IGF 2020 MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy

Online Meeting X
3 December 2020 at 14:00 p.m. UTC

Summary Report

The tenth virtual meeting of the IGF 2020 MAG's Working Group (WG) on IGF Strengthening and Strategy (WG-Strategy) was held on December 3 2020 at 14:00 p.m. UTC. The meeting was hosted and moderated by the Group's co- chairs, Concettina Cassa and Anriette Esterhuysen. The list of participants is annexed to this report. The recording of the meeting is available only to the meeting participants upon request.

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

<u>Agenda</u>
1. Feedback on the main discussions on Digital Cooperation held during the IGF2020
2. IGF improvements – next steps
3. Parliamentarian track - next steps
4. Priorities to be addressed by the end of 2020
5. Brainstorm around a plan of activities for the WG to be presented to the new MAG in 2021
6. Response document to the Options Paper - do we update it and if so how?
7. AoB

The co-chair Anriette gave a brief introduction on the scope of the IGF Strengthening and Strategy WG and on the activities done so far. She explained the opportunity the WG had to respond to some challenges addressed by the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and the Options Paper.

She also reminded that the WG received an endorsement on the Response Document to the Options Paper from the IGF Civil Society from Cacaus.

A. FEEDBACK ON THE MAIN DISCUSSIONS ON DIGITAL COOPERATION HELD DURING THE IGF2020

Several participants expressed support to the comments shared by Paul Blaker related to the need to have an IGF closer to the IGF + model with a more focused agenda and addressing no more than two or three policy questions. The suggestions included the need to reduce by 50% the number of workshops and parallel sessions and to have stronger IGF outcomes. For the whole list of comments shared by Paul see annex 2.

Some other participants observed that reducing the number of workshops and parallel sessions would severely limit participation and interest of traditional IGF communities and they pointed out that the IGF should keep space for a broader agenda, even if a few policy questions are selected as main tracks.

Jorge Cancio shared his view on the challenges and gaps of the vIGF2020 in relation to par. 93 of the Roadmap for digital Cooperation. He expressed support for the reduction of workshops pointing out

that their selection should be issue-driven. He observed that there was a lack of presence of politicians, head of state level and private sector decision-makers in the vIGF2020. He noted that there were several sets of "messages" issued in relation to the different tracks of the vIGF2020 and this could have caused some confusion. He also noted the low impact the IGF had in media and the low level of concrete pledges. For the whole list of comments shared by Jorge see annex 2.

Several concerns were expressed by the WG members for the fact that only four IGFs are left before WSIS+20 decides whether or not to renew the IGF mandate and on the need to show significant changes in the next IGF that should look different from previous ones.

Several participants observed that no more than two three topics should be selected for the IGF agenda and that they should be based on community inputs. It was expressed that this approach would help to identify hot topics and would bring in media /policy makers attention.

Some participants observed that an extended preparatory process and collective discussion should be activated and highlighted the need to have more focused messages/options for actions.

It was noted that a number of innovations were added to vIGF2020 few weeks before the event started (social media, pledges, messages from multiple tracks, networking sessions, etc.). It was suggested to identify some as 'building blocks' and to give them a place in the overall plan for 2021.

Several participants suggested more involvement of NRIS saying that the NRIs should be invited to address the policy questions as this could help to share worldwide perspectives.

The need to have more Youth involvement in the IGF was also expressed noting that the presence of Youth was higher in the vIGF2020. Some ideas were shared on this aspect:

- encourage workshop submitters to add youth representatives from the very beginning of the process (not as last resource).
- Youth participation should not be limited to "youth issues" encouraging the crossover among generations.
- suggest the NRIs to include youth representation at the organization of their annual meetings.

Some participants noted that having an IGF with a more simple structure could be more attractive for the High Level Leaders.

It was suggested to have two parts in the IGF and to concentrate the main/emerging topics in two days leaving the space to discuss the other topics (workshops) in the other days. There was also a suggestion to hold the workshops in a different time of the year.

Some participants suggested adopting the "EuroDIG model for messages" as this could help to identify a limited number of topics and issues and to focus the communication.

Several participants highlighted the need to keep the bottom up process and the ownership of the community.

Timea Suto underlined the importance of having a communication strategy to be started at the beginning of the year.

Giacomo Mazzone expressed the need to have a multiyear communication grid and from that grid to choose one focus per year to be communicated. He also noted that the lack of media coverage could

be attributed to the fact that the event was virtual and not in presence.

Several participants highlighted the need to look at the whole of the IGF process, including BPFs, DCs, Open Forums, etc. saying that around 90% of participants are not aware that DCs, BPFs, the workshops are fundamentally different things

Several WG's participants pointed out the importance of drafting a proposal to be presented to the MAG so that the new changes to IGF could be implemented in 2021.

