

MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy
Online Meeting
3 April 2025 at 19:00 UTC

Summary Report

The 94th virtual meeting of the IGF MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy (WG-Strategy) was held on 3 April March 2025 at 19:00 UTC. The meeting was moderated by Chris Buckridge and a recording of the meeting is available upon request.

Chris opened the meeting by introducing the agenda.

Agenda

1. Update from the IGF Secretariat
2. Update on the 6 sub-working groups
3. Update on VWs HLE organized by the European Commission
4. Fourth Open Consultation Process meeting for the WSIS+20
5. General updates – WSIS+20 HLE/GDC/AI governance
6. AoB

Discussion

1. Update from the IGF Secretariat

The Secretariat did not attend the meeting.

2. Update on the six sub-working groups

Chris invited the chairs of the six subgroups to give an update on the status of the activities.

- *WG 1 (Bruna): Work on a paper reinforcing the mission of the IGF and its long-term contribution to the digital cooperation and internet governance space.*

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dp19oLro_xLDXGx6jC17C-VaY2GJ7Qwc1f9lk1U4DGg/edit?tab=t.0

Bruna expressed concern about potential overlap between the Leadership Panel's document and the current proposal. She is organizing a meeting to discuss this further and will share the link with the group.

- *WG 2 (Chris): Draft a panel submission to the WSIS+20 Open Consultation Process (OCP) in order to host a discussions during the High-Level Event in Geneva:*

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lvTxDECW1hX9CJbchhBCfpMonkd06q0DRa862YcAWKI/edit?tab=t.0>

Chris shared that a proposal to organize an IGF session as part of the WSIS+20 High-Level Event has been submitted on behalf of the MAG. In total, three proposals were submitted: two by the IGF Secretariat, and one on behalf of the MAG. The intent is to have two IGF-themed sessions, one of which will present the outcomes of the IGF event; and another focused on discussing the IGF's contribution to the WSIS+20 review process.

- *WG 3 (Titti): Host a dialogue webinar with ODET and other UN Agencies on the implementation of Para 68-71 of the GDC (MAP), together with DCs, NRIs and other intersessional work:* https://docs.google.com/document/d/1suCaQDM-TWem29QZXTXcpxZS3_0JW8YL/edit

Titti shared that the concept note is nearly finalized. Representatives from various UN entities—including ITU, ODET, CSTD, UNDP, UNESCO, UNDESA, UNCTAD, and OHCHR—will be invited, along with a diverse group of Member States and stakeholders. The focus will be on identifying WSIS framework structures and processes that could support the implementation of the Global Digital Compact (GDC), and on exploring how the IGF can contribute to this effort, particularly in relation to paragraphs 68–71 of the GDC (MAP). The discussion will also consider the contributions of Dynamic Coalitions (DCs), National and Regional Initiatives (NRIs), and other intersessional activities.

- *WG 4 (Flavio): Host a webinar on the implementation of the NM+10 Sao Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines implementation to the IGF work.*

Flavio recalled that the goal of the subgroup is to engage the main workstreams of the IGF ecosystem in order to raise awareness about the São Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines. The aim is to encourage these workstreams to reflect on their own governance practices in light of the guidelines and, where relevant, consider possible improvements. The group is also exploring the idea of organizing an online webinar during EuroDIG, and would like to propose a high-level session on the São Paulo Guidelines at the IGF.

- *WG 5 (Amrita): Consider actions for fostering governmental engagement,* https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Zras1z1RQMaZyhkLkgWd_Q01tok419DVtoauShV_GQQ/edit?tab=t.0

Regarding governmental engagement, the subgroup proposed organizing a half-day discussion dedicated to governments. The specific topic and date will be discussed during the next virtual meeting.

- *WG 6 (Bruna): Draft a high level Multistakeholder statement addressing the UNGA Presidency highlighting the importance of the IGF and the need for it to be transformed into a permanent effort and fora:*
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ezsfdAT5-y48GUfG9IJ96wK2cxxAbmc5h626UYE6XZY/edit?tab=t.0>

The idea is to issue a high-level, multi-stakeholder statement, ideally addressed to the co-facilitators and the President of the General Assembly (PGA), highlighting the importance of the IGF. The statement will be open for signatures during the week preceding the Oslo meeting. Representatives from NRIs and DCs have been invited to join the upcoming call on April 10 (meeting will be 10 April at 09:30 UTC, [Google Meet](#) link).

