

Consultations run across the National, Regional, Sub-Regional and Youth IGF Initiatives (NRIs) on the Report of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation/Recommendation 5 A/B/ IGF Plus Model

- Output Document -

Completed by the NRIs Task Force¹ and submitted to the HLPDC Reports' Recommendation V co-champions on 5 June 2020

Executive Summary

The report of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation (HLPDC) entitled "The Age of Digital Interdependence" proposed an improved model of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF Plus) as providing the means for achieving more effective global digital cooperation. The co-champions for the fifth recommendations of the HLPDC Report focused on global digital cooperation and three proposed models for global digital cooperation run several months long consultations across communities. Given the long standing implementation of the IGF model globally and a growing number of the national, regional, sub-regional and youth IGFs (NRIs), several NRIs decided that it is important to respond to these consultations. Particularly, as the HLPDC Report refers to the network of the NRIs as valuable.

The NRIs Task Force² undertook open consultations through the NRIs' stakeholder networks worldwide including governments, the private sector and civil society. The consultations were available to all stakeholders to respond, through a survey developed by the Task Force in an open, consultative manner. The survey, available in English and French languages, covered all three options for creating a new digital architecture with particular focus on the IGF Plus model, given the fact that the targeted group of respondents were those that have long-standing experience in the IGF-like processes, whether on a global or national and regional levels. In addition to the survey, the NRIs looked at the contribution from different stakeholders submitted during the 2019 annual IGF meeting while preparing the main session on digital cooperation that built on the HLPDC Report. Only sections relevant to the IGF Plus model were included in the second section of this report.

In total, 111 stakeholders, in their personal capacity, on behalf of their NRIs multistakeholder organising committees or organisations, responded to the survey. The survey results were carefully analysed by the NRIs Task Force. The overall conclusions are:

- *Stakeholders agree that the global digital cooperation mechanism should be multistakeholder, multidisciplinary, accessible, open and inclusive of all perspectives.*
- *The IGF Plus is seen as a model that can pursue global digital cooperation. Its advantages relate to the fact that it is already a mandated process with a clear set of high principles*

¹ The NRI network formed a Task Force to develop the survey and run consultations, composed of: African IGF, APriGF, Arab IGF, Argentina IGF, Canada IGF, EuroDIG, Italian IGF, IGF-USA, The Gambia IGF, LACIGF, West African IGF, SEEDIG, Paraguay IGF, Quebec IGF.

² Ibid.

and related procedures; as well as that it has a developed structure through which communities successfully cooperate for years, despite continuous financial challenges and under-resourced staff support.

- *While stakeholders believe that the IGF should retain its essential role as a non-decisional global forum for all stakeholders in advancing digital cooperation and effective strategic multistakeholder governance, there was also general support for the IGF having the facility to make public policy recommendations for adoption and implementation by relevant rule-making entities and governance processes at the regional and national levels.*
- *Respondents broadly agree that global digital cooperation can only be developed if cooperation exists at local levels. The growing network of the NRIs, that replicates the IGF's high principles and procedures at the national and regional levels, is seen as a critical and feasible way of strengthening inclusive public policy making in all nations and regions worldwide, in close cooperation with the new mechanisms provided by the IGF Plus, with an overarching structure provided by the IGF Plus.*
- *While the IGF's Plus proposed architecture, namely the Cooperation Accelerator, Policy Incubator, Observatory and Help Desk, generally have support among stakeholders, many raise concerns about the practical implementation of these forms, especially regarding funding, digital divide, linguistic, social, economic, political and cultural differences. In addition, stakeholders cautioned against duplicating efforts, as some of the proposed architectures already exist, such as the Global Policy Observatory (GIPO) online platform.*
- *Instead of allocating already scarce resources on building new structures and mechanisms, many advise improving the existing ones that already have a strong legacy of important outcomes and outputs, notably the IGF's Best Practice Forums and Dynamic Coalitions.*
- *The IGF's Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) can be further improved and its role elevated, to meet the recommendations of the IGF Plus model. Particularly, its membership should be more diversified to include parliamentarians, academic experts beyond the core Internet interests (e.g. climate change etc.) and business leaders, among others.*
- *Stakeholders agree that the advanced model of the IGF should further improve its cooperation and partnerships with the private sector, especially industries and tech companies, with member states, the UN system, and other leading international organisations. In particular, the IGF needs to continue to invest efforts in meaningfully including the underserved and unrepresented, such as the communities from the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states; and vulnerable groups, such as women and girls, persons with disabilities, elderly population, youth, refugees etc.*
- *The IGF Plus should be a result-oriented forum with clear outputs. It should particularly engage with the local communities, through the network of the NRIs, to understand local specificities and develop a global programme relevant to all.*
- *The IGF Plus needs to focus more on sustainable development.*
- *The UN should support the IGF by raising its visibility in the UN system and supporting its cooperation through the programmes of relevant UN agencies.*
- *There was a support for the IGF to be closer linked to its convener - the UN Secretary-General.*
- *The IGF+ model with its additional permanently-based functions is dependent on a more stable funding provision. New mechanisms for achieving this on a long-term basis are*

therefore needed as a matter of urgency, aiming for a variety of funding sources and multi-year commitments of supporting stakeholders from the private sector, international institutions and governments in particular.

SECTION I

Analysis of the Survey responses

The survey was composed of 17 questions. Annex I and II contain a detailed overview of the breakdowns of the survey responses and 111 individual responses.

1. Global Digital Cooperation Architectures

Which of the three models best pursue Global Digital Cooperation?

The majority of respondents (85%) to the survey indicated that IGF+ is the model that best pursues global Digital Cooperation. IGF+ is based on the existing IGF which was convened by the UN Secretary-General in 2005. It would benefit and strengthen the bottom up, open, transparent and inclusive processes for policy discussions which the IGF has been developing for the last 15 years.

