

**Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II:  
Call for Public Input  
11 July 2016**

**Introduction**

In 2015, over 70 [submissions](#), including 22 from national and regional IGF initiatives (NRIs), contributed to the development of a set of [Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion](#) that were presented at IGF 2015 in João Pessoa, Brazil, in November 2015.

The first phase of the IGF intersessional project *Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion* (2015) focused on developing a set of policy options aiming at the creation of enabling environments, including deploying infrastructure, increasing usability, enabling users and ensuring affordability.

In April 2016, the MAG decided to explore further developing the IGF “*Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion*”.

**Phase II (2016): Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion**

The UN Agenda for Sustainable Development identifies information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the Internet as horizontal enablers for development. Paragraph 9-c. sets an important goal for the international community, namely to:

*“Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020”*

Given ICTs and the Internet are so important to development, it is critical that policy options and strategies be tailored to local needs and specificities. In 2016, it is proposed to further develop the 2015 *Policy Options* by emphasizing local and regional specificities and by demonstrating how *Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion* contributes to reaching the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Learn more about this initiative**

Read the full outline framework document, including a more detailed description, explanation of modalities, and timeline, [here](#).

**Guidelines for background contributions**

All stakeholders are invited to submit contributions on the theme “*Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion*”. Contributions from NRIs, best practice forums (BPFs), dynamic coalitions (DCs), and IGF workshops are particularly welcome.

**What format should my feedback be in?**

Contributions are preferred in Microsoft Word, but should as far as possible be supported by links to studies, reports, references, statistics, etc. and are expected to be of reasonable length in order to maximize readability. Additional templates may be developed to aid contributions if this is deemed helpful.

## What will happen to my contribution?

All contributions will be published on the IGF's website and will be analysed and incorporated into the outcome document for *Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion*, as far as is deemed possible and relevant by the editorial group of volunteers. All contributors' details will be credited in the outcome document, and contributions may be published on the IGF's website.

## What is the deadline for contributions?

While we would appreciate input by 31 July 2016, we will continue to receive contributions on a rolling basis until 31 August for the first draft.

To facilitate the participation of national and regional IGF initiatives (NRIs) that might only host their respective events later this year, no deadline has been prescribed for NRIs.

## Who do I send my feedback to?

Email contributions should be sent to Anri van der Spuy ([avanderspuy@unog.ch](mailto:avanderspuy@unog.ch)) and Brian Gutterman ([gutterman@un.org](mailto:gutterman@un.org)).

## What if I have more questions?

For further queries, or for more information, please contact Constance Bommelaer ([bommelaer@isoc.org](mailto:bommelaer@isoc.org)), the coordinator of this initiative.

## Proposed questions to guide your response:

While inputs of any format will be considered for incorporation, a suggested format could include bullet points addressing some or all of the following questions:

1. How would you define, or how do you understand, the theme "*Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion*"?
2. The first phase of *Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion (2015)* identified a set of policy options aimed at the creation of enabling environments, including deploying infrastructure, increasing usability, enabling users, and ensuring affordability. What are the factors to consider when adopting these policy options at local levels (e.g. the state of a country's market development, the available infrastructure, level of capacity-building, etc.)?
3. Are you aware of any specificities around connectivity at a local or regional level? (In other words, do you know of factors that impact connectivity in, for instance, rural areas but less so at an urban level? Or factors that affect connectivity at regional or larger scale, but not as noticeably at local or smaller scale?)
4. Data shows that the growth of Internet adoption is slowing down in some areas, especially as broadband services extend to more remote, less densely populated areas (facing challenges beyond affordability and availability).<sup>1</sup> What are some of the barriers or limitations preventing people who *do* have Internet access from being enabled or empowered through such connectivity?
5. What does *meaningful access* mean?
6. How can connectivity contribute to reaching the new SDGs?
7. Do you know examples of stories where using ICTs to support development has not worked, and why?
8. Can you think of ways in which ICTs or Internet connectivity could be used to

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<sup>1</sup> Broadband Commission (2015). *The State of Broadband 2015*. Available online: <http://www.broadbandcommission.org/documents/reports/bb-annualreport2015.pdf>.

help reach the SDGs?

9. Do you know of examples of success stories that can illustrate how Internet access can help to address real-world problems (in either developed or developing countries)? For example, do you have stories or experiences to share regarding some or all of the following SDG-related questions:
- How can connecting and enabling users help **to reduce poverty** in its various forms? (SDG 1)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to **end hunger, achieve food security and support improved nutrition**? (SDG 2)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to **promote sustainable agriculture**? (SDG 2)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure **healthy lives** and to promote **well-being** at all ages? (SDG 3)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure inclusive and equitable, quality **education**? (SDG 4)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to promote lifelong **learning opportunities**? (SDG 4)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to achieve **gender equality**? (SDG 5)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to **empower women and girls**? (SDG 5)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure the availability and sustainable management of **water and sanitation**? (SDG 6)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern **energy**? (SDG 7)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable **economic growth**? (SDG 8)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to promote full and **productive employment**? (SDG 8)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure **decent work**? (SDG 8)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to build resilient **infrastructure**, promote inclusive and sustainable **industrialization** and foster **innovation**? (SDG 9)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to **reduce inequality** within and among countries? (SDG 10)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to make **cities** and human **settlements** inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable? (SDG 11)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to ensure sustainable **consumption and production** patterns? (SDG 12)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to combat **climate change** and its impacts? (SDG 13)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to conserve and sustainably use the **oceans, seas** and **marine resources** for sustainable development? (SDG 14)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of **terrestrial ecosystems**, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss? (SDG 15)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to **promote peaceful and inclusive societies** for sustainable development? (SDG 16)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to provide access to **justice** for all? (SDG 16)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to build effective, accountable and inclusive **institutions** at all levels? (SDG 16)
  - How can connecting and enabling users help to strengthen the means of

**implementation** (SDG 17)

- How can connecting and enabling users help to revitalize the **global partnership** for sustainable development? (SDG 17)