Final Draft

IGF 2016 COMMUNITY INTERSESSIONAL PROGRAMME

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

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MAG volunteers: Julian Casasbuenas G., Wisdom Donkor, Alejandra Erramuspe, Miguel Estrada, Segun Olugbile, Renata Aquino Ribeiro, Salanieta Tamanikaiwaimaro

Introduction

The 2012 report produced by the United Nations (UN) Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) working group on Internet Governance Forum (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 multi-stakeholder advisory group (MAG) launched a new intersessional programme in 2015 with the intent to extend and increase the impact of other IGF activities, such as national and regional IGF initiatives (NRIs), Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) and Best Practice Forums (BPFs).

Over 70 submissions, including 22 from national and regional IGFs, contributed to the development of a set of *Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion* that were presented at IGF 2015 in João Pessoa, Brazil, in November 2015.

The outputs from this intersessional programme 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*", including an inclusive invitation to the NRIs for their contributions detailing certain national and regional specificities, including challenges and relevant developments.

Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion – Phase II

The UN Agenda for Sustainable Development identifies information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the Internet as horizontal enablers for development. Paragraph 9-c. sets an important goal for the international community, namely to:

> "*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 intersessional project *Policy Options for Connecting the Next Billion* (2015) focused on developing a set of policy options aiming at the creation of enabling environments, including:

1) Deploying **infrastructure;**
2) Increasing **usability;**
3) Enabling **users** (e.g. through ICT literacy and training tools); and
4) Ensuring **affordability.**

In 2016, it is proposed to further develop these policy options by **emphasizing local and regional specificities**

- For example: level of market and digital policies development, competition environment, capacity-building, technical infrastructure, access to information and content, cybersecurity, etc.
- The NRIs could be invited to contribute to identifying local challenges and to showcasing success stories.

With a view to **demonstrating how *Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion* contributes to reaching the new Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs)

- While all of the SDGs are equally important to consider, some (like, for example, affordable connectivity and access to infrastructure, the cross-cutting use of ICT tools, digital literacy and skills, and capacity-building) can be viewed as building blocks to support other SDGs.
- Examples of success stories in using the Internet to address real world problems in least developed and developing countries should be inclusive of examples in e-government, e-agriculture, e-health, e-education, e-innovation and e-commerce; of how ICTs could be used to empower women and girls; the importance of the mobile industry to connectivity in developing regions; as well as other innovations in areas facing pandemics, such as use of high-speed Internet in fighting Ebola.
- Limitations, barriers to entry, and examples of what has not worked well would also be observed.
- As far as possible, tangible checklists could be developed to provide a framework of considerations for the implementation of each of the SDGs that potentially relate to connecting and enabling the next billion.

To enhance the impact of the IGF's work, it is also proposed to:

1) **Build strategic alliances with key players at all levels**: global, regional, national, local: development workers and communities, World Bank, International Telecommunication Union (ITU), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), CSTD, regional commissions, European Union (EU), African Union Commission, NEPAD, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Association for Progressive Communications (APC), Web Foundation, GSMA, LIRNE*asia*, other civil society organizations; International Chambers of Commerce (ICC), relevant ministries and national agencies of education and health, local governments, NGOs, etc.

2) **Build strategic alliances with key non-governmental initiatives**: 2030 SDGs, Global Connect Initiative, Alliance for Affordable Internet, WEF Internet for All initiative, etc. The strategic alliance could also deal with innovative funding mechanisms.

Modality

1. To identify policy options for "C*onnecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II*", rounds of online public consultations will be conducted (with versions in local languages as far as is reasonably possible). Following the example of the BPFs, an open and bottom-up process is envisioned to collect input.
2. Initial contributions in Phase I will be analysed with the aim of identifying commonalities and differences across submissions. This should prevent the need for duplicate submissions by stakeholders, and will strengthen the current work.
3. Interested NRIs, DCs, and BPFs will be invited, among others, to contribute by sharing success stories or by proposing additional options to support *Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II*.
4. Draft outputs will be produced and further discussed, both online and during the IGF 2016 (6-9 December, Jalisco, Guadalajara, Mexico) during a main session. 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, World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum, NRIs, DCs, BPFs, etc. This output will also serve as input to the IGF community in order to decide on a theme for the 2017 IGF community intersessional work.

Timeframe

- July – 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.

- July: Invitation to the MAG/ IGF community to join open editorial group.

- Sept: First draft "*Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II*" open for public comment through web platform and 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 for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II*" during IGF meeting.

- Post-IGF: "*Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion – Phase II*" incorporates input from IGF 2016 in Mexico; published and shared with relevant fora at the international, regional and local level. Documents/work space continue to evolve (based on support and value).