

# **First Steps in Strategic Planning: Results of the online survey**

**Prepared by Debbie Budlender, 3 August 2012**

## **Background**

### ***The numbers***

During July 2012 APC sent out a request to all its Council members, all staff, and nine partner organisations asking them to participate in an online survey as the first step in APC's strategic planning for the period 2013-2016. The request asked that only one response be submitted per member organisation, only one per staff grouping, and only one per partner organisation. Several of the sections of the questionnaire were directed only at members. Board members responded with the member organisations they are part of.

A total of 39 completed responses were received: 29 from the 46 member organisations, one from each of the 6 staff teams, and 4 from partners. Unfortunately the contacts from two of the partner organisations were on annual leave.

Member organisations and staff teams were asked to have an internal discussion before completing the survey. Of the 29 member organisations, 16 said that they did so, 10 did not. Three did not answer the question as they had, in error, not categorised themselves as member organisations and thus were not asked this question. One of these subsequently clarified that there had been an internal discussion while a second said there had not been such a discussion.

### ***The survey questionnaire***

After asking basic identifying questions, the first 'content' part of the survey questionnaire asked about respondents' experience and perception of the performance of APC and its members over the strategic plan period 2008-12. The next section went on to ask about which elements of the current strategic plan should be carried forward to the plan for 2013-2016, and what should be changed and added.

Many of the survey questions asked about the Key Result Areas (KRAs) of the existing strategic plan. The external KRAs, the abbreviations used in tables and graphs in this report, and the associated goal for each KRA are as follows:

- KRA 1: Affordable internet access for all [Access]

*KRA goal: APC will campaign to lower the price of internet connectivity, especially broadband, with a specific emphasis on Africa and Latin America. We will respond to the immense opportunity presented by mobile telephony and radio spectrum as a means of accessing the internet*

- KRA 2: Using emerging technologies for social change [Emerging technology]

*KRA goal: APC adopted a pro-free software policy in 1998 and this will be reflected in our work. As new tools emerge, we will evaluate them from the point of view of their effectiveness for*

*strengthening networking for social justice, and compare them to older tools for efficiency and appropriateness for users, especially those in developing contexts. Internet is APC's primary area however and we will continue to focus on internet-based tools and platforms.*

- KRA 3: Making technology work for environmental sustainability [Env sus]

*KRA goal: APC will raise significant awareness of the environmental cost of the production, use and disposal of ICTs and promote policies and projects that use sustainable consumption models. In a world increasingly affected by climate change, we will support the use of ICTs to help people whose lives and livelihoods are under threat to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. As an ICT-focused network, we will reduce our own carbon footprint.*

- KRA 4: Building the “information commons” [Info commons]

*KRA goal: The internet presents a unique opportunity for maximising access to information, and for building and sharing in an information commons. APC will raise awareness of the value and importance of an information commons – including the adoption of open licences and free and open source software – particularly with policy makers, civil society and the ICT industry, and will work towards expanding it.*

- KRA 5: Securing and defending Internet rights [Internet rights]

*KRA goal: APC wrote a groundbreaking Internet Rights Charter<sup>2</sup> back in 2001, based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It categorises the rights needed to keep the internet open and accessible to all into key areas including access for all, freedom of expression and association, access to knowledge, shared learning and creation, privacy and good governance. We will encourage policy makers, civil society groups and technical people we work with to defend internet rights as an integral part of any policy discussion.*

- KRA 6: Improving governance, including the governance of the internet [Governance]

*KRA goal: The internet can be used by civil society, communities and individuals as a powerful and effective tool for more transparent and participatory governance and for holding government accountable. APC will investigate good practices and apply them to further improve and maintain new models of governance, particularly of the internet.*

There are also two internal KRAs, namely:

- KRA 7: Mobilising resources

*KRA goal: We will ensure that APC the organisation and our members have access to the resources we need to effectively implement the network's vision and mission.*

