

MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy

Online Meeting 60
20 July 2023 at 14:00 UTC

Summary Report

The 60th virtual meeting of the IGF MAG Working Group (WG) on IGF Strengthening and Strategy (WG-Strategy) was held on 20 July at 14:00 UTC. The meeting was moderated by Chris Buckridge and a recording of the meeting is available upon request.

The co-chair opened the meeting by introducing the agenda:

Agenda

- 1) Outcomes and results of the II Open Consultations and MAG meeting
 - a. Update on the IGF LP meetings (Timea Suto, Ross Creelman)
- 2) [Policy Brief on GDC](#)
- 3) [Convening a public discussion on GDC and WSIS+20 review](#)
- 4) Update from the IGF Secretariat
- 5) AoB

Discussion

1. Outcomes and results of the II Open Consultations and MAG meeting

Chris gave an update on the II Open Consultations and MAG meeting saying that there was a good discussion on the agenda, on the role of the IGF intersessional activities and on how the latter could be better represented in the IGF agenda. Part of the discussion covered the outputs of the intersessional activities and how they could be better endorsed by the IGF and the UN. There was a lot of discussion on how to best position the IGF in the coming two years in relation to the Summit of the future and to the Global Digital Compact and in relation to the WSIS+20 review. It was discussed how to ensure that the outcomes coming from the IGF and from the intersessional activities could be really understood and impactful. Chris referred also about the discussion the MAG had on day 2 and 3 on the workshop proposals and the discussion to have human rights and gender as a sort of overarching topics in relation to the workshop proposals. The other point Chris shared was the discussion on town halls and on how they fit into the overarching IGF structure in relation to the open forums.

Chris added that there was a significant discussion about the main sessions and the priorities to give to the different issues. Some discussion was related to AI and how that should fit into the IGF 2023 agenda to ensure that the IGF taps into a bigger global discussion. Many questions were related to having human rights and gender issues included in the main sessions and also to have a main session focusing on Digital Cooperation. It was shared that the MAG will work with the Secretariat in the next weeks to find the speakers of the 8 main sessions.

Jim Prendergast observed that the MAG controls only 80/85 sessions related to the workshop proposals and that it could be reasonable that the MAG should also control the other sessions (town hall, open forum, etc.).

Wout de Natris highlighted the work done by the intersessional activities and by the DCs noting that the IGF is more than what is included in the IGF mandate. He suggested a review of the IGF mandate to consider the IGF evolution towards the IGF++ model.

Abdulrahman Almutairi noted that to follow up on the request to have the Dynamic Coalitions more recognised from MAG it is needed to put in place a process and define how to do that. He highlighted that fundraising is an important issue that needs more attention. He also recalled the attention on the proposal of the UN's SG to have an AI board saying that more information should be collected from UNDESA on this also in relation to the role the IGF community could have on it.

Amrita added that there is a need to work more on the process and on the structure to have the MAG more involved on the DC's outputs. On the funding suggestion, she added a definition of a roadmap that could make this process more clear.

a. Update on the IGF LP meetings (Timea Suto, Ross Creelman)

Timea gave an informal update on the LP discussions on behalf of Maria Fernanda Garza, member of the Leadership Panel.

She recalled that the Leadership Panel has a dual mandate 1) to act as the ambassador for the IGF to raise the visibility and impact of the IGF within and outside UN 2) to provide their views on current and pressing Internet policy related matters. The LP is combining this dual mandate in advocating the IGF to be the place where international public policy issues related to the Internet are discussed. This concept has been indicated in the contribution the LP has sent to the GDC thanks also to the support of the WG Strategy. The Leadership Panel is now working on the first version of the paper that includes their vision on the *Internet We want*. The document is in progress and it will be released soon. It will represent the panel's vision on what the *Internet We want* looks like. As a next step the Leadership Panel wants to gather input on how to realize this vision, and want to do that, together with the MAG and with the IGF community. So it's important to figure out how to use the IGF annual event to reach out to the community, gather input, and do the next steps together.

In addition, the Leadership Panel feels very strongly that the IGF should become the place where these conversations are organically developed, as it has been in the past and there's no necessarily need for any new structure to discuss these kinds of issues. The Leadership Panel wants to go to New York and make sure the delegations, both in New York and elsewhere, are aware of what the IGF does and how it is ready to take on the role of discussing these issues, and to evolve into being the place where these issues can be discussed. The Leadership panel wants to present the IGF as the organic continuation of anything that comes out of the global digital compact not necessarily as a comparison with the proposed Digital Cooperation Forum.

The Leadership Panel would need some help from the MAG to identify clear examples, to identify clear achievements from the IGF that can be shown to negotiators or missions in New York, and and others, on what qualifies the IGF to be this place. The Leadership Panel wants to verify if the MAG is open to activate this kind of collaboration.

