

Session Title: "Digital inclusion and accessibility: public policies to eradicate the digital divide"

Session Format: Panel 60 minutes

Theme: Digital Inclusion and accessibility

Proposer: Jimena Sierra

Organizers: Juan Carlos Hernández Wocker and Víctor Manuel Martínez Vanegas

Bio Juan Carlos Hernández Wocker

He was born in the City of Mexico. He studied International Relations at the Colegio de México and obtained a scholarship from the British Council to study a Master's degree in International Relations and European Politics at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. In 2001 he joined the Mexican Foreign Service. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was Director for Bilateral Relations with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Finland, Norway, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Belgium, and between 2004 and 2014 he served as Diplomatic Advisor to the Presidency of the Republic. Since November 2014 he holds the position of General Coordinator of International Affairs of the Federal Institute of Telecommunications.

Speciality: International Diplomatic and Telecommunications Relations

Bio Víctor Manuel Martínez Vanegas

He was born in 1979, Mexico, is the Director of International Policy of the Federal Telecommunications Institute (IFT) since October, 2014. He is responsible for elaborate and promote the international policy of IFT in telecommunications, broadcasting and competition duties. Moreover, he coordinates with the Spectrum Unit the cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and Transportation (SCT) in the processes carried out before competent international organizations in order to obtain orbital resources in favor of the Mexican State.

As part of his international experience, he has served as Alternate Head of Mexican Delegation, VI Assembly of Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL) in 2014; Head of Mexican delegation, IV Study Group Meeting of Development Sector in ITU in 2013; Regional Coordinator for World International Telecommunications Conference of ITU in 2012; Alternate Head of Mexican Delegation. World Radiocommunications Conference of ITU in 2012; Alternate Head of Mexican Delegation. Radiocommunications Assembly of ITU in 2012; and as National Delegation Coordinator, Plenipotentiary Conference of ITU 2010 and 2014.

Mr. Martínez has a bachelor of Science in Law and holds many seminars and workshops in Telecommunications Services Regulations and their new challenges, Analysis of price and cost of telecommunications, European legal framework in telecommunications sector, Internet Policy Guest, and has a Postgraduate in GSM Technology by Tec NYCE.

Speciality: International Telecommunications and Standardization

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Speakers: (No more than 5, no less than 3) Mails:

1. Female: Maria Elena Estavillo. Federal Telecommunications Institute. Mexico. Government, -Latin America and Caribbean.
2. Female: Hellerstein Judith, Founder/CEO of Hellerstein & Associates, Private Sector, Western European and Others Group (WEOG).
3. Female: Wynhoven Ursula, International Telecommunications Union (UIT). International Intergovernmental Organization.
4. Male: Akinremi Peter Taiwo, African Civil Society for Information Society (ACSIS).
5. Male: Jana Priyatos, Mallabhum Institute of Technology India, Asia-Pacific Group, Technical Community.

Relevance of the Issue

The intersessional work of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in this area has focused on identifying policy options to connect and enable the next billion people. This is a community-driven process that began during the preparatory cycle of the IGF 2015. This work has consisted of two phases, resulting in final documents drawn up through a process of consultation and input from the different sectors interested in Internet Governance.

In 2015, during Phase I, it was contemplated that more than three billion people would be connected to the Internet by the end of that year. This was, by all standards, a great achievement, however, it was felt that there was still a lot of work ahead. The way forward should be based on experiences and collaboration among all stakeholders to face future challenges.

This initiative addressed the digital divide, the potential of the Internet in a diverse set of areas such as: health care, commerce, agriculture, education, development and better living conditions for all the people of the world.

In this document, the contributions and comments that showed, at that moment, the complex and multifaceted nature of increasing connectivity were enunciated. Different stakeholders addressed the problem from diverse and unique perspectives, which allowed a holistic approach to connectivity that

ranged from the deployment of infrastructure to factors that drive demand and allow users to use the Internet.