2. Advisory Group structure

Should the Advisory Group have the same structure as the current MAG?

2a. If you selected 'no' for the previous question, what changes should be brought to the structure of the Advisory Group (AG) (compared to the MAG)? Some examples of changes are provided.

2b. If you indicated that the AG should include representatives from additional sectors, please specify which sector(s).

Most respondents (57%) indicated that the structure of the Advisory Group (AG) should be improved. *Among them, over 65%* agree the AG should include representatives from additional sectors and several comments were included to support this aspect. Regarding the operating principles of the group, there was a broad agreement to keep the bottom-up and multistakeholder representative structure of the AG. There was a general agreement that the number of AG members should be clear, with a defined term of years. AG composition should be enhanced both in terms of seniority and diversity of representation, geographically balanced, gender sensitive with a clear balance among stakeholder representation.

Composition. There was a specific suggestion to include one representative per country. Further on the composition, it was advised to include members parliaments (*as a separate group from governments*), technology standards bodies, academic researchers, and a greater number of professional experts including economists, sociologists, psychologists and biologists. AG should represent cross-sections of society in different countries. Further, some suggested that the AG has more representation from industry and the private sector, especially from under-represented

regions, from small civil society organizations in order to create a balance between governmental and non-governmental groups in the AG. It was also suggested to include the NRIs representatives in the Advisory Group and that the AG is more vocal and present in diverse Internet governance arenas, so as to advance the goals of the renewed IGF+ structure, especially in terms of outreach and engagement, shedding light on the several initiatives and outcomes being achieved by the multiple groups committed to the intersessional work.

Several respondents advised that instead of adding categories it could be reasonable to enhance the role of the international organizations and ask them to express their representatives into the Advisory Board. As an example for involvement of MPs (Members of the Parliament) it could be asked to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) to express some name among which the SG could choose. For the banks the same question could be forwarded to the World Bank Association to identify names of possible representatives, etc.

Some respondents suggested including the possibility for the UN Secretary-General to add to the list five persons at Secretary-General's discretion to represent new areas of expertise that could enrich the experience of the AG.

It was suggested to expand representatives to include people with disabilities. Non-self-governing territories should also be represented on the AG. Several respondents suggested that the Advisory Group should include representatives from NRIs, the IGFs Best Practice Forums (BPFs) and Dynamic Coalitions (DCs).

Some suggested a better representation of governments and private sector, while others said that it would be better to lower the presence of the "governments by default representatives" below the current 40% and increase representatives of the NRI's in order to achieve real influence in the decision making bodies - parliamentarians.

One respondent suggested to lower the percentage of the representatives of the NGOs whose modus operandi is attached to international organizations while other respondents wanted to add part of the NGO's networks and society correlated with IG dialogue and invite separately national and/or regional NGO representatives.

Structure. In terms of the structure, there was a suggestion that the Advisory Group is composed of two sub-groups. A smaller group of high-level representatives from all stakeholder groups and regions that would report directly to the UNSG or the Tech Envoy; and a bigger group of experts from all stakeholder and regional groups.

There was also a suggestion of not adding more pre-defined stakeholder groups and to improve the current stakeholder group definition as is sometime too inflexible and some valuable resource person will hardly find their way to the MAG.

One respondent suggested forming separate groups for the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and large corporates with significant market power (SMP) because many of these have different challenges and issues.

Several suggestions were related to the **AG appointment process:**

- Some noted that the election process should be conducted in a more transparent and selective manner with clear and established criteria that determines how people are appointed to the AG and how one qualifies to have their term renewed. There was one suggestion to have the appointment process without a unilateral UN role. Some others asked to include a mechanism for a skills audit to identify skill-sets that the AG is in need of to assist the Secretary-General with appointments.

- Several respondents suggested to reform the selection and appointment process of the Advisory Group taking as reference the CGI and ICANN board with an election by the various stakeholders and a percentage through a NomCom model. It was also underlined the importance to make sure that prospective AG members completely understand the responsibilities they have, not least in terms of attendance and contributions .

3. Advisory Group (AG) Responsibilities

Do you think the Advisory Group responsibilities should be broader and different than those performed by MAG?

3a. If yes, please suggest which responsibilities you propose for the Advisory Group?

3b. If not, please explain why.

Among those that responded to this question (60%) there was a support that responsibilities of the AG should be broader than advising on the IGF's annual meeting preparations, and focused more on promoting digital cooperation and building processes that strengthen the architecture of Internet governance. It was further added that the AG should act as a collective advisor to the UN Secretary-General as initially suggested by the WGIG (Working Group On Internet Governance 2003-2005).

Stakeholders advised that the AG responsibilities could also include outreach and engagement of IG communities at national and regional level. Particularly, the AG members could connect with NRIs to identify local needs and demands and advise accordingly. Suggestion was made to continue evolution for reduced state-centricity.

AG members should potentially assume an engaging role in the wider IG related regional processes in their respective regions by providing specific expertise on the topic to the relevant/concerned stakeholders. They can also liaise with others fora beyond the IGF community (example: World Economic Forum, Arab Economic Summit etc.).

AG should be closer to UN-related initiatives (ITU's AI for Good, , UN's AI Week, IFAP , UNESCO) to understand how to better propose transnational cooperation amongst standards developers, network operators, online service providers, users, governments and international organizations. The AG should act as a coordinating structure for the emerging discussions about issues in the global digital community, identifying moments when emerging discussions in other fora should be connected to the IGF, as well as issues that are not covered by existing mechanisms.