Adam encouraged participants to reflect on the implications of the phrase “institutionalize the IGF,” warning that it could imply restrictions and unintended consequences. Anriette agreed, noting that “institutionalization” is not a term that is typically well-received. However, she clarified that within the group, the intent behind the term is not to compromise the IGF’s relative independence, but rather to strengthen its relationship with the UN. In this context, institutionalization would mean enhancing the IGF’s institutional capacity, financial predictability, and overall resources.

Markus emphasized that the IGF does not follow standard UN procedures, as it is not a Member State-driven body. Therefore, it cannot be considered a formal UN entity. He pointed out that the procedural rules of the UN are not as open and inclusive as those of the IGF. However, he also noted the presence of the ODET office, which is partially funded through the regular UN budget, and suggested that a strategic shift is needed—arguing that the IGF should be treated on equal footing in terms of support and recognition.

Anriette added that the necessary language and framing are already available in the [non paper](#) drafted by the Swiss Government. She recommended using it as a foundation for a working group strategy proposal concerning the future structure and sustainability of the IGF.

3. Update on VWs HLE organized by the European Commission

Chris gave an update on the conference held by the European Commission on web 4.0, virtual worlds, and Internet governance. He noted that there were some concerns from attendees in the Internet governance space about the implication that these new applications would require changes to Internet governance structures and processes.

Ana added that the messages from participants were very different.

4. Fourth Open Consultation Process meeting for the WSIS+20

Anriette noted that ODET appears to be moving quite rapidly in implementing the Global Digital Compact, which is likely to significantly influence ongoing processes. It seems that there will be multiple outputs, and it is important to closely monitor them. She emphasized the need to influence the Chair's report of the WSIS+20 High-Level Event, as well as other upcoming reports—such as the UNGIS report—as they will shape the WSIS report to be discussed at the UN General Assembly in December.

She also stressed that the WSIS+20 HLE will include the participation of several Member States, and that the session organized by the IGF needs to be utilized more effectively than it was last year.

5. General updates – WSIS+20 HLE/GDC/AI governance/CSTD data governance

Ana provided an update on the CSTD meeting, mentioning that the WSIS segment will begin on April 9. She noted that there is an issue with the United States, as they are pushing to remove references to the SDGs and all sustainability-related language from both resolutions. Ana also highlighted that the report from the CSTD Secretariat is particularly useful for understanding what has and hasn't been achieved, and the reasons behind it. Additionally, she mentioned that some Member States are proposing to extend the WSIS+20 mandate by five years, until 2030, as a new development agenda is expected to be introduced that year.

4. AoB

The next meeting of the WG-Strategy will be held on April 17 at **13:00 UTC**.

List of participants

1. Anriette Esterhuysen, former IGF MAG Chair
2. Chris Buckridge, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member
3. Titti Cassa, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member, Government of Italy
4. Bruna Santos, Former IGF MAG member
5. Afi EDO, Independent Expert
6. Desiree Milhoshevic, IGF MAG member
7. Ana Neves, IGF MAG member
8. Bill Drake, Independent Expert
9. Valeria Betancourt, IGF MAG Member
10. Jorge Cancio, Swiss Government
11. Jasmine Ko, Independent Expert
12. Giacomo Mazzone, Independent Expert
13. Maria Paz, former IGF MAG member
14. Cheryl Miller, IGF MAG member
15. Jimson Olufuye, Independent Expert
16. Adam Peake, former IGF MAG member
17. Flavio Wagner, CGI.br and University of Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil
18. Jennifer Chung, IGF MAG member
19. Jim Prendergast, Independent Expert
20. Ellen Taylor, Independent Expert

21. Cheryl Miller, IGF MAG Member
22. Manal Ismail, Independent Expert
23. Mark Carvell , EuroDIG
24. Markus Kummer, former IGF chair
25. Amrith Kumar, Independent Expert
26. Andrew Flavin, Independent Expert
27. Poncelet Ileleji, Independent Expert
28. Maurenn Owutsu, Independent Expert
29. Romella Janene, Independent Expert
30. June Parris, Independent Expert
31. Qsai ALShatty , Independent Expert
32. Nabel Yasin, Independent Expert
33. Saba Tiku, former IGF MAG Member
34. Ms. Dofel, Sook-Jung, IGF MAG Member
35. Stephanie Choi, Independent Expert