The five main dimensions and policy options to increase connectivity as identified by the IGF community in 2015 were:

1. Deployment of infrastructure: through broadband, spectrum, wi-fi, IXPs, IPV6, among others.
2. Increase in usability: through the development of applications, services, local content, accessibility, etc.
3. Enabling users: through human rights, inclusion, literacy, digital citizenship, entrepreneurship, etc.
4. Guarantee affordability.
5. Create an enabling environment: through appropriate regulation, private sector non-profit initiatives, etc.

Thus, it was concluded that many of the challenges to improve Internet accessibility require governments to establish guidelines and regulations to support the sharing of infrastructure and introduce new business opportunities.

During Phase II of this multi-stakeholder intersessional activity, led by the IGF community, challenges and opportunities to address and overcome barriers to meaningful Internet access, promote access in diverse contexts and regions and ensure that this access, also support the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

This Phase made use of bottom-up information, with an inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach. Their work was mainly driven by three rounds of online public consultations that facilitated the participation of a diverse selection of stakeholders.

The second phase concluded that more work is needed to better understand the role of ICT and the Internet in supporting efforts to achieve the SDGs. The importance of taking account of differences in context in designing appropriate approaches to promote meaningful access in various regions was also recognized.

Currently, Phase III is underway, and its theme is "the promotion of meaningful access". For 2017, the recommendation is to focus on a limited number of SDGs that are affected by ICTs and to make a deep immersion in the collection and analysis of case studies around the world.

The proposed approach is:

- Objective 4: Guarantee an inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Objective 9: Build a resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and encourage innovation

The contributions of the IGF community will build a series of case studies and success stories in which the Internet is playing a key role in advancing the SDGs and their value in relation to the 2030 Agenda.

Content of the Session

Digital inclusion is defined by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), as the empowerment of people through information and communication technologies (ICTs). In accordance with the ITU, over 1 billion people living with some form of disability and growing numbers of senior citizens are often cut off from the digital revolution when ICTs lack accessibility features. Furthermore, there are other vulnerable individuals and communities, as women and girls, youth and children, indigenous peoples, among others. Ensuring widely available, affordable, accessible and assistive technologies requires innovative business, policy and regulatory practices.

Related to accessibility, the European Commission indicates that it has become necessary due to the rapid growth of online information and interactive services provided on the web and by mobile applications. Some examples are online banking and shopping, using public services online, communicating with our relatives and friends. The lack or absence of accessibility contributes to the exclusion or partial exclusion of many people from society. For that reason, web accessibility is not just about technical standards, web architecture and design; it is an issue of political will and of moral obligation.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on the fundamental issue of accessibility, requires countries to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers and ensure that persons with disabilities can access their environment, transportation, public facilities and services, and information and communications technologies. Therefore, States must work so that the Internet and ICTs provide people with disabilities the means to live more equitably within the global community.

This way, access and inclusion to digital technologies, especially broadband Internet, has become an essential part of the lives of all people, whether in the social, educational, health or rural development fields. In fact, the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development clearly specifies that Information and Communication Technologies are essential enablers for the three pillars of sustainable development: economic development, social development and environmental protection. Hence the importance of creating and fostering an inclusive world and connecting the unconnected.

In its Declaration Ensuring that no one is left behind, the Broadband Commission recognizes the benefits of inclusion in a digital environment, for example:

- Economic growth, prosperity and sustainability: connectivity promotes GDP growth, fosters innovation and the generation of new jobs, financial inclusion and the improvement of agricultural productivity, labor and energy efficiency.

- Coverage of basic needs: connectivity can help meet the needs of food, water and energy thanks to the broadband Internet infrastructure that allows the construction of smart and more sustainable cities.
- Poverty reduction and education improvement: broadband infrastructure can contribute to distance education or lifelong learning in such a way that people can be empowered through digital skills training.
- Improvement of health services: there is an opportunity to improve access to information, specialized knowledge, and remote diagnosis.
- Monitoring of climate change: providing data for scientific research and development.

