

Capacity of Developing Countries to Participate in ICT International Governance

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

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Overview

Participation in international governance raises a complex set of issues anywhere; and at present particularly so with information and communication technologies. This chapter looks primarily at the challenges which this poses for developing country participation in international ICT and Internet governance, and at potential capacity-building initiatives that might address these. It begins with an account of change within governance of the ICT sector which seeks to set these challenges—and potential new initiatives—in context.

ICT and Internet Governance

The word "governance" itself is inexact. Governance arrangements within countries include intersecting management and consultation processes that involve national, regional, local and sectoral tiers of government; elected representatives; quasi-governmental agencies and civil society agencies; judicial processes and self-regulatory bodies in the public and private sectors—and so forth. International governance has seemed simpler, historically, because nation-states have been represented by their governments in international fora. International governance has largely meant intergovernmental governance. But here, too, governance has become more inexact in recent years, involving more diverse participation and a wider range of stakeholders, if sometimes in the teeth of resistance from intergovernmental institutions and some governments.

Nowhere has this increased diversity been more apparent in the information and communication technology sector, and it is worth briefly considering why. For most of the twentieth century, international telecommunications governance was dominated by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the intergovernmental agency first established in 1865 to coordinate international telegraphy. The ITU had a number of critical roles where transnational coordination was required in order to make national networks interact: notably the allocation of radio spectrum, the establishment of technical standards, and rules relating to the distribution of proceeds from international telephone traffic. As the twentieth century progressed, a number of other treaty-based international telecommunications agreements arose, notably those establishing satellite infrastructure such as INTELSAT and INMARSAT. Interconnection and accounting arrangements were largely handled at a bilateral level between state-owned monopoly telephone operating entities.

All of these intergovernmental governance arrangements were highly technocratic. The ICT sector did not spill over substantially into broader policy issues except on rare occasions—the ITU's Maitland Commission enquiry into the developmental potential of telephony in the mid-1980s being one of the most apparent. The last fifteen years of the twentieth century, however, saw a succession of major changes in the nature and scope of the ICT sector, which have realigned its institutions of international governance, introduced new and sometimes highly unusual governance structures in new areas of the ICT market, and led to much more complex interactions between ICT governance and other areas of policy. These changes were driven by four factors:

- Technological innovation has enabled communications businesses and consumers to bypass traditional internationally governed accounting and traffic management.
- Liberalization and privatization of telecoms markets have transformed the structure of national and international communications markets, replacing public sector priorities with those of private businesses, many operating internationally rather than within nation-states.
- The convergence of information and communications markets—telecommunications, broadcasting, computing—and their increased interaction with other markets such as financial services—have broadened the range of stakeholders with an interest in ICT governance.
- New services—and in particular the Internet—have led to the establishment—or in some cases, organic evolution—of new governance arrangements which provide alternatives to or contest authority with traditional intergovernmental arrangements.

As a result of these factors many new agencies, with overlapping powers and interests, now play crucial roles in international governance within the ICT sector. The restructuring (liberalization and privatization) of communications markets has brought them within the ambit of trade as well as technical regulation, with the post-GATS WTO's Agreements on Telecommunications and Information Technology playing major roles in relation to international investment, competition and dispute resolution. Liberalization and privatization have undermined governments' abilities meaningfully to represent national ICT sectors in international fora, thereby also diminishing the ITU's authority and (some say) relevance. Private sector companies and standardization fora now play much of the role which governments used to play in standard-setting, both within the ITU and, more importantly, without it.

In addition, the growing perceived importance of the ICT sector as a driver of globalization and/or economic growth has led to much more extensive policy and decision-making where it is concerned within non-sector-specific international governance structures. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), for example, plays an increasingly important part in an ICT sector characterized by rapid changes in technology and in the capacity to deliver an ever increasing amount of content in an ever increasing number of ways. Development agencies like the World Bank play an important part in international ICT policy development and in national decisions concerning investment and sector restructuring. There have even been two World Summits on the Information Society, which articulated the hopes of many that ICTs can transform the lives of all, though they failed in many ways to bring together the different worlds of ICT and development specialists.

