Workshop 145: The Importance of Regional Coordination in Internet Governance

Organizer: Mr German Valdez, Number Resource Organization

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http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/igf-2013-transcripts/1414-145-nusa-dua-hall-1

Concise description

In a juncture of Internet Governance where there are unanimous calls for enhanced cooperation, aggressive collaboration and sustained engagement, there are numerous success stories across geographical regions showcasing diverse models of engagement, partnership to achieve common goals and contribute to development.

Summary

The Internet Universe and Ecosystem is composed of multiple stakeholders including Netizens[1], Internet Service Providers, Regional Internet Registries (RIRs), Domain Name Registries and Registrars, Standards Bodies, Vendors, Internet Society Chapters (ISOC) Network Operator Groups (NOGs), Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) , civil society organisations, Entrepreneurs not excluding the many other institutions and organisations that together make up the community have extensive examples of cooperation for capacity development, contribution to policy development, building infrastructure such as Internet Exchange Points (IXPs). As stakeholders work towards developing their communities whether it is to increase the penetration rate of services in underserved areas, or to cooperate to minimise risks associated with vulnerabilities on the internet, or grow local content, or ensure that there is access through reduced transit costs, or whether it is ensuring that there is meaningful participation in the global, regional and national policy processes, it becomes inherently clear that organisations and stakeholders need to enhance their level of cooperation. The Workshop showcases success stories from across the world. Because their organisations and contexts were different, their models for engagement and collaboration were different however, there were common elements that they have that are useful as communities build their strategic framework for engagement. There were lessons shared, challenges identified and interaction from the participants added to the value of the workshop.

Panelists

- **Ms Bernadette Lewis**, Caribbean Telecommunication Union (CTU), Female, Intergovernmental Organizations, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, Latin American and Caribbean Group – GRULAC

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[1] Netizen: Term used to descibe internet users.

- **Ms Nnenna Nwakanma**, The Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa, Female, Private Sector, NIGERIA, African Group
- **Mr Oscar Robles**, NIC Mexico, Private Sector, MEXICO, Latin American and Caribbean Group - GRULAC
- **Mr Musab Abdulla**, Telecommunication Regulatory Agency - Bahrain, Government, BAHRAIN, Asia-Pacific Group.
- **Ms Sally Costerton**, Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), Technical Community, UNITED KINGDOM, Western Europe and Others Group – WEOG
- **Ms Yurie Ito**, APCERT, Technical Community, JAPAN, Asia-Pacific Group

Moderators

- **Ms Sala Tamanikaiwaimaro**, Pasifika Nexus, Female, Civil Society, FIJI, Asia-Pacific Group
- **Mr German Valdez**, Numbers Resource Organization (NRO) [Remote Moderation]

Lessons from Panelists

One of the things that the organisations have identified in their practical engagement on cooperation and coordination is the need for common goal, shared vision and clear framework. This helps to identify and set parameters of engagement where expectations are clearly defined and stakeholders can work together to achieve common objectives.

Whilst there are numerous challenges such as geographical diversity, language barrier, access to funds, challenges in meaningful participation, digital divide, stakeholders were quite adamant that these were not limitations but rather opportunities for empowerment, collaboration by enhancing strengths, effectively utilising resources for the purpose of achieving goals of access, development and security.

All panelists agreed that no one single stakeholder organisation can advance on its own but needs to aggressively collaborate and engage in concerted efforts of growth and collaboration. There is also a need for high level political committment from countries. Effective and aggressive cooperation does not need to be legislated but trust and relationships need to be built to ensure success. There was a clear consensus that stakeholders cannot afford to work in silos but that trust has to be built. It would mean sharing spaces where people are not territorial and the examples that were shared showed successful examples of collaboration.

Case Scenario: Africa and Convening Internet Governance Forums and Related Activities

Nnenna Nwakanma began asking, why is there a need to define enhanced cooperation? Nnenna is an organizer of the Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa, and Africa IGF processes. There are different models of coordination in the national, regional, and international venues. She suggested the most relevant model is the national level. In West Africa there are three official languages, which present a coordination challenge. There is a consortium of seven stakeholder organizations for this level. At the Africa level there is a staffed operational secretariat for the IGF within the UN Commission for Africa. At each level there are individuals that do the work. The African Union is one of the multilateral government organizations, which has led to the current African sub regions; these are followed at the sub regional IGF level. There is a high level of Internet coordination in Africa, due

to the AF* organizations: AFRINIC, AFNOG (network operators), AFRICANN, AFIGF, AFLTD (top level domain association), AFNIC (national Internet registry association), AfriSIG, AfiCTA (ICT association) among many other examples come together in several forums. However one of the things that she mentioned was that whilst there are mechanisms to coordinate activities and projects that it does not undermine the significance of the impact of individuals in those organisations.

