

# Assessment of the Internet capacity development needs of IGF stakeholders, 29 February 2020

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## Overview of the task

The task of developing a framework for capacity building for the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) as outlined in the contract involved:

- An assessment of the capacity building needs of IGF stakeholders in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small islands developing states (LDC/LLDC/SIDS) and developing countries.
- An assessment of capacity building provided by National, Regional and Youth Initiatives (NRIs), Dynamic Coalitions and regional Internet governance schools to determine what their capacity building needs are, and how they can work with the IGF Secretariat to meet those needs
- Exploring how the IGF Secretariat, MAG and wider IGF community can “help increase the capacity of people from under-represented and marginalized communities, engage and interact in the IGF process”
- Developing an action plan including draft syllabuses, tutorials on how to carry out the activities as described in ‘expected accomplishment’ 4.4 and 4.5 of the IGF Phase III Project Document which are to: 4.4 Cooperate with stakeholders on developing and implementing Internet governance capacity-building initiatives and 4.5 Convene, and carry out capacity-building workshops on the margins of relevant Internet governance-related meetings and events, including regional and national IGFs<sup>1</sup>
- Produce a draft framework for IGF-based capacity development

This document only includes the assessment of the capacity building needs of IGF stakeholders, particularly those from LDCs, LLDCs, SIDs and of young people involved in the IGF. It should be read together with the draft framework for an IGF-based capacity development programme.

## 1. Understanding Internet governance capacity development

In 2002, during the build up to the first World Summit on the Information Society, the Louder Voices study reviewed developing country participation in international ICT decision-making<sup>2</sup>. It was a substantial review and included the views of multiple delegates taking part in major international meetings convened by institutions such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). Even though the Louder Voices study took place nearly two decades ago, it remains relevant and contains useful conclusions for the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). For example, it found that weaknesses in national policy-making processes are related to limited developing country participation in international processes. This is not to say that the manner in which international institutions and processes work does not impact on developing country participation. International meetings that take place in high-cost locations make it hard for developing country actors with limited resources to participate. Of particular relevance for the IGF and its National and Regional Initiatives (NRIs) is the Louder Voices conclusion that **even if international processes and institutions were substantially more inclusive, many developing countries might still not participate effectively as a result of weaknesses in their national policy-making context**. This emphasises the importance of capacity development at national level, and the role that NRIs and strategic partners like Schools of Internet Governance (SIGs), the technical community and university-based and civil society entities that do capacity development in Internet policy.

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1 [https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot\\_download/4099/516](https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/4099/516)

2 [http://panoslondon.panosnetwork.org/wp-content/files/2011/03/louder\\_voicesGjJeXx.pdf](http://panoslondon.panosnetwork.org/wp-content/files/2011/03/louder_voicesGjJeXx.pdf)

Responses to the email questionnaire distributed to gather information about the Internet governance capacity development needs of IGF stakeholders<sup>3</sup> indicate that capacity development needed in the context of Internet governance is multi-faceted. It comprises growing knowledge of Internet governance broadly as well as specific policy areas. It involves leadership development. It relates to influence and power – and the lack of influence and power. Capacity development in Internet governance often means different things to different people. Some people see it as the solution to building more inclusive governance, particularly with regard to the global South. Others see it as a mechanism to deflect political differences or to avoid confronting deeply embedded power imbalances in Internet governance, both at regional and global levels. These imbalances are also complex, involving location, geographic origin, stakeholder group, gender, age, political allegiances and positions.

Some Internet governance capacity building initiatives are tied to institutions that are themselves key players in Internet governance, and, while there is significant appreciation for these efforts, there is also, at times, a perception that they promote specific institutional policies and approaches to Internet governance. Sponsored fellowships or travel support, while valued, did not emerge as a sustainable solution as they do not always equip people to participate effectively in processes over the longer term. Moreover, they tend to target newcomers at the expense of people who have been around and demonstrated continued commitment and interest. Individuals have managed to take strategic advantage of these fellowships mostly in cases where they have backing from the institutions with which they are affiliated. But once-off attendance in events does not really succeed in building the kind of capacity that is needed for effective participation.

To address all these concerns and in response to the needs documented below, this report proposes that capacity building be conceptualised as a process of equipping people and thereby the institutions of which they are part, to more effectively understand and analyse policy contexts. This would enable them to make up their minds to pursue their choices and interests while also understanding the choices and interests of others. To do this they need not just to understand Internet governance as a sector, but also how Internet-related policy interacts with other spheres. Therefore, Internet governance capacity should not only be about the nuts and bolts, and the who's who of Internet governance. It should aim to connect Internet governance issues with the real outcomes that affect the lives and work of people and institutions who are not part of the Internet governance ecosystem in a narrow sense.

