
IGF INITIATIVES

A Toolkit to assist communities in establishing the IGF initiatives

- National, Sub-Regional, Regional and Youth IGF initiatives -

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About

This Toolkit is based on inputs from existing and emerging IGF Initiatives, and draws on their suggestions for information that describes the basic requirements for an IGF initiative to be listed on the IGF website. It also offers suggestions about organizing structures.

The Toolkit stands as an advisory document and is a result of the NRIs collaborative process on establishing basic requirements such as adhering to the IGF principles.

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In particular, the publication benefited from the work of the NRIs Working Group², that was specifically organized for this purpose.

¹ The 2016 existing IGF initiatives: Argentina IGF, Armenia IGF, Australia IGF, Austria IGF, Azerbaijan IGF, Bangladesh IGF, Belarus IGF, Benin IGF, Bosnia and Herzegovina IGF, Brazil IGF, Canada IGF, Chad IGF, Colombia IGF, Croatia IGF, Denmark IGF, Ecuador IGF, Finland IGF, Georgia IGF, German IGF, Ghana IGF, Indonesia IGF, Italy IGF, Japan IGF, Kenya IGF, Malta IGF, Mexico IGF, Mozambique IGF, Netherlands IGF, New Zealand IGF, Nigeria IGF, Paraguay IGF, Peru IGF, Poland IGF, Portugal IGF, Russia IGF, Slovenia IGF, South Africa IGF, Spain IGF, Sri Lanka IGF, Switzerland IGF, Togo IGF, Trinidad and Tobago IGF, Tunisia IGF, Uganda IGF, UK IGF, Ukraine IGF, Uruguay IGF, USA-IGF, Zimbabwe IGF.

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Introduction

Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

The [Internet Governance Forum](#) (IGF) serves to bring people together from various stakeholder groups as equals in discussions on issues pertaining to the Internet. It is convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN) and administered by the IGF Secretariat, under the [UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#) (UNDESA), while its format and substantive agenda is developed by the members of the [IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group](#) (MAG), appointed by the UN Secretary General on a yearly basis, and based upon inputs received from the broad stakeholder community during the open, public consultations.

At the annual IGF event, participants discuss, exchange information and share good practices with each other. The IGF helps to facilitate common understandings of how to maximize Internet opportunities, address different types of challenges that arise, through a bottom up, multistakeholder, open, transparent and inclusive manner.

Every year, the IGF launches a call for input, where the wider community suggests substantive topics that require in-depth discussion. These are valuable inputs that would further be reviewed and clustered, and the final agenda developed by the MAG, ensuring that it reflects the needs of the global multistakeholder community.

After the agenda is created, the community continues developing the substantive program (e.g., developing the content for various types of sessions) for the annual meeting.

Since its first event in 2006, the global IGF has inspired the development of numerous IGF initiatives. [National, sub-regional and regional IGF initiatives](#) (NRIs) are IGF events that are organized by the community at the [national](#), [regional](#) and [sub-regional](#) levels, in a bottom-up manner.

In recent years, a number of [Youth IGFs](#) have also been developed by younger members of the IGF community. These IGF initiatives are part of a process that aims at further including and amplifying new voices.

For further reference, “IGF Initiatives” or the “NRIs” is used in this document as a term that stands for National, Sub-Regional, Regional and Youth IGF initiatives.

Different IGF initiatives can organize and coordinate local stakeholders to participate in the global IGF, however, their primary purpose is to promote multistakeholder dialogue and cooperation aimed at tackling issues of relevance to their stakeholders.

The IGF sees the NRIs as valuable contributors in conducting an inclusive and open multistakeholder discussion on matters pertaining to the Internet. Individual engagement is very important, since we are all responsible for the Internet’s success and impact; thus, the IGF Initiatives play a central role, for all.

Collaboration between IGF initiatives significantly helps participants at the global IGF to better understand the substance of the issues existing around the world. It is equally important to note that IGF initiatives also reflect the need for greater stakeholder inclusion. For instance, the development of youth IGFs has served as a platform for voicing new perspectives to national, regional, and international Internet governance debates and processes.