Considering all these benefits, it is not surprising that the use and adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT), including the Internet, has grown considerably. According to data from the World Bank, the total number of Internet users has more than tripled in a decade, from 1,000 million in 2005, it is estimated that by the end of 2015 there were 3200 million users.

Similarly, the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the general review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society recognized that, in the last decade, a considerable increase in connectivity has been achieved. This mainly as a result of the use and exploitation of new technologies, especially the Internet and fixed and mobile broadband, which allows the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also recognizes the current Internet governance mechanisms that have worked effectively to turn the Internet into the solid, dynamic and geographically wide media that it is today.

However, the World Bank itself indicates, in its "World Report: Digital Dividends", that the digital divide has also increased since today, almost 60% of the world's population does not have access to the Internet, so it can not take advantage of the benefits of the digital environment.

On the other hand, the WSIS estimates that almost 4,000 million people, who represent approximately two thirds of the people residing in developing countries, remain outside the connection. While the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development estimated that there is still 57% of the world's population without Internet access or broadband because connectivity is not available or is not affordable.

Considering the above, it is evident that it remains a global priority to be able to make the Internet universally accessible and to make it accessible to all. In countries where there is little access to the Internet and the digital economy is still emerging, the task is to create the conditions for increased adoption and use. The reforms include the elimination of such fundamental obstacles as the lack of basic ICT and support infrastructure; the excessive regulation of product markets, and the application of high tariffs to digital goods.

As previously mentioned, one of the main obstacles to get access and inclusion to the non-connected, is the infrastructure, that is, the access and deployment of broadband Internet networks. The deployment of this infrastructure is essential because they are indispensable for the whole ecosystem of Internet

governance, because if you do not have the necessary infrastructure to bring this type of technology to the most isolated areas, you will never be able to achieve the goal of connecting to those not connected.

However, it must also be recognized that the task does not end with the deployment of the necessary infrastructure, but it is also vital to generate capacities so that people can use and take advantage of them in such a way that they benefit from the use of the Internet. Both topics are directly related, and both are necessary to reduce the digital divide and bring the Internet to all those who remain offline.

At this point, the manual by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Inter-American Development Bank, on "Broadband policies for Latin America and the Caribbean", highlight the main objectives of these policies and digital strategies that contribute to broadband Internet access and inclusion.

Although this manual analyzes a large series of policies and strategies, this panel will only take into account those policies related to the deployment of broadband network infrastructure and the improvement of the inclusion of all people in the use and adoption of this type of technologies.

The manual indicates that, among the main challenges to achieve complete access to broadband Internet are the following:

- Lack of incentives for infrastructure deployment,
- The lack of national, regional and international backbones,
- The affordability of broadband services.

It also identifies some good practices such as the deployment of networks and the provision of broadband services by private investors, complemented by the public sector, the design of digital strategies and national broadband plans, the investment to reduce bottlenecks in infrastructure, reduction of deployment costs to stimulate competition, among others.

On the other hand, it is also important that, in addition to analyzing policies that contribute to increasing the affordability of broadband Internet services, an analysis is made of the best practices that promote the inclusion of all people in the digital environment, especially in relation to the creation of capacities that allow the full adoption and use of all digital tools.

In the case of Mexico, according to the study of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on telecommunications and radio broadcasting in Mexico 2017, one of the most prominent areas of discussion in those countries where detailed guidelines have been established on ways to preserve an open internet, has been the relationship between video transport and the price differential or discounts on specific traffic. In view of this it is indicated that one of the main actions of the IFT in this issue, is the analysis of the neutrality of the network and the supervision of its possible defaults, as well as the evolution of differential prices (zero-rating) and specialized services.

