



IGF 2021

Proposal for a 2021 Best Practice Forum

1. Title

Committed actions to make access to the Internet sustainable and affordable for everyone

Executive Summary

This proposal for a Best Practice Forum (BPF) on **Committed actions to make access to the Internet sustainable and affordable for everyone** aims to convene and bring together the different stakeholders, to document and share existing policies and concrete actions that have been taken from their sectors and regions, to make Internet Universal and affordable for all. Through this process, we will be able to learn from the good experiences that have been exposed in different countries and regions around the world with a view to documenting and sharing them with the whole community and thus allow better replicability.

If approved, this BPF will develop different activities during three years, with expected outcomes such as: Identifying and mapping which countries will be part of the study; Identification and analysis of policies that have produced direct impact in providing affordable and meaningful Internet for their citizens, based on reports as related evidence; elaboration of proposals for improvements of existing policy and analysis of possible new policies that would be implemented; contribute to the nexts Global IGF with key results and practices during workshops and sessions.

At the final stage between the second and third year, these sets of recommendations would be included as a report and offered as reference documents, for all stakeholders. This action would be also contributing to one of the components of the new IGF+ model, known as the Policy Incubator.

2. Names of at least two Facilitators

- [Karim ATTOUMANI MOHAMED](#), MAG Member from Comoros Private Sector (Telecom Comores SA) and proposed co-facilitator of this BPF
- [Roberto ZAMBRANA](#), MAG Member from Bolivia Technical Community (ISOC Chapter Bolivia) and proposed co-facilitator of this BPF

Supports / Endorsements

- [Christian O'Flaherty](#), Regional Vice President - Latin America and The Caribbean, Internet Society
- [Adil SULIEMAN](#), Senior Policy Officer, Infrastructure and Energy Department African Union Commission, Focal point of the Secretariat of the African Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF)
- [Sandro Bazzanella](#), Team Leader - Technical Assistance Policy & Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA) African Union Commission - DIE/ISD Addis Ababa - ETHIOPIA
- [Dr Tim Kelly](#), Lead Digital Development Specialist, World Bank
- [FANNY SALYOU](#), Responsable Projet Transmission ORANGE CI, Coordonnateur Pays FGI COTE D'IVOIRE
- [Ali Hadji MMADI](#), Président ISOC Chapitre Comores
- [Sonia Jorge](#), Executive Director, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)
- [Nazar Nicholas Kirama](#), President & Chief Executive Officer, Internet Society Tanzania Chapter

3. Background

The recently published Report of the Secretary-General Roadmap for Digital Cooperation has presented eight key areas for action. The very first one: “ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL CONNECTIVITY BY 2030”, is summarized as: “Half of the world’s population currently does not have access to the Internet. By 2030, every person should have safe and affordable access to the Internet, including meaningful use of digitally enabled services in line with the Sustainable Development Goals”.

Another important reference document was recently issued (August 2020) by ITU as the Connecting Humanity Report, with the contribution of Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) in order to Assess investment needs of connecting humanity to the Internet by 2030.

The solutions proposed over the last years have been based on national policies and strategies severely challenged by the rapid advancement of the demand-driven Internet in terms of mobile broadband services, forcing local telecom operators to constantly develop infrastructures, aiming to increase the coverage and serve those who are not connected.

According to ITU’s 2019 report, based on the country's reports, “93 per cent of the world’s population live within physical reach of mobile broadband or Internet services”. Indeed those policies succeeded with growing Mobile Internet infrastructure, but also proved to be ineffective when providing affordable Internet connectivities. Because the same source indicates that “only 53.6 per cent of the world’s population now use the Internet, leaving an estimated 3.6 billion without access”.

We had to face a global pandemic, to remind us the FUNDAMENTAL ROLE THAT INTERNET HAS IN OUR LIVES, but at the same time, how important is to achieve the UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY as fast as we can, because if we don’t overcome this situation, in the coming months and years, near half of the world’s children and also university students, will not be able to follow online classes, billions will not be able to work from their homes, and many others will remain completely isolated without any contact with friends or family when we enter in this so-called “new normal”.