It is important to note that there are many multistakeholder conferences related to Internet governance that are not IGF initiatives.

However, if a multistakeholder conference wants to be recognized by the IGF Secretariat as an IGF initiative, it needs to follow a set of baseline principles, described in further detail below.

In addition to honouring these principles, the IGF initiative has to submit a meeting report to the IGF Secretariat. Any guidance provided in this Toolkit, outside of these baseline requirements, are suggestions only and offered by other IGF initiatives as good practice.

This Toolkit has been developed through open community discussion amongst participants on the dedicated mailing list, hosted by the IGF Secretariat.

We hope that this publication will help those looking to organize an IGF Initiative to understand what are the essential steps for establishing an IGF initiative, how to engage with the existing ones and what is the value of all stakeholders respecting the core IGF principles of being open and transparent, inclusive, bottom-up, multistakeholder, and non-commercial in our work.

IGF Secretariat

IGF INITIATIVES

Over time, many of the stakeholders from around the world have organized themselves into multistakeholder groups to discuss Internet governance related issues emerging from their respective communities. Such practices contributed to the formation of national, sub-regional, regional and youth IGFs, in different parts of the world. All IGF initiatives, regardless of the level they are organized at, have agreed to adhere to the same IGF principles as the global IGF, which draws its principles from the [Tunis Agenda](#).

This publication will review those principles and ways to establish one IGF initiative. It will also reflect the requirement for reporting of the initiatives toward their respective communities and the IGF.

I. IGF initiatives: what are they?

IGF initiatives are the Internet Governance Forums organized as a reflection of the need of a particular community. They are classified as:

- [National](#);
- [Sub-regional](#);
- [Regional](#), and
- [Youth IGFs](#).

If an initiative is organized at the national basis in one country, then it is classified as a **national IGF**. In case the initiative is organized to serve the needs of one particular region, then that classifies them either as **sub-regional** or **regional IGFs**, depending on the size of the geographic area.

The main criteria for identifying a region is geography, but also in some cases mutual language and culture are considered.

Youth IGFs are specifically organized forums that discuss the issues pertaining to the Internet arena from the youth's³ point of view.

II. Getting started: How to organize an IGF initiative?

In case there is an interest within one respective community to discuss the issues pertaining to the Internet, there are established procedures for organizing an IGF.

The main practical steps include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Consult your wider community and engage with different stakeholders within it;
- Contact the IGF Secretariat. They can provide advice and support during your planning process;
- Make sure that a multistakeholder core Organizing Team is established where its membership composition comes from at least three different stakeholder groups, with a goal to move to inclusion of all stakeholder groups over time (*civil society, government, private sector, technical community*);

³ The initiatives are independent in describing the Youth population.

- Ensure that the Initiative conducts work in accordance with the main IGF principles of being open and transparent, inclusive, multistakeholder, bottom up and non-commercial;
- Ensure that decisions are reached based on public consultations with different stakeholders and community members;
- Send regular updates and final report to the IGF Secretariat that will further inform the NRIs Network and wider IGF respective community.

These listed checklist items on the IGF core principles, the multistakeholder composition of the core organizing teams and on reporting guidelines, are explained further below.

III. NRIs respective communities

At the beginning of the organizational process, the IGF initiatives are encouraged to describe the community scope they act within, mainly in terms of expected participation at their meeting(s), indicating the countries, or sub-regional groupings, etc.

In principle, the national IGF initiatives act within one country⁴. Sub-regional and regional IGFs are more complex in this sense. Usually, they are developed around one geographic region, or in some cases around one language and/or culture.

Sub-regional IGFs are encouraged to describe, to the extent possible, the geographic region they will be acting within, mainly referring to the countries and regions they aim to collaborate with, as well as the central criteria for engagement (for example, shared cultural values, geographic location, shared language, etc.).

⁴ UN member states.

The IGF initiatives, regardless of their respective geographic, cultural, or linguistic described representations, should be open to all interested stakeholders, meaning that all stakeholders are welcome to attend and participate in the preparations of the NRIs events, as well as at the events themselves.