Taking into consideration the foregoing, it is proposed to hold a workshop focused on analyzing all those stages involved in digital inclusion and accessibility, among which the deployment of infrastructure, the creation of capacities and policies that allow the use of technology by the entire population. In addition, this panel will seek to identify the challenges in the generation of public policies to reduce the digital divide on the Internet, with special emphasis on equitable and affordable access, the promotion of an inclusive and sustainable industrialization, the improvement of infrastructure through the adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes. Likewise, it will seek to analyze the role played by each of the interested parties in each of the stages and actions described previously.

Interventions

The workshop will analyze the following:

- Public policies that promote affordability, digital inclusion and accessibility: an analysis will be made of the best practices that allow promoting digital inclusion to take advantage of access to deployed networks and infrastructure. It will be debated on what should be done for the groups with specific needs to take advantage of the infrastructure and technology implemented.
- Main challenges and best practices and policies for the deployment of infrastructure and broadband, the affordability of services, the lack of backbone networks, and barriers that create obstacle to this deployment. As well as the design of standards to make websites and mobile apps more accessible.
- The promotion of inclusion and the development of digital skills so that all users can take advantage of and use ICTs on a daily basis, in addition to having access to telecommunications services.
- The development of strategies and investments to reduce and eliminate historical, institutional and structural barriers to access and use Technology.
- Identify measures and strategies that will significantly increase access to information and communication technologies, as well as reduce the digital divide that exists for women and girls, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.

Some triggers of the proposed dialogue:

- What public policies have been implementing by your State to reduce the digital divide?
- From the point of view of each stakeholder, what is needed to achieve a digital inclusion and accessibility?
- What are the main challenges in these topics and how they could be dealt with?

Diversity

1. Female: Maria Elena Estavillo. Federal Telecommunications Institute. Mexico. Government, -Latin America and Caribbean.
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5. Male: Jana Priyatos, Mallabhum Institute of Technology India, Asia-Pacific Group, Technical Community.

Onsite Moderator

Male: Adrian Carballo. CCLAT Board Member, SSIG Director, ISOC Argentina Chapter Board Member. Civil Society. Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)

Online moderator

Edna Ferrer. Federal Telecommunications Institute. Mexico

Rapporteur

Jimena Sierra. Federal Telecommunications Institute. Mexico

Online participation

online attendees will have a specific time after each intervention to give them the queue, the workshop moderator will have the online participation session open, and will be in close communication with the workshop's trained online moderator, to make any adaptations necessary as they arise, in order to give online participants opportunity to ask, comment and participate remotely.

Discussion Facilitation

Panel discussion. The workshop will begin with a brief introduction presented by the moderator who is going to briefly explain the main objective of the panel and the detonator questions over which the panel will be addressed; Panelists will subsequently have 5 minutes to explain their point of view of the preliminary target points of the panel previously presented by the moderator.

Following these interventions, the moderator will ask the questions to the panelists to initiate a debate between them. Subsequently, the panel will be open to the public so that the audience can participate with comments or questions remotely and in site.

Finally, the moderator will have a few minutes to complete the most important points discussed at the meeting.

Sustainable Development Goals.

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XXII. Additional Reference Document Link (Optional)

- Informe de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible 2016, Naciones Unidas.

Link: <https://goo.gl/WMq3y4>

- World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends, World Bank.
- Broadband Policies for Latin America and the Caribbean: A digital Economy Toolkit, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; Inter-American Development Bank

Link: <https://goo.gl/QNFZbm>

- Open Statement from the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development to the UN High-Level Political Forum “Ensuring that No One is Left Behind”.

Link: <https://goo.gl/p3RFI4>

- IGF Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion. Final Compilation (Phase 1)

Link: <https://goo.gl/kw6rnw>

- Policy Options for Connecting & Enabling the Next Billion(s): Phase II

Link: <https://goo.gl/RjMGnX>

- Cómo superar las barreras al despliegue de servicios de comunicaciones móviles. Hoja de ruta de México, Banco de Desarrollo de América Latina

Link: <https://goo.gl/wBe1aD>