Anja Gengo observed that vIGF2020 was held in a particular moment where the US election and other UN events were held. She said that this could have influenced the coverage of international media, but the event was covered from several national media outlets. She informed the participants that several commitments and pledges were made by many stakeholders and that the IGF Secretariat will start the "call for taking stock" next days to collect ideas to improve IGF 2021. She also invited the participants to reflect on the proposal to reduce the number of sessions as this could reduce the number of active participants.

Paul Charlton said that the reforms to put in place in the IGF should consider how to get more participation from the stakeholders and from certain levels of stakeholders. He added that the next IGF should also consider the IGF hybrid model where people are participating from remote sides and in presence.

Anriette suggested to draft a proposal to include some basic recommendations for the IGF 2021 to be presented to the next MAG meeting. She observed that IGF is a global event, open to everyone, to people from different parts of the world who have different priorities. It cannot be compared to a regional event. For what concerns the reduction of IGF sessions, she noted that this could be done keeping the ownership in the agenda setting process and maintaining the bottom up leadership. She invited the participants to reflect on how important vIGF2020 was for the Global South. She also shared some thoughts on the kind of participation we expect from Parliamentarians and High Level Leaders. About the different messages related to different tracks, she reminded that this was not the initial plan and that it is important to have more structured and integrated messages. She also observed that MAG, IGF Secretariat and UNDESA have its own communication team and this makes the communication process more complex.

B. **Improvements to the IGF Output**

   documents:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1L6cf00crInn_ae3_peObjkIMxWE3cSlL/edit#heading=h.gjdgxs

Summary of key points: The facilitator, Flavio Wagner, reminded the process which brought up the selection of the three priorities from the Options Paper and the need to decide how to proceed. The co-chair Anriette said that she updated the document to include the comments raised by WG's participants. She explained that there is a general consensus on the first two proposals but the third one has some elements that need more clarifications. Paul Blaker observed that the third proposal related to the Observatory has less priority and that its implementation could be linked to the IGF website project.

Next steps: it was decided to leave the document open for comments for one more week and to

postpone the discussion to the next virtual meeting.

C. Proposal to include the Parliamentarian track as permanent component in the IGF activities (Roadmap for Digital Cooperation - Par. 93 c)

Output documents:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YVW3RZL4eSnrBdrGergJymNONNp6Riiw/ edit

Summary of key points:

Wolfgang explained that the proposal was published on IGF website and that based on the outcomes discussed during the parliamentarian roundtable track the document is going to be updated. He added that the Chair of the Digital Committee of the German Bundestag started the process for the formalization of the informal group. Wolfgang asked for some clarifications on the procedure to follow in order to have this group formalized in the IGF and if the MAG or UNDESA are responsible for the process. He also asked if the non-paper document could be added to the Response document to the Options Paper.

Jason Munyan informed the participants that the Options Paper and the MAG's response to it are being taken into account by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) and DESA in New York. They think the operational aspects of paragraph 93 would be good for the IGF MAG Strengthening and Strategy WG to focus on (e.g.the parliamentarians engagement, the outcomes, the structure and focused agenda of the annual meeting) while it will be for the Secretary General to take decisions about the High level body, and the fundraising and communication strategies.

The co-chair Anriette shared the impression that Parliamentarian track is under UNDESA responsibility.

The need to harmonize the work of parliamentarians at global level and to share the strategies with National and Regional IGF and of creating more awareness about the IGF processes and initiatives was expressed by Mattia Fantinati and Oliver Peace.

Next steps: it was decided to add the proposal to the Response Document to the Options Paper. Wolfgang will share the updated version which will include the comments raised by the WG's participants and the results of the Parliamentarians roundtable

Next meeting: The next meeting of the WG is planned for **Dec. 10 – 1 PM UTC.**

Annex 1:

List of participants

1. Adam Peake, ICANN, MAG member
2. Anja Gengo, IGF Secretariat
3. Anriette Esterhuysen, IGF 2020 MAG Chair, Group's Co-Chair
4. Ben Wallis, Microsoft, Independent Expert
5. Bill Drake, Independent Expert
6. Concettina Cassa, Group's Co-Chair, Government of Italy
7. Eileen Cejas, Youth IGF Argentina, Independent expert
8. Flavio Wagner, CGI.br/ University of Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil
9. Fiona Alexander, Independent expert
10. Jason Munyan, HLPDC Secretariat
11. Jim Prendergast, Independent Expert