IV. Main objectives of the NRIs

The NRIs should define the main objectives of their initiatives, as well as the key leading principles and goals they aim for, within their overall work.

In principle, the NRIs should provide the answers to why the particular initiative is organized and what the main goal is for organizing the NRIs' annual meeting(s) in their objective statements.

The defined objectives should be clearly visible at the websites/webpages and in the reports of the IGF initiatives.

Many of the IGF initiatives, as a description of their objectives, state the following:

- Raise awareness, build capacity and promote a better understanding of Internet governance-related matters among the stakeholders of their respective communities;
- Facilitate multistakeholder discussion and exchanges of ideas and opinions;
- Seek to foster multistakeholder collaboration among the stakeholders from their respective communities; and
- Bring the perspectives of the respective communities to the global IGF agenda and reflect the perspectives of the global IGF into the NRIs events, where and when relevant and needed.

V. Core principles of the IGF

The IGF Initiatives should be organized in accordance with five core IGF principles, which are:

- 1) Open and transparent,
- 2) Inclusive,
- 3) Bottom-up,
- 4) Multistakeholder, and
- 5) Non-commercial.

Below section presents description of each of the five IGF principles, in the NRIs context.

1) Open and Transparent

IGF initiatives are open to all relevant stakeholders interested in contributing to the organization of the meetings. It is the responsibility of the multistakeholder organizing teams to ensure that all interested stakeholders, both individuals and organizations, are invited to participate in the IGF Initiative.

It is important that the IGF Initiative's work is conducted in a transparent manner. This means that wider relevant communities, beyond the organizing team, need to be properly informed about the work plan.

The best way to inform the community is to regularly send updates to an open mailing list, post them on the official website/webpage and promote through the social network accounts and other ways of conducting effective public outreach.

2) Inclusive

The organizing committee of an IGF Initiative has the responsibility to organize the meeting and develop the overall program that will encompass the views of the wider community. Conducting rounds of public consultations on the substantive meeting program, are good practices that can ensure inclusiveness.

In particular, the meeting's program agenda needs to address the views of the wider community. The core organizing teams need to develop a plan on how they will run the open and public consultations.

Usually, the initiatives either launch a public call for input for topics that should be discussed at the annual meeting(s), or they propose agenda topics and call for public consultation, potential edits, and the final adoption of the proposed agenda.

Either way, the organizers have the responsibility to create an effective way of conducting outreach with the community and seeking input before the final decision is made, which should ideally be based on consensus to the extent possible, taking into account the available resources to organize the event.

To comply with the IGF's main principles, mainly the principals of being open, transparent, and inclusive, the initiatives should conduct effective outreach toward their respective communities.

The NRIs should undertake efforts to promote the call for input and motivate the wider community to actively participate.

In order to inform community and conduct outreach, supporting mechanisms include the instrument listed below:

- Establish a dedicated website or webpage⁵;
- Create a mailing list and/or an open website platform;

⁵ In case of lack of resources, the IGF Secretariat will help temporarily facilitating a dedicated page on its website, as well as a mailing list.

- Create dedicated social media accounts and official hashtag(s)⁶.

3) Bottom-Up

The decision-making process of the IGF initiative should be bottom-up, where the substantive organization of the annual meeting(s) should reflect the needs of the respective community the NRIs are acting within.

This is why the NRIs are encouraged to run public consultations, in order to ensure that the community is aware of the initiative's work, uphold the importance for engagement, and encourage involvement to the extent possible. In particular, it is important to ensure that the program agenda reflects the need of the respective community. This is why the initiatives are running specific public call for inputs, where the program agendas are developed according to received substance.

4) Non-commercial

All annual meetings of IGF initiatives are non-commercial (not-for-profit). The annual NRIs' meetings are not organized for the purpose of gaining profit.

This means that the attendance at the annual meeting as well as the cost of participation for all interested stakeholders during the preparatory process and the meeting day(s) need to be free of charge.

However, this does not mean in any way, that the initiatives are not free to have donors and sponsors that will support the organization of their annual meetings. In fact, donors and sponsors provide the majority of the funding and resources needed for the organization of the NRIs annual meeting(s).

