

# End user involvement: why and how

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ITU Internet Governance  
Workshop

Geneva, 27 February 2004

# Reasons for Internet success

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- Intelligence at the edges
- Users are free to innovate
  - No central regulation / validation / authorization process
  - Free deployment of new businesses / activities
- Users instantly become producers
  - Of new content
  - Of new services
  - Of new technology
- Unique model, opposite to older telecommunication systems (telephony, radio, television...)

# A problem of values

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- Before drawing boxes and classifying issues...
- Need to agree on a set of values shared by all stakeholders
  - There cannot be governance without a “Constitution”
- Shared methods and principles
- Then, you can apply such values and methods to any Internet governance issue – included those we cannot foresee yet!

# Why involve users?

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- Must be able to defend their freedom to innovate
- Can counterbalance private sector interests and defend public interest and competition
- Can contribute specific skills and expertise
- Can establish a quick reaction loop
- Can increase geopolitical diversity
- Policies made without listening to the users will be unenforceable and ineffective
  - The most spectacular failure in global ICT governance is...

# How to involve users?

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- User participation is not about representation
- User participation is about advocacy
  - Involving only those who want to be involved
  - Allowing good ideas by active individuals or small groups to emerge
  - Allowing opinions to be confronted and consensus to form

# The glocal network model

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- Take existing organizations and groups
  - They can discuss in local languages and suiting local customs, at manageable size
  - They can manage outreach and translations
- Put them in communication and let them discuss together and come to consensus
- Let them select an advocate to bring their consensus to the upper level

# ICANN's ALAC

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- Started in February 2003
- Still at an early stage (currently interim)
- Civil society equivalent to GAC (less powers)
- Advisory role, independent from ICANN
- Built over five Regional At Large Organizations
- ...which are the discussion forum for all Internet user organizations in a given Region
- Possible model for user participation?

# ALAC Activities

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- Implement the network of organizations
- Push for
  - more gTLDs to be established quickly
  - more global distribution of gTLDs
  - quick introduction of multilingualism and internationalized domain names
  - personal data in WHOIS to be kept private
- Organize WSIS workshops at ICANN meetings
  - Next one in Rome, 4 March 2004

<http://alac.icann.org/>