

IGF 2024 NRIs Coordination session

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

15 December 2024, 11:15-12:45 local time | WS Room X

Overall focus: What NRIs could do for GDC and WSIS+20?

- SUMMARY REPORT -

About the session

The [NRIs Coordination Session](#) is an annual collaborative and open work meeting with all National, Regional, and Youth IGF Initiatives (NRIs), alongside representatives from the IGF community. Developed in an inclusive and bottom-up manner, this session provides a platform to bring together diverse stakeholders to discuss and shape the role of NRIs in addressing pressing global challenges and advancing digital governance.

At the 19th annual IGF meeting hosted on 15 December 2024 in Riyadh, the NRIs coordination session focused on some of key Internet governance developments, including the recognition of the multistakeholder approach in the Global Digital Compact (GDC), and the implementation of its objectives; as well as on the preparation for the 20 years review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20) and with that the IGF+20 process, reflecting on its two decades long role in fostering multistakeholder Internet governance which led to organically emerged network of 174 national, regional, and youth IGF initiatives.

Participants exchanged practices by examining the implications of the GDC and WSIS+20 for NRIs, and vice versa, and identifying actionable strategies for advancing the shared vision. The session further aimed to prepare for upcoming global reviews, including the IGF+20 mandate review, ensuring the continued relevance and impact of NRIs. Below is the session's agenda developed in a bottom-up consultative manner by all NRIs:

- 1) Welcome and introduction by IGF Secretariat
- 2) Evolution of the NRIs - good practices of impact
- 3) NRIs role in the context of WSIS+20 and IGF+20
 - a) How is WSIS+20 impacting NRIs?
 - b) NRIs role in IGF+20 mandate review
 - c) IGF National Initiatives relation with their countries' government
 - d) GDC implications for NRIs
- 4) Closing

Over 80 NRIs were represented on the NRIs coordination session. Further below are the main key takeaways emerged from the session:

Stakeholder Engagement & Capacity Development

- Outreach efforts should be expanded to ensure broad participation and engagement from various sectors of society.
- Efforts should be made to strengthen multistakeholder cooperation, particularly through initiatives that foster collaboration between developed and developing countries.
- Capacity development remains a key priority, with a focus on increasing resources and support, especially for rural communities.
- More education and awareness initiatives are necessary to ensure policymakers and parliamentarians understand that Internet governance encompasses all digital issues, not just technical aspects.
- There is a need for increased youth involvement in global Internet governance processes through structured engagement opportunities. Greater action is needed to engage youth in Internet governance, including the creation of dedicated platforms for youth participation.
- Webinars and university-led initiatives can enhance youth engagement, providing more avenues for participation.
- Fellowships and structured programs are encouraged to support youth involvement in global processes like the GDC and WSIS+20.
- Media should be engaged as an important stakeholder to help inform and involve local communities in Internet governance issues.

Strengthening Multistakeholder Approach and Policy Engagement

- There is a need to promote the multistakeholder model in Internet governance discussions and ensure that governments actively listen to and engage with all stakeholders.
- More proactive government participation is required to translate multistakeholder discussions into concrete policy decisions.
- Stakeholders should be better informed about the importance of contributing to WSIS+20, and awareness-raising materials, such as brochures, can help in this effort.
- The Summit of the Future's outputs should reinforce multistakeholder cooperation between developed and developing countries.

Evaluation and Measuring Impact

- Mechanisms should be established to assess and evaluate the impact of Internet governance discussions and initiatives.
- Measured outcomes from various discussions so far, should be re-examined to inform future planning.
- There is a need for tools and methodologies to track progress and ensure informed decision-making.
- Stakeholders should consider making concrete recommendations to issue-focused organizations to drive meaningful action, e.g. actions on data governance should be sent to data authorities directly.

Cooperation and Coordination

- More efforts are needed to ensure that regional Internet governance meetings contribute substantively to global processes such as WSIS+20 and the GDC.

- All IGF initiatives should leverage their meetings to create tools and opportunities for engaging their communities and providing input to global discussions.
- A global mechanism should be developed to consolidate inputs from NRIs into the WSIS+20 process.
- Internet governance discussions should not be limited to annual meetings; follow-up actions and ongoing engagement throughout the year are necessary.

Future of IGF

- A dedicated working group should be established to design the IGF mandate for the next 20 years, similar to the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG+20) in 2003-2005.
- NRIs could hold a pre-IGF session before the 20th IGF in Norway, to contribute to the WSIS+20 discussions and preparations on the future of the IGF.
- The UN General Assembly WSIS Resolution should include a provision for WGIG+20 to shape the IGF's long-term framework.