- KRA 8: Network development and governance

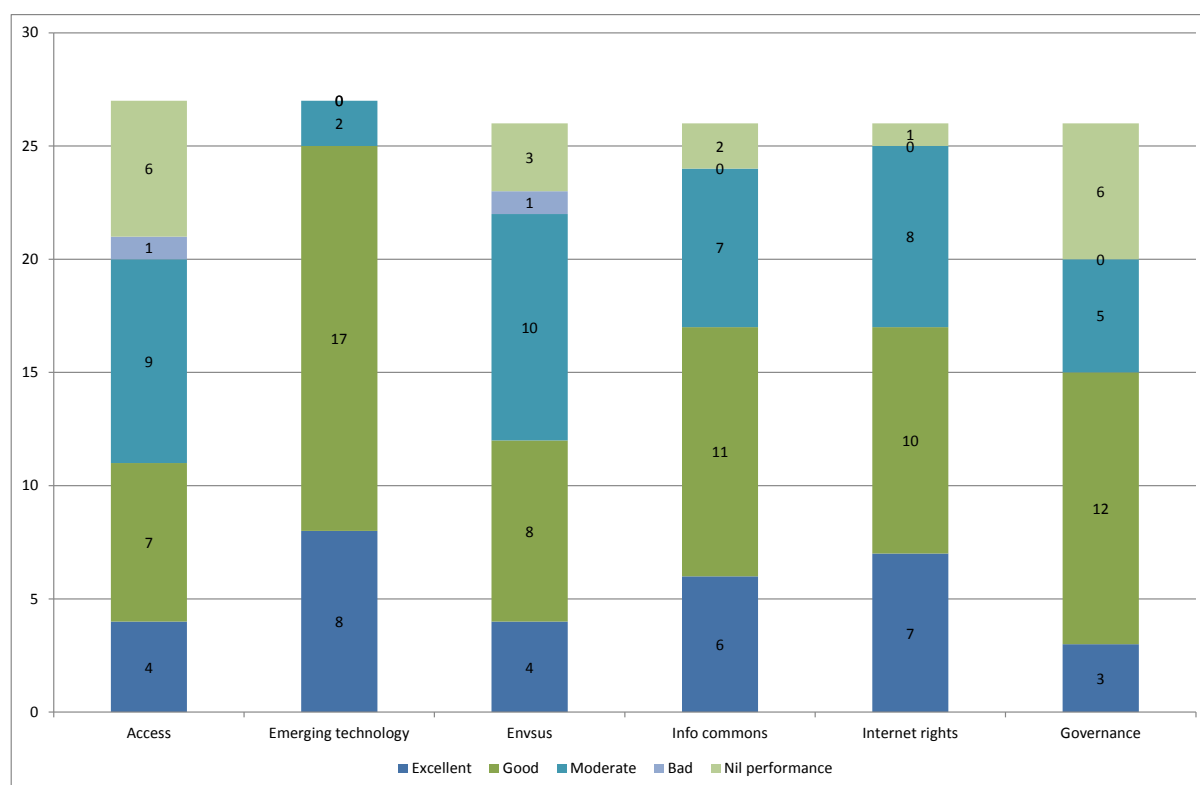
*KRA goal: APC members will work collaboratively, share information, experience and skill, to keep the APC a vibrant, participatory hub for the innovative use of strategic technology and networking for social justice and development.*

## Looking back: Achievements over the past five years

### Members' ranking of own past performance

The first set of questions asked for a ranking of the performance of the person's own organisation against each of the KRAs. They were also asked to provide motivations for the rankings. This section was asked only of member organisations. The "don't know" responses – which were generally few – are not shown in the figures that follow unless otherwise noted.

#### Ranking of own organisation's performance on KRAs



The graph above shows that members were most positive about their performance on emerging technology, where 8 gave a ranking of 'excellent' and a further 17 a ranking of 'good'. Next highest ranked were information commons and internet rights. Access was the lowest scored overall, with only 4 organisations giving a ranking of 'excellent' and 7 a ranking of 'good', while 6 said they had 'nil performance'. Governance also had 6 reporting 'nil performance', which was often an indication that an organisation did not focus on a particular issue.

It was primarily organisations based in South Asia that rated their performance on **access** as excellent. Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) referred to its work on internet rights, involvement in policy reviews and advocacy, and successful Ford Foundation-supported work on wireless. Bangladesh Friendship Education Society (BFES) said that they provided a low-cost – or even free – internet service to rural people. Beyond South Asia, EsLaRed referred to its training, materials production and other work in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as in Africa. Several organisations which ranked themselves 'good' also offered low-cost internet services. WOUGNET, with a 'good' ranking, noted the organisation's ongoing dialogue with government agencies and other stakeholders to address issues of access in respect of both price and connectivity.

