

GLOBAL INFORMATION SOCIETY WATCH 2017

*Internet governance from the edges:
National and regional IGFs in their own words*



GISWatch 2017
SPECIAL EDITION

Internet governance from the edges: National and regional IGFs in their own words

Global Information Society Watch 2017 Special edition
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Global Information Society Watch 2017 special edition:
Internet governance from the edges: NRIs in their own words

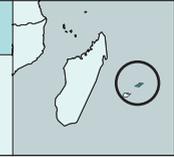
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This report is a special companion edition to Global Information Society Watch 2017: National and Regional Internet Governance Forum Initiatives (NRIs), which can be downloaded from <https://www.giswatch.org/2017-local-and-regional-internet-governance-forums-igfs>

MAURITIUS IGF

Mauritius

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NRI founding stories and development

What is the story of the founding of your NRI? What were its inspiration, its objectives?

Mauritius IGF, founded in 2017, came at the right moment when the coalition of non-state actors decided to take forward the upcoming issues related to the internet. The objectives were:

- To advance internet governance issues in Mauritius through a multistakeholder framework as well as facilitating partnerships and coalitions that deliver coordinated domestic responses, initiatives, and synergies.
- To increase awareness and build capacity development on internet governance issues in Mauritius so as to ensure informed dialogue on policy and related matters between all stakeholders.
- To establish a coordinated and coherent framework for dealing with internet governance issues in Mauritius.
- To facilitate the participation of a broad range of stakeholders in internet governance issues.
- To ensure that Mauritius views are represented in the region and at the global IGF.

How did it develop and what difficulties did you experience along the way?

The concept of Mauritius IGF was welcomed by all stakeholders and several meetings were held prior to its establishment. Stakeholders including civil society, the corporate sector and technicians also brought their input. The difficulties encountered were minor or can be easily considered as none.

How do you imagine your NRI and its activities in the future?

Mauritius IGF is already set for paving the way of ICT field in the future. The annual meeting scheduled in November 2017 will bring in a set of new ideas that will be taken forward in the future for the benefit of all stakeholders.

NRI internal governance and initiatives

Who are the people involved in your NRI and how do they contribute to it?

Mauritius IGF has its own governance policy and also its anti-corruption policy. All members commit themselves to abide by these policies.

Have you experienced difficulties in ensuring all stakeholder groups participate fully and more or less equally?

Each stakeholder has one voice and the question of participation at a less equal level does not arise.

Do you measure gender balance in your NRI? Did you undertake measures to encourage gender balance?

Gender balance is a must in our NRI. The fact is that several stakeholder programmes focus on advocacy towards ensuring Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the region, and young women and girls are the most targeted audience.

How was your last forum organised, what were the topics chosen and the outcomes of discussion? How was it financed?

The first forum was organised on 16 November 2017. The forum had a keynote speaker from AF-RINIC Ltd, diplomatic representatives, members of parliament and other key personalities in the sector. The forum was divided into three plenary sessions. The forum was financed by the Internet Governance Forum Support Association (IGFSA) and a private sector in Mauritius that has internet governance high on its agenda.

Are there controversial topics that have been difficult in your NRI and if so, why?

The role of service providers in ensuring that they play a more active role and the voice of youth.

Perspectives on the role of NRIs in internet governance

What is your take about the role of your NRI in internet governance processes, at the level of your country, region and globally?

Mauritius IGF is positioned to become the pioneer in the ICT field insofar as non state actors are concerned. We will endeavour to play an important role at the regional level as well given that we already have a strong network of NGOs working in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Indian Ocean region.

How do you perceive your role and position towards other NRIs, the IGF and the IGF Secretariat?

We are provided with the proper and appropriate guidelines to be a responsible actor as NRI and also to be on the same wave-length with other NRIs. This is facilitated by the IGF Secretariat.

Internet governance from the edges: National and regional IGFs in their own words

National and Regional Internet Governance Forum Initiatives (NRIs) emerged in response to the success of the first two global Internet Governance Forums (IGFs). The Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, the outcome document of the final phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), alongside the call for the creation of the IGF, served as the foundations for the model of bottom-up, multistakeholder internet governance. The first NRIs were set up in 2007 and 2008, and there are now close to a hundred initiatives, comprising national, sub-national, regional and youth initiatives, which organise autonomously and cooperate with the global IGF Secretariat. The importance of NRIs has increased throughout the years, as they have grown in number and their work has expanded in scope. They have acquired such relevance within the IGF that an NRI session was included in the IGF 2016 and 2017 main sessions agendas.

This year, APC has taken the initiative to compile two editions of Global Information Society Watch (GISWatch) focused on the work of NRIs. While the main 2017 GISWatch annual report provides independent and analytical perspectives on the role of NRIs in internet governance broadly, the present companion edition, *Internet governance from the edges: National and regional IGFs in their own words*, aims to give voice and visibility to the stories of each NRI, share their experiences and achievements, and highlight their perspectives on internet governance.

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