

Introduction to the Pacific Internet Multistakeholder Forum

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Co-Convenor

Data X Blue Pacific, 24 October 2024

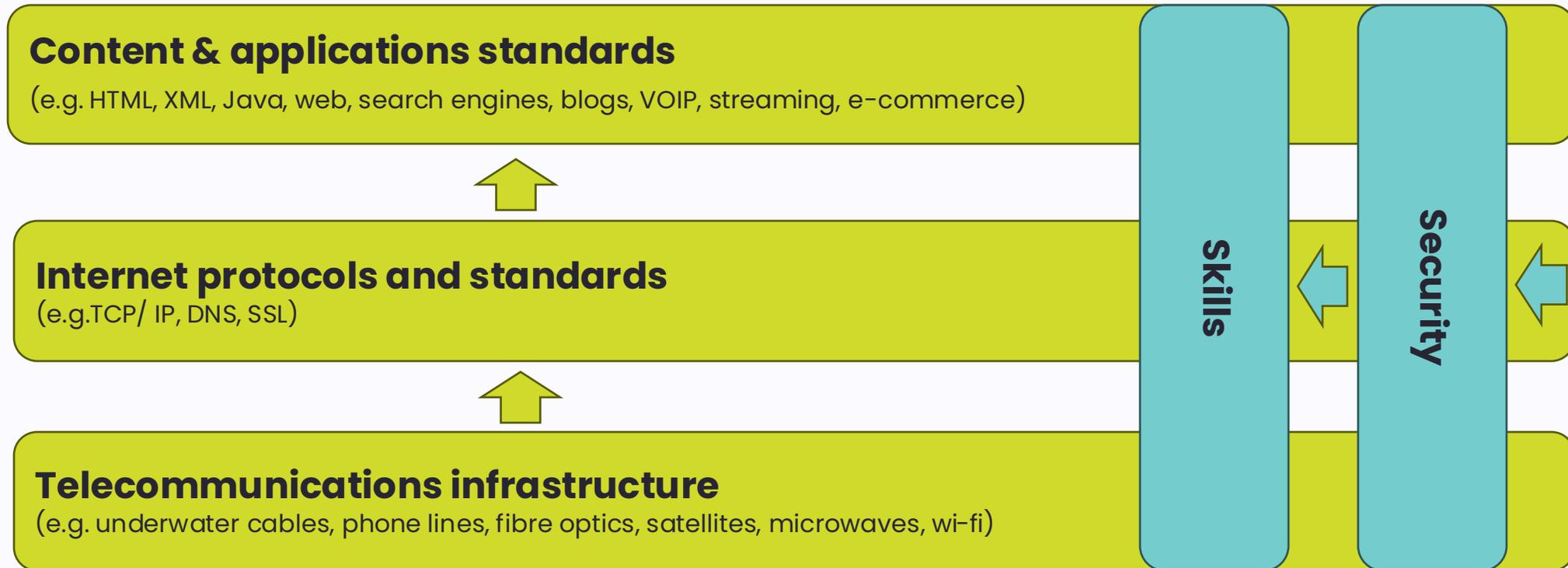
Our aim

- To show how the broader regional and global multi-stakeholder technical community (Some country code operators, network operator experts, APNIC, ICANN etc) can contribute more efficiently to support local professionals in Pacific Island Countries by aligning their commercial and technical skills with the various development aid groups which are funding Internet and communications development.
- We see this initiative as multistakeholderism in practical action.

Model for Internet and ICT discussion

Three focus areas

Enabled by 2 'S's



Pacific Internet Multistakeholder Forum, Brisbane, 1-2 September 2023

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- Twenty-five stakeholders representing fourteen funding and technical organisations
- Co-convended by Paul Twomey and Rosemary Sinclair, CEO of auDA
- Preliminary meeting. Its purpose was to identify what each participant was already doing in the region – or would be willing to contribute especially to the building of technical and business capabilities among protocol layer organisations in the region.
- In parallel with APNIC meeting and Pacific IGF

Pacific Internet Multistakeholder Forum, Wellington, 4-5 September 2024

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- Purpose: engagement with Internet technical people in the Pacific to determine issues and needs
- Co-convened by Paul Twomey and Rosemary Sinclair, CEO of auDA
- In parallel with APNIC meeting and Pacific IGF
- Participants included: APNIC, APNIC Foundation, Asia Development Bank (ADB), AuDA (.au operator), ICANN, Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the European Investment Bank, US Department of State, the UK High Commission to New Zealand, World Bank, Country Code operators and some network operators for: Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tuvalu, Samoa, Vanuatu, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, and the Cook Islands.
- Report on Forum is distributed.