⁶ For example: #SEEDIG, #igfchad etc.

5) Multistakeholder

The IGF initiatives need to respect the criteria of being multistakeholder in its organization. The multistakeholder approach refers to collaboration between all stakeholder groups on an equal footing (private sector, civil society, government and technical community), around development and implementation of an array of Internet-related principles, norms, rules, decision making procedures, and policies and programs.

Additionally, the multistakeholder component is also very important in regards to the meeting. In principle, organizers must ensure that the session speakers and presenters reflect stakeholder diversity, as this will add to the session being inclusive of different views.

If asked, the Secretariat is available to assist in sharing information and good practices about successful approaches used by fellow NRIs.

The nature of the multistakeholder organizing team is explained in the following section.

a) Multistakeholder Organizing Teams

In the context of an IGF Initiative, “multistakeholder” means that the organizers of the IGF Initiative have to maintain a multistakeholder composition, where the members initially come from at least three different stakeholder groups, with the intention of eventually evolving toward the inclusion of all stakeholder groups.

The initiatives are free to choose the name for their core organizing teams. Usually these are called: Organizing Committees, Steering Committees, Executive Committees or even national or regional Multistakeholder Advisory Groups (national and regional MAGs)⁷.

⁷ For consistency, in this publication, the term “Organizing Team” (OT) will be used when referring to the multistakeholder organizing teams.

Additionally, besides the multistakeholder nature of the Organizing Teams, the membership composition also needs to reflect the regional and gender diversity. The regional diversity means primarily that the membership composition involving members from more than one city/town/village or country, depending on the environmental structure of the community.

i. The main tasks of the multistakeholder Organizing Teams

Among the main tasks of the multistakeholder organizing teams are usually the following ones:

- To coordinate the preparatory process for the annual meetings, especially in regards to planning the program, overall logistics and finances;
- To initiate and coordinate outreach toward the wider community, with goals of informing the community about the existence of the initiative, thus raising awareness on the importance of the NRIs and ways of engagement.
- In this regard, its task is to streamline the outreach activities toward bringing new stakeholders into the initiative's process, either as members or as partners/supporters;
- To actively explore sponsorship opportunities for supporting the organization of the NRIs annual meetings;
- In regards to the annual meeting program agenda and major decision making processes, to coordinate the public consultations, call for inputs and proper classification of received inputs;
- To prepare an annual meeting report in (one of the) official national language(s) of the respective communities the NRIs act within, and to ensure the report is made publicly available and presented to the concerned stakeholders, at-large community, the global IGF, and other organizations, fora, and processes within the global Internet governance ecosystem;

- To ensure consultation with concerned stakeholders on all important matters related to local and/or regional Internet governance processes, and that the input received is integrated into the NRIs' decision-making processes; and
- To represent the initiative at all relevant events, particularly the IGF and the NRIs.

ii. Mandate of the multistakeholder Organizing Teams

The initiatives are free to decide on the mandate of the Organizing Teams. To be fully inclusive, it is recommended that the Organizing Teams establish an open and inclusive approach to engagement while respecting the geographic, stakeholder, and gender balance. Over time, this may lead to rotations or it may result in increased membership in an Organizing Teams.

iii. NRIs Contact Points

For the purposes of having continuous and effective communication between the IGF initiative, other NRIs, and the global IGF, it is recommended to have a dedicated point of contact within the initiative that will act as a liaison between the initiative and other relevant groups, including the IGF Secretariat.

From the practice so far, this can be one or more persons, the NRIs Secretariat, NRIs chair or co-chair(s), or member of the Organizing Team, all depending on the final decision of the initiative's core Organizing Team.

The IGF Secretariat keeps the list of all these contact persons, giving them a technical term of a coordinator, which is a functional term used within the planning processes of the NRI's collaboration. It is not intended to replace any official terms or appointments by the NRIs for their own operational purposes.

As emphasized above, the NRIs coordinators act as liaisons between the global IGF, the NRIs network and their initiatives.