As the final and relevant input, it is important to report about the Main Session on Inclusion (“Definitive and Committed Actions for Connecting and Enabling the Remaining Billions”) during the first virtual IGF 2020. This session had as invited speakers: Sylvia Cadena (APNIC Foundation), Vint Cerf (Google), Sonia Jorge (A4AI), Mongi Marzoug (Orange), Christian O’Flaherty (Internet Society) and Moctar Yedaly (African Union Commission). Along the dialogue, the panelists contributed with reflections and recommendations about this topic that can be found in the following link to the report:

<https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2020-main-session-inclusion>

Committed actions to make access to the Internet sustainable and affordable for everyone is one of the main challenges to effectively overcome the digital divide. And this challenge needs to be addressed by all stakeholders through a coordination platform such as the Best Practice Forum proposed.

4. Description:

This Best Practice Forum aims to establish an intersessional work that will bring together the different stakeholders, to gather and analyse existing policies and concrete actions that have been taken from their sectors, to make Internet Universal and affordable for all. We will be able to learn about the actions that have been conducted over recent months and learn from the good experiences that have been exposed in different countries in all regions of the world.

These inputs will allow to map out a set of recommendations for carrying out public policies that may be applied in the different countries, which may also be part of the actions recommended in the Report of the Secretary-General Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, and that can be adapted to the new structures that will surely be included as part of the new IGF+ model, which has the greatest acceptance and consensus.

This BPF proposal have a time frame for 3 years, in three phases, with the following activities, actors and outcomes:

III.1 Phase 1. 2021

Time frame: February - December 2021

Actors: Co-facilitators, focal points in countries that are part of the scope of work and any contributor from the developed world.

Activities:

- Definition of regions, developing and LDCs and key institutions, which will be part of the scope of the BPF.
- Identification and analysis of successful policies in countries that have the best penetration rates (FIRST GROUP OF COUNTRIES)
- Analysis of reports from different ISPs, policy makers and regulators, in different regions, about what has worked and why, regarding: viability, sustainability and affordability. (FIRST GROUP OF COUNTRIES)
- First Open Virtual Meeting with different stakeholders, presenting a map of regions and countries, aiming to identify the top 3 best policies identified.
- Analysis of the variations in the income of the telecommunications and mobile broadband operators, during the last 3 years, in the countries under study.
- Analysis of the growth of the activities of the ICT sector and the impact they have on their economic flow.
- Review of current policies in some of the developing and LDCs, analyzing the current conditions that prevent the increase in the Internet penetration rate, in terms of coverage and Internet business models. The analysis will cover traditional telecommunications operators, as well as community networks. (FIRST GROUP OF COUNTRIES)
- Identification of innovative policies and regulation frameworks, which have been successful in different countries of the world.
- Second Open Virtual Meeting with different stakeholders, presenting the matrix of conclusions.

Outcomes: Map of regions and countries included in the study. Matrix of conclusions. Executive Report. Planning document for the session to be organized during IGF2021.

Make a session presentation during Day0 - IGF2021 in Poland.

III.2 Phase 2. 2022 – INPUTS FOR POLICY INCUBATOR

Time frame: January - December 2022

Actors: Co-facilitators, focal points in countries that are part of the scope of work and any contributor from the developed world.