A general concern was expressed on the HLPDC Report's unclear indication of a relationship between the AG and other parts of the IGF+ architecture, such as the policy incubator and cooperation. Further it was underlined the need for more cohesion on the links between the IGF's intersessional work, the annual IGF meeting, the additional structures of the IGF+ model (cooperation accelerator, policy incubator, observatory, help desk), and the broader Internet governance community, participating in internet policy and governance arenas worldwide, advancing the goals of the IGF renewed structure, and fostering outreach and engagement with the multiple outcomes achieved by the annual work tracks.

Some suggested that rather than setting up a new "cooperation accelerator" and "policy incubator", the AG itself could undertake many of these functions, identifying issues and convening discussion. All these functions could be performed in cooperation with the intersessional groups such as best practice forums (BPFs) or dynamic coalitions (DCs).

Some suggested that AG should have a more strategic role about IGF+ itself discussing strategic issues regarding the IGF+, human resource and administration including fundraising, the role of NRIs, intersessional work, etc. and also act as coordination accelerator network in case of urgent issues (i.e. “respond calls”); provide input on draft principles, orientations, guidelines and recommendations prepared by policy incubator networks.

One suggestion was made that the AG should not become a decision-making body while some others suggested that the AG should have more decision-taking power and act on behalf of the whole architecture. There were suggestions that the it would be better to keep the main responsibility of AG to prepare the program, while leaving the other responsibilities to the other components of IGF+ model, as it is important not to duplicate responsibilities.

It was noted that AG needs to be equipped with new tools to face the new enriched role, such as the definition of solid recommendations to be sent to the various agencies and bodies that would have to discuss and implement. It was also suggested that AG should monitor the implementation of recommendations of the IGF+.

There was one suggestion to separate "organizational" tasks from "content" tasks, and that AG should lead on filters to focus the agenda. One stakeholder advised that each region and local IGF could have its own "filters" (so-called “mini-MAGs”).

Several respondents said that AG should take a robust approach to programming with clearer priorities and influence over the development of proposals. Programming should not only rely on the input received from the call for sessions. AG should bring and suggest coming topics to the agenda.

There was a general consideration that currently there are too many workshops covering too many subjects and even if there have been improvements on inclusion and gender balance. There is a need to empower the AG to ensure greater quality control. There should be a strong evidence base with key statistics and background information on policy issues in advance to help to ensure a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities and encourage more fruitful discussions and progress. The better the IGF sessions are prepared, the sharper their focus and the clearer the formulation of their questions, the more likely it is that they arrive at actionable outcomes. The new AG should bridge the gaps and redeem the problems of the planning/preparation phase of the existing model.

It was also suggested that the AG may meet more frequently than the current MAG and it was recommended to provide more than one seat from the same stakeholder group in a region, because one person can not represent the whole region and can not manage the issues and challenges of whole region, this can be applicable to the most critical regions and these regions that need more support even development countries or not.

It was suggested also that AG promote knowledge sharing and introducing ICT skills in rural and peripheral areas.

4. IGF Engagement

In recent years, an emphasis has been put on the need to engage additional sectors, such as parliamentarians, youth, academic researchers, philosophers, economists, futurists, etc. in IGF activities. Should these or other sectoral representatives be more involved in the IGF overall?

Several respondents to the survey commented that since the IGF was established in 2005 the Internet has become an important part in all aspects of daily life and the IGF therefore needs to sustain a broader, more inclusive and interdisciplinary approach for policy discussions. This would

ensure the outcomes of the IGF's work reflect the diversity of engagement and are forward-thinking and comprehensive.

While some respondents to the survey commented that sectors and interest groups listed in the question were already represented in the IGF, over 90% of respondents agreed that participation in the IGF should involve more of these interest groups because they all potentially play a vital role in shaping public policies, introducing fresh perspectives and new ideas drawn from their expertise and experience.

There was general agreement in the survey responses that more governments and parliamentarians needed to be involved as public policy and law makers – including in the IGF's inter-sessional activities. In addition, specific mention was made of environmental and climate change experts, consumer rights entities and business entrepreneurs. Several respondents mentioned specific economic and development sectors which should be represented at the IGF, notably health, education, finance and transport.

It was noted that securing broader participation with the resource implications that presents for individuals and organisations, would be more likely achievable if the IGF undertook multi-year planning that identified critical issues to be scoped for the design and development of related public policies. This would help identify and communicate the issue-specific reasons for, and benefits of, both direct and indirect participation in the IGF's work. Furthermore, implementation of conclusions would be expected to be made easier as a result of the participation of all interested groups and sectoral stakeholders in the IGF discussions.

It was also suggested that it was more important to secure the participation of individual experts from these wider interest groups and sectors at the national and IGFs, with broader geographical representation of them at the annual global IGF.

5. IGF Outputs

Which of the following suggestions will support IGF+ to produce more tangible outputs?

- *Issuing recommendations at the global level to be considered by IGOs, Governments, SMEs, NGOs, Technical Communities, etc.*
- *Involvement of parliamentarians in the IGF could take the form of a "network" to enable sharing of information for the awareness of IGF outputs at national and regional level.*
- *Increased awareness of the purpose and activities of the IGF, through increased outreach to NRIs, IGOs, NGO networks, etc.*
- *Inclusion of IGF outputs on the regional and national digital agendas.*
- *Other*

The proposal that the IGF issue recommendations was supported by 84% of respondents. It was suggested that these could be drawn up and agreed as broad outcomes on the final day of the annual IGF event.

The need to increase awareness was agreed by 68% of respondents and several highlighted in their comments how restructuring the IGF to include a cooperation accelerator and policy incubator, an observatory and help desks, and with a more strategic communications operation, would all serve to increase awareness of these outcomes. Directing the IGF's engagement and outreach more effectively in this way would enable greater implementation by the relevant governmental and corporate policy-making processes across the world.