This means that all updates about the individual NRIs are being regularly sent to the Secretariat and to the NRIs by the Coordinator. Also, the Secretariat is communicating with the NRIs through their Coordinators, that are responsible for communicating the messages further to their community.

After being established, the initiatives are advised to decide among their Organizing Teams who will be assigned with this role and inform the IGF Secretariat to update the database of all NRIs coordinators contacts.

REPORTING

All IGF Initiatives are primarily accountable to their respective communities. It is the responsibility of the multistakeholder Organizing Teams to report accurately about their annual events to their respective communities, with the main goal of having the wider NRI communities informed as well.

In order for the initiatives to be listed on the IGF website, one of the requirements from the IGF Secretariat is for the initiatives to submit their annual reports duly and timely so that they can be further distributed to the wider IGF community.

This section will reflect the desired form and content framework of the final annual reports, with the main objective of having comprehensive report content that illustrates the overall organizational work of the organizing committees, and conveys the required information about the issues addressed, participation at the event and provides certain information that is intended to be consistent across all NRIs. It is useful to note that the initial basis for these reporting requirements is built on long standing discussions among the NRIs, over a number of years.

The IGF initiatives are independent to report about their annual meetings. However, each report needs to have essential elements, in order to be published at the IGF website.

The essential elements are:

- Informational details about the annual meeting: exact date and the venue where the meeting is hosted. The overarching theme to be indicated, if there was one;
- Information about the Host of the meeting;
- Information about the multistakeholder Organizing Team;

- Reflection to the records and information regarding preparatory meetings;
- Description of how the preparatory process was conducted in accordance with the main IGF principles;
- Complete agenda of the meeting, with listing the speakers/presenters;
- Overview of the main key points raised at each of the sessions;
- Attendance statistics of the meeting: total number of online and on-site participants, with breakdowns per stakeholder groups, countries/regions (where possible) and gender;
- Information about the meeting's budget, and
- Initiative's contact information.

Taking into account the above mentioned elements, the purpose of the following section on reporting guidelines is to advise the NRIs on some of the most effective ways to inform the wider IGF community about the work conducted during the preparatory process of their NRIs' annual meeting, as well as on the activities of the event day(s) and outcomes achieved.

I. NRIs annual reports guidelines

It is advised for the report to consist of an introductory segment and major, substantive parts.

The first page of the report needs to have a headline that will state the full name of the initiative followed by an acronym, if any [e.g., South Eastern European Dialogue on Internet Governance: SEEDIG). Below the name, there should be indicated a number of the annual meeting for the particular year (e.g., the second national IGF of Colombia), year and date(s) of the meeting, and the meeting venue address (e.g. conference center name, university name etc.).

The report can start with a summary of content and an introductory section.

The **introductory section** should state the brief description of the history of the initiative, reflecting the year the initiative was established and the number of organized annual meetings. It is recommended to restate the initiative's main objectives and operational key principles in the annual report as well.

Finally, this part can be concluded by describing the composition of the multistakeholder organizing teams, with listing their respective members for the particular meeting the initiative is reporting about.

Details for the members of the Organizing Team should include: full names, affiliations within their organizations, and stakeholder groups.

After this, the report could provide an overview of the major highlights of the preparatory process for organizing the annual meeting.

A website and a contact email address should conclude the introductory section.

1) Reporting on the preparatory process

The report should indicate the major highlights of the preparatory process for organizing the annual meeting. A timeline of the organizational process could be indicated at the beginning of this section.

It is recommended to elaborate on the following:

- Number of meetings the core Organizing Teams held and what subjects or topics were discussed?
- How was the outreach conducted toward the wider community in order to gather inputs for developing the meeting agenda?

The first section (bullet point 1) will provide a record for the number of formal meetings organized with different stakeholder groups. The second section (bullet point 2) in particular is very important as it needs to explain how the initiative developed a meeting agenda that is fully inclusive of the needs of a wider community. As previously explained, public consultations are usually run by the multistakeholder organizing teams through the initiative's website, official mailing list(s), and social media accounts.

