

The IGF We Want

Working DRAFT

This document is a working draft and contribution to the discussions on the future of the IGF. It seeks to reflect ideas and thoughts discussed overall, and not to be exclusive. This working draft was compiled by colleagues at ICANN and we look forward to working with the broader community discussing the future of the IGF.

As the Internet Governance Forum enters its 20th year, it has consistently demonstrated its value as the global venue for multistakeholder Internet governance discussions envisioned in the Tunis Agenda.

This draft has been developed with the overarching goal of maintaining and developing this value. Under the umbrella categories of “continuity and stability” and “scope and focus”, it considers characteristics that are crucial to an IGF that is sustainable over the long-term. The draft outlines suggestions or mechanisms that may contribute to achieving this sustainability, while not precluding other suggestions or proposals.

Continuity and Stability:

An IGF that is anchored in the global Internet ecosystem as a venue for important discussions involving all interested participants (rather than having its mandate revisited every 5 or 10 years) can usefully complement existing governance organizations and entities. Rather than inventing something new, the IGF can support evolution of the existing model, serving as a venue for initial, cross-sectoral discussions that can then be taken up in other forums for finalization.

Over the years, the IGF has been complemented by a broad and growing ecosystem of national and regional Internet governance initiatives (NRIs). These are critical for engaging on national and regional themes and can inform and enrich discussions at the global IGF, facilitating the coordination necessary to identify opportunities and solutions at the global level.

Aspects relevant to continuity and stability include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Logistical Stability:**

- Venue locations that are accessible and predictable would aid long-term planning. Consistency in venue locations would enable more consistent planning and preparations, creating greater ease for participants and minimizing distractions associated with substantive planning for the annual meeting. Key elements of venue locations include ease

of accessibility for travel (including visas); facilities and infrastructure to accommodate multiple workshops for large number of attendees; ease in logistics, such as accommodations and transport, for all participants; and arrangements for effective remote participation. More consistent venue selection could also afford cost savings.

- *Possible proposal:*

- Host meetings at UN locations on rotational basis.
- Leverage regional and national IGFs.
- Seek long-term hosting commitments from UN Member States to develop a multi-year plan.

- **Administrative Stability:**

- The IGF requires a stable, well-resourced staff to support the logistical, administrative, and substantive preparations of the IGF annual meeting. This includes the support provided to the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) and other mechanisms for preparing the agenda and program for the annual meeting. This requires adequate and sustainable funding.
- *Possible proposal:*
 - Staff stability and continuity for corporate memory and knowledge of UN operations and policy, and familiarity with the IGF and regional and national IGFs.
 - Possible internship or secondments paid by sponsoring entity.
 - Further encourage governments to financially support internships with the IGF Secretariat for NRI participants (not necessarily government employees).

- **Financial Stability**

- The IGF Secretariat requires adequate funding to engage staff to support the work. This should enable strong staff support, opportunities for possible interns or fellows (perhaps from national or regional IGFs), and support for the meetings to ensure outcomes, themes, materials are captured in searchable and useful forms for all.
- Financial stability should be diverse, and contributions should be provided with no conditions beyond supporting the IGF and its stability.
- *Possible proposal:*
 - Develop a clear budget proposal for funding that is adequate to ensure the stability and continuity of the IGF. Seek diverse funding from businesses, civil society, governments, and technical community, with a targeted annual budget.
 - Encourage long-term (e.g. five year) contributing commitments for long-term planning to pilot areas of need, and afford the opportunity to assess longer-term budgetary and strategic needs.

Scope and Focus:

- Themes and scope should be relevant to the Internet and the Internet ecosystem:
 - Evolving and staying current on topics of relevance to stakeholders, decision makers, and participants.
 - Focus of themes, and topics, that help inform decisions on policy, regulatory, or operational areas of the Internet.
 - The IGF should continue to be a forum that provides value and benefit to participants.
- *Possible approaches:*
 - Further evolve subject matter linkage with national and regional IGFs
 - Establish a searchable, archivable, resource of sessions, materials, discussions, accessible to all with ease. Some work on this is underway, for example, https://docs.google.com/document/d/15V92tLPXsva0PtDrki-pYX-rB_tqCd0Ot7ALFsRNR9Y/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.mrpbd1g108tw
 - Track issues – where could be, are being or have been addressed and resolved.
 - In coordination with the leadership panel, explore possibilities.
 - Potentially explore evolving the MAG to streamline input, and or evolve to more of an advisory role to support the IGF secretariat.
 - Link and partner to other resources, dialogues, forums with roles or responsibilities on specific topic areas, as one of many available resources to users.