 Estimates of the value of the AI market in 2025 range from$60 billion202 to $17 trillion.203 The problem is most acute in developing countries, where resources to collect evidence are scarce and data collection is generally uneven. Establishing a knowledge repository on digital policy, with definitions of terms and concepts, would also increase clarity in policy discussions and support consistency of measurement of digital inclusion, as we have noted in our Recommendation 1D.

Gap 6
Lack of trust among governments, civil society and the private sector – and sometimes a lack of humility and understanding of different perspectives – can make it more difficult to establish the collaborative multi-stakeholder approach needed to develop effective cooperation mechanisms.