It is recommended to provide a summary reflecting the subject matter of the public consultations, desired results, applied methodology, outcomes achieved, and the ways the outcomes were later used and/or applied.

2) Reporting on the meeting day(s)

In regards to reporting about the annual meeting(s) event itself, the report should provide a full meeting agenda, reflecting the work timeline, session names and types, and presenter's information details (full names and affiliations).

The next section can have sub-sections reflecting the brief summary report on each of the sessions (submitted at the end of each session to the organizing committee) indicating what was the discussion focus and what were the final outcomes. The sub-sections should follow the format of indicating at the beginning the names of the session presenters, their affiliation(s), and the countries the institutions they represent are based in.

These brief summaries will provide the concept of the discussion and major key points raised.

Many of the NRIs appoint session rapporteurs, to assist in capturing of the key messages and contribute to the development of the final report. This can be a very useful way to broaden inclusion of community members from the OT.

Some of the initiatives have adopted the practices of producing concrete messages from each of the sessions, which have become an integral part of the report.

Others prefer indicating the main key points that each of the speakers raised.

Some initiatives provide a short reflection on each session's activity on social media accounts, as per the records obtained from the official hashtags of each session.

In case any type of documented input were shared during the presentations, it is recommended to reflect them, and to attach the full version as annexes to the report.

Each of the sessions' summary reporting may be supported by the direct interventions coming from the onsite and online participants, while intervening from the floor, in a form of a quote or brief summary, in case relevant.

Where possible, official photos from the annual meeting(s), or even of the individual main sessions and workshop should be included in the report as well.

3) Reporting on meeting records

The section on the Meeting Records need to provide the information in regards to the following elements:

Total number of participants present on-site and online, with breakdown per stakeholder group. For having most accurate information on this, it is recommended having official records based on the total number of badges distributed to the registered participants.

The NRIs are encourage to provide information on the demographics and geographical characteristics of the participation in order to allow the assessment of under-represented areas. This will help to illustrate if there is equal distribution of participants according to the regions and countries, or there is a significant concentration of participants coming from a particular region/city.

A breakdown by gender of all registered participants onsite and online (i.e., remote participants) should be included. It is important for the initiatives to be gender sensitive when gathering such data.

Above described records should be illustrated using text but also supported by graphical illustrations whenever possible.

The report should conclude by providing a summary of the participant's feedback about the program and other relevant information. Some NRIs use session feedback forms, some run virtual and onsite Taking Stock meetings, while others rely on an online survey. Some others launch their next year planning process with a session that addresses 'lessons learned' from the previous year's organizing process.

Depending on the ways the feedback was gathered, initiatives can illustrate these in different ways, for example, by providing a summary of all feedback received and directly quoting the most relevant statements representative of what was discussed, issues/challenges raised, solutions offered, etc.

4) Reporting on budget

The report should briefly explain how the initiative is funded and list the sponsors and recognize in-kind support from sponsors (such as offering a meeting space for free).

An overview of the budget for the particular event the organizing committee is reporting about should be provided in a table. Budget items with estimated and actual costs should be indicated as well.

Additionally, the related identifying information of the main sponsors and supporting organizations should also be provided.

5) Contact details and meeting main information sources

A section detailing the main contact details should be provided, in particular the:

- Official website/webpage of the initiative;
- Official email address of the initiative;

- Official mailing list and/or open website details, and
- Official social media account information with official #hashtag(s) details.

A section with resources related to the initiative's annual meeting should be provided, containing the following information:

- A link to the report on the initiative's website as well as on the IGF website;
- Links to the online location of all session transcripts, video recordings, and photos, and
- Links to the meeting program agenda.

II. Reporting language and deadline

1. Reporting language

In regards to the reporting language, the IGF initiatives are reporting in one of the official languages of their respective communities.

However, when informing the global IGF about the overall work in a form of an official report, it is the established practice to submit the report to the IGF Secretariat in English language, as the main goal is for the wider IGF community to be able to understand the content.

