IGF 2017 Open Forum Report

Session Title
Memory and Documentation in Internet Governance: The Challenge of Building Collections

Date
Thursday, December 21

Time
10:10 - 11:10

Session Organizer
Brazilian Internet Steering Committee – CGI.br

Moderator
Hartmut Glaser (CGI.br)

Rapporteur/Notetakers
Diego R. Canabarro (CGI.br advisory team)
Vinicius W. O. Santos (CGI.br advisory team)

List of Speakers and their institutional affiliations

Jean Carlos F. dos Santos (CGI.br advisory team)
Ron da Silva (ICANN Board Member)
Susan Chalmers (NTIA)

Key Issues raised (1 sentence per issue)
- The importance of memory and archiving to Internet Governance
- The challenges involved in documenting Internet Governance practices and processes due to their volume and complexity
- The technological and implementation/operational challenges for documenting Internet Governance practices and processes
- The difficulties inherent to having a "lingua franca" that integrate and ensures interoperability among different projects and initiatives
- The complexity of having controlled vocabularies and common taxonomies universally applicable
- The urgent need of multi-stakeholder cooperation in the field under discussion

If there were presentations during the session, please provide a 1-paragraph summary for each Presentation

Hartmut Glaser initiated the session presenting himself and all the speakers. He described a little bit about CGI.br, its mission and initiatives and underscored the importance of the Open Forum and the main goals involved in its proposal.

Susan Chalmers presented the Friends of IGF (FoIGF) initiative, focused on making content from the Internet Governance Forum meetings more accessible. She also described the platform stewardship transition process, when the project was put under the auspices of CGI.br. The FoIGF platform seeks to keep alive the IGF memory, organizing and archiving all the materials that resulted from all the IGF events, among videos, transcripts, reports, summaries etc. The beta version of the FoIGF portal is being developed with the support of NIC.br/CGI.br staff. There is also a dialogue between the project and National and Regional IGF initiatives so that they can have their own individually managed space on the platform which intends to serve as a place for keeping the memory of all IGF tracks.

Ron da Silva presented the tools and processes involved in the ICANN documentation, memory and access to information framework. Ron went through all the complexity involved within documenting ICANN activities, as it comprises a whole bunch of different constituencies, advisory committees, supporting organizations, working groups etc., that produce a very large number of documents, from policy briefings and meeting transcripts to complete track reports, audios, videos and decision making resolutions. Ron explained the importance of a well organized technological environment to put all these together, as well as discussed the issues involved with classification and categorization.

Jean Santos started his speech explaining some objectives envisioned when proposing the Open Forum, as well some expectations following the dialogues initiated by the proposed session. He described some of the documentation activities which run under CGI.br advisory team, and presented one specific project – very recent –, which involves building and developing an Internet Governance Collection, with different titles and materials specific to and/or supporting subjects related to the Internet Governance field. Jean explained why and how the project was conceived and described its development from multiple angles. He listed a set of challenges involved with CGI.br's initiative and detailed some of those challenges, such as implementation technologies, the development of categories and vocabularies used, as well as the need for further cooperation (local and global).

Please describe the Discussions that took place during the workshop session / Key takeaways, suggestions and next steps: (3 paragraphs)

The Open Forum was a quick and simple format session, with only three brief projects/initiatives presentations and a debate with the audience. Each presentation focused on a specific project/initiative, but there were a set of challenges which were commonly shared by them. The main issues discussed during the session referred to the development of a common language and the choice of technology among a myriad of possibilities. All the presentations touched

at those two topics in some sense, showing the difficulties involved with choosing, planning and implementing tools, as well as the complexity inherent to language practices as categorization and vocabularies emerge as crucial activities to put on this sort of project.

During the debate, the audience and the speakers delved into aspects related to database interoperability and cooperation. The participants showed a lot of interest in how to put initiatives to work together, how cooperation could be established, how to enact a useful dialogue between different databases. Also, there were other topics pointed out as important, such as indexing and retrieval of information, as well as intelligibility in information organization. Another important topic raised referred to how some choices are made when planning and organizing these type of database. Questions such as "what is a document?" guided the debate about how to determine what is suitable or not to be archived, ranging from simple texts to artistic and symbolic pieces.

There were two other participants that mentioned specific projects, one recalling the Regional Internet Registries' databases and other talking about libraries and documentation initiatives in the Pacific region. Both of them approached a specific topic: the loss of data over time. Those participants described how their databases work and how they lost a bunch of data over the time.

The participant from the Pacific region described that in order to as online repositories coexist with offline repositories a process that involved the creation of a library with offline and online layers. According to her, despite of having a process for documenting things online, the persistence of offline modalities creates disincentives for people to duplicate processes. In order to tackle that issue, she mentioned a project that involves the creation of a library with offline and online layers. Cooperation to solve those and other problems was at last a keyword raised by participants of the session.

GENDER REPORTING

Estimate the overall number of the participants present at the session
Around 30 participants

Estimate the overall number of women present at the session
Around 12

To what extent did the session discuss gender equality and/or women's empowerment?
Not discussed.

If the session addressed issues related to gender equality and/or women's empowerment, please provide a brief summary of the discussion
Not applicable.