

GLOBAL INFORMATION SOCIETY WATCH 2017

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



GISWatch 2017
SPECIAL EDITION

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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

Disclaimer: The views expressed in survey responses are not necessarily the views of APC or of its members.

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>

TAIWAN IGF

Taiwan

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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?*

The Taiwan IGF (TWIGF) was first held by the National Information Infrastructure Enterprise Promotion Association (NIIIEPA) in 2015 with the support of the government. Then, the 2016 APriGF was held on 27-29 July 2016 and locally hosted by NIIIEPA and the Taiwanese government. 2016 APriGF was very successful and aroused the interest of the Taiwanese internet community and the need for a more organised platform to begin focusing on the ongoing discussions on IGF-related issues.

Since then, the TWIGF has been formally formed since December 2016, and it also organised a Multistakeholder Steering Group (MSG), which is based on the APriGF multistakeholder model, composed from the broad-based technical community, civil society, private enterprises, government and academic community. The first MSG selected seven workshop topics, and about 200 people participated. It was widely praised by the internet community. During the 2016 TWIGF, it also launched a TechGIRLS activity for mutual exchange and sharing of women's internet technology career experiences. In addition, there are more than 1,500 people already registered on the "Taiwan Internet Governance Forum" Facebook group, who usually communicate with each other about domestic and global internet governance-related activities and issues; community interaction is also very strong. Therefore, the TWIGF has been playing a fundamental role in bridging the APriGF, UN IGF activities and IGF-related issues, hoping to accumulate more energy and to continue playing a positive role in promoting internet governance.

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

Internet technology is growing very fast, the traditional government-based governance model has been unable to cope with the needs of rapidly developing technological environment. Therefore, the purpose of good internet governance is to help the

government to transform into an innovative government-based governance model.

In the policy development process, we can make more multistakeholder groups involved in the process to participate effectively, and ultimately to minimise the conflict between the virtual world and the physical world.

But it is still the initial stage of the multistakeholder model, the government's various internet-related laws and regulations, how to refer to the multistakeholder model, we are still grasping them, so there is urgency to strengthen the IGF-related issues of education and training. In addition, it is imperative to create a successful best practice for the policy development process (PDP) of the multistakeholder model, which is the biggest challenge.

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

The TWIGF hopes to achieve the following objectives in the near future:

- To play the bridge role between Taiwan IGF, the Asia Pacific region, and the global IGF community
- To continue to promote activities to enhance awareness of internet governance amongst the various stakeholders
- To enhance the quality of TWIGF activities and to increase the number of participants, especially amongst young people
- To assist the government in incorporating the multistakeholder model of internet governance into the relevant policies and regulations development process and to benefit from it.

NRI internal governance and initiatives

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

Kuo-Wei Wu, Kenny Huang and Vincent Chen are involved in the activity of our NRI or in the Facebook

community, they translate the English reports to Chinese and bring the discussion forward. They also persuade our government officials to join the Taiwan IGF, APriGF and APNIC, and to let more people know about internet governance in Taiwan.

Other NGO groups, civil communities, government officials and the private sector join the Facebook community page to discuss or share their opinions. And we also have a TechGIRLS meetup, to persuade everyone to share their life, their opinions together, face to face, without any limitation due to gender issues.

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

Actually, not really. But some communities do not want to join the “governance”. That is a problem, but we do not want to force anybody to join. And there is one problem that the messages only spread between some stakeholders. The other is that some people are afraid of talking about technology issues, they are not familiar with technology or with the internet, while some of us always talk in technical jargon that makes people confused and nervous.

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

We do not really have gender balance issues in our NRI. We have had many women join the discussion, but with these internet governance issues, I found some women do not have much confidence to express their own opinions in English; even in our native language women tend to hide behind the men. Each MSG member tries to encourage gender balance, we always try to persuade women to join us, but confidence, culture and language can be barriers for them.

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

The TWIGF currently has 15 members in the MSG, from technical community, to private enterprise, civic community, government and academia. NIIIEPA also committed to perform the role of TWIGF secretariat. The 2017 TWIGF was successfully held on 17 June 2017. The MSG received a total of 11 workshop proposals, and finally selected seven workshops for the agenda. Each of these workshops has a moderator and four to five panelists, all voluntary and

with free participation. The seven workshop agendas are:

- Controversial speech mitigation, privacy and personal information protection
- Impact of regulation and demand of talent on the internet decentralisation
- Cybersecurity challenges and perspectives in the era of artificial intelligence
- The impact and evolution of the sharing economy
- The multistakeholder governance model to prevent and deal with cyber bullying
- The challenge of internet exchange environment in Taiwan
- Outreach and awareness for internet governance.

Approximately 200 participants attended the meeting, 61% came from private enterprises, 15% were government officials, 14% came from academia, 5% from civic communities and 4% were individuals. All of the meetings were broadcast live on Facebook and have been uploaded on private YouTube channels. The meeting funding mainly came from LINE, CHT and Chief, and other private enterprise companies donated additional funds.

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

At present, the TWIGF community is most concerned about the issues including fake news, the sharing economy, network security, privacy and data protection, OTT services, IoT/AI/big data/cloud/blockchain social and policy issues, etc.

These are the new issues on the internet, or the issues relating to ICTs that hit traditional industries. These emerging issues need to be discussed more with different stakeholders to highlight the controversial issues and encourage more people to participate, that is the biggest challenge.

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?

The TWIGF is on the one hand aiming to continue to accumulate energy, strengthen Taiwan internet multistakeholders’ active participation, and contribute

to the local internet ecosystem. On the other hand it aims to play a bridging role between the Asia-Pacific and the global IGF community, and to promote participation, transparency, accountability, and an inclusive multistakeholder governance model that can be truly implemented in the internet governance ecology.

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

TWIGF participants are from different stakeholder groups, and have so far already accumulated enough basic energy, including attracting the attention of the government, especially the National Communications Council and legislators, which have continued to focus on and integrate internet governance into the Digital National Development Promotion Program.

The TWIGF also plays the role of training young people in the IGF meetings and activities to create a community enhancing the capacity of internet governance awareness. This includes the preparation of training materials, planning training agenda, selecting personnel to participate in the IGF, encouraging more people to participate in IGF-related technology discussions and policy meetings. It is also expected to enhance the participation of the IGF community and contribute to the Asia-Pacific region and the global IGF community.

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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