The national and regional IGFs could potentially be instrumental in proposing recommendations for consideration at the global IGF and 70% of respondents agreed that IGF outputs should be included in regional and national digital agendas.

Some respondents also emphasised accordingly the importance of tracking the progress of these outputs through the network of national and regional IGFs. This could also be done through the UN's global channels and its agencies.

One suggestion was that an IGF task force should be established that would follow up on the dissemination of recommendations with the relevant agencies, administrations and corporate entities involved in public policy decisions.

6. Do you think the Cooperation Accelerator is a useful element of IGF + architecture? The Cooperation Accelerator would support cooperation among existing organisations and processes on specific issues.

6a. If yes, do you think current Best Practice Forums (BPFs) intersessional activities could implement this element?

6b. If not, how should the Cooperation Accelerator look in terms of composition/membership as well as its responsibilities?

Among 111 respondents, over 94% believe that the Cooperation Accelerator is a useful element of the IGF Plus structure, as a mechanism that would support the cooperation between existing organisations and processes on specific issues. Less than 6% responded negatively.

Over 78% stakeholders believe that the IGF's Best Practice Forums are a form that could implement the Cooperation Accelerator, while 22% proposed alternative mechanisms. Many of the proposals focused on a more elevated role of the MAG. Namely, it was suggested that:

- The MAG could identify points of convergence and issues around which new coalitions could be built;
- A group of MAG members could particularly focus on this role. However, some underlined that the current MAG's form is challenged to fulfil this role due to lack of continuity in its tenure and unclear work scope and mandate, calling for improvements.
- Some, however, suggested that the cooperation accelerator could take a form of a permanent team focusing on matters pertinent to the global digital policy.
- In addition to having the MAG being included in the CA, several proposals noted the importance of engaging experts from the NRIs communities to take part in the membership of the CA.
- Some saw the mechanism of the Dynamic Coalitions as a better fit than the BPFs or as a complementary mechanism to the BPFs that would strengthen the CA.

Stakeholders agree that the cooperation accelerator should be multidisciplinary and multistakeholder, regionally balanced with a clear mandate with a few suggesting the importance of youth inclusion.

Some stakeholders discouraged this mechanism referring to a duplicated effort 'IGF inside IGF', further advising that the Policy Incubator has an advisory role and to build on the BPFs experience.

The challenges related to the funding of the CA were also prioritized as critical aspects to respond to when developing this infrastructure.

7. The main function of the Cooperation Accelerator would be to facilitate cooperation across a wide range of institutions, organisations and processes.

What specific institutions, organisations and processes should the Accelerator focus on?

Since the main function of the Cooperation Accelerator would be to facilitate cooperation across a wide range of institutions, operations and processes, the survey asked about specific institutions, organisations and processes the Accelerator could focus on.

The broadest support of over 80% was given to “standards or policy organisations addressing policy areas with digital dimensions, such as food, healthcare, weather, environment, intellectual property, etc.”; and to “technical Internet organisations such as ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) , IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)” with over 76% of responses. The UN agencies, world and regional financial institutions and other IGOs also received a high number of responses.

Respondents also added that active engagement of the private tech companies owners is necessary, as well as the overall industry organisations and scientific entities, particularly tackling the emerging issues. In addition, the non-traditional stakeholders should be engaged, such as libraries, social enterprises and impact investment companies, entities in charge of handling refugees; and members of the legislative authorities.

The nature of these responses confirms the respondents broad support for the IGF Plus mechanisms to be multistakeholder, cross-sectoral and with wide inclusion of expertise across disciplines. The mechanism needs to have a clearly defined work scope and mandate, be accessible and transparent.

8. Do you have any suggestions on how the Accelerator could facilitate such cooperation?

Further on the implementation methods for the Accelerator’s cooperation, the respondents noted the importance of an agenda of global relevance. The overall process should be transparent, inclusive, open and outcome oriented. Some noted that its outcome-orientation does not imply its decision-making power. More likely, the multi-stakeholder dialogue and research-based work can identify areas having potential for a consensus, or risk areas where further work is needed.

Additional operational mechanisms suggested by stakeholders related to:

- Appointing a liaison to foster engagement between the IGF’s informal multi-stakeholder ecosystem and the UN’s traditional multilateral system. This mechanism could re-energise the UN system on matters related to Internet governance.
- Developing mechanisms to create links to, and receive inputs from the local level. The multistakeholder NRIs are seen as good partners for this. Dialogues should also be facilitated at the local level in the same manner as at the global level.
- Engaging government ministers and parliamentarians from the member states is also a critical component of the successful facilitation mechanism.
- The Accelerator should also focus on gathering public policy best practices and inspiring others to develop. This mechanism could build on the existing BPFs. This will also help to develop cooperative agendas across stakeholders that were not involved in the collective actions for public digital policy.
- Strategic involvement of the private sector.
- Some suggested to have only a task force, with possible reporting to the Advisory Group, that would navigate the existing mechanisms of the BPFs, NRIs, DCs etc. to cooperate and advance their working modalities and results.

- Involvement of the capacity development entities at the local, regional and global levels is important.

9. Do you think the Policy Incubator is a useful element of IGF + architecture? The Policy incubator would monitor, examine, and incubate policies and norms for public discussions and adoption.

9a. If yes, how should it look in terms of composition/membership as well as its responsibilities?

9b. If no, please describe why.

Close to 90% of all respondents see the Policy Incubator as a useful element of the IGF Plus architecture.