And then there is the Internet. Most of the international governance agencies described in the previous paragraphs come from the intergovernmental model, in which governments alone represent nations and their citizens. Not so with the Internet—perhaps the most important phenomenon in human social and economic development to have evolved with so little involvement of the powers-that-be. Although the Internet's first origins lay in the US military, its dynamic leadership has moved outwards through a succession of non-governmental actors—academics, computer programmers and developers, commercial businesses—so rapidly that it had become a major force in society (at least in industrial countries) before governments took much notice.

The Internet has therefore been a much less intergovernmental space with much less intergovernmental governance. Most of the crucial components of Internet governance—such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and the Internet Society—were developed outside governmental circles, often by people suspicious of the role of governments: individuals and individualists who relished the opportunity to move things forward experimentally, through what they often saw as democratic consent, without the caution and political manoeuvring they associated with intergovernmental fora. ICANN, the centre of much dispute in the World Summit on the Information Society, is a curious hybrid—exercising regulatory powers, theoretically (if rather uncertainly) subject to jurisdiction in one country (the United States), but—like other Internet fora—peopled by individuals rather than representatives.

The last few years, therefore, have seen something of a clash of paradigms in ICT/Internet governance—between traditional, treaty-based institutions like the ITU, WTO and WIPO, and more innovative, less formal agencies within the Internet community. (The former might be called traditional ICT governance; the latter Internet governance.) Governments clearly retain authority within the former, though they are increasingly reliant on the private sector for expertise in technical areas. Negotiating skills are often more important in these contexts than technical knowledge.

Governments have struggled, however, to gain comparable authority in Internet agencies, where technical knowledge remains a more important criterion for successful participation. The contest for authority between governments and non-governments was at the heart of intense debate about Internet governance during the World Summit on the Information Society. Many governments in WSIS, particularly from developing countries, sought to vest more authority over it in an intergovernmental forum such as the ITU or some new agency in a similar mould (as well as seeking to diminish the authority of the United States). Their desire for this was resisted by the Internet community, civil society and the private sector as well as by industrial country governments, all of which see the lack of historic governmental and intergovernmental control over Internet standards and development as one of the reasons for its dynamism and growth.

Developing Countries and ICT Decision-making

How do these contrasting paradigms of ICT/Internet governance affect the capacity of developing countries to participate and influence policy outcomes?

The *Louder Voices* enquiry, conducted for the G8 Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOT Force) in 2002, looked in some detail at the capacity of developing countries to participate in international ICT decision-making fora. It focused on three agencies in particular—the ITU, WTO and ICANN—but concluded that its findings had relevance across the board. It identified serious under-representation of developing countries in ICT decision-making processes, which resulted in decisions made taking insufficient account of the contexts, needs, priorities and concerns of developing countries and those living in them—on issues ranging from terminal design to international bandwidth pricing. Sub-optimal technical decisions, from a developing country point of view, were likely to lead to poorer social,

economic and developmental outcomes, including slower access growth and weaker integration into the global ICT economy.

Analysing extensive interviews with developing country participants, the *Louder Voices* report identified six key areas of deficiency behind the underperformance of developing countries in international ICT decision-making. Some of these concerned the international decision-making institutions themselves, but the more important concerned the national policy-making processes available to participants.

Three main problems were identified within the structure of international decision-making institutions. These were:

- a. lack of easy, affordable and timely access to information about ICT-related issues, decision-making fora and processes;
- b. logistical problems, including the frequency and location of international meetings and restrictions on participation (for example, by private sector and civil society experts); and
- c. ineffective use of financial resources available to support participation.

