

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

IGF strategy and strengthening in 2020: A series of online discussions convened by the IGF MAG chair

To be convened during September and October 2020

v 2 – 20 August 2020

Background

The IGF's mandate was renewed for a further 10 years by the UN General Assembly in December 2015. The current year, 2020, marks the midway point of this extended mandate. In addition, the recently released UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and its support for a strengthened and expanded IGF (the IGF plus model) presents the opportunity and challenge for deeper engagement on the IGF's achievements and challenges.

To provide an opportunity for reflection on the IGF's achievement of its mandate and to contribute to the debate and discussion on the architecture for digital cooperation the IGF MAG chair, in collaboration with the IGF MAG Working Group on IGF Strategy and Strengthening, is convening a series of online discussions during September and October.

These discussions will open to all and take place weekly starting in the second week of September up to the last week of October. Each discussion will take place via Zoom for a period of 1.5 to 2 hours. The discussions will be moderated by MAG chair and co-chair of the IGF MAG WG in IGF strategy and strengthening, Concettina Casa.

Provisional topics

Below is a list of possible topics.

1. The evolution of the IGF in the context of a new architecture for digital cooperation

1.1 Perspectives on IGF outcomes and outputs: Representation, legitimacy and follow-up in multistakeholder policy processes

Content: This session will consider how the IGF can evolve towards more focused policy discussions which lead to outcomes that can be then be considered by decision-making bodies.

It will also consider the challenge of how to frame the IGF outputs when not all stakeholders or views are represented in the sessions that produce them. Equally, BPFs and DCs can only be said to represent the views of those who participate (and generally have specific interests for doing so). That's not to say that any policy recommendations that come out of such sessions or processes are invalid. But it can be used to question their value and legitimacy. This session will discuss the challenges the IGF faces in producing multiple outcomes and policy suggestions, from multiple sources, without any single way of having a community-wide endorsement of the outputs.

Discussion leads: Members of the IGF Secretariat and IGF MAG WG-strategy and relevant UN personnel

Co-convenors: MAG chair and IGF MAG-WG strategy and Under Sec Gen. HHochschild's office (tbc)

1.2 IGF-plus and the proposed new Multistakeholder High Level Body (MHLB)

Content can be framed by the "options paper" developed by the co-champions of recommendation 5 A/B of the UNSG's HLPDC report and the documents on the MHLB produced by the WG-strategy.

Discussion leads: Authors of the "options paper" and members of the WG-strategy

Co-convenors: MAG chair and IGF MAG-WG strategy

1.3 Defining Internet Governance in the context of evolving digital cooperation

Fifteen years ago it was easier to define what public policy issues are related to the Internet. Nowadays, this has become more complex and sometimes one can question why an issue should be discussed at an Internet governance forum in the first place. Issues that touch on the Internet are also discussed by other forums, often without Internet specialists present. How should the IGF deal with this? By defining its topics more narrowly, or by embracing a flexible and multidisciplinary definition of Internet governance? Typical examples: Ethical questions related to AI and automated decision making transcend the Internet-specific policy and governance. How does the IGF address these issues?

Discussion leads: tbc

Co-convenors: MAG chair and BPF Data and New Technologies and CSTD (tbc)

2. The IGF and its mandate in 2020: challenges and achievements midway through the renewed mandate

2.1 Participation and inclusion from 2006 to 2019: achievements and challenges and possible next steps

Content based on first draft of research paper being produced by Research ICT Africa on IGF participation data since 2006. What has been achieved with regard to the Tunis Agenda mandate, and where are the gaps? How can the IGF approach participation and inclusion going forward to address these gaps? This discussion will look at participation and inclusion from two angles: the people and institutions that shape, contribute to and attend the IGF, as well as the content of IGF themes and tracks. What is the relevance IGF content? How is it decided and has it helped to make the IGF more focused and raise its profile. Has there been an evolution in themes, do these themes (sufficiently) help to link the IGF with other forums and to achieve its goal of being inclusive, particularly of actors from developing countries.

Discussion lead: Anri van der Spuy, Research ICT Africa (tbc)

Co-convenors: MAG chair and Research ICT Africa [optional: ISOC and the IGF Secretariat]

2.2 IGF intersessional work now and in the future: Best Practice Forums and Dynamic Coalitions

Content: BPF of BPFs paper as well as reflections on DCs and how the existing intersessional modalities related to modalities proposed in the IGF-plus model. The discussion will focus on the achievements of BPFs and DCs, and then consider how these modalities can be developed and optimised in the context of an evolving IGF model. Discussion will include reflection on how these

intersessional modalities can collaborate with one another and with NRIs building on the [Secretariat proposals](#) for collaborative mechanisms between BPFs and NRIs developed in 2020.

Discussion leads: BPF of BPF team; IGF Secretariat; DC coordinators (tbc)

Co-convenors: MAG Chair, IGF MAG members and the IGF Secretariat

2.3 National and regional and youth IGF initiatives: challenges, achievements and possible next steps

Content: NRIs can be described as the most significant evolution of the IGF model since the first annual forum held in Athens in 2006. What are the next steps for NRIs? Have they reached the limit of their potential, or can they play a greater and more consistent role in the IGF ecosystem? What opportunities and challenges do an IGF plus model hold for NRIs? Discussion will include reflection on how these intersessional modalities can collaborate with one another and with NRIs building on the [Secretariat proposals](#) for collaborative mechanisms between BPFs and NRIs developed in 2020.

Discussion leads: Anja Gengo, IGF Secretariat and convenors of national and regional and youth IGFs, such as, for example (final list tbc):

Caribbean IGF: Nigel Cassimire

African IGF: Makane Faye

Kenya IGF: Barrack Otieno

West African IGF: Mary Uduma

APrIGF: Jennifer Chung

LACIGF: tbc

EuroSIG: Sandra Hoferichter

IGF-USA: Marilyn Cade

Portugal IGF: Anna Neves or UK-IGF: Nick Wenban-Smith

Youth IGF: tbc

Dutch IGF: tbc

Co-convenors: MAG chair, IGF Secretariat and IGF WG-strategy

2.4 The IGF and linguistic diversity: challenges and achievements and possible next steps

Content: An overview of efforts the IGF is currently making to respond to the goal to be inclusive and affirm linguistic diversity. However, simply providing translation into UN languages of some documents and interpretation at certain sessions, is not only not enough, it could also consolidate the marginalisation of other languages and the people that speak them. Should the IGF make greater use of machine translation? Are there other emerging technologies the IGF should consider using to achieve more inclusion and linguistic diversity.

Discussion leads: tbc - members of the WG-strategy; UNESCO; ICANN

Co-convenors: MAG chair and IGF WG-strategy and IGF secretariat tbc

2.5 IGF as a platform for capacity building

Content: In 2019 the IGF Secretariat commissioned the development of a framework for IGF-based capacity building. A research study gather input from members of the IGF community and resulted in a draft framework. The purpose of this discussion will be to present this framework for open and interactive discussion among IGF stakeholders, in particular those concerned with capacity development.

Discussion leads: IGF Secretariat/UNDESA; others tbc

Co-convenors: MAG chair and DC on Schools of Internet Governance and IGF Secretariat

3. Multistakeholder global internet governance and regulation in the context of digital cooperation (provisional title)

Content: More effective "digital cooperation" as outlined in the UN SG's Roadmap requires, among other concerns, creative approaches to multistakeholder policy-making, and to cross-national and global governance and regulation. One such approach is the Internet Society's "internet way of networking".

Discussion leads: tbc

Co-convenors: MAG Chair and the Internet Society (tbc)