UN-INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM MULTISTAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP UPDATE REPORT – BY DALSIE G. BANIALA FOR PICISOC

1.0 Introduction

Internet Governance Forum Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) was established back in year 2006 by the United Nations Secretary-General. The overall objective of this group is to assist the Secretary –General in the preparations of the annual Internet Governance Forum (IGF) such as preparations of programs and schedules, led by the UN-IGF secretariat supported by the MAG Chair.   In this link https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/mag-terms-of-reference, you will have access to the main responsibilities of the MAG members.

A MAG member is always served at his or her personal capacity, where no one is expecting compensation for all the works perform and contributed to whether for the tiny community, for a nation, a region or serving at a recognized international body. A MAG member must first of all have passion for the region he or she is serving and importantly for all internet communities that are impacted by the decisions and or discussions made at the internet governance forums.

Representing the technical community, I have served as the MAG member for two years, 2018 – 2019 already and now my term was automatically renewed.

2.0 Activities engaged on during my two years term

In the last two years serving as a MAG member representing a technical community in the pacific region wasn't an easy ride for me. Especially in 2018, when I was a full time National Regulator for Vanuatu, and at the same time heading the institution with its own mandatory obligations expected to be fulfilled and supervising daily office operations. Moreover being the first female Regulator heading such an important Government institution, I can only describe my experience as one of the most haunting experience because the experiences I have been through.

Despite all the experiences, I always remained focused, professional and did my very best to contribute to the internet community not just in Vanuatu but at the Regional level as well.

3.0 UNIGF MAG Activities

(Above - Picture of MAG Members with the UN General Secretary at the Berlin Global IGF, November 2019)

The main MAG activities were our participation on the monthly Virtual meetings discussing agendas prepared and submitted for our views and feedback where appropriate.   The key activities that I was mostly part of during are discussions are International Best Practice Forums, where documents are then finalized, approved and uploaded. Additionally, discussing preparations leading to hosting of UN-IGF in Berlin, Germany on the 12th to 14th November, 2018. I have also participated in the inter-sessional work; including online discussions and virtual discussions with groups I was part of.

The activities was mainly engaging on are virtual monthly meetings focusing on the preparations leading to the 25 – 29, November 2019 IGF in Berlin, Germany. The discussions were constructive and very informative. I was also part of the review for few topics of proposals, some of which has been discussed during the IGF.   My involvement was mainly on Digital Inclusion Workshop which I have provided a lot of support on the coordination of the group sessions.

During the global IGF in Berlin, I also had the opportunity to organize for the Co-Founder for Diplo Foundation Dr. Jovan K. to meet with the Pacific Participants to discuss an interesting initiative. However, only the Vanuatu participants turned up for this meeting session and it was a very fruitful discussions where an initiative is being discussed with the VanIGF secretariat and its team and will be discussed with other interested pacific Islands.

(Photo for Dr. Jovan meeting with Vanuatu team).

3.1 International/Regional Contributions

Although my calendars are always full with Regulatory mandates and other community works especially, youth and other women development activities, I did my best to spare time to promote internet governance through women and girls in ICT initiatives happening in respective pacific regions. At the same time, assist with facilitating a number of Pacific IGF activities. Additionally, in a number of my regulatory presentations in various countries such as in the Regulator's Round table meeting in India, Bangladesh and PITA Annual general meeting in Guam, I have made presentations, gave examples of internet development activities within the Pacific Region, especially on regulatory internet forum which is an annual regulatory internet forum for Vanuatu leading to now the Vanuatu IGF Secretariat. I was also invited by PITA during its annual general meeting in Guam, 2018, briefly presented on internet access experience and women and girls in ICT development. At the same time, I made an open invitation for the APrIGF which was held in Port Vila in July, 2018.

In 2018 and as reported above, Vanuatu hosted the Asia Pacific regional IGF (APrIGF). Being the MAG representative in the Region, I have put a lot of effort onto the coordination and facilitation of the event to make sure it is a successful event given, it is for the first time hosted in the Pacific Region.

One of the outcome of the event, the Vanuatu IGF was also formed. As we progressed forward, and being the Regulator of Vanuatu at that time, I also pledged the Institutions Support towards the establishment of

the Forum Secretariat. I am so pleased to see Vanuatu IGF http://www.internet.org.vu/ positively progressing and doing a lot for the citizens of Vanuatu.

In 2019, during my advisory functions towards establishing the Telecommunications/ICT Regulatory Office for the Palau Government, I also had the opportunity to assist with facilitating the formation of the Internet Community of Palau – i-COP. I-COP is now focusing its effort on many of the national issues related to Internet. And one of its main focus is the security of .pw ccTLD which is being blacklisted and with the ICOP's, the Bureau of communication's support and assistance, the team are working towards resolving the experiences. Its Cyber-security Policy is being consulted on and now ready for approval and implementation in early 2020.   At the same time, facilitate Palau's membership of apTLD which Palau is now a formal member. This is one achievement for the Region as Palau has always been left out in many of the internet discussions.

I have also made some writing contributions for the Pacific Telecommunications Council meeting which was presented in early January, 2019. My presentation promotes a lot on the importance of why Regulatory regime should also cater for Data privacy. See link to my presentation https://www.ptc.org/2019/01/vanuatu-what-regulation-do-micro-markets-need/ I quote one specific statement made *"Ms. Baniala also backs more Internet governance alongside a major expansion of online services providing e-government in health and education in Vanuatu. She wants to see major improvements in e-service delivery, particularly of government services covering health and education. Putting all this in a consistent framework will be a challenge, she admits. As a result, she anticipates the next generation of regulation will not be a closed ended, but rather open and flexible to accommodate changing demands".*

There are many more to be reported on in this report however, on especially what I have been doing and delivering with my hat on as the MAG member. That can be done on the one to one basis when required.

Additionally, there are more to be done in the upcoming months and my last report at the end of 2020 will outline some of the activities that has been and will be discussed and implemented.

END