Case Scenario: Latin America – Collaboration and Partnerships in Establishing NIC , NOG and IXPs.

Oscar Robles mentioned Latin American examples of enhanced cooperation. Collaboration within the academic and technical community led to the establishment of LACNIC. In the late 1990s, the Latin American region did not have a Regional Internet Registry (RIR) and there were few players including a few country code top level domain (ccTLD) operators. In 2002 LACNIC received accreditation as a RIR due to the cooperation of multiple stakeholder entities. There have been several LAC* organizations formed since then: LACTLD, LACIX, LACNOG, and so forth that laid ground for LACIGF. Government actors have been involved as well during the last 10 years.

Case Scenario: Caribbean Telecommunications Union building relationships to coordinate holistic development.

Bernadette Lewis discussed the perspective of intergovernmental organizations. The Caribbean Telecommunications Union was established in 1989 as the telecom policy institution for the region. The evolution of technology and growth of the Internet led to the expansion of membership to include private and civil entities in addition to governments that were not traditionally involved. This is now a multistakeholder organization, and that has enabled work to fulfill the mandate to coordinate activities to encourage resource pooling and information exchange. The CTU agenda is shared with the ITU Caribbean office to align activities. Without coordination, there would be separate activities that would not contribute to coherent advancement. The goal is to establish synergies between different initiatives and to build upon projects so that there is progression. CTU works in strategic partnerships, with organisations such as LACNIC, ARIN, Packet Clearing House and this enables the organization to enhance the quality of work and represent the broader view of the collective community. The CTU is looking to collaborate further to make effective use of limited resources to continue developing Caribbean internet Governance.

Case Scenario: Arab Region - Bahrain Regulator's Perspective.

Musab Abdulla shared Bahrain's experience on effective cooperation as a regulator. The Arab region has two sub regions: the Gulf Cooperation Council and the League of Arab States. Historically cooperation across the region has been strong, but in terms of Internet governments the Arab region has been behind. The Arab IGF was established as a new platform for cooperation. The policy coordination is a newer phenomenon but in the past technical coordination has been successful, due to a good relationship with the RIPE NCC. This is a work in progress, to coordinate within the region and with other regions.

Case Scenario: Asian Tigers - Regional CERT and coordinating functional collaboration

Yuri Ito joined remotely to present the effect of coordination on APCERT, which is the regional incident response forum of CSIRTs for the Asia Pacific. APCERT was established in 2003, there are significant political and cultural differences among the participating economies. She described the evolution of the CERT community from 1989, and the collaborative environment that developed organically due to the nature of the task of managing Internet security worldwide. It is natural for government to be engaged in security operations, so these operations often work in tandem with relevant government agencies. Cyber security is in particular seen as an environment where international collaboration is required to be effective, as there is the potential for a breakdown in trust. Activities include wide campaigns, providing a point of contact for the CERTs, global dialogue, training, and participation in regional and international forums. She mentioned the focus has shifted from security to regional risk reduction.

Case Scenario: ICANN constantly evolving to be inclusive

Sally Costerton gave her experience in global stakeholder engagement at ICANN, which is undertaken at both the global and regional level but implementation occurs mainly at a regional level. ICANN provides resource that is often personnel to solve problems, and other forms of support. ICANN relies on strong relationships with regional organizations, and she added the new initiative to internationalize the organization with the global hubs will enable better coordination and support that are relevant to community groups on a more localized level. To staff these hubs, ICANN is looking specifically for people with the right skills, are humble and not arrogant and are strong team players who are able to facilitate coordination. She also mentioned that ICANN is pioneering web tools to reach out to the wider Internet community, but there is a particular focus on people.

Annexure: Snippets from the some of the Qs and As

Sala Tamanikaiwaimaro summed the comments, saying coordination and collaboration are particularly important where there are limited resources. Institutional reforms can cater to collaborative environments, and emphasized the importance of attitude and a desire to collaborate.