It follows that the assumption that Internet governance capacity building is only needed by people who are new to Internet governance is fundamentally flawed. Internet governance experts generally have little understanding of development challenges and policy. Many have no knowledge of the conditions in LDCs and SIDS. Many only have a cursory understanding of human rights, or of telecommunications and media policy, not to mention gender. While this report focuses on the needs of stakeholders from developing countries, particularly LDCs and SIDS, it also argues that Internet governance stakeholders who are not from LDCs or SIDS require capacity development if the IGF is to effectively respond to the needs of LDCs and SIDS and developing countries and contribute more widely to development.

Capacity building is linked with inclusion. On its own it will not create more level playing fields or ensure more diversity in participation, e.g. women and gender diverse people, people of colour, young people, people with different political views and people from a variety of disciplines. But the combination of capacity building activities that foster diversity and awareness of the importance of inclusion at the IGF can achieve positive results, producing greater range and variety of people and perspective and thereby enriching IGF discussions.

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3 See Appendix B: Interview schedule and email survey for the email questionnaire.

Capacity building also needs to address process issues, including the development of processes which are both new and innovative and that respond to the specific characteristic of the Internet as public resource which is managed and developed by multiple stakeholders.

## **2. Internet governance capacity building needs of IGF stakeholders**

The summary of Internet governance-related capacity building needs below is based on the input of more than 40 respondents consulted for the purpose of this study as well as on previous studies conducted by, among others, the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation, (CTO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU)<sup>4</sup>, and the African Union Commission (AUC)<sup>5</sup>. Respondents were asked to focus on the needs of least developed countries, small island developing states, young people, NRIs, and under-represented groups, but many responded from the perspective of developing country needs more broadly and several looked at the needs of IGF stakeholders everywhere.

### **Assumptions with regard to Internet governance capacity building needs**

IGF stakeholders are generally clustered into four groups: government, business, civil society, and the technical and academic community. However, when considering the capacity development needs of IGF stakeholders, it is important not to assume that these groups – or their needs – are homogeneous. There are differences in existing Internet governance capacity, and in the needs for further development within these stakeholder groups. Small businesses have different needs from large businesses. Different government departments have different priorities and needs. This does not imply that diverse needs cannot be addressed through a common capacity development programme; they can, but only if the design of the programme avoids assuming that needs are uniform. Capacity development initiatives need to take the needs and the context of the people they intend to benefit. Respondents pointed out that it is important to distinguish between capacity building programmes aimed at fostering new participants or programmes aimed at deepening people's engagement.

This study was asked to also identify the needs of “under-represented and marginalised stakeholders”. This label is often used to refer to groups of people such as women, young people, disabled people, people living in rural areas, ethnic and sexual minorities and people from LDCs and SIDS. It is not an easy category to work with in a meaningful way. Reaching people in this category is important and some general Internet capacity building needs can be attributed to the category as a whole, but to include them effectively they need to be disaggregated and with the specific needs of specific people in this category identified in a specific manner.

There are also issues of regional and national specificity to consider. Not all countries are the same. This has bearing on Internet governance capacity development needs. Although there are generally applicable capacity building needs, in order to build capacity in ways that are truly empowering an IGF capacity building programme needs to look beyond generalities. Developing capacity development activity linked to NRIs should use local issues and processes as a starting point. As pointed out in the Louder Voices study quoted above, strengthening developing country participation and influence in global processes is dependent on more robust and inclusive processes at national level.

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4 “Reviewing Global Internet Governance Capacity Development and Identifying Opportunities for Collaboration”, Prepared for ITU by Diplo Foundation researchers led by Marilia Maciel and Alan Finlay, April 2017. <https://dig.watch/sites/default/files/ITUIGreport2017newcover.pdf>

5 “Mapping of multi-stakeholder structures related to digital policies and decision-making in Africa”

Below is a list of capacity development needs that are potentially relevant to all stakeholder groups followed by needs associated with specific stakeholder groups. These “needs” are, however, merely indicative and it is always advisable to establish the specific needs of participants in capacity development events when they are being planned. A list of topics that respondents proposed for IGF-linked Internet governance programmes is attached as Appendix B.