12. Jorge Cancio, Government of Switzerland
13. Jyoti Panday, Internet Governance Project, India
14. Markus Kummer, IGFSA
15. Mattia Fantinati, Italian Parliament, MAG Member
16. Paula Martins, APC, Independent expert
17. Paul Blaker, Government of UK
18. Paul Charlton, Government of Canada
19. Peace Oliver, Independent Expert
20. Poncelet Ileleji, Independent Expert
21. Raquel Gatto, ISOC, independent expert
22. Raul Echeberria, Independent expert
23. Roberto Zambrana, ISOC Bolivia, MAG Member
24. Sophie Peresson, ICC, MAG Member
25. Susan Chalmers, NTIA, MAG Member
26. Tereza Horejsova- DiploFoundation, MAG Member
27. Timea Suto, ICC Basis
28. Wim Degezelle, Independent Expert / consultant IGF Secretariat
29. Wolfgang Kleinwächter, University of Aarhus

ANNEX 2 – COMMENTS ON vIGF2020

COMMENTS BY PAUL BLAKER (UK GOVERNMENT):

- The next IGF should only have two (or maximum three) specific and focused policy questions, based on community input. It should be clear that proposals for workshops that do not address those questions will not be accepted. The High Level Leaders Track and Parliamentary will also address these questions.
- The number of workshops at the next IGF should be reduced by half. There will be a stronger expectation that all sessions must have panellists from all stakeholders groups and that all sessions must have at least 50% of the time for Q&A discussion and ten minutes at the end for reporting
- NRIs will be invited to address the policy questions and there will be a session at the IGF when stakeholders from NRIs from each global region will be invited to report back on perspectives in their areas and there will be further discussion
- There will be a limited number of "side events" for other topics that members of the community might want to get together to discuss. These will have remote participation but they will not formally be part of the IGF programme. They will be advertised separately on the website (not just a different colour on the schedule, but a separate section of the website recognising that they have a different status) and they will not form part of the formal reporting. The side events will provide some space for other projects and networking, but the focus of community attention should clearly be on the policy questions.
- Each IGF session will have a rapporteur and at the end of the session there will be five or ten minutes for them to read to the room three or four headline messages from the discussion, which participants will be able to comment on.
- The headline messages will be consolidated into a concise, single set of messages which will be published in the morning of the final day and there will be a final session for participants to comment on it before a final version is produced.

- Rapporteurs will be 'neutral' professionals who will aim to reflect areas of consensus, and any significant areas of disagreement, in a clear, balanced and succinct way. There will be published guidelines about how they should report (for eg. not singling out individual organisations, limits on length, guidelines for when and how to report on areas of disagreement etc.)

These are just some ideas, and I'm sure other members of the WG will have better ones, but it seems to me that the urgent priority now is to develop proposals which send a clear message that we are responding to the HLP and starting to build an IGF+ that looks and feels different.

I wonder if there is time for us to draft a proposal for the new MAG to consider? Perhaps starting with some of the key principles from the Roadmap (more focused agenda, stronger outputs, parliamentary track etc) and then presenting some concrete ideas, like the ones set out above, for how to make them real.

COMMENTS BY JORGE CANCIO (Switzerland Government)

Here are some take-aways in form of "general impressions" from my side linked to the content of §93 of the UNSG Roadmap, always very mindful of the huge challenge the vIGF has been, but also of the need to show substantive progress in the coming IGFs in the implementation of the Roadmap:

General impressions:
Positive:
- Resilience of the forum in difficult times has been shown
- IGF was able to identify and discuss emerging topics: environment & Covid
- There were good innovations which strengthen the inclusion levels, especially through "We The Internet" and second parliamentarian track
- The discussions were more structured with the four main tracks
- There was more NRI presence
- More youth presence (although not so in main tracks)
- There was a wealth of outcomes (but are they being noticed? – see below)
- Call for voluntary pledges was a good idea (although not too much feedback…)
- Record in participation (over 6000)
- There was clear support to UNSG Roadmap and to steps foreseen therein towards IGF+

Challenges:
- Low presence of politicians (perhaps less than 5 Ministers overall! – to my knowledge: Swiss President being only exception at head of state level)
- Overall low active participation from government experts
- Low presence of private sector decision-makers (no CEOs, except E. Kaspersky)
- Too many outcomes? Potential confusion on the "messages": there were HL track and main track "messages" (single tracks and outcomes from both main sessions and HL sessions would be better), in addition there were "key take-aways" and "session recommendations": less is more?!
- Disconnect largely remains between main sessions/HL sessions and intersessional work (outputs)
- Too many sessions and hence duplications, due to a "owner" instead of "issue"-driven model
- Very low impact in media (one mention in passing in The Economist) – many good ideas re social media presence but limited impact (e.g. 100 subscribers in Instagram or some dozens of followers of twitter accounts) Particularly social media work could be improved (e.g. all

sessions were announced on Twitter, but without linking the institutions and speakers, thus very few retweets)
-   Very low impact on external well-known mailing lists/distribution lists (e.g. IGC list) or newsletters
-   Low level of concrete pledges (see https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/10794/2352) and/or implementation steps for IGF+