

**INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM 2016
MULTISTAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP**

PART – I

**FINAL MAIN SESSION GUIDELINES
(as of 5 June 2016)**

BACKGROUND: The annual Internet Governance Forum (IGF) event features diverse modalities (session types) in order to encourage timely and informative dialogue on Internet governance and policy issues catering to multistakeholder participants. Diverse modalities include Workshops, Open Forums, and other session types. “Main Sessions” are organized by members of the IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG), with assistance and input from the community. These sessions are typically held in larger rooms and provide for translation in the six UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish).

1. PURPOSE of MAIN SESSION GUIDELINES:

- (i) To facilitate the meaningful and timely organization of Main Sessions for the annual IGF;
- (ii) To deliver Main Sessions with maximum value for all stakeholders and the IGF community;
- (iii) To harmonize approaches and create a structured approach for developing and executing Main Sessions that are facilitative, inclusive, transparent, and enable MAG members and the IGF community to contribute;
- (iv) To support and augment the ability of the Main Sessions to contribute to the output and resource of the IGF to community; and
- (v) To enhance confidence in the multistakeholder approach to Internet governance during the renewed 10-year mandate of the IGF.

2. PRINCIPLES for MAIN SESSION ORGANIZATION:

(A) Themes/topics of discussion should be:

- (i) Contemporary and relevant to the Internet governance developments during the IGF year;
- (ii) Either align with the overarching theme of the annual IGF or reflect one of the existing themes of the IGF, or reflect a new relevant theme with broad consensus among MAG members for inclusion;
- (iii) An important concern for, or relevant to, developing countries; with relevance for developed countries;
- (iv) Able to generate wide-ranging interest amongst onsite and online IGF participants;
- (v) Able to lend itself to qualitative documentation; and
- (vi) To the extent possible, build on existing dialogue from previous IGFs.

(B) Organization of the Main Sessions should:

- (i) Allow for all multistakeholder groups to contribute substantively, on an equal footing;
- (ii) Engage key stakeholders;
- (iii) Consider how to contribute substantively and establish dialogue between actors in the various Internet policy processes and Internet governance fora, and how to provide outputs that can feed into them;

- (iv) Consider how the Main Session can contribute to efforts to improve the IGF, in line with the CSTD Working Group Report on recommendations for Improvements to the IGF, and as reflected in the WSIS+10 Outcome Document;
- (v) Encourage contributions from national and regional IGF initiatives;
- (vi) Consider how the session can particularly benefit from the resources available, i.e. room size, translation into UN languages; and
- (vii) Include, in an appropriate way, inputs from the IGF workshop sessions on the same theme.

3. REQUIREMENTS for MAIN SESSION ORGANIZATION:

- (i) Adhere to the Principles for Main Session Organization (above);
- (ii) The topics for the IGF Main Sessions are determined by the MAG. To the extent possible, and time permitting, the topics should be informed by the themes identified in workshop proposals submitted by the community for the IGF event;
- (iii) The MAG will determine the number and duration of Main Sessions based on the suggested topics and related proposals. Note: Usually there are 8 Main Sessions slots with duration of 3 hours each, unless the MAG chooses to accommodate additional Main Sessions of 90 minutes, or other durations during the allotted program timing.
- (iv) Main Session Co-Organizers:
 - Must be MAG members and must be made known and remain available to the IGF community for planning purposes;
 - Usually 2, and in some exceptional cases, more than 2;
 - Are primarily responsible for leading the main session planning;
 - Must represent gender, geographic, and stakeholder group diversity; and
 - Expected to solicit assistance from other MAG or IGF community members and to create an “organizing group” for that session.
- (v) Planning for the Main Sessions:
 - Will include at least 2 scheduled conference calls for planning purposes (and more if determined necessary by the co-organizers);
 - Will include periodic public consultation regarding speakers, policy questions for discussion, and other relevant content, format, and planning elements;
 - Will follow a consistent timeline as determined (and published) by the MAG for that IGF year;
 - Should include sharing of any reference documents/material; and
 - Should include use of social media in the preparation for, promotion of, and proceedings in the Main Session.

(vi) Main Session Speakers:

- Once the Main Session topics are determined, MAG members can provide recommendations to the respective co-organizer for speakers, preferably from their own stakeholder group, that include experts, new voices, and reflect gender and geographic diversity; the co-organizers will make decisions on the proposed speakers based on the following criteria:
 - The overall composition must reflect gender, geographic, and stakeholder group diversity;
 - Any speaker should not speak in more than one Main Session unless there is a need for making an exception in extreme circumstances, to which the MAG agrees;
 - Should strive to include young people, elderly people, and persons with disabilities; and
 - Could include up to 2 remote speakers, and are encouraged to do so where useful in enhancing diversity of perspectives.

(vii) Role for MAG members:

- Serving MAG members should not serve as speakers or Moderators in more than 1 main session.
- MAG members should not serve as speakers in a Main Session for which they are a co-organizer or assisting co-organizers.
- MAG members are encouraged to attend at least one Main Session in which they have not played an active role, in order to provide feedback at the following MAG meeting; and
- If a MAG member (as an exception) serves as Moderator for a Main Session, they must follow the moderator role described in Part II of this document.

(viii) Reporting:

- Main Sessions must provide a 1-2 page summary report of the session in order to contribute to the session summary and the “Taking Stock” Main Session/reporting;
- The summary report must be approved by the moderators and MAG co-organizers before publishing and taking stock reporting; and
- The final detailed report can be prepared by rapporteurs but must be approved by the moderators and MAG co-organizers. Speaker review is encouraged.