### **Needs that cuts across all stakeholder groups**

- **Capacity at individual and institutional levels.** Without strong institutions able to play a leadership role in Internet governance at national level, effective participation of LDCs and SIDS at global level will not be sustainable. This applies to all sectors and stakeholder group.
- **Critical thinking, research and analysis.** Critical thinking and skill in policy analysis are developed over time, but the methodology and materials used by capacity building initiatives can help build these skills. This includes the ability to analyse power and interest in a nuanced way. Not everyone needs to be expert researchers, but research is part of the policy development cycle and everyone involved in Internet governance needs basic skills in finding and analysing information.
- **Evidence-based policy and regulation.** Knowing how to approach policy and regulation on the basis of evidence, as opposed to assumptions or political positions and alignments, and understanding why this is important. As the United Nations Division for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) puts it on its website: “Evidence-based policy is important for making effective and successful policy decisions”. They identify a set of key tools for building capacity for evidence-based policy which resonates with needs identified by respondents. For example, understanding statistical standards and statistics and environmental accounting.<sup>6</sup>
- **Policy makers and policy processes.** Understanding the mechanics of policy processes and the imperatives that governments and policy-makers (e.g. legislatures) work with at national level, and how global policy processes operate. With regard to Internet related policy processes, people need to be able to examine them critically, and prioritise which are most important to their interests.
- **The IGF and NRIs.** This includes understanding the roles of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group and the Secretariat; knowing how to participate in and propose Dynamic Coalitions or Best Practice Forums and how to write session proposals.
- **Development, particularly and sustainable development and the rights-based approach to development<sup>7</sup>.** A basic understanding of development, under-development, information and communications technologies (ICTs) for development and differences in infrastructure and resources in different parts of the world. Understanding human development and social equality and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is also important for Internet governance practitioners who need to engage both the positive impacts of the Internet as well as negative impacts.

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6 <https://www.un.org/development/desa/capacity-development/what-we-do/areas-of-work/evidence-based-policy/>

7 More on this approach which is particularly suited to Internet governance is available at <https://hrbaportal.undg.org/>

- **Gender, gender justice, gender identity and diversity.** Understanding the experience of women and gender-diverse people on the Internet as well as the gender gap in access and use of the Internet and how to factor this into Internet governance and policy. Sensitivity to gender issues, understanding sexism and why it is important to ensure policy spaces are not sexist is an important need. Many men do not understand, for example, why women are sensitive to, for example, being addressed as “ladies” in policy discussions at the IGF.
- **Human rights.** Understanding the human rights regime at international, regional and global level. The duties of states and companies, and the rights of individuals. It is also important for Internet governance capacity development to include civil and political rights and economic social and cultural rights as human rights standards from both sets of rights apply globally (with differences based on which agreements countries have signed on to). For LDCs and SIDS it is also useful to understand what is meant by the “rights-based approach to development” which is used across the UN system and which is ideally suited to Internet governance as it links participation and inclusion in policy processes to their outcomes.
- **History of Internet governance, definitions of Internet governance and the Internet governance ecosystem.** Institutions at national, regional and global levels, what they do, who they are accountable to, and debates on the role and legitimacy of these institutions. Agreements at intergovernmental and other levels that shape Internet governance. It is important to include not just “Internet” institutions like Regional Internet Registries and ICANN but also Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) telecommunications regulators and regional bodies who make decisions on Internet infrastructure, the cost of communications and other regulation that impacts on the Internet. Cybersecurity is also an important part of this ecosystem as are Internet intermediaries.
- **The multi-stakeholder approach** and how it is perceived and applied in different contexts. The value of understanding the perspectives of other stakeholder groups/people from other parts of the world and giving this consideration in Internet governance. Several respondents mentioned the need for critical engagement of this approach so that it can evolve and improve rather than stagnate.
- **How the Internet works.** Basic technical understanding of the Internet as a network of networks and of the protocols, processes and institutions that keeps it working. This includes Internet names and numbers, and the layer model (transport, content, application etc.).
- **Internet business models** and how the Internet interacts with the traditional economy and the growing digital economy.
- **Internet intermediaries and intermediary liability.** This covers different role players, content moderation, responses to harmful or illegal content and behaviours, cross-border jurisdiction and a range of other issues that generate day to date Internet governance challenges.

Beyond the kind of knowledge building mentioned above there are also practical skills needed to help people and organisations be effective in Internet governance nationally, regionally and globally. Examples of this kind of “**process**” or “**practical**” capacity are:

- **Effective collaboration in a multi-stakeholder context.** Many respondents felt that collaboration between stakeholders in Internet governance remains superficial.

Understanding how to work collaboratively across stakeholder groups needs to be learnt and practised. It can be difficult to work with people whose world view is different from one's home. How to manage this can be learnt, e.g. through role play as is done at some SIGs.