2. Deadline to submit a report

It is recommended to publish the final version of the report within twelve (12) weeks from the day the meeting ended and where possible, before the global IGF meeting, so that the initiatives can distribute information to broader community. The first draft version of the report should be available for public discussion for up to two (2) weeks, where the received input should then be reviewed and incorporated before publishing the final version.

Once the NRI Coordinator submits the report, the IGF Secretariat will review the submission. If it complies with the IGF's main principles, the IGF Secretariat will finalize the process of recognizing the initiative as one of the official IGF initiatives and include it with the other recognized national and regional IGF initiatives by listing it on the IGF website, and publishing the report.

Note: To stay listed on the IGF website, the initiatives are required to submit their regular updates throughout the year, and submit the report after their annual meeting(s). However, not all NRIs organize their events on a yearly basis due to various reasons. As long as the multistakeholder organizing team exists and the community expresses its need to discuss relevant Internet governance-related topics in a unique multistakeholder forum, the IGF Secretariat will keep the initiatives listed.

NRIs NETWORK

The IGF initiatives, officially recognized by the IGF Secretariat, are listed on a dedicated page on the [IGF website](#). If any stakeholder is interested in engaging with a particular initiative, the IGF website is the first place to visit and check if there is a relevant initiative.

On the global level, the NRIs conduct regular (bi)monthly virtual meetings to coordinate their joint work activities. The NRIs generally also organize a face-to-face gatherings at any of the larger Internet governance-related meetings (such as the global IGF, IGF Open Consultations and MAG meetings or the regional IGF meetings).

Every year, the NRIs collaborate on the organization of dedicated focus-session activities at the annual global IGF, in order to discuss substantive issues from different world perspectives. Related and relevant information are regularly distributed through the [NRIs mailing list](#) and published on the [IGF website/NRIs webpage](#).

[How to become recognized by the IGF Secretariat?](#)

All IGF initiatives that adhere to the same IGF principles and are organized in accordance with the IGF procedures, as explained in this Toolkit, are listed on the IGF website.

After the stakeholders decide to organize an IGF initiative, the following information should be sent to the IGF Secretariat's Focal Point for the NRIs:

- Full name of the initiative;

- Details regarding the composition of the core Organizing Team: full names, affiliations and stakeholder group of members. As explained, the Organizing Team needs to be composed of members coming from three different stakeholder group, at minimum;
- Dedicated website/webpage;
- Contact details of the initiative's coordinator(s);
- A clear statement that the preparatory work and the meeting itself will be organized in accordance with the IGF principles of being: open and transparent, inclusive, non-commercial, multistakeholder and bottom up;
- Details about the event including the logistics related to conducting a Public call for inputs;
- After the event, the initiatives will need to send a full report that will reflect the substance and organizational logistics of the preparatory work and the meeting day(s).

The IGF Secretariat will review all submitted information and if the conditions are met, proceed with the recognition process.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

National, Regional and Youth Initiatives of the IGF [NRIs]

1. Who are the NRIs?

NRIs is an acronym that stands for National, Sub-Regional, Regional and Youth IGF initiatives. These are the Internet Governance Forums organized on a national basis in different countries, or on a regional or sub-regional level, depending on the size of the geographic area, where the main criteria for identifying region is geography, but also in some cases mutual language and culture.

2. What do the NRIs have in common and how are they organized?

A shared objective for all NRIs is adhering to the core values and principles of the IGF. They are contributing to Internet Governance related matters, nationally, regionally, and globally.

The NRIs are organic and independent in their organization. However, they have agreed and are expected to respect the main IGF principles and working modalities. Therefore, the NRIs are open and transparent, inclusive and non-commercial, with a multistakeholder participation during the whole organizational process of the annual meeting(s), as well as during the meeting(s) itself, and with a bottom-up decision making process. All parties agree and accept to act on an equal footing, which a unique but important aspect of the Internet Governance Forum [IGF].

3. Where are the NRIs located?

The NRIs are located all around the world, in more than 40 countries and 15 regions on four different continents. To see the NRIs geographical locations, visit the [IGF website/NRIs map](#).

4. Who organizes the NRIs meeting(s)?

The NRIs are organized by the community and for that respective community.

