

Working Group: Strategic Multiyear Work Programme 2018 Status Report

and

Draft Proposal for an IGF Community wide Strategic Multiyear Work Programme in 2019

The MAG WG – Multi-Year Strategic Work Programme (WG-MWP) was [chartered](#) by the MAG to see what “... more could be done to take a strategic, long-term view of the role and activities of the IGF...to reinvigorate the IGF by taking a longer-term view of particular issues ... achieving concrete outcomes on these over time. A longer time horizon ...could help to bring in new collaborators, including international agencies, and new donors. “

The WG was composed of individuals from all stakeholder groups and regions, with leaders or active members of the intersessional activities and the NRIs, also participating. The WG met eleven (11) times between 25th May 2018 and 30th October 2018 and the meeting summaries and Resource documents can be found [here](#).

There were three (3) main areas of focus, as outlined below:

- 1) [Draft IGF Programme Framework Chart](#): - outlines the planning cycle for the annual IGF in a simple, yet comprehensive, format. The purpose of the Draft Chart is to serve as a reference document for the work of the wider community by illustrating the agenda and programme-setting process from a "bird's eye" point of view, thus capturing the main points and junctures of the current process. The aim of this exercise is to develop a common baseline for the IGF annual programme development and agenda setting process, as well as to assess potential gaps and suggestions for improvement.

The Draft IGF Programme Framework Chart also aims to assess how IGF outputs are reached, collected, and shared so that they are valuable inputs and building blocks for a subsequent IGF cycle.

A public questionnaire was shared with the IGF community for public contribution and comment to assess whether the Programme Framework Chart accurately represents the current process and for community members to share ideas to improve the efficiency, scalability, and transparency of the current process.

- 2) Moving from reports to outputs/recommendations:
 - a. Two pilots¹ were proposed to facilitate intersessional and multiyear work that would focus on more concrete outputs and possible modalities for different types of recommendations² as some WG members stress are indicated in the Tunis Agenda - 1 - [Methodologies for the Development of Written IGF Outputs](#), and 2 - [Strengthened cooperation within the context of the IGF 2019](#), while respecting the Tunis Agenda. The aim of the proposed pilots was to determine if/how to use these experiences in future IGF cooperation processes.
 - b. Two pilots were proposed as alternative sessions for the Berlin IGF 2019.
- 3) Improve current outputs: Various efforts were undertaken to improve the outputs that currently exist, making them more useful and more visible. Many of these efforts were based on suggestions made by the MAG and the community, and were supported by the IGF Secretariat, DESA, and a few WG members. These were covered in separate efforts as part of operationalizing them through the IGF Secretariat.

In short, the multi-year work program is about a range of improvements to the way the IGF accomplishes its work, with focuses on clarifying the process of arriving at results, achieving more concrete results and better capturing those results, while increasing participation and support for IGF activities.

The Working Group recognized the importance of engaging broadly across the full MAG, the IGF community, BPFs, DCs, CENB, and NRIs, in the development of a multi-year strategic work programme. These engagements are of primary importance given the global interconnected nature of international Internet public policy issues, and in full recognition of the work and expertise that exists across the IGF ecosystem. At the same time, it was recognized that progress on these issues requires the collaboration of additional International Organizations, governmental, non-governmental, private sector, civil society, and non-governmental entities. The WG recognizes the importance of bringing in additional collaborators in virtually all areas, and has suggestions on how to advance this.

The WG stresses that the IGF, as a multistakeholder effort, is an important forum for discussion on many international Internet public policy issues. For example, the IGF could collaborate with or act as a convener providing a platform for engaging on global solutions through open discussions on international Internet public policy issues. The combined knowledge and insight across collaborators would help broaden perspectives, bring clarity and enable additional and accelerated progress through possible partnerships on these important, complex and intertwined issues.

¹ [Methodologies for the Development of Written IGF Outputs and Strengthening Cooperation within the Context of the IGF](#)

² [Tunis Agenda](#) – para 72 g. Identify emerging issues, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, where appropriate, make recommendations.

It is important for the IGF to bring in new collaborators, as well as work more substantively with the organizations already engaged in the IGF. A key goal of all these efforts should also be to increase the participation of disadvantaged and marginalized groups in our work.