The characteristics of Pacific Internet Multistakeholder Forum are:

- Implementing Practical Multistakeholderism to bring the strengths of the development community and the technical community to bear both for the benefit of the region and as an example more broadly.
- Importance of both fact based analysis and listening to the needs and preferences of local partners.
- Internet technical bodies actively helping other similar bodies in the developing world to develop technical and business capabilities, according to the priorities of the recipients
- Internet technical bodies engaging with funding agencies (mostly government/multilateral) to understand and coordinate efforts to assist developing countries to achieve full Internet/digital development. Ensuring that the efforts of each within their own sphere of interest are complementary to the other.
- Exhibiting at a regional level that governments, technical bodies, local civil society and businesses working together can be a powerful model for inclusive development
- Ensuring that the Internet development model being pursued is not just one focused on the transit and content layers, but also includes the protocol layer.

Look out for the Report on the Wellington Forum in your email.



Pacific Internet Multistakeholder Forum
PRACTICAL COLLABORATION FOR A DIGITAL PACIFIC

Report of the Second Pacific Internet Multistakeholder Forum Wellington, 4-5 September 2024

Now that We have the Cables: Capacity Building and Adapting to Change - Practical Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for the Development of ICT in the Pacific

Building on the initial 2023 Brisbane Forum, Paul Twomey and Rosemary Sinclair invited over forty stakeholders representing funding, policy and technical coordination organisations from the Asia-Pacific Region for a discussion, on the fringe of the 2024 APNIC annual meeting, about possible approaches to improve multi-stakeholder contributions to the development of the Internet in Pacific countries.

Participants included: APNIC, APNIC Foundation, Asia Development Bank (ADB), AuDA (.au operator), ICANN, Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the European Investment Bank, US Department of State, the UK High Commission to New Zealand, World Bank, Country Code operators and network operators for: Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tuvalu, Samoa, Vanuatu, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, and the Cook Islands.

The key lessons and recommendations from the Wellington Forum are below.

Key Lessons

The Wellington Forum discussions highlighted several key lessons regarding digital development in the Pacific Island region. Here are some of the most important takeaways:

1. A Shift in Perspective: From Cables to Ensuring Sustainable Utilization:

The most significant shift in the views of participants from 2023 to 2024 was in how participants viewed the role of transmission infrastructure. While laying cables, erecting towers and establishing back-up LEOS connections remain crucial; the forum

stretched recipient nation capacity negatively impacted the ability to deliver value for money and sustainable impact.

Recommendations for Action

While the Wellington Forum successfully fostered a shared understanding of key challenges and opportunities, the real test lies in translating these discussions into actions and tangible outcomes. The following recommendations emerged during the Forum. They are a product of the multistakeholder discussion and none is a statement of commitment by any attendee.

1. Enhance Infrastructure Resilience

Future-proofing digital infrastructure is crucial in the face of climate change and other challenges:

- Invest in redundant connectivity solutions, including exploring the viability of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite communications as a backup during cable disruptions. The contracts put in place by the World Bank projects appear to be positive models to follow.
- Review the vulnerability of coastal infrastructure to climate change impacts, including potential relocation or hardening of critical facilities.
- Improve power supply reliability to support network operations, potentially through investments in renewable energy solutions and smart grid technologies.

2. Nurture Local ccTLD operations

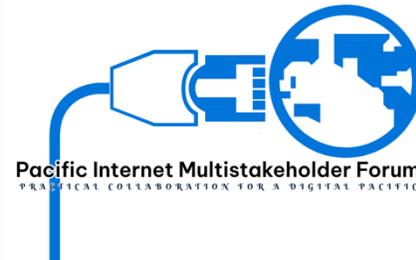
A thriving local digital economy is key to long-term sustainability:

- Invest in the skills, business and technical capacities of Pacific Island ccTLDs to unlock their potential to support e-commerce through a local network of registrars who will also likely distribute opportunities in hosting, online payments and digital skills.
- As well as the Multistakeholder Forums, nurture the upcoming Pacific ccTLD meeting format as a means to promote a Pacific voice on Internet Governance matters and to discuss, coordinate and promote Pacific country code management concerns.
- Donors and regional technical experts to help Pacific Island ccTLDs overcome DNS abuse and ensure that the global ISPs do not block traffic from Pacific Island Top Level Domains.
- Establish and support transparent measurement of the health of regional DNS and cybersecurity infrastructure and operations.

3. Embrace Regional Collaboration

The power of collective action was recognised by participants. Priorities identified include:

- The establishment of a regional Internet Exchange Point (IXP) to enhance inter-island connectivity and reduce reliance on costly international links.
- Exploring models for aggregating Pacific ccTLD capacity to achieve economies of scale and improve overall efficiency. In particular, consider creating a shared,



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