

Green leaves growing into «IGF+» - *“food for thought” non-paper* – 20200128

Introductory note to this document:

This “non-paper” tries to summarize in a holistic fashion a number of important **gaps identified in the global digital cooperation arrangements** (first column), how the current IGF (and some other initiatives) is **already addressing** such gaps (second column), and what **possible specific and concrete evolutions** in the direction of a **stronger, more effective and more inclusive “IGF+” could be envisaged** (columns three and four).

The “non-paper” ends with some considerations on **funding and support** needed for such an “IGF+” to be possible.

The non-paper benefits from the consultations had in Geneva on January 14th and in Brussels on January 28th, and is naturally open to further refinement as the discussions develop. However, it may already be useful as a preliminary input to the task of concretizing the elements of future strengthened digital cooperation arrangements.

Challenges and gaps identified (see e.g. HLPDC Report (Chapter 4))	Existing “Green leaves” observed within and outside IGF addressing the gaps	Potential grown-out forms within an “IGF+” framework	Comments/complementary ideas
Desire for more tangible outcomes	Best Practice Forum (BPF) outcomes (since 2015) and Dynamic Coalitions ⁱ IGF Meeting “Messages” (since 2017) Improved Host Country Report Outcomes from NRIs (e.g. Eurodig Messages or Outcomes from African IGF ⁱⁱ)	Improved Outcomes (timeliness, conciseness, usability) both from intersessional work (Dynamic Coalitions, Best Practice Forums, NRIs etc.) and from annual Meetings, evolving from current formats with help of strengthened IGF-Secretariat and Observatory/Helpdesk Network	One mid-term objective would be to develop Recommendations as envisaged by §72 of the Tunis Agenda on the Information Society (TAIS), as non-negotiated, rough consensus and/or options documents
Better follow-up on discussions	Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) and BPFs inside IGF and multiple initiatives and Calls outside IGF (Internet&Jurisdiction Policy Network; Paris Call, Christchurch Call, Geneva Dialogue)	Current DCs, BPFs and external policy networks (willing to do so) could be evolved into policy incubator networks (PINs) and offered stronger support by the IGF-Secretariat as well as the Observatory/Helpdesk Network. Thematic discussions on the proposals of PINs could also be a feature of a more structured annual program , which would further strengthen the approach of having a limited number of politically, socially and economically highly relevant thematic tracks .	The intersessional work from policy incubator networks (PINs) should have stronger linkages to the high-level leaders’ (“hll”) tracks and program . The high-level leaders should also be able to propose the establishment of new PINs or request existing ones to address emerging/urgent needs. In this sense, high-level leaders would intersessionally and/or at its annual forum discuss draft PIN principles, orientations, guidelines and recommendations and make inputs to the PINs. By being linked in these ways to the high level leaders the PINs would count with direct connection to the relevant decision-makers, which, in turn, would enhance the visibility, tangibility and relevance of their work.
Low status on political agenda	Speech by UNSG (since 2018, with video in 2017) and Speech by Host Country Head of State or Government (since 2017)	The IGF Opening could feature as a permanent session a “State of Digital Cooperation” Speech by the UNSG, complemented by a speech of the	

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<p>Need of more active and high-level participation by governments and the private sector</p>	<p>More interactive Opening and High Level Sessions, Ministerial Roundtables, High Level Leaders Sessions, Parliamentarian Track (2019)</p>	<p>corresponding host Head of State or Government;</p> <p>The high-level leaders segment of the IGF should be a permanent feature of its program, with strong links and integrated with the other parts of the program and with the intersessional work (PINs, see above).</p> <p>It could also be considered whether a permanent but rotating high-level format of the MAG could be added or if an additional high-level group (“hlg”) could be established. This “high-level” MAG or group would convene a manageable number of leaders from all stakeholder groups at head of organization level. This group would meet at least once F2F during the annual IGF, and could be chaired by UN-Secretary General or an immediate appointee of the UNSG. It could provide strategic input to the IGF annual program; 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.</p> <p>In addition the MAG would maintain –in a technical level format- the main task of developing and preparing the IGF annual meeting (“program committee”).</p>	<p>The high-level MAG/group could be in line with the numbers, distribution and periodic rotation of seats existing in the current MAG.</p>