- **English language skills.** To be effective in global Internet governance processes, people need good English-language skills. This need does not negate the importance of these spaces becoming more inclusive of language diversity, but it does express the current reality.
- **Establishing and maintaining effective national and regional IGFs** or other policy discussions in a manner that accommodates diversity of views, languages, inclusion of people of different classes, gender, sectors and stakeholder groups.
- **Building, sustaining and taking advantage of** partnerships, particularly with people from other stakeholder groups.

Resource-related needs cut across stakeholder groups as well.

- **Financial support for attendance of global Internet governance events.** While this is not a solution on its own, for people from all stakeholder groups in LDCs and SIDS it remains fundamentally important to their capacity to participate effectively in IG. However, rather than this support targeting newcomers it should consider facilitating continuity, enabling people who are already active to deepen their knowledge and influence.
- **Reliable long-term support for Internet governance capacity development at the national and regional level.** This would include regional, sub-regional and national schools of Internet governance (SIGs) and training activities of regional intergovernmental institutions (e.g. the African Union or the Organisation of American States).
- **Information about Internet governance capacity building** opportunities, fellowships and internships, and access to training material and other resource material. Also needed is easy access to information about Internet governance organisations, activities, fora and events.
- **How to make effective use of remote participation opportunities and online courses.** These are particularly relevant to people – from all stakeholder groups - who cannot travel to events because of lack of financial resources, lack of mobility or other conditions which makes travel or attending large events difficult for them. Improving remote participation has to be an ongoing priority for the IGF. It is a means of inclusion of people from SIDS and LDCs, people with disability for whom travel is difficult, and young people, among others. Remote participation does have limitations however, particularly if one's goal is to influence agendas and outcomes. If accompanied with preparation and support, remote participation has enormous capacity development potential.

## **Stakeholder group-specific needs**

### **Governments**

Different parts of governments have different capacity development needs, depending on their area of work, but all need a basic understanding of global Internet governance processes, and in particular of how international law applies to the Internet. "Government" as a heading for a sector encompasses a huge and diverse range of institutions, from the judiciary, to regulators, to policy

makers. Even though parliamentarians and legislatures are not, in most countries, formally part of government administrations, they are often considered as part of government in the context of Internet governance. Needs associated with governments included knowing how to:

- **Navigate the multistakeholder environment.** Delegates need capacity building in how to effectively participate in multistakeholder spaces which have different dynamics and modalities to intergovernmental forums. E.g. there are usually no binding agreements, or treaties. Policy formulation is done by participants, not consultants. Silence is often seen as consent and so-called rough consensus can be very frustrating for government delegates who feel their views are not respected. These processes can be more transparent than intergovernmental processes, but also more difficult to navigate as the interests of all parties are not always evident.
- **Navigate the intergovernmental environment.** Even if more familiar to many developing country governments, this too remains challenging. Some intergovernmental bodies work through regional groupings, such as the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Others, like the Human Rights Council, make use of “core country groups” who are deliberately made up of different regions and rely on developing and developed countries working together. Also, while officials from foreign affairs departments are usually well-versed in the intricacies of intergovernmental negotiations, people involved in technical aspects of Internet matters are often not.
- **Link Internet policy to social and economic inclusion.** How can Internet policy and regulation enable equity and sustainable development at the national level.
- **Engage different stakeholders.** Government officials need skills in how to reach out to other stakeholders while making policy on Internet related issues in a timely manner, not just as a “last resort”. This involves understanding the role of, for example, civil society and the media – voices which often challenge government. They need to understand how involving other stakeholder groups (civil society, technical community, academia) can help them face challenges related to fast-paced digitalization or the lack thereof.
- **Uphold the role and responsibility of government in the context of IG.** Governments are responsible for creating enabling environments for economic, social and political development. Government institutions are responsible for developing, even if in partnership with nongovernmental stakeholders, Internet infrastructure. They have to protect and promote the rights of individuals in their territory and implement policies there. They need to be equipped with knowledge of internationally accepted legal and technical standards, international law, and they need to know how they use digital technologies to support and effective public sector services. Having one or two individuals in a communications or ICT department understand Internet governance is not sufficient. Knowledge needs to filter through institutions, and government institutions need to have capacity building strategies at institutional level.
- **Fulfil government’s responsibilities as duty bearers for upholding human rights online.** Understanding this is particularly important for parts of government involved in information and communications technology as these duties are often not on their radar.
- **Ensure governance is accountable and transparent** and understand how Internet policy can contribute to achieving this.
- **Ensure public participation in policy processes** as a building block of inclusive, accountable and transparent governance.
- **Approach the Internet with openness as opposed to fear, while also acknowledging risk and harmful use.** While most governments understand that the Internet can bring economic benefit, many are still more preoccupied with controlling how the Internet is used by their citizens.

