

digital COOPERATION
UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S HIGH-LEVEL PANEL



QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

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The [High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation](#) was convened by the UN Secretary-General in July 2018 to advance proposals to strengthen cooperation in the digital space among Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organisations, academia, the technical community and other relevant stakeholders.

The Panel submitted their report [The Age of Digital Interdependence](#) to the Secretary-General on 10 June 2019. Therefore, the purpose of this questionnaire is to support the follow up process of the recommendation (5A/B). Your contribution is essential for improving the global architecture for cooperation on digital technologies, which are:

- Internet Governance Forum Plus
- Distributed Co-Governance Architecture
- Digital Commons Architecture

Written contributions, either from an individual or organizational perspective are welcome. Submissions can be made as a single PDF emailed to Ms. Wafa Al Mehairi (wafa.almehairi@tra.gov.ae).

The deadline period is open from 5th April 2020 to 19th April 2020.

A. Overarching questions on a future digital cooperation structure concerning all models

1. Do you support the recommendation of a multistakeholder ‘systems’ approach for cooperation and regulation that is adaptive, agile, inclusive and fit for purpose for the fast-changing digital age? To what extent is the “multistakeholder” aspect important?

I do support a multistakeholder system approach for cooperation and regulation. The most important aspect of inclusivity is working on any system from a multiple point of view and getting it right. A top down model can alienate people and derail any system because it was imposed by one party.

2. In what ways would a new/ improved model promote actionable outcomes?

If you take connectivity, we have managed to get the obvious ones connected because they could afford it... what of the rest? How and why would we connect them? Our systems do not cater to their needs/their languages - thus a lot are not really interested. Finding how, why, what, who etc. would go a long way to making sure we connect them the right way, which will make the system sustainable.

3. How can broader participation of government and business representatives, particularly from small and developing countries and SMEs, be ensured? Is there a role for the UN?

Forgetting the developing world will yield no benefit to the rest of the world. There is a role for the UN, but a better one than what it's been so far, in assuring that it works for all.

4. What means of implementation are required for a sustainable system?

Inclusivity of people and our environment going forward. Meaning finding why we do things and who do we implement systems for, so appropriation happens and sustainable is the result.

B. Internet Governance Forum Plus (IGF +)

5. What structure, membership and responsibilities could a new Advisory Group have? What are its potential benefits compared to the current MAG?

The MAG could be a repository of experts as said above who could be year long, working on several problems by applying their knowledge to resolving specific issues brought to them by countries, Governments, stakeholders groups.

6. What are your thoughts on the following proposals? What structure, membership and responsibilities should each have?

- Cooperation Accelerator - MAG
- Policy Incubator - MAG
- Observatory and Help Desk – Repository of problems brought to MAG and some of the whollistic repsonses its members found and that are being implemented, with monitoring evaluation by the beneficiaries. Thus all of the historical members of MAG could become pool of people who can help their regions n implementation.

Make them all voluntary - yes

7. What are your thoughts on a new IGF Trust Fund? If considered, how should it look like, what expenses should it cover, and—accordingly—what annual budget would it need?

The trust fund relies on too few parties and has struggled to be sustainable. The IGF scertariat should be lightweight and fully funded under UNSG, to help the MAG mostly and the observatory. The Tunis Agenda actually allows in Para 73 allows for decentralization and complementarity. :

73. The Internet Governance Forum, in its working and function, will be multilateral, multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent. To that end, the proposed IGF could:

- a. **Build on the existing structures of Internet governance, with special emphasis on the complementarity between all stakeholders involved in this process – governments, business entities, civil society and intergovernmental organizations.**
- b. **Have a lightweight and decentralized structure that would be subject to periodic review.**
- c. **Meet periodically, as required. IGF meetings, in principle, may be held in parallel with major relevant UN conferences, *inter alia*, to use logistical support.**

In my opinion building on regional structures, as well as meeting with for example the High Level policy forum would allow for a decentralize and complementary structure that can actually integrate SDGs, and their achievements.

C. Distributed Co-Governance Architecture (COGOV)

8. What gaps in the existing digital architecture could the COGOV model address? What are its potential benefits compared to the business-as-usual scenario? How might it interact with existing mechanisms?

In terms of COGOV, we have actually really stopped short of making it work historically given the friction between historical telecommunications, Internet entities that are self governed, Governments that were kept out of the Internet processes and civil society suffering from all the bottlenecks in access and meaningful connectivity. So making sure that stakeholders in countries, regions, globally can identify with goals to achieve and state levels at which they can all help, sharing information will take us a long way to achieve SDGs. We all need to identify with the end result. No work in silos like IGF themes and workshops have done so far.

9. What structure, membership and responsibilities could the distributed co-governance mechanism take on? How might principles governing the logical and infrastructure layers be applied in economic and social layers of governance?

Example: Get rid of plastic- clean our food chain and oceans: who is working on that globally? Find the stakeholders at all levels, bring them together so they can be empowered by their numbers, learn from each other, take the task back regionally, locally with support from their governments and private sectors. The logical and infrastructures layers have worked by empowering people to connect networks, creating the network effect that we know today. Each empowered person/community adds to the strength of the movement towards achieving results.

10. What existing networks, if any, fit the necessary prerequisites of transparency, inclusion, multistakeholderism, to serve as pilots for COGOV?

None that I know go the complete way.

11. How would the COGOV Architecture contribute to the development of digital norms?

COGOV could help by enlightening people on their responsibility and accountability in things that they do. Digital norms have lacked the informed stakeholders having the right digital presence and not only being the product of a few, reaping all the benefits.

D. Digital Commons Architecture

12. What gaps in the existing digital architecture would the Digital Commons model address?

Accessibility to knowledge, best practices that stakeholders would not get access to in normal circumstances, because that knowledge would be intellectually protected and thus not accessible

13. Which aspects/features of the proposed architecture should be further considered?

The real integration of work towards the same goal by all stakeholders.

E. Other Ideas

14. Do you see scope for combining the three models and if yes, how could this be operationalized?

IGF MAG: the solutions providers via available expertise -- IGF meeting to be coupled with HLPF each year and for voluntary contributions to have all stakeholders get help by MAG on issues identified and send to MAG – restitution to take place at HLPF

COGOV - Stakeholders to showcase actions and results regionally, nationally to strengthen enactment of goals

Digital commons to be repository of knowledge and best practices of solutions as well maybe becoming a place to figure out norms agreed by all.

15. What are key shared values, principles, understanding and objectives for a global digital cooperation architecture that should be included in a “Global Commitment for Digital Cooperation”?

Preserve the only medium that we all share at the moment that is good at this global sharing: the Internet. Find ways to make sure the biggest actors act for the global good and not only for money.

16. What role do you see for the UN in the future of global digital cooperation? What would the profile, responsibilities and role of a Technology Envoy (to be appointed by the UN Secretary-General) be?

The UN and its system need to demonstrate to all that they work in sync so we can all view digital cooperation in the light of making impact on people’s livelihoods. The technology envoy should act as the glue in making sure dissemination of information on UN and all partnerships, are known. Glue for the UN system, IGF and global commons.

17. Which other ideas, mechanisms and features are worth considering?

Empower people and they will tell us. There are a lot of mechanisms and features that at the moment are working at very local levels and could probably be replicated as we go. We should not burden the system from the start by adding too many features. The obvious will come up quickly.