

**IGF 2021**  
**MAG Meeting VIII | 20 April 2021**

**Summary report**

### **Action items & Next steps**

#### **IGF 2021 issue narratives and policy questions**

- MAG members to review the [consolidated document with issue narratives](#) (descriptions, policy questions, etc.). Deadline: 7.00 am UTC on 21 April.
- The Secretariat to then finalise the document.

#### **Session proposal forms and evaluation process**

- The Secretariat to continue working on finalising the session proposal forms.
- MAG members to review the [workshop proposal form](#) as it is being refined by the Secretariat and send their comments. A new version to be shared with the MAG on 22 or 23 April; at that point, MAG members to only make comments on very substantive issues.
- The Secretariat to develop the narrative text for the call for session proposals and share form comments by the end of the week.
- WG-Workshop process to continue working on developing the workshop evaluation process (e.g. evaluation criteria, overall process, guidelines for MAG members).

#### **Other issues**

- The Secretariat to distribute a poll inviting MAG members to indicate whether they prefer keeping the second Open Consultations and MAG meeting to its original June dates or having it postponed.
- ❖ **The current tasks for MAG members (and related documents) are also available in the [MAG dashboard](#).**

1. The eighth virtual meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) in the IGF 2021 preparatory cycle was held on 20 April 2021. The meeting was moderated by Ms. Anriette Esterhuysen, MAG Chair.

Attached to this summary report are the meeting agenda and input documents (Annex I) and the list of participants (Annex II).

### **I. Introductions and updates from Host Country and Secretariat**

2. The Chair welcomed participants and gave an overview of the meeting's agenda. She explained that the purpose of the meeting is to advance the preparatory work for launching the IGF 2021 call for session proposals.

3. Mr. Przemek Typiak, Polish government, informed the MAG that the Host Country had issued 'save the date' invitations for IGF 2021 to digital ministries in UN member states and that confirmations are already being received. He further noted that Host Country's considerations regarding the hybrid format for the December meeting are reflected in the forms for session proposals developed by the Secretariat. Mr. Typiak also reminded MAG members to keep the host country informed about the COVID-19 situation in their countries and regions (e.g. travel restrictions, vaccination).

4. Mr. Chengetai Masango, IGF Secretariat, announced that the [Multistakeholder Working Group for the Policy Network on Environment \(PNE\)](#) is now constituted and would hold its first meeting on 28 April 2021. After the meeting, the PNE work plan will be shared with the MAG. MAG members were reminded that [a concept note](#) is available describing what policy networks are and how they are expected to function.

## **II. Review of IGF 2021 issue narratives and policy questions**

5. Ms. Esterhuysen reminded participants that the process of deciding on the IGF 2021 focus areas started with the call for community input, closed on 31 January 2021. The issues received in response to the call were classified in several categories, discussed in a series of MAG meetings, and then organised into two main baskets: (a) main focus areas (outcome-oriented, with 60% estimated time allocation): economic and social inclusion and human rights; universal access and meaningful connectivity; (b) emerging and cross-cutting issues (discussion-driven, with 40% estimated time allocation): emerging regulation: market structure, content, data and consumer/users rights regulation; environmental sustainability and climate change; inclusive Internet governance ecosystems and digital cooperation; and trust, security and stability. MAG working groups (issue teams) were formed for each of these areas, to develop descriptions, topics and policy questions to be included in the call for session proposals. The Secretariat has then worked with the documents developed by MAG issue areas to ensure that they are uniform in style and format, and that the policy questions are clearly articulated.

6. Ms. Sorina Teleanu, IGF Secretariat, presented the [consolidated document with issue narratives](#) and explained that the Secretariat, together with the MAG Chair, had worked with the texts developed by MAG issue teams and focused on: (a) ensuring consistency in language, style and format across the entire document; (b) revising the issue descriptions to make them concise and of similar length; (c) narrowing down the list of policy questions and making them concise, in line with the overall goal in having a more focused IGF; (d) taking a look back at the call for issues to ensure that key issues were not missed in the descriptions and policy questions; (e) narrowing down the list of related issues/tags; and (f) making sure that the texts are sensitive and inclusive towards all stakeholder groups. Ms. Teleanu also explained that the topics initially developed by MAG issue teams had been removed from the consolidated document, as they were overlapping with the policy questions. Mr. Wim Degezelle further noted that the emphasis on policy questions is also meant to bring more focus and avoid the situation from previous years when sessions addressed a very wide range of issues and policy questions, which made it challenging to develop both the pre-meeting guide and the IGF 2021 outcomes.