(ix) Format:

- The format of the Main Sessions can include innovative options, variable speaker numbers, different room set ups (as can be accommodated by the venue), and other alternative approaches as appropriate to the session;
- The format must accommodate remote participation, and seek to leverage the participation of remote participation hubs; and
- The format must enable interactive formats that encourage Moderators to intersperse comments from the panel of speakers, with comments and questions from online participants and delegates from the floor, from the very beginning.

PART - II

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MAIN SESSION ORGANIZATION/FACILITATION

BACKGROUND: Over the past 10 years of IGF, MAG members have made some observations and recommendations that MAG organizers can take into consideration in the planning of Main Sessions, as follows. Part II can be amended to reflect new and evolving recommendations from MAG members, from year to year.

RECOMMENDATIONS for CONSIDERATION:

(A) Main Session Co-Organizers:

Ideally each main session must have 2 co-organizers (in exceptional circumstances more than 2) who are primarily responsible for writing up main session proposals, seeking MAG approvals, inviting co-organizers / volunteers, placing open calls for inputs / policy questions, host virtual planning calls, invite candidature for speakers , moderators, remote moderator(s) and rapporteurs. Prepare, with inputs from the volunteers / organizers, the final structure, seating, and session flow. Submit final main session template (provided by IGF secretariat) for their respective main session, at least one month in advance of the IGF, to the IGF secretariat for publication / outreach. Advise on the use of social media for main session remote and onsite participation. The co-organizers and organizing group can be acknowledged in the Main Session supporting documentation and reporting, as desired. Finally, at the IGF, before the main session, brief moderators, speakers, host country chair, and engage in outreach activities, including any “special needs” discussions with host country organizers.

(B) Moderator(s), Remote Moderator, Host Country Co-Chair and Rapporteurs:

- (i) Moderators, simply facilitate the session discussion with the help of remote moderators. Ideally, they should go back and forth between speakers, online participants and participants from the floor for comments from the very beginning. They can be subject matter experts where appropriate, but must certainly be deft at running smooth, inclusive and time bound main sessions.
- (ii) Moderators (ideally 2) should represent gender, geographic, and stakeholder group diversity;
- (iii) Moderators should serve in a strictly moderating role for the Main Session dialogue. They should refrain from offering their own opinion and from going beyond:
 - Introducing the chair
 - Introducing the theme
 - Introducing the speakers
 - Asking clarifications from speakers
 - Engaging clarifications from speakers
 - Ensuring that all speakers have a fair opportunity to speak
 - Ensuring substantive participation from the floor
 - Strictly observing the time limits
 - Wrapping up the session in time for the chair to conclude.
 - Provide neutral, periodic summaries of the discussion (not their opinion) during the course of the sessions (where appropriate), in order to punctuate the dialogue and to keep the delegates from the floor, engaged on the subject matter.

- (iv) Remote moderator(s) with appropriate skills and interest, must be appointed to facilitate online and remote participation during the main sessions in coordination with Moderators. /
- (v) In addition to Moderators and speakers (recommend 8-14, but depends on the format), it is advisable to appoint 2 rapporteurs to take notes and help draft the summary report.
- (vi) Host country co-chair: If the host country provides a co-chair for the Main Session, the co-chair should provide brief (3-4 min) opening and closing comments that should be anticipated by the co-organizers and known in advance to the Moderators, for the sake of session planning. If the host country does provide a co-chair, recommend advance meeting with co-organizers and preferably Moderators, for coordination.

(C) **Content:** Co-organizers (and the organizing group):

- (i) Should consult the broader Internet community for developing policy questions for the Main Session;
- (ii) Can utilize workshop proposals on related topics to derive policy questions or discussion items, and to show linkages between the workshops and Main Sessions;
- (iii) Are encouraged to reflect and/or contribute to intersessional work; and
- (iv) Are encouraged to make connections, where possible, to the 2030 Agenda/Sustainable Development Goals and any work streams determined to be relevant to that Main Session topic.

(D) **Fostering Interactivity**

- (i) There should be time built into the agenda for Moderators to engage delegates from the floor, by soliciting questions and comments;
- (ii) The venue should provide 4 standing microphones and 2 roving microphones (manned by volunteers) for enabling delegates interventions;
- (iii) If intervenors from the delegates are identified in advance, it should not exclude the inclusion of new interventions from the floor/online during the session, especially to include interventions by young people, or under-represented regions, communities, or viewpoints;
- (iv) Room setup can vary to foster interaction (i.e. theatre style, “U”-shape, café style, roundtable, etc.) depending on the session content/participants. Regardless of room set up, the room should be able to accommodate a large number without looking “empty”. This will depend to some degree on what the venue can accommodate, which is taken into consideration during the site selection. Past experience that a hall with seating capacity of 400-500 delegates is sufficient for the main sessions;
- (v) English language translators should be available to provide for engagement from the floor;
- (vi) Social media, online web spaces, and online applications can be incorporated into the Main Session proceedings in different ways. (Can possibly include a social media competition to encourage participation);
- (vii) Main Session co-facilitators should leverage advance outreach opportunities to increase visibility, participation, and effectiveness; and
- (viii) Dissenting views expressed during the Main Session should be both recognized and reported.

(E) **Reporting**

- (i) See 3(viii), above;
- (ii) For inclusion in the IGF Chair’s Summary, the co-organizers can provide workshop notes in advance of the IGF that provide information about the session but do not prejudice the discussion/final session report; and
- (iii) Gender report cards can be produced by co-organizers.

