DC on Schools of Internet Governance
2020 Meeting Report

The DC SIG met as part of the virtual IGF 2020 on Day 3 of the meeting. The round table was composed of the members of the DC SIG who are directly involved in creating and sustaining the schools who were able to participate in the meeting. This has been the practice of the DC SIG for several years, through when in a room with a big round table, we invite as many as possible to sit at the table and participate.

The meeting was introduced by Sandra Hoferichter, the founder and chair of the DC. After briefly describing the function of the DC and its history of working on tools, documents and web pages, to assist Schools of Internet Governance, all of those who either directed or organized schools were invited to introduce themselves and their schools. There were approximately a dozen introductions from schools from across the planet, and the Internet. Some people had created presentations they wanted to show the meeting. As these had not been staged in the planning, time was left for them at the end of the meeting. The presentations can be found in the recording of the meeting.

The first discussion tem of the meeting, as has been the practice at our last 3 IGF sessions, was to cover the work that the DC had done since the last meeting. This included 3 items:

- Continuing development of the website. One of the major projects on the web site this year has been the inclusion of as many of the existing schools in the map of schools. The web site also supports a wiki that allows any interested school to contribute information on their schools, including plans and curricula..
  During this discussion, there was a question as to how the work of the DC and SIGs was sustained. Several of those who organized schools discussed their ways of fundraising and sustaining their schools. Several different models were presented.
- Status of the Toolkit document. This document has been in development for 2 years and is a substantive piece of work, but one in which we will always find more to be done.
- Status of the Operations Guide. This is a new doc developed during 2020 that is still early in development.

One point made about all of the work items, is that the group's projects and are all open for improvement and further work by all readers of the document. The document work is done on drive documents that allow for anyone with the url to review, comment and recommend new text. At our periodic online meetings through the year, all recommended changes are reviewed by attendees at the meeting and either approved or left for further discussion.

The third part of the meeting involved initial discussions on issues and work items that the DC SIG should take up in 2021. While not meant to dissuade people, it was emphasized that proposals for new work are always welcome, but with the expectation that those suggesting new work would be willing to contribute to that work. Some of the work items proposed included:

- Continuing update and maintenance of existing documents. One of the requirements of the work being done by the DC SIG is that work can get stale if it is not frequently updated. Additionally, as discussed, they are never really complete; there is always more to learn about how to educate and about the field of Internet Governance.
- Developing guidelines for curricula. While different curricula are being collected on with wiki and there is some guide in the toolkit of the breadth of areas that can be covered, there is little in terms of advice on setting up a school for the first time or examples that can be followed. This could include specialized programs for specific audiences or on narrow topics within Internet Governance.
- Develop a FAQ on schools that answers the most important questions someone creating a school for the first time might have.
- Looking at ways to get media involved in the proliferation of information about Internet Governance
- Enabling people to learn from existing schools.
- More connection with some of the work being done by other DCs and especially by youth participants of IGF.

The meeting closed with presentations from a few of the schools present in the meeting and general discussion.

It was a very energetic meeting with good exchange of experience and viewpoint. Among the participants there was an enthusiasm for the project and for its continuation. The proof of that will be in the work that gets done in the next year. The group acknowledged that during Covid, SIGs held remotely would become more prevalent and that this might affect progress and the direction of some of the immediate work being done.

For details on any of the comments made by the speakers around the virtual round table, the transcript of the meeting is available.

The meeting replay is also available.

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Meeting Agenda as scheduled

Description:

The DC SIG meets yearly with 3 main goals: To do outreach to those interested in schools on Internet governance; to review the work done the year before; to decide on the work for the next year. The meeting is a round table composed of the members of the DC SIG who are directly involved in creating and sustaining the schools.

Relevance to IG:

The SIGs (Schools of Internet governance) are vital in educating policy makers in the subject of Internet governance. There are schools popping up in many countries and regions all the time. The task of the DC SIG is to create and provide materials useful in setting up a school, running a school and developing its curriculum. The schools serve all stakeholder groups and focus, among other things, on the meaning and application of the words from the working definition of Internet Governance. It is one thing to have a working definition of Internet governance, it is another to understand and apply it.

Relevance to Theme:

Part of digital inclusion involves understanding how the Internet is run and how to affect the policies involved in maintaining and sustaining the Internet, which is a critical feature of modern life. The Internet contributes in one way or another in many of the efforts to achieve any of the SDG goals as well as surviving economically and culturally during a worldwide plague. Understanding it is part of digital literacy, allowing for inclusion, both in access and in policy creation.

In providing Schools on Internet Governance, the organizers of the schools are involved in widening the inclusion of people in the discussion and practice of Internet Governance. The schools provide training to many of the people who eventually become contributors and leaders of various IG organizations and policy efforts. Understanding Internet Governance is a digital literacy requirement for anyone who would attempt to contribute to Internet governance.