These challenges are, obviously, not particularly specific to the ICT sector. Developing country representatives face the same problems in many international fora in many different contexts. Meetings are usually organized in ways that suit their major players, particularly large delegations with the personnel to attend parallel sessions and engage in extensive lobbying activity outside the formal meeting space. Lack of appropriate information is a particular problem where highly complex issues are discussed in a number of different fora, as is increasingly the case in the ICT sector with its overlapping layers of authority (ITU, WTO, regional regulatory associations, standardization bodies, Internet governance entities, development agencies, *etc.*).

The *Louder Voices* report also identified three main groups of problems with national policy-making processes. These were.

- a. lack of policy awareness, at all levels of government and citizenship, of the potential role of ICTs in social and economic development;
- b. lack of technical and policy capacity on ICT issues, particularly in respect of emerging technologies and new policy areas—such as migration from circuit-switched to IP networks and indeed Internet issues in general;
- c. weaknesses in national and regional policy-making processes, including:
 - lack of political leadership;
 - absence of national ICT strategies;
 - ineffective coordination between different government departments and agencies with ICT responsibilities;

- lack of private sector and civil society participation in national decision-making;
- inadequate preparation for international meetings;
- and ineffective use of financial and human resources.

In short, the report—based substantially on interviews with developing country participants in decision-making processes—identified lack of policy development capacity, poor coordination in government and insufficient attention to non-governmental expertise as critical factors in under-representation and under-performance. Lack of attention to non-governmental expertise was particularly problematic in areas such as the Internet, which had been developed by the private sector and (sometimes) civil society rather than by government action.

All of these national policy weaknesses are susceptible to new approaches in-country and to capacity-building initiatives, some of which are considered later in this chapter. First, though, it is useful to consider two particular issues about the representation of developing countries in international ICT/Internet fora: who participates, and what requirements they have to participate effectively.

Stakeholders

“Multistakeholderism”—the participation of diverse stakeholder communities in decision-making—was commended by the World Summit on the Information Society. Although the practice of participation by the private sector and civil society in the development of WSIS texts was resisted by many governments, the principle was endorsed within those very texts. “We recognise,” the *Geneva Declaration of Principles* put it, “that building an inclusive Information Society requires new forms of solidarity, partnership and cooperation among governments and other stakeholders, i.e., the private sector, civil society and international organisations.” “The international management of the Internet,” added the *Tunis Agenda for the Information Society*, “should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organisations.”

This is very different from the way things have usually been done in international ICT decision-making. It reflects the influence of the Internet governance world, in which multistakeholder participation is strongly established and governments are weak. Even if intergovernmental agencies like the ITU gain more say in Internet affairs, it is difficult to see that this multistakeholder character could be displaced. The Internet Governance Forum, the only significant new entity created as a result of WSIS, has also been set up on an explicitly multistakeholder basis. Some think that this will pose challenges to established ICT (as opposed to Internet) decision-making fora, though whether this happens is yet to be seen. The ITU’s 2006 Plenipotentiary Conference initiated a very limited review of stakeholder participation in its WSIS-related work (rather than its workload as a whole). There seems to be little appetite in the traditional ICT agencies’ governance processes for much widening of stakeholder participation.

We need therefore to look at two stakeholder groups, and at the interaction between them. Neither of these stakeholder groups is simple.

On the government side, a number of different categories of personnel are involved in ICT decisions. These include, in particular:

- diplomats, whose expertise lies in negotiating and drafting international agreements;
- ICT policy specialists, whose objective is to understand the issues and maximize the value derived from an ICT sector point of view;
- ICT technical specialists, whose expertise lies in understanding and maximising the value of technical (technological, accounting, *etc*) options within agreements;
- and non-sector specialists, whose responsibilities intersect with the ICT sector and whose contribution focuses on the priorities which they require from international ICT governance for their own purposes (for example, personnel from ministries of finance concerned with attracting investment or managing customs revenue; personnel from development ministries seeking cheaper international bandwidth to enable more effective use of ICTs in health, education *etc.*).