Additional goals:

- i) Increased participation from senior policy makers
- ii) Increased participation from senior private sector actors
- iii) More balanced stakeholder participation
- iv) Increase collaboration between the NRIs and the global IGF
- v) Support NRI efforts to increase collaboration among NRIs
- vi) Increase collaboration among DCs and between the DCs and the global IGF
- vii) Work to raise the overall stature of the IGF

Of Special Note:

Throughout this process, there has been a recurring issue with respect to how far to go with producing more tangible outputs. Some members believe there is support in the Tunis Agenda for “recommendations”, perhaps achieved through various ‘deliberative democratic methodologies that do not require text negotiations or voting, while still delivering outputs’.

It should be noted that all members of the WG fully support the Tunis Agenda and the WSIS+10 Outcome Document. No members supported the idea of voting or steps for the IGF to become a forum for negotiations, as the implementation of such ideas are beyond the scope of the MAG, and within the hands of the United Nations General Assembly. Specifically, several members (from different stakeholder groups) expressed the hope that the MAG will support the idea of new modalities of outputs / recommendations, perhaps via a small number of pilots.

Proposed Strategic Multi-year Work Programme - 2019 IGF cycle:

1. The IGF Secretariat should provide an assessment to the MAG, ahead of its first meeting of topics discussed during IGF 2018 (in workshops, main sessions, open forums, inter-sessionals etc.), including input from the IGF taking stock exercise and the call for ‘IGF topics of interest’ (as piloted in 2018).
2. This assessment should inform the MAG’s decisions on the main intersessional work for IGF (including any major policy initiatives (past efforts here were Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion(s) programme (CENB)) and/or a number of BPFs. It should also inform the programme preparations of the IGF through, inter alia, the selection of IGF sub-themes and potential multi-year topics, which in turn should influence the topics on which a call is made for workshops. The report [‘Strengthened cooperation within the context of the IGF 2019’](#) was reviewed by this WG, and though there was no consensus, some members thought it would be helpful to the MAG’s deliberations as they plan for IGF 2019.
3. An overall plan for the advancement of intersessional work and/or multiyear topics should be developed, which as for all IGF work, should provide measures of success, standards of accountability and balance, including a focus on ensuring broad collaboration, and input from the IGF community with a specific outreach plan for other important collaborators.

4. The MAG should decide on how the development of intersessional work and/or multiyear topics would be overseen (e.g. by the MAG itself or by a separate group). The CENB project is now four years old and some members suggested a review of how such major policy initiatives can be improved, and whether it was time for a new project to be supported.

5. All groups would follow community expectations of openness, inclusivity and engagement, and would engage with the IGF Community to further develop activities, outputs, recommendations as appropriate.

6. A process could be piloted to collect 'IGF Findings' or "IGF session Recommendations" reflecting the output of the multistakeholder discussions held during IGF sessions, and in line with the suggestions below. This has been successfully piloted in a number of NRI meetings and is planned for the NRI sessions held during IGF 2018. Whether there was strong agreement, strong divergence, or something in between, a reflection of what the "session participants" think would be helpful. The report "[Methodologies for the Development of Written IGF Outputs](#)" was reviewed by this WG, and though there was no consensus, some members thought it would be helpful to the MAG's deliberations as they plan for IGF 2019.

7. Following the conclusion of the 2019 IGF Annual Meeting, the Chair's summary should report on all discussions (including workshop reports, main session reports, BPFs, Open Forums, etc.) to be distributed broadly; with a special focus on those individuals, organizations, and/or fora with a need to know (for policy activities, for implementation considerations, etc.). Care would need to be taken to highlight the provenance of any outputs in order that they be accurately attributed and positioned (for example, similar to today's BPF outputs).

8. The IGF is already producing a lot of output, such as: Chair's Summary, main session and workshop summaries, BPF and CENB output documents, collaborative partnerships, etc. At the same time the multistakeholder dialogues at the IGF are themselves valuable outputs; policymakers can gather many insights from the exchange of information and experiences with Internet policy issues that takes place during the IGF. Capturing and promoting them successfully could increase the reach of these conversations beyond the IGF session participants.