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		<p>It also would consider as inputs the views of the UNSG in his State of the Digital Cooperation Speech as well as the input from the high-level MAG/group.</p> <p>A parliamentarian track should be continued and enlarged, while keeping it integrated with IGF program.</p>	
<p>Arrangements not inclusive enough of small and developing countries, indigenous communities, women, young and elderly people and those with disabilities</p>	<p>Work of National and Regional Initiatives (NRIs) as key link between global, regional and national levels</p> <p>MAG criteria on diversity in workshops and Main Sessions</p> <p>Travel Support (especially 2019)</p> <p>Youth Track</p>	<p>NRIs would be further integrated into the IGF Plus structure, including looking for further synergies with the IGF annual program and with the work of the Policy Networks.</p> <p>Better funded travel support and empowerment through strengthened IGF Secretariat and / or Observatory/Helpdesk Network</p> <p>Youth to be embedded with agency in all work efforts</p>	
<p>Complexity and lack of a simple entry point, which makes it hard for small enterprises, marginalized groups, developing countries and other stakeholders with limited budgets and expertise to participate;</p>	<p>Observatories and helpdesks established by different entities, e.g. Global Internet Policy Observatory (by EU) or Geneva Internet Platform (initiated by Switzerland)</p>	<p>The IGF+ Observatory and Helpdesk function would be performed by a network of helpdesks/observatories willing to perform that task, which would closely cooperate with a strengthened IGF-Secretariat.</p> <p>The Helpdesk/Observatory Network should serve as a “one-stop-shop” for all stakeholders, but especially from small and developing countries and on a</p>	<p>The IGF-Secretariat would maintain a public list on the IGF website of the entities participating in the helpdesk network.</p> <p>The IGF-Secretariat may assume a role of first point of contact for the Helpdesk/Observatory Network.</p>

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<p>Lack of reliable data, metrics and evidence on which to base policy – need of a knowledge repository on digital policy</p> <p>Need for capacity-development opportunities for communities not involved so far in order to enable meaningful participation in digital governance fora</p>	<p>Information resources, such as “session reporting”, “daily reports”, “final report”, etc.</p>	<p>needs-based basis, in order to enable their meaningful participation;</p> <p>The Observatory/Helpdesk Network should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide updated information on relevant issues, processes and actors; - connect interested actors with each another and provide support for organizing as Policy Incubator Networks; - provide capacity-building for interested stakeholders on relevant issues in the field of digital cooperation enabling them to meaningfully participate in IGF and/or direct to appropriate capacity-building resources; - direct requests for help on digital policy (such as dealing with crisis situations, drafting legislation, or advising on policy) to appropriate entities, including regional and sector-specific helpdesks; - ensure links between governance processes and implementation of SDGs; - collect and share best practices. 	
<p>Need of better communication across different bodies and synergies</p>	<p>Role of Nitin Desai in first IGF period; Role of successive MAG Chairs and of IGF Secretariat;</p>	<p>The Tech Envoy could play a key role, acting as liaison between the IGF and the UN system;</p> <p>The strengthened MAG and/or “high level group” (see above) would improve coordination at a level of decision-makers across the different stakeholder groups;</p>	

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		<p>The Observatory/Helpdesk Network would help strengthening ties between all institutions and fora using its network;</p> <p>A strengthened IGF-Secretariat would be enabled to more effectively support these liaison efforts</p>	

General considerations on support and funding:

- ➔ By linking stakeholder leaders to the IGF+ through the high-level MAG or group and by increasing the relevance and added-value of the work done by the PINs the **incentive and pressure to devote funding to the IGF would naturally increase.**
- ➔ The **mid-term goal would to reach a funding span between 3-6 Million USD per year** (annual meeting not included), which should be more than enough to cover the costs of the whole system, including appropriate travel-support for less well-resourced stakeholders. (for current budget and needs see: https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/9615/1961)
- ➔ **Funding should be multistakeholder including support from member states, technical sector, foundations and private companies.**
- ➔ The **IGF Secretariat’s staff would need to be increased and strengthened** so as to properly serve the policy and administrative support needs of the enhanced IGF framework.

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ⁱ E.g. the Dynamic Coalition of Community Connectivity. The work they have done has been taken up all over the world, including by regulators and policy makers. <https://comconnectivity.org/>

ⁱⁱ See <https://www.afigf.africa/sites/default/files/2019/Outcome%20document%20Afigf2019%20draft%204.1%20rev.pdf>