7. During the discussions, a few concerns were raised regarding (a) the removal of topics from the issue narratives, and (b) the introduction of an approach in which session proponents are required to select from the existing list of policy questions (as opposed to them only using the MAG-developed policy questions as illustrative). In response to these points, Ms. Esterhuysen and Ms. Teleanu added the following clarifications:

- The workshop proposal form is developed in such a way as to **require proponents to first indicate whether their proposal addresses main focus areas or emerging and cross-cutting issues.**
- **For the main focus areas, workshop proponents are then invited to select up to two policy questions (from those developed by the MAG) to focus their proposal on.** Once the policy questions are selected, there is still some level of flexibility in how these questions are addressed, as proponents are able to go into detail and explain, for instance, if they want to focus only on one element of the selected question, or to address the question from a different angle and further refine it. Having session proponents choose only from an existing list of policy questions is intended to make it easier to have a more focused and outcome-oriented IGF; this, in turn, should also make it easier for MAG members to evaluate session proposals and determine whether there is overlap or duplication between some proposals.
- **For the cross-cutting and emerging issues, proponents would be both able to select from the predetermined list of policy questions and add other questions if they wish to.**
- The distinction between main focus areas and emerging and cross-cutting issues with regard to the policy questions is meant to reflect the fact that, when IGF 2021 outputs are developed, more attention will be paid to the main focus areas (while the emerging and cross-cutting issues are more discussion-oriented).
- The topics and the policy questions are, in a sense, playing the same role, as they encourage session proponents to select a specific aspect they will be addressing in their session proposals. The topics were removed from the issue narratives because there was duplication with the content of the policy questions. But the intent of requiring session proponents to select from a narrow list of issues to focus on is maintained through the policy questions.
- This new approach represents a fundamental shift in how the IGF programme is developed, but is in line with previous calls for a more focused IGF.

8. Several additional points were raised by MAG members:

- The focus on policy questions needs to be clearly explained in the call for session proposals.
- When session proposals are evaluated, MAG members need to ensure that the selected sessions are not too similar to each other.
- There were some concerns about the different approach between the main focus areas and the emerging and cross-cutting issues (i.e. proponents of sessions for the latter category would be able to add new policy questions in addition to those developed by the MAG). It was noted that this openness might result in too much variety among topics being addressed, which would defeat the purpose of a more focused IGF. However, it was also acknowledged that a difference needs to be made between the two issue areas.

## 9. Action items & next steps

- MAG members to review the consolidated document with issue narratives (descriptions, policy questions, etc.). Deadline: 7.00 am UTC on 21 April.

### III. Review of session application forms

10. Ms. Esterhuysen explained that the Secretariat had worked on developing forms for various types of session proposals (not only workshops). When the call for session proposals is launched, the community will first see information about the different types of sessions they can submit proposals for, making it clear that workshops are not the only option.

11. Ms. Anja Gengo, IGF Secretariat, gave an overview of the [types of sessions](#) that could be proposed by the community: workshops; networking sessions; presentations of research/think tank work/book launches; Dynamic Coalition sessions; national and regional IGF initiatives collaborative sessions; town halls; lightning talks; pre-events; and capacity development sessions.

12. Mr. Luis Bobo, IGF Secretariat, presented the [workshop proposal form](#), focusing on the changes made in comparison to the previous year (e.g. proponents being asked to indicate whether their session will address main focus areas or emerging and cross-cutting issues; the focus on policy questions). He noted that work still needs to be done on the form and that an updated version is to be shared with the MAG by 22 or 23 April.

