|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Document CWG-Internet-21/3** |
| **6 January 2025** |
| **English only** |
|  |  |
| Contribution by the United Kingdom |
| CONTRIBUTION ON RESEARCH INTO THE IGF  |
| **Purpose**To inform the Council Working Group about recent research into the value of the UN Internet Governance Forum.**Action required**The Council Working Group on international Internet-related public policy issues is invited to **note** the research and its key conclusions.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References** The report, *Net Effects: An Evidence-Led Exploration of IGF Impact*, can be read here:<https://dnsrf.org/blog/net-effects--an-evidence-led-exploration-of-igf-impact/index.html> |

**Contribution on Research into the UN Internet Governance Forum (IGF)**

The UK would like to congratulate the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting a successful Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in December and to thank them for their warm and generous hospitality. The IGF addressed a range of key topics around the theme of “building our multi-stakeholder digital future”. It included a high-level track, a parliamentary track, a youth track and a wide range of sessions bringing stakeholders together from across the world.

The aim of this contribution is to make the Council Working Group aware of recent research by the DNS Research Federation, based in Oxford in the UK, which examines the IGF’s value and impact from 2016 to 2023. The research is based upon nearly 50 structured interviews and a large-scale text analysis of over 12 million words, including more than 500 IGF workshop proposals and nearly 1,000 workshop transcripts.

The report found that the IGF has had significant direct and indirect impacts on global Internet policies. The IGF:

* has served as a crucial connection point for policymakers, business, technologists, activists and academics;
* acts as the centre of an international ecosystem where other Regional and National IGFs both feed up and pull down from the annual global meeting; and
* has provided a national, regional and global voice to individuals and groups that would otherwise have struggled to have their concerns or perspectives heard.

Examples of direct impact include:

* being a key driver in the growth of Internet Exchange Points (IXPs);
* serving as a catalyst for community connectivity;
* consolidating as a global ecosystem of knowledge sharing; and
* nurturing the next generation of Global South leaders.

The report highlights examples of indirect impact such as paving the way for the successful conclusion discussion on the transition of the IANA functions and shaping high-profile policy discussions, for example, on online safety issues.

In addition, an analysis of IGF participation data shows that the forum offers a venue for Global South participants to engage actively in global conversations on Internet governance.

The report also records suggestions made for improving and developing the IGF, for example by encouraging greater global representation and diversity.

We believe the report is a valuable contribution to discussions about the future of the IGF and we look forward to the next annual IGF, to be held in Norway in June.

The report, *Net Effects: An Evidence-Led Exploration of IGF Impact*, can be read here:

<https://dnsrf.org/blog/net-effects--an-evidence-led-exploration-of-igf-impact/index.html>

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_