- **Connect national to regional to global concerns.** Understanding which global processes have most significance at national level. This requires good knowledge of international Internet governance processes.
- **Connect Internet governance concerns with other areas of policy**, e.g. online data protection and financial services, public health or education and developing **in-country policy expertise** to avoid dependence on consultants, or donors, or investors. This dependence can easily lead to capture.
- **Link Internet policy and industrial and innovation policy.** Approaches that assume there is a standardised blueprint for policy solutions which can be replicated should be avoided. Understanding what is meant by the so-called 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution and how this relates to Internet-related policy.
- **Approach taxation** of global Internet companies and avoid national taxes and tariffs which can have negative impacts on low income Internet users. Free trade areas and how they operate, what the benefits and potential risks are is also important for governments to understand.
- **Approach cybersecurity** challenges and policy processes. They particularly need capacity in navigating global and regional cybersecurity discussions, and in approaching cybersecurity in a manner that includes protection of individual users (and citizens).
- **Respond to cybercrime** and how it is different from cybersecurity.
- **Gather and use statistics.** What data to gather, how, and how to analyse and use statistical information. This is linked to evidence-based policy-making, which is mentioned above under general needs relevant to all stakeholder groups.
- **Measure impact** of the Internet and other digital technologies. The UNESCO Internet Universality Indicators based on its R O A M framework is particularly valuable in this regard.
- **Optimise participation in the IGF and NRIs.** Understanding how they work their potential value for government. Knowing how to find and use the outcomes of the IGF processes.

## Businesses

Businesses are diverse, with small national or local entities having different needs from those who work across borders. Aside from the crosscutting needs mentioned above, business stakeholders also need to understand:

- **Policy and regulation** at global, regional and national level that impacts on their operation in the context of the cross-border nature of the Internet. While large multinationals have in-house legal and policy experts, small and medium sized businesses, particularly from LDCs and SIDS, do not. IGF-based capacity building can help address this gap.
- **The difference between profile building and participation.** A respondent described this as needing to understand the difference between funding “high impact” corporate responsibility projects and funding “high-profile” corporate responsibility projects.
- **How to deal with platforms** (maximising gains, minimising risks) and understanding the pros and cons of regulation. This is particularly needed by export-oriented businesses.
- **How to identify niches with potential sustainability and competitive advantage**, e.g. market niches where local businesses will not be obliterated by large global platforms. This is needed by national and regional ICT businesses – large, medium, small and micro. They need support as they play a vital role in developing country economies.
- **The value of interacting with and cooperating with others stakeholder groups**, particularly civil society and government, to implement public policies and strategies and such for digital inclusion. Businesses need to be able to grasp how participating in and

supporting the IGF aligns with business objectives but also that is not primarily a marketing opportunity.

- **Consumer rights** as well as human rights, including why they are different.
- **How regulation affects their business in cross-border Internet contexts**, e.g. data protection and privacy regulation from Europe that applies to European citizens all over the world.

### Civil society

Civil society is the “glue that holds the IGF together”. It is a very heterogeneous grouping and includes individual citizens, Internet users, and large, small, national and international civil society organisations working on a vast range of issues and with different political positions and approaches. Social movements and trade unions are also part of civil society. Civil society organisations connect people and different stakeholder groups to one another in the Internet governance context. Some play a monitoring role – looking at the behaviour of states and of corporations in order to protect rights and the public interest. Some respondents identified the need for more and stronger civil society organisations that specialise in Internet governance issues at national level in LDCs and SIDS. It was also emphasised that it is important to build the Internet governance capacity of civil society organisations not focused on the Internet, but who work on social justice, sustainable development, transparency, good governance, human rights, and gender justice. Specific capacities identified as needed by civil society stakeholders include:

- **How to engage with policy processes collaboratively** and find ways to engage critically but move beyond protest to achieving the outcomes they seek. Working with business and government and finding common ground.
- **In-depth understanding of Internet business models** and of the social and economic impact of the Internet affects human rights, social justice, equality and sustainable development.
- **Areas of policy linked to Internet governance** such as economic and fiscal policy, investment policy, and policy related to infrastructure development.
- **Technical aspects of the Internet and how this impacts on Internet-related policy.** For civil society to be effective in Internet governance they need to understand how the Internet works.
- **Market structure and analysis.** Civil society also needs to understand how Internet and telecommunications markets operate and are regulated (or not).
- **Understanding of issues from the perspective** of others, particularly business and government.
- **Understanding the value, and possible risks,** of working collaboratively with government and business.
- **Cybersecurity, cybercrime, encryption.** Understanding concerns that are priorities for other stakeholders but also important for civil society.