Those in favour of the described Incubator's mechanism suggested that its configuration is multistakeholder, composed of digital policy related institutions and processes from all regions. Some suggested that this feature should be an integral component across all IGF Plus structures. The importance of engagement of legislators was particularly elaborated by some, recalling the positive experience from the IGF 2019 in Germany.

Some explicitly advised that the Policy Incubator should be developed around the priority issues, following the advice of the Advisory Group. This would further direct the composition of the membership. For example, if privacy online is a priority matter to focus on, the Incubator would be composed of high-level experts on privacy from all stakeholder groups and regions. Some further advised that the issue-focused policy incubators would transform the existing BPFs and DCs.

The incubator, in addition to being seen as a multistakeholder and regionally balanced network, rather than as an institution, also should develop meaningful cooperative mechanisms with the local levels. The NRIs are already with a capacity for this form.

Those indicated not to support the Policy Incubator, noted that the IGF already has these forms developed through its intersessional work that needs further improvement, thus making it unnecessary to develop any new mechanisms. Some notes that the Cooperation Accelerator and Policy Incubator configure as similar if not the same entities.

10. Do you think the Observatory and Help Desk are useful elements of IGF + architecture?The Observatory and Help Desk would provide an overview of digital policy issues, coordinate capacity development activities, and provide help and assistance on digital cooperation and policy issues.

10a. If yes, how should it look like in terms of composition/membership as well as its responsibilities?

10b. If no, please describe why.

Over 77% of respondents confirm that the Observatory and Help Desk are useful elements of the IGF Plus architecture, while around 23% disagreed.

Those supporting the concepts of the Observatory and Help Desk outlined several suggestions for their compositions, including that the Observatory should serve to exchange experiences, ideas and practices on a particular Internet governance matter.

Some saw the IGF Secretariat as a first office to support the help desk function, and further connect requesting stakeholders to those that can help; while others see the help desk function established at the regional levels with the NRIs being the implementers given their multistakeholder structures.

Several inputs particularly expressed concerns about the proposed help desk function. These concerns relate to ensuring viability, inclusiveness, operation on agreed principles given the social, economic, cultural, political, linguistics and other differences. Some stakeholders called for further consultations on the 'help desk' function, suggesting the involvement of the UNDPs and ITU, underlining the importance of establishing an independent resource. Additional suggestions relate to this mechanism already exist at the level of the European Union and OECD ('Policy Observatory; and 'Going Digital' initiative).

Some also added that these two concepts imply duplication of effort with the proposed Policy Incubator, advising to focus on one meaningful mechanism.

The Observatory, however, received a more encouraging response. It was advised to follow some existing good practices such as those of the European Commission or the European Broadcasting Union, or successful practices of CERTs, that allow for systematic gathering and display of information and sources on the matter from all parts of the world.

Finally, it was underlined that both the Observatory and Help Desk are seen as networks of critical and relevant stakeholders, rather than entities/institutional formations.

11. IGF Funding

The present approach to funding for the IGF is a combination of voluntary contributions from governments, technical Internet organizations, private sector. At present, a UN Trust Fund, administered by UN DESA receives funds and manages the UN Trust Fund. It has been acknowledged that funding is not at the needed level to support the work of the IGF and that more funding is needed to fulfill the Project Agreement that defines the activities of the IGF. Additional funding is needed for the IGF+, as proposed. Do you think the funding mechanism included in the IGF + architecture is sustainable?

11a. If not, how funding could be increased and improved? What are some options for additional funding sources/contributors?

- *A professional fundraiser reporting into the IGF Secretariat*
- *Additional outreach to foundations*
- *Funds from the World Bank/regional banks*
- *Additional funds from industry groups, such as WEF*
- *Additional funds from countries*
- *Other (please specify)*

Respondents to the survey generally agreed that a more secure, diverse and sustainable basis for funding the IGF needed to be developed, especially if it is to take on the new resource-intensive functions such as a policy observatory and help desks which would require permanent support.

There were several expressions of support by respondents for retaining and building on the neutral, multi-stakeholder framework of funding including more direct support by business stakeholders worldwide. However, the future closer linkage of the IGF to the UN system would enable augmenting the scope of the funding base with contributions from UN agencies and the global financial institutions such as the IFC and the World Bank which was supported by 66% of respondents.

Ensuring a more effective strategy to secure funding with additional outreach is clearly a key objective for the Advisory Group. Employing the services of professional fund-raisers was supported by 52% of the respondents to the survey.

12. IGF Role

Do you think the IGF should have a strengthened role in addressing IG public policies?

12a. If yes, how could this be achieved?

12b. If not, please explain why.

88% of respondents were in favour of the IGF having a strengthened role in addressing public policies that would deliver more effective global integration and cooperation in implementing global solutions. There was a wide range of comments in support of this view, most of which advocated the IGF retaining its non-decision taking functions as a global platform for multi-stakeholder discussion that i) serves to address critical issues through inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue; and ii) through its outputs inform decisions taken in other existing international and regional rule-making organisations, fora and related processes.

There were several references in comments to a strengthened IGF making recommendations on public policy issues and issuing calls for action. However, some comments underlined that this would not be a mandatory, rule-making function of the IGF; rather it would continue to undertake its unique global facility of identifying where the necessary final decisions on implementation need to be taken.

Respondents to the survey who expressed a negative view about substantially changing the role of the IGF cited concerns that the IGF's primary purpose as a forum which facilitates global stakeholder dialogue would be undermined if it adopted tools and mechanisms for making recommendations which should be made primarily at the national level. Rather they believed that the focus should be on how to implement more effectively the outcomes of the IGF under the role agreed at the WSIS.

Several respondents referred to integrating the IGF with the Panel's proposals for a cooperation accelerator, policy incubator, observatory and help desks which would all serve to strengthen the IGF's function as a global, non-decisional platform.