Those who noted nil performance were Pangea, GreenNet, EngageMedia, Jinbonet, Community Education Computer Society (CECS) and Web.net. Where these organisations motivated their responses, they generally said this was not a current focus or activity. This is understandable as all these organisations are located in countries where access is not a significant challenge.

For **emerging technology**, those who rated themselves as ‘excellent’ performers were Colnodo, DEF, EngageMedia, May First, Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet), Web.net and Cooperativa Sula Batsu. This group thus spans virtually all regions. DEF noted its Digital Panchayat Project, which ‘ICT enables’ and ‘web-site enables’ village council level governance bodies. Colnodo referred to its use of free and open source software for all services provided. May First referred to experimentation with a range of different emerging technologies. These included using Big Blue Button for the Cochabamba Mother Earth Conference; using dyswitch for live video streaming for the annual membership meeting and other conferences and meetings; and writing of collaborative democracy workshop software to allow groups in multiple locations with different languages to work together.

No organisations recorded nil or ‘bad’ performance on emerging technologies.

On **environmental sustainability**, members who rated their performance as ‘excellent’ were VOICE, ArabDev, LaNeta and Sula Batsu. The more developed countries were thus absent from this grouping. ArabDev referred to its involvement in a study of IT and environmental sustainability, with a special focus on climate change, which they successfully used for policy advocacy purposes. LaNeta noted its participation in APC’s GreeningIT and GISWATCH projects and the Climate Change conference in Mexico, as well as sourcing local funds to research the intersection between ICT and the environment in Mexico. BFES, which scored its performance as ‘good’, noted the establishment of community climate care centres where people have access to updated weather-related information. Nodo Tau, which also ranked itself as ‘good’, noted participation in various projects involving recycling of computers.

Among the ‘moderates’, both Funredes and Foundation for Media Alternatives (FMA) said that they had done interesting research on the topic of environmental sustainability but had not taken the research as far as they might have. Similarly, WOUGNET gave itself a ‘moderate’ rating on the basis that it had shared information about the dangers of e-waste but had not followed through to see what changes had been effected. Fantsuam awarded itself ‘nil performance’, observing that it was one of the first members to show interest in this area but had got ‘left behind’ and/or put the issue on the ‘back burner’.

On **information commons**, those who self-rated themselves as ‘excellent’ performers were Women'sNet, DEF, EngageMedia, EsLaRed, May First and KICTANET. Several organisations noted their use of open source software and creative commons licensing. May First noted that it supported use of these approaches by its members. LaNeta noted that while it subscribed completely to openness and ‘copyleft’ licensing, this was more of a guiding principle than a KRA with related actions. It therefore gave itself a rating of ‘moderate’.

Funredes – with a rating of ‘good’ – reported good initial results from its DILINET project for building indicators of linguistic diversity, but said that they did not yet have the funds needed to take it further.

CIPESA and ArabDev gave themselves a rating of ‘nil performance’, saying that information commons had not been on their agenda over the recent period.

On **internet rights**, VOICE, Bytes for All Pakistan, DEF, StrawberryNet and Jinbonet all rated their performance as ‘excellent’. Again, there was some bias towards South Asia in this grouping. Bytes for All Pakistan observed that defending internet rights became very significant as a result of international political dynamics as well as other factors, and noted resources provided by APC to itself and other members for this work. May First noted that they had ‘never turned down a fight that a member wanted us to take.’ The issues that they had taken up, and documented included the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and the FBI server seizure. Jinbonet reported that it was recognised as a representative organisation on internet rights in South Korea.

EsLaRed, which gave itself a ‘good’ score, highlighted its campaign against a legal clause that would define the internet as a restricted activity. LaNeta – also ‘good’ – highlighted their implementation of Mexico’s MDG3 project and Take Back The Tech! GreenNet, another ‘good’, said that in recent years they were represented by national bodies on most issues related to internet rights rather than taking the issue up strongly themselves.

On **governance** the ‘excellent’ scorers were Bytes for All Pakistan, DEF and CIPESA. The latter said that it had spearheaded internet governance discussions in Uganda and also participated in regional and international forums, including hosting the 2010 East Africa Internet Governance Forum (IGF). Bytes for All Pakistan commented on the visibility of APC and several of its members more generally. Colnodo, which scored itself ‘good’, said that they had been involved in all regional (Latin American) IGF preparatory meetings and were due to host the event in Colombia during 2012. They had also implemented a remote hub to allow remote participation during the global IGF of 2011. Several other organisations – FMA, EsLaRed, WOUGNET – also noted participation in the IGF.