### Technical community

- **Social, political and developmental impacts of Internet governance.** Respondents identified the technical community as tending to be somewhat more insular than any other Internet governance stakeholder groups. This results in people and organisations from the technical community adopting, particularly at national level, a one-dimensional approach to Internet governance.
- **How to engage in non-technical discussions** with other stakeholders as part of the same ecosystem.

- **How to talk about technical issues to non-technical people.**

### Academic community

The need for more academic engagement, and the needs of people in the academic community for Internet governance capacity is very pronounced in LDCs and SIDS. The role of the academic community in Internet governance is substantial and should never be underestimated. It is a community that contributes research and analysis, evidence and innovation, that assesses impact, and that educates the next generation of Internet governance practitioners. It is important that their research findings feed into policy discussions, and that academics listen and learn from other stakeholders in the IGF process who deal with the impact of Internet governance decisions (or the lack of them) on a daily basis.

One respondent, using the example of Latin America, said that they feel that the multistakeholder model is stagnating because post-graduate university-based programmes are not contributing to critical analysis of Internet governance processes, or providing opportunities for Internet-governance focused post graduate study or research.

Capacity building needs identified specifically for this community include:

- **Integration of critical Internet governance topics into existing programmes.** E.g. social research and research methodology programmes should introduce courses on big data and research.
- **Closer interaction between humanities and STEM departments and graduates.**
- **How to approach research** into emerging priorities such as artificial intelligence, datafication, etc. and how to involve practitioners in this research.
- **Different methods of making information available**, such as academic podcasts, artwork, illustrations and videos suitable for the different kinds of learners
- **Scholarships to attend conferences** and to learn from experts in the field. To avoid abuse of these scholarships, there should be an application phase which is inclusive and a reporting stage after the event followed by a community service based on what has been learnt
- **Platforms where they can publish research articles.**

### Young people and youth IGF initiatives

Emphasis on youth inclusion is not new in the IGF and young people are visible and invested in the IGF as evidenced by the large number of responses from young people to the research questionnaire distributed during this study. There is a body of active and organised youth IGF initiatives around the world. Nevertheless, for many young people it is still difficult to be taken seriously with their inclusion often limited to youth sessions, or youth representatives at opening or closing sessions of the IGF. At national level the situation is even more challenging, with very few national policy processes actively including young people's voices. Their Internet governance capacity needs should be seen in this context and addressing these needs will need effort both from the IGF itself, as from individual young persons and youth organisations.

Many of the questions posed in the email questionnaire were already discussed by youth IGF stakeholders themselves, including at the Youth Coalition on Internet Governance (YCIG) session during the 2019 IGF in Berlin<sup>8</sup> on "Youth Participation at the IGF". They stressed the need for community building and better access to information about learning and funding opportunities.

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<sup>8</sup> A mind map of the issues raised during this session can be viewed at <https://www.plectica.com/maps/NWOCE4EK0>.

Many said they found it difficult to navigate the Internet governance ecosystem, and feel part of the IGF community. Some suggested that mentorship – formal or informal – can help newcomers understand the context of discussions and debates.

Continuity and longer term capacity building programmes – as opposed to once off initiatives or fellowships - stood out among the needs expressed by young respondents. Most fellowship programmes aim to include **new** young people. There is very little on ongoing support for those who engage consistently and demonstrate commitment and leadership.

Young people interested in Internet governance appear to be at a juncture where they want to be included as more than participants. Most recognise that capacity development is both an opportunity for them to be more involved in Internet governance, as well as way of making their participation more influential. They recognise that they need to take the initiative but feel constrained by the limitations of current capacity building opportunities. One said that “youth engagement programmes are successful, but lack rigour”. The lack of continuity with most programmes providing once-off opportunities is a major concern, as is the difficulty in finding institutions that will support their involvement over time. This is particularly challenging for young people in the developing world where there are fewer Internet-related job and study opportunities. Needs identified include:

- **Grasping the IGF concept, what it can deliver and what it cannot.** New comers struggle to figure out where to start, and how to find their place. The discourse of the Internet “belonging to everyone” with anyone who wants to be able to contributing to shaping it creates expectations that are not easily met.
- **To be part of the conversation:** Many young people are working hard to deepen their knowledge of specific Internet governance topics. This knowledge, combined with the perspectives they bring as Internet natives, can add value to Internet governance processes. Youth need to be seen as voices that add value, not mere recipients of affirmative action, or a non-threatening source of diversity.
- **Role play.** Opportunities such as SIG practicums or “model united nations”. These give young people the opportunity to build confidence, negotiate, debate, and formulate policy positions in a safe and learning-oriented space.
- **Public speaking.** How to approach different types of speaking opportunities, from presentations, to asking questions, to panel or round table discussions.
- **Leadership** skills.
- **Capacity building linked to NRIs.** A day zero at each NRI would reach a large number of young people, many whom would not have the resources, or connections to travel to a global IGF or benefit from a SIG or Diplo Foundation courses.
- Capacity building linked to network building.
- **Information about capacity development and funding opportunities.** Information about SIGs, fellowships, online courses, scholarships, degree and post graduate programmes, etc. is currently scattered. Having a one-stop-shop for this kind of information on the IGF website would make it much easier for young people who want to get more deeply involved in Internet. Some respondents also said they needed help with their applications.
- **Youth peer networking, community and sector building.** Many respondents felt that youth needs to be more effectively networked as a stakeholder group or peer community. Many are still studying, or looking for employment and therefore do not fit neatly into the standard IGF stakeholder categories. And many find it difficult to engage in Internet governance activity as so much of it requires some degree of specialised knowledge.

- **Knowing how to “understand”, communicate and “promote” what “Internet governance” is** and adjusting this according to audience.
- **Mentoring and supported participation.** Young people need continued engagement in Internet governance processes and particularly after having had the benefit of a fellowship. Many fellows do not sustain involvement due to lack of support.
- **Opportunities to be role players and to be part of substantive debate and discussion.** Make youth part of the conversation: many are working hard to deepen their knowledge in specific Internet governance topics and as Internet natives they bring a perspective which older actors lack. Respondents also expressed a need to be given opportunities to speak and do presentations, to be moderators, rapporteurs and organisers of sessions.

### **Others, particularly marginalised groups such as people with disability, minorities, or people living in remote areas**

The frequent statements made in the resolutions and statements about the need to include marginalised groups need is unfortunately rarely matched by systematic effort to identify who they are, interact with them about how Internet governance affects them and understand their needs. Specific marginalised groups do have specific needs, and the starting point should be to identify them, and engage with them. This can be challenging, as people not currently engaged in Internet governance are often not aware that getting involved is in their interest. Some who are aware of the relevance of Internet governance are reluctant to participate, as, based on past experience, they are unconvinced that the configuration of power, conditions and attitudes inside Internet governance processes will ever allow for their meaningful inclusion and participation. Overcoming the barriers to under-represented groups’ participation in Internet governance requires more than capacity development. Nevertheless there are general needs and issues that capacity development activity can respond to, and use as a way of building more meaningful engagement with specific currently excluded groups:

- **Understanding what Internet governance processes are, and where they take place, and what they impact on.** A first step for groups not currently included is understanding of how Internet governance affects them and their interests. They also need to know how to they can participate in these processes and put their concerns on the table.
- **Integrating Internet governance concerns into policy activity they are already involved in.** Disability groups for example are often already involved in advocating for their interest in terms of access to education, public spaces and public transport. Capacity building activities can help them identify opportunities for pursuing their interests in the field of Internet governance.
- **Accessibility.** Capacity building programmes need to be accessible for people that are visually or hearing impaired. Currently most Schools of Internet governance do not accommodate visually or hearing impaired participants. Many online courses are also not accessible to the visually or hearing impaired. Use of tools, products and outputs which are specifically designed for participation of the various groups with disability.
- **How “the unconnected can connect themselves”.** For many people – particularly those who live in remote areas, or in urban slums that lack infrastructure - basic affordable access to the Internet remains a challenge. They need to know how policy and regulation can enable affordable access and how innovative locally driven models like community networks can help meet local information needs, create jobs, strengthen local ownership and control.
- **Digital inclusion.** People, groups and communities who are excluded, or “marginalised” in some way, need to know how to create their own inclusion narrative, one in which they have agency. Internet governance capacity development, if designed with this in mind, can

help them build these narratives and participate in a more empowered way in policy processes locally, nationally, regionally and globally.

- **The opportunity to speak, tell their stories and make others aware of their needs.** The IGF, and NRIs in particular can give people with disability, sexual minorities, people living in remote areas and others outside of the Internet governance mainstream the opportunity to talk directly to those whose actions affect them.