None of these stakeholder groups within government needs to understand everything about ICTs and their interaction with other areas of policy. It is important, however, that they understand sufficient of the issues across the board to ensure that they can engage effectively. At present, there is often a substantial gap in understanding between these different groups; and, in particular, there is often a paradigm gap between ICT specialists and non-sector specialists such as those in mainstream development ministries. Addressing this paradigm gap—enabling both groups to understand each other's priorities—is critical to enabling more joined-up government.

There is significant pressure for wider stakeholder input within national policy environments. Although WSIS showed that most governments still prefer to retain policy development inside officialdom, some did seek during WSIS to engage with the private sector and civil society, and in a few countries (such as Kenya) the private sector and civil society became quite assertive about their right to policy engagement. The scope for this engagement differs at present quite significantly between traditional ICT and new Internet governance bodies, for reasons that naturally follow from the structural differences described above. Governments still wholly represent their nation-states in the traditional ICT institutions, but Internet bodies draw participation from the whole Internet community, irrespective of stakeholder identity. Citizens of any country may take part in them without being official representatives.

The result is a set of institutions whose representative characteristics (and flaws) differ from those of their intergovernmental equivalents, but in which developing country participation suffers from quite similar deficiencies. Everyone, for example, can participate in principle in the Internet Engineering Task Force's development of standards, but it takes a lot of time and money to do so. And, as one IETF habitué put it in a recent colloquium, it takes a great deal of courage for any "newbie" to put her/his expertise on the line and enter the fray. New spaces are rarely very open to all; like traditional fora for negotiation, capacity to participate really depends on the assets which individuals or organizations can bring to bear—assets

such as time, expertise and funding. Most stakeholders in most developing countries—and all in some—lack these necessary assets. The Internet's governance fora may therefore be more open in terms of the status of participants (private sector, civil society, individuals as well as—often instead of—governments), but they are no more open in practice to developing country participation than permanent intergovernmental fora. There may well be fewer developing country actors playing substantial roles in some Internet governance bodies than there are in the more traditional ICT institutions.

Questions for Participants

Those who do participate need to acquire and hold such assets, and this lies at the heart of the capacity-building requirements discussed later in this chapter. To participate effectively, certainly if they intend to be proactive rather than reactive, developing country personnel—whether from governments or other stakeholder communities—need to know answers to a number of questions about what they are seeking to achieve. These questions might be summarized as follows:

1. What policy outcomes or decisions are in the interest of the country or stakeholder community I represent?
2. What is the range of opinion on the issues concerned? Why do others think they way they do? How do I judge the viability of different approaches or the likelihood of success in achieving these objectives?
3. How do I negotiate outcomes that are desirable for my country or stakeholder community in the particular institution(s) concerned (*i.e.*, how does that/those institution(s) work)?
4. What partnerships are available to me with other countries/stakeholder groups in pursuing these outcomes?

It is clear from these questions that effective participation requires a number of different assets. In particular, it requires:

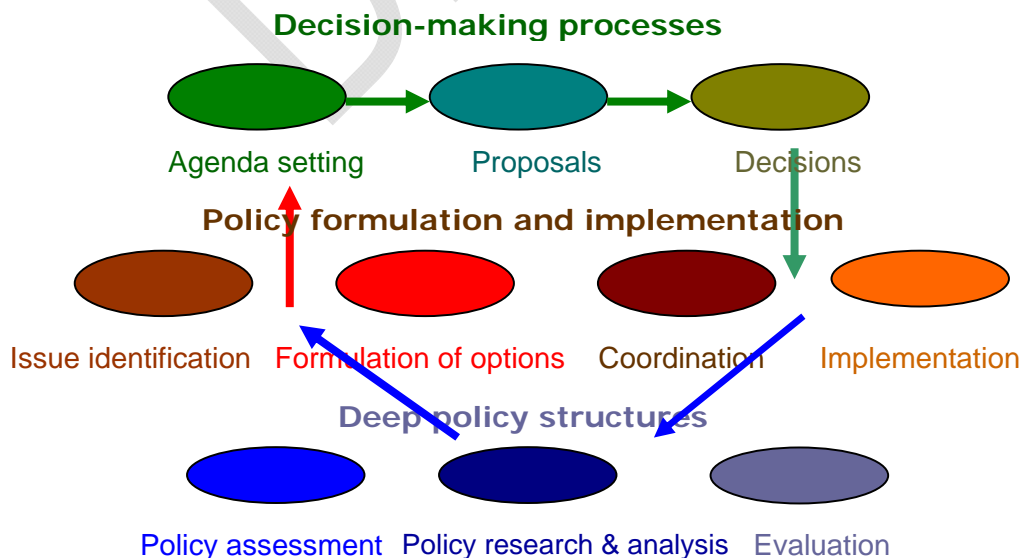
- a. access to reliable, up-to-date information about the issues under consideration and the state of negotiations to date;
- b. technical understanding of the issues under consideration;
- c. analytical understanding of the policy options under consideration;
- d. expertise and (preferably) experience in the formal and informal processes of decision-making in the institution(s) involved; and
- e. understanding of and sensitivity to the views and underpinning thinking of other actors within the decision-making process, probably based on personal acquaintance and past experience.

These are not easy assets for new participants to acquire, particularly if they are from smaller countries. To some extent they involve personal skills (and there are numerous examples of individuals from small countries who have played important roles in international ICT decision-making because they have deployed strong personal skills). But the participation of developing countries in international decision-making should not depend on the personal qualities of individuals; and most important deficiencies faced by developing countries are in any case systemic and structural rather than personal.

There are initiatives that can be taken—by international institutions, by national governments, by stakeholder communities—to increase the participation assets that are available to developing country participants. International institutions, for example, could do a good deal more to make information available about their processes and procedures and to train participants from developing countries so that they can make most effective use of them. Such institutions can also do much more to demystify issues under consideration. A common complaint of developing country participants is that they don't have the time or research support to trawl through the metres (or gigabytes) of documentation prepared (especially for technical meetings)—but that they also can't participate effectively in the absence of reliable, objective synopses. Where, they ask, are those synopses?; why do international agencies not make them available?

Participation in international fora is also expensive. Some international agencies, including the ITU, offer fellowships, covering the cost of travel, accommodation and subsistence, to allow developing country personnel to attend. These fellowships have value, but are also criticized for two reasons: too often, it is said, they go to the wrong people; and, in any case, they merely support the presence of developing country personnel, not their effective participation. For that, much more is required: the kind of induction process and ethos that make newcomers feel part of what is going on, participants rather than observers.

The requirements for effective ICT policymaking are, if anything, even more complex at the national level. Ideally, national decision-making processes should draw together policy, strategic planning, underlying knowledge and research, and implementation into a single coherent process, which draws expertise from political leadership, the range of relevant government personnel, the private sector, civil society, academic research and, in the case of Internet, what might be called the Internet community. The structure of such a process is illustrated in the following diagram, developed from analysis originally published in the *Louder Voices* report.



This diagram seeks to represent the complexity of serious policy development and articulation. At the top level, representation in formal meeting spaces—the international meetings themselves—is required not just in final decision-making plenaries, but in agenda-setting meetings and throughout the dialogue and negotiating process. Much of this process is informal, conducted in coffee bars rather than conference rooms, and requires lobbying and negotiating skills as well as depth of policy and technical understanding. Effective participation, therefore, requires both expertise and continuity. As suggested above, it cannot be achieved through fellowships alone, but rather through demanding and resource-intensive continuous participation in conjunction with like-minded colleagues.

The central tier of the diagram represents the bureaucratic and technocratic support systems that underpin both political decision-making and diplomatic negotiation. It is this tier that analyses implications and selects between policy options, referring these upward to more senior (and often political) decision-makers. It is also responsible for implementing decisions that are taken, drawing the implications from the outcomes of international decision-making processes back into the national sphere and seeking to take advantage of the opportunities (and avoid the negative impacts) that arise from them. Without this supporting infrastructure of bureaucrats and technocrats, representatives in international fora are likely to be ineffective.