Internally, the most crucial organizational segment of the IGF initiatives is the existence of the multistakeholder Organizing Team, where the most basic requirement is to have representatives from at least three different stakeholder groups, with intention of evolving toward the inclusion of all stakeholder groups.

In addition to this, there is also an identified contact person who takes on the role to commit to act as a liaison between the initiative, wider community, IGF Secretariat and the NRIs network. NRIs need to create a website, maintain a working email address, and provide support to social media accounts for conducting effective outreach toward the NRIs respective communities, but also toward the wider IGF community. The “coordinator” also accepts responsibility for ensuring that the NRI meets the basic requirements to be listed on the IGF NRI website, coordinates the submission of the required report and participates in the NRI network’s open working calls.

5. What are the ‘In-Formation’ NRIs?

Several countries are working toward launching their first IGF meeting. Accordingly, the IGF Secretariat is encouraging participation in the NRIs network, and is recognizing the “in - formation” initiatives and listing them on dedicated pages at the IGF website. These initiatives are internally organized, but have not met the criteria for organizing their annual IGF meetings.

6. What do the NRIs do?

The NRIs gather their community to undertake open consultations and develop an annual IGF meeting, that addresses key issues of concern locally, or regionally.

Using a bottom-up consultation process, the NRIs strive to include all stakeholders (governments, civil society, private sector, technical community), to work together on issues pertaining to the Internet, all acting on equal footing.

Taking into account all received inputs from their respective communities, the NRIs develop comprehensive agendas that reflect the needs of the community, and logistics for organizing the major annual event(s), where different stakeholder groups will gather and discuss the issues of highest priority to them. Some recommend messages or outputs for potential solutions and next steps toward the improvements on Internet governance related fields.

7. My country does not have an NRI: how can I organize an IGF initiative?

To organize the IGF initiative, the first step would be to contact the IGF Secretariat and consult the Toolkit. The Secretariat's Focal Point for the NRIs will further assist in explaining how to get started, with details for the main criteria and procedures that need to be followed, also providing concrete examples from the more experienced NRIs and advice on how to improve and speed up the organizing process.

It is important to gather the group of interested individuals that are coming from at least three different stakeholder groups, for the process to be initiated.

8. Are there other ways to be engaged with the NRIs, except to organize one?

Absolutely. On the global level, the NRIs are conducting regular and open to everyone, (bi)monthly virtual meetings for the purposes of coordinating their joint work activities.

The NRIs are also organizing their open, face-to-face gatherings at any of the bigger Internet governance related meetings.

Every year, the NRIs organize dedicated focus sessions at the IGF annual meeting, with discussing substantive issues from different world perspectives. They are regular contributors to the IGF intersessional work.

To keep yourself updated about the most up to date NRIs work activities, subscribe to the [NRIs mailing list](#), where all relevant information are shared.

All NRIs join activities are open to everyone.

9. How are the IGF initiatives recognized by the IGF Secretariat and listed on the IGF website?

For one IGF initiative to be recognized by the IGF Secretariat and listed on the IGF website, a written statement outlining the following essential information needs to be submitted to the IGF Secretariat:

- Full name of the initiative;
- Details regarding the composition of the core Organizing Team: full names, affiliations and stakeholder group of members.
- Dedicated website/webpage;
- Contact details of the initiative's coordinator(s);
- A clear statement that the preparatory work and the meeting itself will be organized in accordance with the IGF principles of being: open and transparent, inclusive, non-commercial, multistakeholder and bottom up;
- Details about the annual meeting including the organizations logistics;
- After the event, the initiatives will need to send a full report that will reflect the substance and organizational logistics of the preparatory work and the meeting day(s).

CONTACT THE IGF NRIs

The IGF Secretariat keeps the list of all NRIs, on a dedicated webpage at the IGF website. The IGF Secretariat will connect you to the any of the IGF initiatives.

IGF Website:

<https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/>

IGF Secretariat e-mail address:

igf@unog.ch

Join the NRIs mailing list:

http://mail.intgovforum.org/mailman/listinfo/igfregionals_intgovforum.org