Workshop Proposal for IGF 2024

Session Title: Communities of the Practice - NOGs Driving the local Internet (working draft)

(Relevant IGF theme: Relevant theme: Advancing human rights and inclusion in the digital age)

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Session Description

Network Operator Groups (NOGs) play a crucial role in driving local Internet development and fostering connectivity within communities worldwide. Often supported by the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) in their regions, NOGs serve as essential platforms for innovation, collaboration and knowledge exchange. In APNIC region alone, there are currently 25 active NOGs, with recent addition of Afghanistan NOG (APNIC), while the RIPE NCC region has 36 NOGs, AFRINIC region 12 NOGs, LACNIC region 5 NOGs and ARIN region 6 NOGs (RIPE Labs). Beyond facilitating technical discussions, NOGs play an essential role in sustaining infrastructure and driving collaboration across diverse Internet communities.

Bringing together NOG leaders from across the world, this diverse session will discuss the role of NOGs and challenges, and opportunities. Exploring how NOGs are evolving into the change agents, the session will exchange practices, highlight collaborative avenues, and learn from diverse NOGs. In addition, the session will showcase successful NOGs to inspire technical communities to leverage their collective expertise for digital transformation across the developing economies. The session is expected to highlight the following discussions and insights:

- Explore how NOGs foster community engagement and address local challenges.
- Highlight NOG events as platforms for knowledge exchange and propose improvements.
- Recognize the need for innovative engagement strategies for participants.
- Explore variations in NOG size, structure, and operational dynamics and propose recommendations.
- Identify barriers to attendance and propose strategies for improvement.

The target audience of the session includes NOG leaders, network operators, technical experts, policy makers, industry players, and researchers and academics. The session will create a cross regional ongoing dialogue among the NOG leadership where stakeholders are expected to support and enrich the NOG ecosystem. This through active participation, contribution, and community engagement to empower NOGs to realize their full potential as catalysts for change in the digital landscape.

Policy Questions:

- How can NOGs contribute to enhancing Internet network development and infrastructure sustainability?
- How can NOGs foster greater collaboration and knowledge exchange within the technical community?
- How can NOGs contribute to bridging the digital divide and promoting digital inclusion?

Session Format

The session will feature a mix of presentations, panel discussions, and interactive workshops. The NOG representatives participating will share their success stories and best practices, engage in discussions on key policy questions, and participate in possible practical activities aimed at fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among participants.
Guests and Speakers

- Omar Ansari, Digital Leap South Asia Project Lead, APNIC Foundation
- René Fichtmüller (Germany), Chairman, Global NOG Alliance. Bio.
- Ariel Weher (Argentina), President Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) NOG. Bio.
- Rupesh Shrestha (Nepal), Chair of the Committee, South Asia NOG. Bio.

Expected Outcomes

- Increased understanding of the pivotal role NOGs play in fostering community engagement and addressing local Internet development challenges.
- Recognition of NOG events as crucial platforms for knowledge exchange, with proposed strategies for enhancing their effectiveness.
- Identification of innovative engagement strategies to enhance participation and collaboration within NOG communities.
- Insights into the diverse landscape of NOGs, including variations in size, structure, and operational dynamics, with proposed recommendations for improvement.
- Proposal of strategies to overcome barriers to attendance, thereby promoting inclusivity and broadening participation within NOG events.