

Report on the Progress achieved in implementing the Arab IGF process

Beirut, 5 December 2017

The Arab IGF has been undergoing, since 2016, a transformation exercise through the implementation of the joint ESCWA-LAS AIGF2020 initiative for the development of its process in the next phase that is expected to last until 2020 or 2025. The first phase of the Arab IGF process (2012-2015) was coupled with the adoption in 2015 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations General Assembly; and this timeframe has coincided with that of the Arab Roadmap for Internet Governance (2011-2015), the implementation of which was the objective of the Arab IGF process.

The ESCWA-LAS AIGF2020 initiative was launched in 2015, at the conclusion of the fourth Arab IGF meeting (Beirut, 2015), and started with the formation in 2016 of a Technical Cooperation Working Group (TCWG) from the various stakeholders in Internet governance, from 13 Arab countries, including high-level representatives from governments, business sector, civil society, and technical and academic community. The work of the AIGF2020 TCWG followed a multi-stakeholder and bottom-up democratic inclusive approach, and has included conducting a comprehensive survey, convening meeting and analyzing within sub-groups five areas of developments, namely: Objectives, Structure and mechanisms; Financing mechanisms; Content and outputs; and Communication, media and outreach. The results of the survey were analyzed and its outcome was reflected in the final report of the AIGF2020 TCWG, which was raised to ESCWA and LAS to base on it the new charter for the Arab IGF and to feed into the development of a new Arab Roadmap on Internet Governance.

In 2016, the AIGF2020 TCWG efforts has resulted with producing a new Charter for the Arab IGF process that represents the Technical Cooperation framework for the Forum in its second phase, towards streamlining the Arab Countries Internet policies to induce development in line the SDGs. The new Charter reflects the framework for engagement of the various stakeholders in the Arab IGF process and the strategy for sustainability and future collaborations. Furthermore, AIGF2020 Initiative also aims at designing an updated version of the Arab Roadmap on Internet Governance, towards support gearing Internet policies in the Arab region towards the implementation of the SDGs, hence complementing the efforts of the TCWG regarding the Forum.

In continuation of the implementation of the AIGF2020 initiative, ESCWA and LAS prepared an initial draft of a new Roadmap on Internet Governance for the Arab region that was presented and discussed during the Arab High-level Forum on WSIS and SDGs, organized by ESCWA in Beirut, 8-12 May 2017. Afterwards, ESCWA and LAS formed the Roadmap Working Group (RMWG) that includes 26 experts from various stakeholders, from nine Arab countries, to collaborate on the review, update and production of a final version of the Roadmap that will be discussed in an [experts meeting entitled "Second Arab Roadmap on Internet Governance – the Next Decade"](#), planned for 11-12 Dec 2017.

The Arab Internet Governance Forum (Arab IGF) was established in 2012 by ESCWA and the League of Arab States (LAS), with the consent of the Arab Telecom and Information Technology Council of Ministers (ATICM) and has concluded its first phase in 2015 following the convening of its fourth annual meeting (AIGF-IV) (Beirut 2015). The first round of the Arab IGF (2012-2015) included the convening of four annual meetings (Kuwait 2012, Algeria 2013, and Beirut 2014 and 2015) and a number of preparatory meetings, including the meetings of the Arab Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (AMAG); and these activities were held in partnership with various stakeholders and host entities. The Arab Internet governance community has called in 2014 for the renewal of the Forum, at the conclusion of its third meeting (AIGF-III); and ESCWA and LAS has jointly launched in 2015, at the conclusion of its fourth meeting (AIGF-IV), the AIGF2020 initiative for the development of the process.

The AIGF2020 initiative was announced by ESCWA and LAS in December 2015, with which the Forum's annual activities were put on hold until the assessment of the future scenarios, and this initiative had the following main objectives: (1) Analyse the achievements of the first round of the Arab IGF process (2012-2015) with regard to the targets of the 2010 ESCWA Roadmap on Internet Governance; (2) Assess the impact of the Arab IGF on Internet governance policies in the Arab region; (3) Discuss challenges that faced the first mandate; and (4) Propose enhancements for developing the second Arab roadmap on Internet governance as well as the second mandate of the Arab IGF, to be geared towards implementation of SDGs.

Additional information can be found on the ArabDIG page and Arab IGF social media accounts:

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