

Ad-Hoc Working Group on Improving IGF Outcomes

BACKGROUND

Improved Internet Governance Forum (IGF) outcomes is the first recommendation toward a strengthened IGF of *both* “the UN CSTD Working Group on IGF improvements” *and* the section focused on IGF improvements in the “NETmundial Multistakeholder Statement.” This gives a strong mandate and urges a suitable response – and the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) is the proper body to initiate the process and drive it forward.

A break-out group of MAG members met on 19 May for an initial brainstorming session; the notes from this session can be found in Annex 1 below. A second brainstorming session organized the next day, on 20 May

Two things stand out: (1) a better idea needs to be developed of what exactly the shortcomings of existing IGF outcomes are, perhaps using the wisdom of the broader IG community; and (2) to seek ways to address those shortcomings, also by tapping the collective wisdom of the IG community. The need for a Working Group to drive the process forward is clear.

Key elements of the second brainstorm session:

MANDATE		COMMUNICATION		OUTREACH	
SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS		GLOBAL IGF <=>	NATIONAL/REGIONAL IGFs		
		PROCESS		INPUTS/OUTPUTS	
TIMELINE		NEXT STEPS			ACTION

Each of these is briefly outlined below as was discussed by the group.

MANDATE

- Both UN CSTD and NETmundial recommend improved IGF outcomes;
- Tunis agenda
- Problem identified: IGF outcomes. To address that, several aspects need to be taken into consideration;
- Still, should be mindful of resource constraints;
- Tactical, small steps until Istanbul; strategic thinking until next IGF and beyond.

COMMUNICATION

- Need better communication strategy, better packaging, knowledge dissemination: Before IGF, at IGF, between IGFs;
- IGF has incredible depth of material and knowledge that has not been properly packaged and communicated until now;

- Even small tweaks in how the existing mechanisms are communicated could go a long way;
- Webinars with featured speakers, to communicate IGF better, but also to outreach to stakeholders;

OUTREACH

- Communicate better about IGF, before IGF. For instance:
 - o Chair could do an interview for BBC, CNN, other media about what IGF is about, what discussing,...
 - o Mobilize more participation from governments, civil society, small business;
 - o MAG members outreach through their community to other communities
- Not only better communication of IGF and its outcomes, but better delivery to other fora and institutions;

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS

- IGF good at facilitating solutions to problems;
- Yet, should have as principle the adapted Hippocratic oath: First, do no harm. Valuable parts at stake;
- Bubble up good ideas, using also the national/regional IGFs for this purpose;
- Build on solutions between IGFs;
- Should be recognized that there probably aren't orphan issues, only individuals/entities who cannot find where they are addressed – this is why IGF can play important part in routing information, helping connect demand to supply when they cannot meet efficiently.
- At IGF, should make easy for people to orient themselves, find solutions:
 - o Categorise every slot on degree of technical knowledge necessary: novice, intermediate, advanced;
 - o Categorise issue: emerging, progressing, ripe for policy output;
 - o People who don't understand an issue can be given a space to "Ask an Expert" – 10 minutes to ask anything in order to understand.
- IGF as both physical space few days a year and online platform for learning and support;

GLOBAL IGF <==> NATIONAL/REGIONAL IGFs

- There should be established and effective ways to get issues that arise at national and regional IGFs to the attention of the global IGF (there was also an idea to rename the IGF to the Global Internet Governance Forum, to differentiate it from the national and regional ones);

and also,

- Established and effective ways to get the outcomes of discussions that occur at the global IGF to the attention of national and regional IGFs;

=> Stronger links among IGFs.

PROCESS

- IGF as something that happens over a year, not just three days in the year;
- Still, quality of the main session is very important – MAG the one that puts it together;
- Workshops should have entrance and/or *exit surveys* – feel what community needs and how responds to offered content:
 - o Feedback mechanisms to adjust for future;
- A discussion is necessary on process of how IGF adopts decisions and provides recommendations;
- Some (not necessarily all) Topics/Issues/Policy Problems can be chosen at the end of one IGF to be developed until the next à Moderators with personal authority in community chosen to moderate issue over year à Whole year used to get inputs/interventions/comments from community, including in an on-line environment à Next IGF used to present given issue in a more polished format à Final format can be Moderator's/Chair's summary, which: avoids a negotiated outcome, presents all voices objectively, gives needed information to those who may need it, and gives way forward;
- Efficient channels of feeding of issues that deserve the attention to feed from workshops/BPFs/OFs/... into main session à From main session, well packaged, to those who need it and issue is relevant for: policy-makers, standard-setters, concerned community, and so on;
- Should consider using at times institutional setting in which IGF finds itself: MAG/IGF à CSTD à ECOSOC à UN General Assembly. This might be a good way to disseminate key outcomes and/or other important information;
- Integrate change thinking into IGF functioning, self-reflection, lens turned inward: Where are we now? What can we improve on?