The importance of enhancing the diversity of participation in the IGF was emphasised in several comments, in particular with more governments and parliamentarians from all regions in their role as public policy makers, industry leaders (including the social media platforms) and critical policy influencers such as human rights experts and consumer welfare entities. Creating a linkage to the technical standards development processes was also mentioned in the comments.

Furthermore, as digitalisation continues to accelerate in permeating all aspects of daily life, respondents urged that the voices of users and of young people need to be heard at the IGF and its role strengthened as a result.

The views and proposals expressed in the comments largely focussed on how to enhance that relationship with other processes so that the IGF had a more widely recognised and influential function. For example, several comments identified the UN as having a key contribution to make in creating greater awareness of the relevance and value of the IGF's outputs to public policy development, through ensuring the IGF's role is more readily understood by Member States, and

deploying the relevant UN agency networks, diplomatic representation and its official communication channels to advance awareness and adoption of the IGF's outputs and calls for action.

Another course of action for strengthening the IGF identified by respondents to the survey related to greater integration of the national and regional IGFs both in submitting public policy proposals to the global IGF, and their interacting with national and regional governments, IGOs, economic communities, NGOs, individual policymakers and decision-takers, in support of global IGF outcomes. The IGF would in this way make a greater contribution to sustainable development.

It is also worth noting individual comments relating to the importance of the IGF - with the aid of its diverse expert advisory group - sifting the roster of agenda questions identified in its consultations with the national and regional IGFs, and with stakeholders generally, in order to focus with agility and in a timely way on specific emerging and critical policy challenges. As a result, supported by the policy incubator function, the IGF would be in a stronger position to identify key decision-takers, to determine areas of consensus and to prioritise where international cooperation is needed in order to implement effective global solutions.

13. IGF Communications

Is improved communications regarding the work of the IGF needed?

13a. If yes, how do you suggest such improvements are implemented?

13b. If no, please explain your reason.

Almost all (96%) respondents to the survey agreed that the IGF needed substantially to improve its communications in order to encourage the wider participation of new actors and stakeholders, and to achieve wider dissemination and recognition of the IGF's deliberations, outputs and documents relating to best practice etc. A number of proposals and innovations were submitted in the comments, including:

- Establishing a strategic communications function that would develop a stronger IGF multi-sector profile with greater visibility and increased outreach to stakeholders outside the established IGF community, delivering clearer, more regular and directly targeted messaging about IGF activities and outcomes (including the inter-sessional processes and projects);
- Recruiting a professional media communications and public relations expert or agency to develop and implement this strategy;
- Through the Advisory Group create a nexus of engagement between multi-stakeholder processes of the IGF and the inter-governmental multilateral institutions;
- With the support of the Secretary-General's Office using the UN's official communications channels and diplomatic networks, in particular to engage more national governments on IGF outputs and practical solutions;
- Devising an awareness campaign and educational programme with the support of the technical and business associations and communities, and of civil society organisations;
- Holding regular virtual events, webinars, updates etc that will extend global stakeholder engagement on IGF priorities and outputs;
- Linking the national and regional IGF networks with the IGF's global communications strategy on events and inter-sessional work through for example quarterly reports;
- Ensuring more precision in the targeting of audiences for specific IGF outputs, including young people (these targets to be reviewed regularly);

- Improving and expanding the IGF website with additional user-friendly functions, including a repository of public policy with a searchable archive.

14. IGF linkage to UN

The IGF was established as a project of the UN Secretary-General's office. The Panel recommended that the IGF Plus Secretariat be linked to the Office of the UN Secretary-General to reflect its interdisciplinary and system-wide approach. (Currently, the IGF Secretariat is anchored within the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.) Do you support the Panel's recommendation?

91% of respondents to the survey expressed support for linking the IGF's Secretariat to the Secretary-General's office. Respondents commented that this would be important in view of the increased importance for Member States of the cross-cutting issues arising from the development of digital technologies. The new structural link would fit with the objective of establishing a more holistic and interdisciplinary approach to addressing the opportunities and challenges created by the rapid global expansion and dissemination of new digital technologies.

It was noted that many of these issues and current related challenges such as the COVID pandemic, fake news and security of data privacy, are beyond the direct remit of DESA as they impact so many wider aspects of human life and society. It is time therefore to move the nexus of interaction between the IGF and the UN system directly to the S-G's office.

It would nonetheless be important to maintain the appropriate level of transparency and accountability in order to ensure that the strong commitment of UN institutional support previously provided by DESA is not undermined or reduced in any way. It was also hoped that the IGF Secretariat function would be retained in Geneva.

Several respondents expected the more centralised oversight of the IGF that this linkage creates would be important for strengthening the profile of the IGF and generally increasing its visibility throughout the UN system. Crucially it would also ensure that the multi-stakeholder IGF outputs are given more weight and are duly integrated in relevant UN strategies and activities.

It was suggested that this proposal could be implemented by the appointment of a Special Envoy for technology with specific responsibility for global digital cooperation and Internet governance.

It was also hoped that the linkage to the S-G's office would help address the challenge of ensuring the IGF has sufficient financial and human resources to undertake its expanded future role.

15. Distributed co-governance architecture (COGOV)

Could aspects/features of the COGOV architecture be further considered for potential inclusion in the IGF+ model? Which ones and how?

Among the 36% that have responded, some were in favour of including aspects or features of the distributed COGOV architecture in the IGF+ model. There was general agreement that COGOV architecture is complex and difficult to understand and there was a risk that this would make cooperation less inclusive. Further, establishing such a complex new architecture from scratch would require significant resources and there was a risk it could duplicate existing work.

