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Multi-stakeholder partnership

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Introduction

- Multi-stakeholder partnership is used by many institutions that govern the Internet
- Promoted by the WSIS and the IG
- Has been used successfully by many ccTLDs
- This presentation will be based on the document prepared by APC: "Frequently Asked Questions about Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships in ICTs for Development"


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What is Multi-stakeholder partnership?

- *Alliances between parties drawn from government, business and civil society that strategically aggregate the resources and competencies of each to resolve the key challenges (of a selected issue), and which are founded on principles of shared risk, cost and mutual benefit.*
[<http://www.unmsp.org>]

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What is Multi-stakeholder partnership?

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- Multi-stakeholder partnerships can be
 - Loose partnerships for exchange of knowledge
 - More formal structures (Legal Entity)
- Often viewed as a network approach, but
 - Networks rely on the membership of like-minded institutions that share a common purpose for core activities,
 - MSP are more formal than Networks
 - MSP work more on promoting policy changes and development

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Goals

- Different MSPs may have different goals.
- Common goals of MSPs in ICT are
 - Identify specific ICT issues that affect social and economic progress
 - Carry out joint analysis and research for a policy process
 - Pool resources, talents and other capabilities
 - Share information on problems and solutions
 - Develop guidelines for best practices
 - Build the capacity of citizens to gain confidence
 - Lobby policy- and decision-makers for change
 - Evaluate and monitor progress of change and subsequent policy implementation

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Benefits

- **Multi-stakeholder partnerships**
 - promote inclusivity
 - expand the analytical capability to address ICT policy issues
 - promote grassroots mobilization and participation
 - promote the development of focused and holistic action plans
 - foster the sharing of skills and innovation
 - create a balance between market orientation and development orientation
 - promote ownership and commitment for action
 - help to develop trust among groups that are usually suspicious and hostile towards each other

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Challenges

- Different groups of stakeholders are likely to compete with each other
- External funding resources may be limited and not always easy to identify and access
- Finding common ground between various stakeholders requires strong negotiation and facilitation skills
- Multi-stakeholder processes run the danger of becoming no more than endless talk shops
- The existence of many initiatives will result in a fragmented process.
- Volunteerism is not sustainable

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Roles of stakeholders

- Each of these stakeholders will play, to a greater or lesser extent, a different role
- Policy- and decision-makers
 - Sponsor the ICT policy process
 - Create mechanisms for follow up and implementation of the policy
 - Carry out reforms that stimulate the development of ICTs.
- Grassroots organisations
 - ensure that local challenges and equity issues are factored into ICT policy-making
- Consumers and consumer groups
 - Insures that consumer rights are respected

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Roles of stakeholders ...

- Media
 - Produces easy to understand articles
- Private sector
 - Brings a culture of initiative, innovation, implementation and risk-taking that is critical
 - Could also help in financing a multi-stakeholder process
- Telecommunications regulators
 - Play a referee role in balancing public access objectives

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Guiding principles

- **An MSP**
 - Needs to deal with inclusive or cross-cutting issues
 - Should insure that all relevant stakeholders are included
 - Has to be seen as legitimate and credible in the eyes of key stakeholders
 - Requires champions or sponsoring institutions
 - Requires monitoring and evaluation
 - Requires funding

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MSP and ccTLDs

- ccTLDs can benefit from MSP
- Very clear issue that should be the concern of everybody
- Important that all the stakeholders trust it
- It is a national resource where governments/regulators should be involved
- Users/consumers want to be sure that their voices/concerns are heard
- The ICT/Telecom/Internet industry wants its voices to be heard

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Conclusion

- MSP has been at the center of the governance of Internet institutions
- ccTLDs can gain a lot from adopting this model
- It is not always easy to work in an MSP but if well implemented MSP can be a very powerful model