There is a need for a concise and organized style of reporting from IGF sessions. This could be achieved through improvements such as: (It is noted that many of these suggestions are in fact being implemented in IGF 2018)

- Inspired from the concept of the 2017 "Geneva Messages", 2-3 paragraph short summaries could be considered for each session taking place at IGF (Main Session, Workshop, Open Forum, and DC and BPF session). To support this, time (approx. 5 mins) should be allocated at the end of each session to reflect on the main findings of the session. Questions to be considered could include:
 - What was the objective of the session? Why was the topic discussed?
 - What were the 3 most compelling elements heard? (eg. case examples, new issues, new solutions, etc.)
 - What are the actions / next steps participants in the session are likely to do?Following the session, answers should be shared publicly in a timely manner with an opportunity for participants to offer further comments or voice differing opinions. A

- more comprehensive summary report should follow.
- The Chair's Summary should include discussions in the other sessions and should include an executive summary of the short summaries by topic. Reflecting together on all conversations on a topic offers richness and better balance in the summary.
 - To improve accountability for reporting, if co-organizers fail to provide a report of their session, the co-organizing entities should be excluded from being able to organise any sessions the following year.

This process will be iterative and there will be learnings along the way, but as we believe the IGF and its multistakeholder processes are central to better informed policies (whether those of policy makers or private sector actors) then the IGF needs to figure out ways to provide more concrete outputs. The WG was chartered to help facilitate that process.

Further, late in the year, some members of the WG proposed the MAG explore the possibility of using a professionally facilitated process in 2019 and discussed an offer from a company called Synmind to provide an online/offline facilitated process for the IGF community. There was no consensus on proceeding, due to lack of time, concerns re funding, and some members recognized this was a discussion/decision for the incoming MAG.

Next Steps:

- 1) Engagement of the IGF Community, as well as all intersessional activities and with the National, Regional and Youth IGF Initiatives (NRIs)
- 2) Improvements made to the MWP incorporating comments / recommendations from the IGF 2018 session, incoming MAG, and by a request to the community for written comments
- 3) Review status report/WG recommendations as part of transition activities between outgoing and incoming MAG/MAG Chair
- 4) Review the possibility of adopting multi-year intersessional activities for some BPFs and/or a major policy initiative or key topic(s)
- 5) Actively seek expanded organizational participation in all IGF activities
- 6) Multi Year Work Plans to be in full view during preparation and organization of IGF 2019 and beyond

Recommendations from this WG for discussions with the outgoing and incoming MAG

- 1) There was interest in rechartering the WG for 2019 in order to continue work towards multi-year planning and to support the development of more tangible outputs. To do so though, several WG members expressed a need to clearly agree goals for the WG (and identify differing opinions) early on, to help align and expedite the work of the group, specifically with respect to producing more tangible outputs given throughout this process there was a recurring issue with respect to how far to go with producing more tangible outputs.

Specifically, several members expressed the hope that the MAG will review the idea of new modalities of outputs / recommendations, perhaps via a small number of pilots.

- 2) It was recommended that as part of the transition process between outgoing and incoming MAG, a review of the output from the WG and an extended strategic discussion take place during the first face-to-face meeting of the MAG in 2019.
- 3) The Secretariat should prepare an analysis of all topics discussed and possible calls for next steps/further discussions to inform the MAG ahead/at its first meeting so that it can take an informed decision on IGF sub-themes and intersessional or multi-year work topics.
- 4) The reports 'Strengthened cooperation within the context of the IGF 2019' and "Methodologies for the Development of Written IGF Outputs" provide additional ideas and though there was no consensus from the WG, some members believe they could be helpful to the MAG in their deliberations as they plan for IGF 2019.
- 5) Consider a call from the MAG Chair during and soon after the IGF 2018 for more attentive, committed and higher level participation from Business, Civil Society, Internet and International Organizations, Governments and Academia;
- 6) Consider asking the MAG Chair to write to stakeholder leaders including Governments at a high level and attach a one page summary of the Chair's summary reflecting key outputs during IGF 2018, with one link pointing to more detailed reports / recordings for further reading.

In closing:

Many stakeholders in the community have expressed a strong wish for the IGF to be more and to do more. In this document and its links this WG provides the MAG with several possible options to advance more robust outputs on a small number of strategic topic(s). These options come from various members and stakeholder groups of the IGF community. Piloting several, different topics in 2019 would allow the IGF community to learn from the results. Different forms of pilots were suggested, where the topic will determine the process. All pilots require determining a goal/goals up front.

For several reasons (largely explained above) there was no WG consensus possible on these pilots ("Strengthened cooperation within the context of the IGF 2019", "Methodologies for the Development of Written IGF Outputs" nor on the Synmind facilitated process), but a number of members had significant interest in them and a strong desire that the incoming MAG be aware of these proposals as they plan for IGF 2019".