Question: The IGF is too focused on procedures and the product is never mentioned. What are we trying to do? That will help us define the process. Nnenna referred to the question raised at the African Internet Summit: should technical and policy personnel go to each others' meetings? The answer is yes because each sector cannot fall into a trap of working in 'silo'. The perspectives and information need to be shared for all actors to do their jobs effectively.

Question: There is a lot of focus on policy and technical aspects. There is a lack of business perspective, and these forums are less accessible to the business community. How do we move forward to incorporate business and academic institutions? A private sector community member and MAG member responded from the floor, that there are many opportunities to get involved in interregional and international dialogue. It is useful for the private sector to see the linkages between the regional and global levels, and there are complementary agendas. It struck him the differences in communities and needs among the regions, and that can inform a deeper understanding in the different cultures and how to respond to varying needs.

Bernadette also responded, pointing out some of the CTU initiatives including awareness building that are designed for different communities in various languages – including operational language – for different sectors. This brings different stakeholder groups to involvement within their areas of relevance and also raises public awareness of discussions on particular topics.

Comment: Coordination has to be meaningful, and inclusiveness is critical. There is pressure on all coordinating bodies, and no one organization can cover all aspects.

Comment: Multistakeholderism can be enhanced through legislation at a local, national, and regional level. For example in Kenya the Constitution enshrines cooperation – this top level support has a positive effect.

Question: How does regional coordination facilitate specific communities of interest?

Sally responded from an ICANN perspective that communities have different needs from different organizations, and it likely depends by region and the individuals involved. She mentioned the new Internationalized Domain Names that have been introduced to the root, and how that will benefit the respective communities.

Nnenna added that within the WSIS framework there are certain groups outlined, and meetings aligned to those, but that the real work happens outside the narrow groupings. Business is wired for 90% result, 10% process; government is the opposite, civil society as well. In the digital economy we are not limited to our own stakeholder groups necessarily. Making business out of the Internet is not possible without an understanding of how it works, so the business community cannot afford to wait to be invited. Each group must be proactive and participate in relevant forums and discussions on topics of interest.

Comment: How do you attract the potential participants to these forums that do not know they should be interested in Internet government? Musab responded that the key is meaningful, effective, streamlined coordination in a forum. You can engage people with clarity – there is so much information for newcomers to absorb, and there are people out there with viewpoints to share.

Comment: In the African region the involvement of the business community is important; most businesses have a very local scope in Africa, so we have to make Internet governance relevant to business at their level. When business becomes global, they will naturally get involved.

Oscar added that multistakeholder engagement is new territory for governments, referring to the comment that governments are process-heavy. Business and civil society need to understand the challenges of every discussion, including the political issues. These are no longer just technical issues. These discussions can lead to actions at a local level.

Sala concluded the session, saying that a clear vision allows for a coordinated approach to engagement, which has come across clearly during the session. In the context where there are questions on the feasibility of enhanced cooperation, it is clear that that is the preferred mode across the world on multiple levels and it is in fact the most effective set of models for effective implementation at a local level. Sally added that the next challenge is to reach out to users and the wider public, because future development needs more voices.

Annexure 2: Twitter Story Board

1. **Nnenna** @nnenna23 Oct

   Wrapping up here. Closing with @adielakplogan point on the need to communicate, inform and educate!! #IGF2013 #WS145

   Expand

2. **German Valdez** @NRO_Exec_Sec23 Oct

   @salanietaT moderating #WS145 Importance of Regional Coordination Internet Governance #IGF2013 @oscarrobles @nnenna pic.twitter.com/mdZe3hTqV5
   Followed by Deploy360 and 15 others

   View photo

3. **AFRINIC** @AFRINIC23 Oct

   @AfrIGF more information about the Internet Summit at .bit.ly/19y9Rl6. AIS'2014 is planned in Djibouti in May 2014. #AFIGF2013 #WS145

   View conversation

4. **Nnenna** @nnenna23 Oct

   Have you heard of "Af*"? I will be speakiing about the AF stars in #WS145 at 11h00 in Nusa Dua Hall 1. Room #2. #IGF2013

   Expand

5. **Nnenna** @nnenna23 Oct

   My next session will be a great one. Dont miss it! "Importance of Regional Coordination in #IGF2013" Room #2 Nusa Dua Hall 1. #WS145 #AfIGF

   Expand