But the bureaucrats and technocrats are not themselves sufficient to make the most of international processes. Ideally, their work should be based upon a deeper layer of expertise, within research and academic institutions, in the private sector and civil society as well as government itself. It is at this level that the underlying understanding of national needs and priorities is developed—where the research is undertaken into national communications environments and markets, where the potential impact of different policies is analysed and where actual impact is evaluated.

Policymaking capacity—and therefore the capacity to take part effectively in international decision-making institutions—depends on the extent to which this range of interconnected layers is actually in place, and the skills which participants have to make use of what it offers them. It is evident that this multi-layered policy-making structure is much more likely to be achieved in industrial countries or in large developing countries than in LDCs (Least Developed Countries) or small island states. The latter are, therefore, always likely to be weaker in international fora—though regional coordination does offer the potential to build more expertise than can be achieved through individual national delegations. Whether or not regional coordination has been achieved, capacity-building initiatives also have a role to play.

Capacity Building

Capacity-building in this context should not be confused with training. Training is an important part of capacity-building. But capacity-building involves much more, including the availability of reliable information, the establishment of consultation processes, and spaces where decision-makers can engage in creative thinking outside the pressure-cookers of negotiating fora.

Capacity-building is also required at different levels. Officials and stakeholders who participate themselves in international fora need a high level of capacity—substantial participation assets, in the sense in which the word was used above. So do those others represented in the diagram in the previous section. But the contribution of these policymakers will be improved if they can engage more inclusively with social actors who are also better informed. In addition to the higher level skills required by negotiators and policy development personnel, there is need to build a common base of sound understanding of the issues among opinion-formers and engaged citizens. When ICANN is discussed, for example, those discussing it should understand what ICANN is and does; when they talk about the root server system, their understanding of root servers should be based on facts rather than assumptions. There is plenty of scope for disagreement about such issues without adding misunderstanding to the mix.

At the higher level—that of active participants in decision-making fora—there are many examples of good practice. The ITU organizes many workshops on different technical and policy issues, which are valued by those who participate in them. The WTO invests significantly, with limited financial resources, in helping developing countries to navigate its very complex processes. ICANN, the Internet Society and regional Internet registries support a range of different training initiatives to improve the expertise, and thereby the participatory capacity, of developing country Internet managers. Some of these are sizable—the African registry AfriNIC organizes regular two-week programmes, including a number of distinct modular events, that draw together well over a hundred technical and other Internet managers from around its continent. Non-specialist organizations, such as the Diplo Foundation, also contribute significantly to this type of capacity-building through documentation, online courses, and training sessions on both ICT/Internet issues and negotiating skills.

There are more examples like this today than there were two years ago, and they provide a sound foundation on which to build; but there is a long way still to go. Capacity-building of this kind in ICTs, where technology and markets change so rapidly, is very short-term in its impact. Ongoing processes that continue to engage people, post-training, are as important as initial training events. Without them, former participants are likely to rely on increasingly outdated information. Training events can also only reach a relatively small number of people. Even the substantial AfriNIC events mentioned above, if they have, say, 150 participants, will only reach an average of three in each African country. This is not sufficient to build the broad policy understanding and deep policy structures that are needed to underpin effective long-term international participation.

Training initiatives, seminars and workshops also tend to focus on specific issues, particularly technical aspects of ICTs and the Internet or, where policy issues are concerned, more technical aspects of policy such as regulation. They are usually concerned more with transmitting information—which is important—than with building discourse—which also matters. They rarely address the intersections between ICT/Internet policy, on the one hand, and other areas of public policy (such as economic development, security, content, or the application of ICTs to social policy objectives) which are increasingly important at both national and international level. ICT decision-makers need to know more about these wider implications of their decision-making, just as those outside the ICT sector could benefit by knowing more of ICTs.