13. During the discussions, the following main points were raised:

- Accepting workshop proposals in languages other than English is not feasible, as it would make the evaluation by MAG members very difficult. However, options are considered for allowing proposals for pre-events and, possibly other types of sessions, to be submitted in other languages too.
- Regarding the workshop proposal form, it was suggested to bring all questions related to session format and interactivity within one section.
- Session proposals will be asked to indicate which sustainable development goal (SDG) and related target their proposals will focus on. This is a mandatory requirement, allowing IGF discussions to be clearly connected with the SDGs. If, later on, the IGF wishes to contribute to SDG-related processes, it will be easy to showcase the connection between IGF outputs and specific SDGs.
- The Secretariat assured MAG members that privacy, security and accessibility issues are taken into account in the development of forms.
- The narratives that will accompany the call for session proposals should highlight several key aspects: (a) the elements that make this call different from the ones in previous years; (b) the fact that IGF 2021 is planned as a hybrid event, and sessions organisers are expected to consider elements of interactivity and accommodate the hybrid format in their proposals.

14. Regarding the overall timeline and process for session proposals evaluation, the following issues were raised:

- The goal is for the call for session proposals to be launched on 26 April and kept open for four weeks.
- In order to allow more time for MAG members to evaluate workshop proposals and for the Secretariat to compile the results of the evaluation, it was suggested that the second Open Consultations and MAG meeting (initially planned for 21–23 June 2021) is postponed, possibly for July. To facilitate a decision on this issue, the Secretariat will distribute a poll inviting MAG members to indicate whether they prefer keeping the meeting to its original dates or having it postponed.
- Generally speaking, the MAG is expected to only evaluate workshop proposals. Other types of sessions usually fall within the Secretariat remit. Should adjustments be made to the process, the MAG will be kept informed.
- If, when evaluating a workshop session proposal, MAG members consider that the proposed session is better fit as another type of session, they are entitled to make such a suggestion.
- With regard to conflicts of interests, MAG members are expected to recuse themselves from evaluating proposals where their organisations were involved in the submission/development. To enable such proposals to be re-allocated to other evaluators, MAG members are expected to identify such proposals early in the process and inform the Secretariat.
- The MAG Working group on workshop process (WG-Workshop process) will further work on developing the process for workshop proposal evaluation (including evaluation criteria and guidelines for MAG members).

### 15. Action items & next steps

- The Secretariat to continue working on finalising the session proposal forms.
- MAG members to review the [workshop proposal form](#) as it is being refined by the Secretariat and send their comments. A new version to be shared with the MAG on 22 or 23 April; at that point, MAG members to only make comments on very substantive issues.
- The Secretariat to develop the narrative text for the call for session proposals and share form comments by the end of the week.
- WG-Workshop process to continue working on developing the workshop evaluation process (e.g. evaluation criteria, overall process, guidelines for MAG members).

16. The next MAG meeting will be held on 4 May 2021.

## **Annex I**

### **Meeting agenda and input documents**

#### **Agenda**

1. Welcome from the Chair
2. Updates from Host Country
3. Updates from the Secretariat
4. Final review of "issue texts" and policy questions
5. Final review of session application forms
6. Next steps
7. AoB

#### **Input documents**

- [IGF 2021 focus areas](#) (draft)
- [IGF 2021 call for workshop proposals](#) (draft)

## Annex II Participants

Last name	First name
<b>MAG Chair</b>	
Esterhuysen	Anriette
<b>IGF 2021 Host Country</b>	
Typiak	Przemysław
<b>MAG members</b>	
Andriamampionona	Hariniombonana
Afonso	Carlos Alberto
Astbrink	Gunela
Attoumani	Karim
Canales	Maria Paz
Castex	Lucien
Charlton	Paul
Chen	Joyce
Chharia	Rajesh
Choudhury	Amrita
Chukov	Roman
Dofel	Sook-Jung
Fantinati	Mattia
Hordyński	Ryszard
Horejsova	Tereza
Koubaa	Khaled
Peake	Adam
Radsch	Courtney

Roach	Carol
Zambrana	Roberto
<b>UN DESA</b>	
Susar	Deniz
<b>Representatives of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and European Commission</b>	
Russo	Lucia
<b>Other participants</b>	
Amessinou	Kossi
Carvell	Mark
Cassa	Concettina
Cohen	Frederic
Degezelle	Wim
Faith	Afia
Galstyan	Lianna
Munyan	Jason
Mustafina	Sabira
Parris	June
Prendergast	Jim
Skwarek	Wiktor
Uduma	Mary
Wagner	Flavio
Wallis	Ben
<b>IGF Secretariat</b>	
Bobo Garcia	Luis
Gengo	Anja
Masango	Chengetai
Teleanu	Sorina