One respondent suggested that the Digital Cooperation Networks may have a place within the contemplated "Policy Incubator" function of the IGF+ model and that the IGF+ model could adopt COGOV's agility in the sense of forming issue specific, self-governing, groups when needed .

One respondent suggested incorporating the Network Support Platforms in the AG as a body that identifies issues for the functioning of BPFs/Cooperation Accelerator/Policy Incubator and to consider the norm design/implementation/enforcement process as a useful structure that can be implemented as a means of achieving more tangible outcomes.

It was noted that project-specific Digital Cooperation Networks of the COGOV model seems very similar to the Policy Incubators of the IGF+ model and could be created whenever the Cooperation Accelerator identifies issues that are not covered by existing discussion fora. Furthermore, the Network Support Platforms could be relevant to support the Digital Cooperation Networks (or the various instances of the Policy Incubator) and promote better integration among them.

One respondent noted the two models have quite similar common elements, with an important difference that the CoGov focuses on describing functions but is silent on where and who would perform them, whereas the IGF+ model already proposes to house such functions under the roof of the broad IGF mandate anchored in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society. The respondent further shared some thoughts on how the main elements from CoGov (namely the digital cooperation networks, peer coordination network and support function) would be reflected in an IGF+ framework broadly as follows, noting that the: a) digital cooperation networks of CoGov broadly correspond in an overall vision to the policy incubator networks which would prepare policy proposals and even norm proposals, which then would be considered by the relevant decision-making bodies; b) peer coordination network of CoGov corresponds broadly to the strategic Advisory Group approach; and c) support function of CoGov would be performed in our approach by the observatory and helpdesk network and a strengthened IGF Secretariat.

16. DIGITAL COMMONS ARCHITECTURE

Could aspects/features of the Digital Commons Architecture be further considered for potential inclusion in the IGF+ model? Which ones and how?

Among the 34% of those that responded, a few were in favour to include aspects or features of the distributed Digital Commons Architecture in the IGF+ model.

Most respondents did not express support for the Digital Commons Architecture option as there is a view that international regulation of space, climate change and the law of the sea are not appropriate analogies for digital technologies, which are largely privately owned. There was a concern too that the option would lead to additional, complicated structures with the risks of duplication, cost and lack of inclusivity. Internet architectures tend to be emergent (bottom up and from usage) rather than imposed.

A few stakeholders noted that the implementation of common digital platforms could be useful in providing an additional space for sharing information, adding that these platforms could be a continuous workspace to achieve the objectives established in the IGF + architecture. Further, entities such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), as a voluntary open standards organisation, could be useful in advising on technical matters the IGF+ would tackle within its mandate. The DCA also was seen by some as inspiring for the IGF+ in the domain of collecting membership fees from the private sector, that could help strengthen the IGF's funding mechanism. The DCA tracks could also be an alternative model for the implementation of the IGF+'s Policy Incubators. The notion of "digital public goods" or "digital commons" is something very familiar to the IGF community. Some initiatives could

be taken within the IGF to further foster the availability and wide awareness about digital public goods projects.

17. Do you have any further comments on the three architectures?

Stakeholders shared views that the report is not in-depth enough, thus preventing from predicting the possible implications its implementation could bring. The IGF has a proven legacy and a strengthened version allows for understanding the processes and future implications for people. It should remain its nature of a people's-forum, open to everyone to participate free of charge.

There were comments noting that elements of two other models for global digital cooperation can coexist with the IGF+; while some underlined that the IGF+ is the most complete proposal and that there is no alternative to it. The focus of the digital policy ecosystem should be on raising awareness and having more informed all players on the field.

A number of stakeholders expressed support for the IGF+ model on the basis of a continued importance of a reformed and improved IGF, along with the associated national and regional initiatives (NRIs). These added that implementing alternative architectures would risk diminishing this focus.

Some notes the critical priorities for an effective model for the IGF: increased communication, increased collaboration and increased participation. These priorities can be addressed without dismantling the existing IGF, and instead leveraging and improving upon its strengths. The IGF+ architecture is seen as a model that best addresses a way to improve upon the IGF's strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, posing an imperative to have the proposed Cooperation Accelerator and Policy Incubator examined in conjunction with the existing intersessional groups in order to incorporate their promising features to the current mechanisms of the IGF. It was added that one of the gaps of the described IGF+ model is insufficient elaboration on the existence and growing importance of the national and regional initiatives (NRIs). The NRIs can help facilitate increased communication, collaboration, and participation, and should be considered in this transitional phase of the IGF.

The IGF+ model should also be synchronised with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and should build on firm foundations of the WSIS process and its own intersessional processes of 15 years long. IGF+ outputs should be elevated to the level of the UN General Assembly to obtain governmental high-level feedback.

There was a suggestion that sees the Digital Commons Architecture resembling the work of the IGF's Dynamic Coalitions (DCs). Options for strengthening the DCs should be explored. This concept could relate to the Policy Incubator and the Cooperation Accelerator.

SECTION II

Summary of received contributions during the IGF 2019

During the 2019 annual IGF meeting, a main session focused on Internet governance and digital cooperation was hosted. The session's preparatory process called for inputs from all stakeholders on the state of digital cooperation described in the Report of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation. These inputs are attached as Annex III to this document.

The below section synthesises parts of those inputs relevant for the IGF Plus model.