Jorge Cancio remarked on the importance of having the Leadership Panel with people like Vint Cerf, Ms. Maria Ressa, etc. with very different points of view advocating the IGF and holding a press conference at the UN premises, and reaching a different kind of public . He also highlighted the importance of shaping the Kyoto program in a way that really addresses the questions that will be put in the issues paper to be prepared by the co-facilitators of the global digital compact. The IGF main sessions, the high level sessions, should respond and address these issues as it is the only way to influence this process. He also expressed support for the approach of the Leadership Panel shared by Timea. It's important to sustain the IGF as the organic place that could cover the functions that follow up the global digital compact without talking too much about the digital cooperation forum itself.

In relation to the funding, Dino dell'Accio recalled that the UN is a bureaucratic organization where everything has to happen formally, especially if there is a request or an expectation for funding. In this case it is important to submit a formal request to the General Assembly. Currently the annual Highlight report submitted by DESA, the Department Economic and Social Affairs, includes half a page dedicated to the IGF with little information on how many sessions were held, the discussion, the topics. He suggested submitting to the UN General Assembly a more formal and detailed IGF report that includes the activities, the engagement, the outcomes, the impact of the IGF and the request for funds to progress in the IGF activities.

2. Policy Brief on GDC

Valeria Betancourt gave an update on the Ministerial Meeting that will be held in September saying that it won't have to do with the content of the global digital compact but it will focus on the modalities of the summit of the future, including the GDC track. She added that the co-facilitators (Sweden and Rwanda) are open to get concrete recommendations from the different stakeholders, from the governments and stakeholders in relation to the development of the GDC and on how to streamline the work of existing spaces to support, facilitate and monitor the implementation of the global digital compact.

Justin Fair also gave some updates on the two events going on in New York related to the digital issues: 1) Sdg summit 2) the ministerial event. He shared that a summary of the consultations faced so far by the GDC will be issued soon and that the negotiations will follow. He added that there are other deliverables that do have implications for digital technology mentioning some of them: Internet visual issues, the policy, brief on the new agenda for peace, AI and lethal autonomous weapon systems, a track developing a code of conduct for information integrity on digital platforms. He said that while it's very appropriate to focus on the global picture of the Global Digital Compact, it's also worthwhile to see the totality of the work that's happening there and make sure the IGF and the broader stakeholder community is engaged on all of it, and not just focused too narrowly on the global digital compact.

Amrita shared that during the meeting with the co-facilitators of the GDC held during the Open Consultation and MAG meeting, she suggested analyzing how the IGF could evolve to meet the requirements for the GDC and that they were very interested in getting this proposal.

Carol suggested the WG Strategy to make a SWOT analysis of the IGF and of the MAG. This could help to better understand the main duties and responsibilities, what is

accomplished and was not , the opportunities, the threats, etc. . She also suggested developing Kpi, some key performance indicators that could help to understand the responsibilities.

The [draft of the SWOT document](#) has already been shared in the mailing list of the Wg-strategy by Carol. All WG's participants are invited to include their suggestions.

Chris summarized the main points emerging from discussion saying that a number of practical work emerged. Among them he mentioned:

- 1) How the IGF has evolved over time and the improvements that have been made.
- 2) How the IGF could improve further to meet the needs of the Gdc.
- 3) Funding. Drafting a more formal UN submission.
- 4) Package up some summary of the IGF and of intersessional works done to date underlining the most successful and most pertinent outcomes of various international activities in a format that the leadership panel can then take into their discussions with Member State delegates in New York and elsewhere. to really showcase the work that the IGF is producing.

He suggested discussing these items in the mailing list trying to activate some subgroups to define the work items.

Timea suggested to identify a short list of functions that ought to be fulfilled for taking the Gdc forward and to identify the functions the IGF is already doing (policy, best practices, inspiring conversation in national, regional international spaces, forging partnerships, etc.) and also including examples of what has been in the past. It could be really impactful in presenting this list to decision makers.

Chris added that the IGF secretary could give some help on what we need in terms of information.

3. AoB

The next call of the working group will be at 14:00 UTC on 10 August 2023.

List of participants

1. Anja Gengo, IGF Secretariat
2. Chris Buckridge, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member
3. Amrita Choudhury, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member
4. Concettina Cassa, Group's Co-Chair, Government of Italy
5. Abdulrahman Almutairi, MAG Member
6. Flavio Wagner, CGI.br and University of Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil
7. Jim Prendergast, Independent Expert
8. Justine Fair, IGF MAG member

9. Dino Dell'Accio, UN JSPF
10. Fiona Alexander , former MAG member
11. Jorge Cancio, Swiss Government
12. Muriel Alapini, Independent Expert
13. Lynn Saint Amour, Former MAG Chair
14. Paul Kasoma, Independent Expert
15. Ross Creelman, Etno
16. Markus Kummer, Former IGF MAG Chair
17. Carol Roach, IGF MAG member
18. Timea Suto, ICC Basis, former MAG member
19. Rosalind Kenny Birch, UK Government
20. Valeria Betancourt
21. Wolfgang Kleinwächter, University of Aarhus
22. Wout de Natris, Independent expert

Links:

[2023 SDG Summit](#)

[Preparatory Ministerial Meeting for the Summit of the Future](#)
[Summit of the Future](#)