One way in which this might be achieved is by establishing better spaces for dialogue between ICT and non-ICT decision-makers, at both national and international levels. One example of such an opportunity may be provided by the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), whose first meeting proved to be an intriguing space for international discourse. The IGF was set up, for many *faute de mieux*, following WSIS' failure to find consensus on substantive ways in which Internet governance might move forward. Its mandate, as agreed by WSIS, is extensive, but its resources are scant and its powers nil.

The IGF's first meeting, in late 2006, was unashamedly a talking shop—for some a matter of disappointment, but for others (including the present author) something to celebrate. It discussed a very wide range of subjects, and was, in truth, more an Internet Policy Forum or even Internet Issues Forum than a forum on internet governance *per se*. It drew participation from a wide range of people with different levels of expertise and different specialisms, including (crucially) the Internet's big names; and it treated all of them not as members or representatives of particular stakeholder groups but as equal individuals. Discussion at the IGF was very open, in a way that it would not have been had the Forum had the power to make decisions—another marked contrast with UN fora, including the recent World Summit. Almost everyone felt at the end of the meeting that they had learnt something, and in particular, had learnt a good deal about why others think the way they do. An illustration, perhaps, of the value of the “talking shop” in moving thinking forward.

A final word is due about the information, rather than training, dimension of the capacity required for developing country participation. Three key deficiencies in information resources are often identified by developing country participants in international ICT fora. These are:

- lack of basic information about international ICT institutions and their negotiating and decision-making processes;
- lack of straightforward, objective information about issues under discussion; and
- lack of update information, providing an account of "where we are today".

As noted earlier, these deficiencies are not exclusive to developing countries or to international ICT fora. They are common to many participants in international decision-making processes of all kinds. They are perhaps particularly acute in the ICT/Internet context, however, for three reasons:

- the rapid pace of change in ICT/Internet technical and policy issues;
- the very large number of fora, with overlapping responsibilities and often fundamentally different processes and methodologies involved; and
- the substantial overlap between Internet-specific and other international governance institutions (*e.g.*, WTO, WIPO, security agencies, *etc.*).

The need for better information resources here applies both to those who are substantially involved in policymaking and in international fora, and to stakeholders in the wider community whose interests and responsibilities intersect with ICT and Internet issues. The latter, in particular, would be much more able to contribute effectively to debate and policy

development if they shared a common base understanding of the organizations, technologies, issues and policies being discussed. There are already some excellent materials—such as the Diplo Foundation’s manual on *Internet Governance: Issues, Actors and Divides*—offering guidance in these areas, but more are needed, addressing in particular individual organizations and narrow but important issues, and keeping users up to date with these. A good example of an archived resource addressing these needs in a different context is the UN Non-Government Liaison Service journal *The Go-Between*, which summarizes significant reports and meetings within the UN family. One of the “dynamic multistakeholder coalitions” formed at the first Internet Governance Forum is actively considering ways of establishing basic core information on ICT/Internet issues, including objective summaries of the roles and outcomes of different governance fora.

Conclusion

International ICT decision-making fora have always been challenging environments for developing country participation because of the high levels of technical capacity required for effective participation. Larger developing countries, particularly those with substantial ICT sectors, have been able to play a significant part in decision-making, while smaller countries and LDCs have found this more difficult. New Internet governance institutions, built around Internet stakeholder communities rather than intergovernmental representation, pose new and different challenges in many ways, but also require high levels of technical expertise for effective participation. Efforts to increase developing country participation are essential if developing country concerns and needs are to be properly addressed by either type of forum. These can be made—by international institutions themselves, by governments and stakeholder communities. The value of doing so should be significant; while opportunities—within the ICT sector and beyond—will be missed if the chance to do so is not taken. While there are distinctive aspects to the ICT/Internet governance agenda here, it has much in common with other areas of international governance, including sustainable development, and there may be much to be learnt from cross-fertilization.