

LACIGF9 – 27-29 July, 2016

San José, Costa Rica

Report - Session 10

The Future of LACIGF Governance

Friday, 29 July 15:45 - 17:45 Hotel Park Inn. San José, Costa Rica

Moderator: Sebastian Bellagamba – ISOC

Panelists:

Pedro Ivo Ferraz Da Silva, Brazilian Government

Valeria Betancourt, APC

Ernesto Majó, LACNIC

Andrés Sastre, ASIET

Andrés Piazza, LACTLD

Sara Fratti, YOUTH LACIGF

Rapporteur: Alejandra Erramuspe

Remote Participation Moderator: Raquel Gatto

The moderator began by explaining the mechanics of the session and the topic to be addressed: Governance of the Regional Internet Governance Forum.

It was then noted that LACIGF was born in 2008 and has since constantly grown. The idea is to improve the Forum, and this requires that participants provide input to produce a proposal for the community. It was observed that, in order to achieve the best possible inputs and visions, it is important to understand the steps taken over the past nine years. A summary was then presented beginning with the current composition of the panel, which is a reflection of the LACIGF Program Committee. The role of LACNIC as neutral Technical Secretariat was also explained (as well as how the organization's role and functions have evolved over time)¹ and how the process is funded by contributors who represent different stakeholders, do not provide a fixed (voluntary) amount, and whose contribution does not give them any rights over the process.

Panelists also mentioned the relationship between LACIGF and eLAC and described how eLAC works. At the LACIGF meeting held in 2014 in El Salvador, it was decided to bring the two events closer together, which is why they were held in the same city (Mexico), one after the other, during the same week. This “allowed for cross pollination.”

Major milestones in the LACIGF process were mentioned, among them: public calls for proposals for selecting the venue; moving from an agenda prepared by a group of individuals to an agenda decided by public consultation; the creation of a multisectoral program committee. Certain future challenges were also discussed, such as advancing in the consolidation of an inclusive, participatory and democratic Internet Governance that is reflected at national level and strengthening Human Rights.

During this session, three fellowships to the Global IGF were raffled.

¹ Highlights include creating and maintaining the website; support for the meeting venue; administrative support for the Program Committee; working with the local organizer; managing funds; communications (currently shared with ICANN); managing a fellowship program (partial, travel or accommodation).

Some of the points raised by session participants are listed below:

- The importance of horizontal participation and bringing back the Youth IGF format as a way to empower youth.
- Providing greater legitimacy to the forum; welcoming and incorporating criticism.
- Regarding the Global IGF: concern about the potential limitation to Civil Society participation.
- Continuing the Forum's work during the year; the possibility of having multisectoral activities.
- Enriching LACIGF with various types of sessions to promote other forms of participation: roundtables, birds-of-a-feather sessions, 'unconferences', working groups. The panel format is no longer efficient, as it uses up valuable dialogue space and the community is increasingly informed. If the panel format is maintained, panels should be more diverse and include other actors. Proposal for WS by the community and central panels by the Program Committee, as in the case of the Global IGF.
- Strengthening national IGFs.
- Inclusion: Improving remote participation and allowing remote attendees to participate as if they were in the room (allowing remote participants to speak). Including sign-language interpretation when broadcasting. Adding translation into French. Another proposal: Replacing simultaneous interpretation with transcription.
- More governments need to be involved.
- Regarding the possibility of partnering LACIGF meetings with intergovernmental events, several proposals were presented and some concerns were raised regarding potential benefits.
- Other actors who should be represented at LACIGF: training for professionals, youth, academia.
- Representation of certain sub-regions such as the Caribbean was questioned.
- This process requires greater participation from the following groups: journalists, academics and individuals working on topics such as open government and e-government.
- Devising proposals for those who are not connected.
- Devising new formats and funding mechanisms that will allow greater participation.
- Including other stakeholders such as youth and academia in the Program Committee.
- Drafting the rules for the work of LACIGF: administrative process, work plans, decision-making process, etc. Specifying and publishing election processes, working methodologies and decisions made by the Program Committee to clarify and make the process more comprehensible. Several examples were mentioned, including IGF Brazil and Youth IGF.
- Building LACIGF rules: incorporating more formal mechanisms for the renewal of Program Committee members, accountability mechanisms, representation mechanisms, rules and parameters for articulating national and regional initiatives.
- Aspects that were celebrated: participation, gender parity, linguistic diversity.