IGF Plus model architecture

- There is already a well populated landscape of digital cooperation mechanisms that are doing valuable work. Instead of wasting resources and duplicating efforts, these should be advanced and cooperation among them strengthened.
- IGF Plus has an advantage over other models because of its mandate and 15+ years experience in implementing the Internet governance community-led multi-stakeholder processes.
- IGF to continue operating on the existing principles of being multistakeholder, bottom-up, open and inclusive, transparent and non-commercial. The Forum to foster an open and inclusive dialogue and multi-stakeholder cooperation with the active participation of representatives from national and regional governments and parliaments worldwide.
- Engage all disciplines and foster and promote digital inclusion for all, especially for vulnerable groups including women and girls, people with disabilities, the elderly and young people generally.
- Build and nurture multi-stakeholder cooperation networks at the local level.
- Develop specific outreach and engagement activities especially to include the under-served and under-represented communities.
- Have the IGF Secretariat linked to its convener - the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.
- While the improvements to the IGF are welcome, it is worth revisiting the proposed architecture of the IGF Plus model, to avoid duplicating existing efforts, and develop a realistic and pragmatic IGF model for all.
- Encourage broader and inclusive participation of the private sector.
- IGF to evolve toward producing more actionable outcomes.

Implementation mechanisms

- It should be advanced as it has pioneered and built strong foundation of remote/online participation which is still the only option for many to actively participate
- The BPFs and DCs produce many outputs. These networks provide a sound basis for a Help Desk function.
- The network of the NRIs is a critical partner in developing comprehensive digital cooperation mechanisms through the IGF Plus.
- Develop mechanisms to meaningfully engage communities from least developed countries
- IGF could be rebranded to emphasize the term 'digital cooperation'. (e.g. the strategic advisory group could be named "Digital Cooperation Executive Board"). Such an updated terminology would signal the new developments within digital field beyond the Internet as such
- MAG's role could be more elevated and they could perform the role described in the report's IGF Plus model as 'cooperation accelerator'. Further, the proposed 'policy incubator' should be with the IGF's existing coalitions, rather than developing a new mechanism.
- IGF to aim for a more focused and streamlined agenda focused on priority issues.
- Improve cooperation with the UN agencies, other IGOs, governments, private sectors, civil society and technical communities on global, regional and local levels.

Funding framework

- New, innovative IGF fundraising options to be sought
- IGF could be supported by the UN's budget. The UN Secretary-General to prioritise securing concrete financial commitment from the full range of stakeholders to the IGF Plus model.
- Ensure more varied sources for funding - financial and in-kind

- Aim for a sustainable funding from a multistakeholder source
- Search for funding of specific activities (e.g. Youth@IGF) that would aim at sources who have these activities in their work portfolios
- Strengthen the IGF Secretariat to better support the engagement mechanisms.

Next Steps

While waiting for the guidance on the IGF Plus model from the UN Secretary-General, some stakeholders suggested possible steps offering their support. For example, the Government of Switzerland proposed that the UN Secretary-General presents initial ideas on how to implement the IGF Plus, within the mandate given by the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society at the WSIS, during the IGF 2020 preparatory process (they are willing to assist with the logistics of such meetings in Geneva or New York).

ANNEX I: Breakdown of received responses

https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/7506/2104

ANNEX II: Received responses

https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/7506/2110

ANNEX III: Contributions received during the IGF 2019 available at:

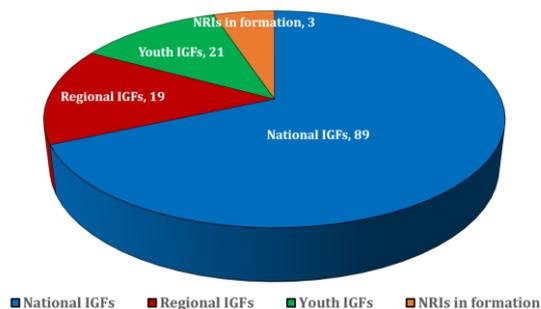
<https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/report-of-the-un-secretary-general%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%8Ehigh-level-panel-on-digital-cooperation>

ANNEX IV: About the NRIs

Who are the NRIs? National, Regional, Sub-regional and Youth IGF initiatives (NRIs) are organic and independent formations that are discussing issues pertaining to Internet Governance from the perspective of their respective communities, while acting in accordance with the main principles of the global IGF.

Organizational principles. The IGF initiatives are expected to follow the principles and practices of being open and transparent, inclusive and non-commercial. They work in accordance with the bottom up consensus process of the IGF and need to have a multistakeholder participation (at least three stakeholder groups initially, and evolve toward inclusion of all stakeholder groups), in both formation of the Initiative and in any other Initiative related events.

Records of recognized NRIs is 129 (+ 3 in-information)



Geographical spread of the NRIs

Submitted by the NRIs Task Force³ to the HLPDC Report/Recommendation V A/B Co-Champions on 5 June 2020

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The NRIs were represented on the NRIs Task Force by the following coordinators:

- African IGF: Makane Faye
- APriIGF: Jennifer Chung
- Arab IGF: Hisham Aboulyazed and Hanane Boujemi
- Argentina IGF: Olga Cavalli

³ The NRIs network formed a Task Force to develop the survey and run consultations.

- Benin IGF: Muriel Alapini
- Canada IGF: Alyssa Moore
- EuroDIG: Sandra Hoferichter and Mark Carvell
- IGF-USA: Marilyn Cade and Dustin Loup
- Italian IGF: Concettina Cassa
LACIGF: Olga Cavalli
- Paraguay IGF: Miguel Candia
- Quebec IGF: Pierre-Jean Darres
- SEEDIG: Sorina Teleanu, Lianna Galstyan
- The Gambia IGF: Poncelet Ileleji
- West African IGF: Mary Uduma

The NRIs Task Force is particularly thankful to members of the Task Force that directly supported the following activities:

- Technical implementation of the survey: Dustin Loup and Poncelet Ileleji
- Translated the English version of the survey to French: Muriel Alapini
- Processed received inputs and summarised them in this output document: Mark Carvell, Pierre-Jean Darres and Concettina Cassa

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