INPUTS/OUTPUTS

- IGF as a router of ideas/issues between those who need answers and those who have them, or have resources and knowledge to start developing such answers;
- IGF doesn't have to solve problem, it can point to place where solution can be harnessed/received;
- In preparation for workshop session, organizers should be asked to provide a 'Recommended Readings' list – could provide answers and better prepare those who want to come to session;
- IGF can have clearer, but flexible, input/output model: inputs from national/regional, from workshop sessions, going to policy-makers, standard-setters, as suitable.

ACTION TIMELINE

- Tweaks until Istanbul, but setting the stage for next IGF;

- Practical steps now...
 - o focus on improving workshop inputs and outputs
 - o focus on creating a better package at end of IGF
- ...at the same time:
 - o start process now that can go toward next IGF and beyond;
 - o communicate with community and outreach to relevant stakeholders:
 - “This is what we’re doing now.”
 - o Get inputs, polish issues for Istanbul
 - o Next host country to get on the ground running from mid-September.
- Prepare an Open Forum Session in Istanbul to deliberate on ideas and inputs from community collected over summer.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

- MAG (+others) should spend a few days a year in informal environment – brainstorm, retrospection, relaxed but informed discussion on IG issues;
- Plenty of knowledge and skills even in MAG, and much more in community, that can be tapped into – resource limitations only need creative responses;
- Clear vision necessary what done with output documents; out-of-the box thinking, necessary to get out of comfort zone.

NEXT STEPS

<u>Task</u>	<u>Responsible</u>	<u>Due by</u>
Create a Working Group to drive process until September	MAG, on proposal of Chair	End of MAG Paris meeting
Create an on-line environment for community to contribute with inputs and comments on improving IGF outcomes	Secretariat or from Community	mid-June
Organize Open Forum Session to present and open further discussion on <i>Improving IGF Outcomes</i>	Working Group and Secretariat	Event at beginning of IGF, to feed into “Future of IG Ecosystem”

ANNEX 1:

MEETING REPORT OF MAG AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON IGF OUTPUTS ,
UNESCO, 19 MAY 2014

Moderator: Mark Carvell (UK)

The group met yesterday evening for 90 minutes of brainstorming on developing and enhancing IGF outcomes. About 35 members participated. Discussion focussed on the following:

- Importance of capitalising on the intellectual leadership of the IGF through knowledge sharing of Internet governance challenges and successful best practice and their impact on capacity building in particular;
- Building on CSTD WG recommendations and the momentum created by the mandate on specific issues from NETmundial;
- Improving existing reporting mechanisms to better package, explain and make use of the wealth of knowledge and information from IGF discussions;
- The importance of issues progressing through the succession from one IGF to the next IGF;
- Creating mechanisms for enhancing accessibility of IGF data and reviewing improvements as a result of IGF discussions so that for example policymakers can identify solutions that could be applied to their particular situations;
- Making IGF preparatory processes more inclusive and participatory in order to identify more rigorously key issues and gear up ahead of the IGF – learning from the NETmundial experience;
- Developing proactive inter-sessional activity in particular more effective linkages with the national and regional IGFs;
- Relevance of Tunis Agenda paragraph 72 (g) on recommendations relating to emerging issues and steps to be undertaken to transpose the discussions into practical steps – e.g toolkits for policymakers tailored to local conditions and needs;
- Modalities for IGF addressing issues identified at NETmundial in a structured way including the use of preparatory concise briefing documents and online interaction for inputs;
- Holding a dedicated session in the IGF programme on outcomes;
- Reinvigorating the “Friends of the IGF” as a contributor to the communications strategy.

There was general agreement that allocating substantial amounts of IGF time to negotiating was undesirable. There was recognition that the IGF has substantially improved the quality of internet governance discussions.

Several proposals were made specifically on developing output mechanisms, communication and increasing interactive preparatory and follow up processes.

There were several contributions stating that dissemination of information provided at IGF sessions and workshops notably the Chair’s report and workshop reports could be improved in order to communicate more effectively areas of agreement

and divergence, and identifying issues not resolved. A working group could be set up to implement these improvements.

There were also suggestions with regard to creating interactive repositories of information and data and enhancing the ability to interact with the IGF website. Survey mechanisms could also be developed.

With regard to sustaining momentum from NETmundial, a series of workshops or special sessions relating to NETmundial topics should be added to the Istanbul IGF programme. Documents relating to these would be posted on the IGF website for comments and inputs. A roundtable event immediately prior to the IGF should be held and the related IGF workshop reports posted online as an IGF package of outputs.