Activities:

- Virtual meetings aiming to further analysis about most relevant policies identified with positive and negative impact.
- Third Open Virtual Meeting with different stakeholders aiming to gather inputs for a report about findings.
- Socialization of the report
- Identification and analysis of successful policies in countries that have the best penetration rates (SECOND GROUP OF COUNTRIES)
- Analysis of reports from different ISPs, policy makers and regulators, in different regions, about what has worked and why, regarding: viability, sustainability and affordability. (SECOND GROUP OF COUNTRIES)
- Review of current policies in some of the developing and LDCs, analyzing the current conditions that prevent the increase in the Internet penetration rate, in terms of coverage and Internet business

models. The analysis will cover traditional telecommunications operators, as well as community networks. (SECOND GROUP OF COUNTRIES)

- Fourth Open Virtual Meeting

Outcomes: Report about findings. Map of regions and countries included in the study (SECOND GROUP). Planning document for the session to be organized during IGF2022.

Make a session presentation during Day0 - IGF2022.

III.3 Phase 3. 2023

Time frame: January - December 2023

Actors: Co-facilitators, focal points in countries that are part of the scope of work and any contributor from the developed world.

Activities:

- Preparation of Final Report on lessons learned and conclusions of the BPF.
- Preparation of the BPF continuity proposal or its evolution towards another form of work.
- Fifth Open Virtual Meeting

Outcomes: Executive Report. Country Map. Final Report and Proposal for continuity or evolution.

Make a session presentation during Day0 - IGF2023.

5. Engagement and outreach plan

It is essential to identify the focal points in each of the countries that are part of the study. The focal point may be a member of any entity that represents any of the interested parties: Government, ICT regulator, Civil Society (including academy), private sector (telecommunications and mobile telephony operators with presence in the country), or technical community including continental organizations like the African Union.

In many cases, the focal points are related or directly involved to the work of the NRIs in their countries, so they have contact with different stakeholders in their community.

Contact will also be made with those responsible or coordinators of the Regional and Special Initiatives and organizations such as: African Union Commission, APNIC, EURODIG, LACNIC, INTERNET SOCIETY and ISOC Chapters, LAC, Youth Observatory and others.

All activities carried out and the results obtained will be published and socialized in different national, regional or global forums, seeking to identify and articulate with other initiatives that have common interests.

There will be five Open Virtual Meetings gathering actively involved participants as well as everyone that wants to contribute to the activities of the BPF.

6. Furthering the implementation of the IGF Mandate and UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation

In accordance with the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and in the spirit of IGF Mandate, this BPF will contribute directly on:

- The global connectivity, focused on achieving universal connectivity by 2030. This will help to respond in practical ways to connect the Half of the world's population currently have no access to the Internet by 2030, with a "safe and affordable access to the Internet, including meaningful use of digitally enabled services in line with the Sustainable Development Goals".
- The digital inclusion by ensuring digital inclusion for all, including the most vulnerable. This BPF will address gaps between geographically, gender, older persons, young people, children, persons with disabilities, rural populations, indigenous peoples, social, cultural and economic inequalities as it's intended to ensure the unconnected people around the world are connected.

"Committed actions to make Internet sustainable and affordable for everyone" will have more sense and be effective by ensuring at least these two pillars:

- Digital trust & security: Indeed, we must provide ourselves with the means to secure digital activities and thus give users confidence in order to allow them to make the most of the inherent advantages of digital. It is more than evident that access to food, water, housing, energy, health care and transport are conditioned by a mastery and therefore with prior access to digital. The most relevant example is the Covid-19 with all the behavioural changes, information needs, business continuity. All these uses require maximum security and adherence to established standards on life privacy and the possibility that should be given to everyone to make a living with digital technology but also through digital.
 - Global digital cooperation. "Actions taken to make the Internet sustainable and affordable for all" go through the identification and consideration of gaps in infrastructure development in a global manner with the aim of correcting them and thus allowing a fair distribution of digital technology for all world population. And there can be no guarantee of an infrastructure distributed and equitably distributed in the world without effective cooperation from all actors on investments but also on standards development and coordination. This joins the spirit of the Internet Governance Forum to allow all stakeholders to discuss as equals through different forms of digital cooperation.
 - Besides, this BPF will provide a close approach to the Policy Incubator scheme, included in IGF+
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