***Draft for discussion***

**IGF 2016 COMMUNITY INTERSESSIONAL PROGRAM**

**Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II**

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**Introduction**

The [report](http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/a67d65_en.pdf) produced by the UN CSTD working group on IGF improvements called for the development of more tangible IGF outputs to “*enhance the impact of the IGF on global Internet governance and policy”.* Given this the IGF MAG kick-started a new intersessional program in 2015, with the intent to extend and increase the impact of other IGF activities, such as National and Regional IGF Initiatives (NRIs), the Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) and the Best Practice Forums (BPFs).

Over 70 [submissions](http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/policy-options-for-connection-the-next-billion/classified-list-of-contributions) including 22 from national and regional IGFs contributed to the development of a set of [*Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion*](http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/documents/policy-options/654-igf-policy-options-for-connecting-the-next-billion-compilation/file) and these were presented in Joao Pessoa, in November 2015.

The outputs from this program are intended to be a dynamic resource and evolve and grow over time. With this in mind, the MAG decided in April 2016 to explore further developing the IGF “*Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion*”, in particular by focusing on national and regional specificities.

**Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion – Phase II**

The UN Agenda for Sustainable Development identifies ICTs and the Internet as horizontal enablers for development. Paragraph 9-c. sets an important goal for the international community: “***Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020”.*** Given ICTs and the Internet are so important to development, it is critical that policy options and strategies be tailored to local needs and specificities.

The first phase of the IGF project (2015) focused on developing a set of policy options aiming at:

1. Deploying **infrastructure**
2. Increasing **usability**
3. Enabling **users**
4. Ensuring **affordability**, and
5. Creating **enabling environments**.

In 2016, it is proposed to develop further these policy options by:

1. **Emphasizing local and regional specificities** (level of market development, competition environment, capacity building, technical infrastructure, etc.) – the national and regional IGFs could be used to explain local challenges and showcase success stories.
2. **Demonstrating how *Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion* contributes to reaching the new Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) such as Good Health and Wellbeing (Goal n°3) and Quality Education (Goal n°4) – the IGF could be used as a unique platform to demonstrate the cross-sectoral benefits of Access. Examples of success stories in using the Internet, such as the use of high-speed Internet in fighting Ebola, or the development of rural educational communities would be documented.
3. **Building strategic alliances with key players at all levels**: Global, Regional, National: Development workers and communities, World Bank, ITU, EU Commission, IEEE, APC, Web Foundation, APC, GSMA, ICC, ministries and national agencies of Education and health, etc. – the IGF could be used as a hub to gather multistakeholder and cross-sectorial expertise.
4. **Building strategic alliances with key initiatives:** 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, Global Connect Initiative, Alliance for Affordable Internet, WEF Internet for All initiative, etc.

**Modality**

In order to identify policy options for “C*onnecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II*”, rounds of online public consultations will be conducted. Following the example of the [IGF Best Practices Forums](http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/best-practice-forums), an open and bottom-up process is envisioned to collect input.

All interested National and Regional IGF Initiatives, Dynamic Coalitions, and Best Practices Forums will be encouraged to contribute by sharing success stories or additional options to support “C*onnecting and Enabling the Next Billion”*.

Draft outputs will be produced and further discussed, both online and during the IGF 2016 ([6-9 December, Jalisco, Guadalajara, Mexico](http://www.igf2016.mx/)). Once compiled, the output will be made available to/shared with relevant fora at all levels, e.g. UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism, High-Level Political Forum, WSIS Forum, NRIs, DCs, BPFs, etc. This output would also serve as input to the IGF community in order to decide on a theme for the 2017 IGF Community Intersessional work.

**Timeframe**

* May – open-ended: Launch public call for background contributions on the theme of “*Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II*”. Contributions will be gathered and ultimately incorporated in the output through an iterative process.
* June: Invitation to the IGF community to join open editorial group.
* Sept: First draft “*Policy Options – Phase II*” open for public comment through web platform + reviewed by open editorial group
* Oct.: Second draft open for public comment through web platform
* Nov.: Final draft output published on IGF website
* Dec.: Presentation and discussion of the "*Policy Options – Phase II*" during IGF meeting
* Post-IGF: "*Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II*" incorporates input from IGF Mexico, published and shared with relevant fora at the international, regional and local level. Documents/workspace continue to evolve (based on support and value).