## **Appendix A: Proposed topics for IGF-linked capacity building**

These topics are not presented in the form of a structured curriculum. They are compiled from input received in response to questionnaire and interviewed conducted in late 2020 for the purpose of this consultancy. They do provide a useful checklist to draw on when developing the curricula or agenda's for Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and National and Regional and Youth IGF Initiatives (NRI) linked capacity building activity. National, regional and other audience specific factors have to be taken into account, e.g. what languages to people speak and work in, and the degree of existing knowledge and experience of those for whom the capacity development is intended. Using methodologies that affirm and utilises existing knowledge “in the room” is also essential as peer-to-peer learning can be an enduring process kick-started during a particular event, but which can continue for years and years. The Dynamic Coalition (DC) on School of Internet Governance (SIGs) is developing a generic curriculum and the IGF can draw on this. Below is a list of topics respondents would like to see covered by IGF-based Internet governance capacity building activities. Some of these topics are best addressed exercises. Some require more traditional “lecture” formats. Methodologies that are interactive and that encourage participants to ask questions are always best. Examples are games and role play exercises.

### **Global IGF-specific topics**

- History and mandate of the IGF
- IGF structure and process, the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) and the multistakeholder model and NRIs, BPFs, DCs
- How the IGF is located in the UN system
- How the host country is selected and host country responsibilities
- How is the IGF agenda is developed
- Navigating the IGF schedule at the global event
- Accessing the IGF participant list and identifying speakers/experts
- How to write session proposals

### **NRI-specific topics**

- Regional and national Internet governance organizations, platforms and initiatives: what do they do and how to get involved in their work
- How to start an NRI
- How to organise an NRI
- Mobilising resources for an NRI
- How to link an NRI to relevant issues and institutions (at national or regional level)

### **General Internet governance-linked topics**

#### **Internet governance and policy topics**

- Introduction to Internet governance, the “ecosystem” including institutions and actors
- Policy-making processes and policy discussions (understanding bilateral and other types of policy meetings and/or policy writing)
- The meaning of 'governance' as opposed to 'government' and why the Internet needs to be governed
- Jurisdictional implications of the Internet and Internet governance-related business models

- Principles for Internet governance (e.g. the NETmundial principles, or the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee's principles)
- Current "hot" Internet governance topics
- Internet governance to achieve inclusion ("not leaving anyone behind")
- "How do we govern the Internet by not leaving anyone behind"
- Policy implementation, policy formulation, policy analysis and policy integration for others particularly persons with disabilities, marginalised communities e.g. Dalit communities and sexual minorities
- Involve civil Society and young people particularly those who involved in youth organization and movement

### **Participation, confidence and network building topics**

- How to engage and participate actively in policy processes (e.g. how to write submissions on draft policy)
- Why engage in different aspects of Internet governance and how to work out what to priorities
- Sharing of personal interests, policy discussions based on experience of the participants
- Practical approaches to youth engagement and network building
- Effective communication of ideas and messages, e.g. making an "elevator pitch"
- Public speaking
- Building self-confidence and belief in the legitimacy of one's experience and concerns
- Inter-cultural communications and biases
- Fundraising and writing grant applications

### **Tech topics**

- How the Internet works - technical basics of the Internet
- Internet domain names and IP numbers and the institutions that administer them
- How to think critically about technology and the Internet and their impact on society
- Digital ethics

### **Human rights-related topics**

- Human rights in the context of emerging technologies
- Privacy and personal data protection
- Media freedom

### **Other topics related to Internet governance capacity development**

- Research methodology
- Intellectual property processes, role players and interests
- Imagining a world without the Internet
- Digital literacy
- Cybersecurity
- Cybercrime and how to combat it

## **Appendix B: Interview schedule and email survey**

### **Interview schedule**

1. How long have you been involved in Internet governance/ICT policy?
2. How would you categorise your involvement
3. How do you rate your own capacity in Internet governance? Why?
4. How do you rate the capacity in Internet governance of others in your institution, on average? Why?
5. What do you do when you need help?
6. Do you feel you need more capacity in IG? Yes/No
- 6.1 In which areas do **you** need capacity most?
- 6.2 Thinking of others that you work with, in which areas do they most need capacity building?
7. What role do you see for the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and National Regional and Youth IGF Initiatives (NRIs) in capacity building in IG?

### **Email survey**

- 1) What in your view are the capacity building needs of developing country actors, particularly LDCs and SIDS? Not all stakeholders have the same needs, so please specify what you think the needs are of: governments; businesses; civil society; the technical community; academic community; young people particularly those involved in youth organisations and movements; others, particularly marginalised groups such as people with disability, minorities, or people living in remote areas.
- 2) Can the IGF (and NRIs) play a role in responding to these needs? And if so, in what ways? Learning events is one way of building capacity, but there are many others.
- 3) What role do you see for the Youth IGF in IGF-related capacity development?
- 4) If you were to develop a curriculum for an IGF-linked capacity building programme.. what would its "table of contents" look like?
- 5) Do you think that Schools of Internet Governance (SIGs) should have a closer relationship with the IGF? If so, why and how?
- 6) Any other thoughts about capacity development and the IGF?