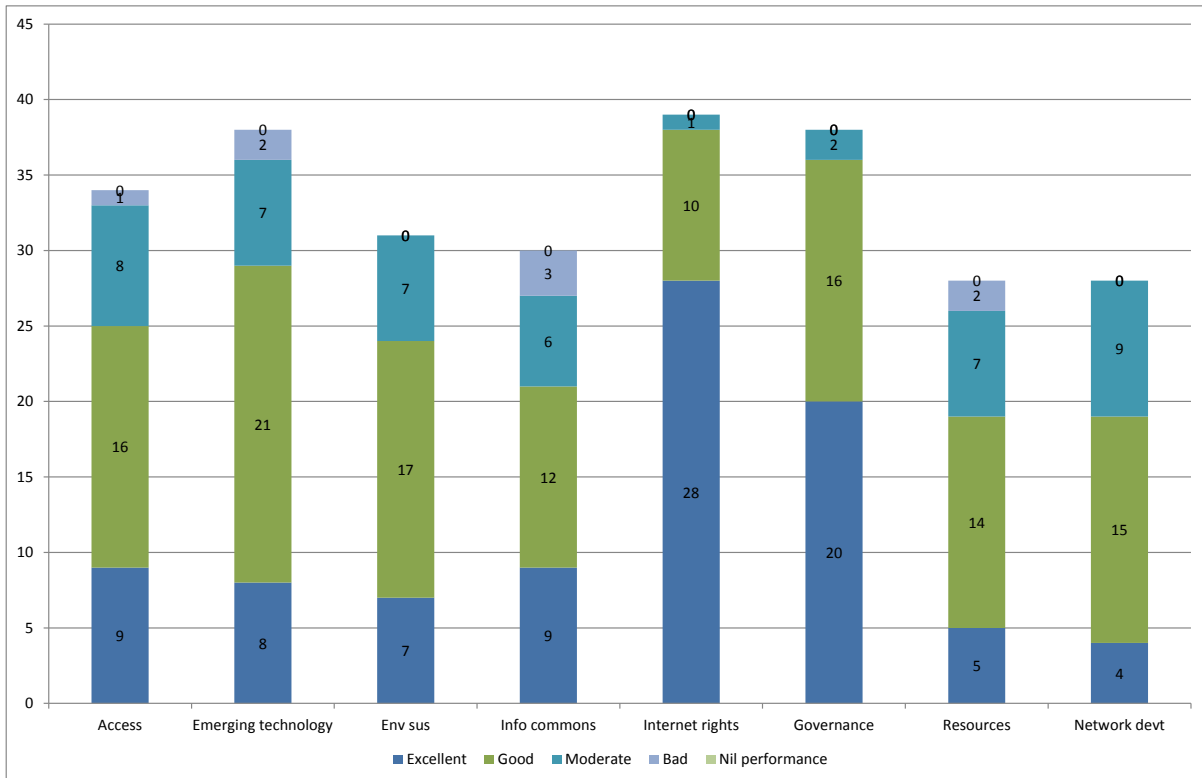
May First said that they interpreted this KRA as including decision-making and governance in their organisation. They scored themselves as having ‘moderate’ performance for using a tool such as the Collaborative Democracy workshop to develop a democratic model of governance for their organisation.

### ***Ranking of APC’s performance***

All respondents were asked to rank APC’s performance on each of the KRAs. Respondents were assured that their responses to these questions would remain confidential (i.e. the analysis report would not identify individual responses).

The varying heights of the columns in the graph below are largely explained by “don’t know” answers, although there were also a few non-responses. Members were not given examples of APC’s work to help them respond to this section of the survey. Instead they had to rely on what they knew, or – if they had time – they could have looked at annual reports, which do not report on all specific projects. The ‘don’t knows’ are thus not surprising as most members would be familiar with only those areas of APC work that they participated in directly.

## Ranking of APC's performance on KRAs



The number of respondents saying “don’t know” was 5 for access, 1 for emerging technology, 8 for environmental sustainability, 9 for information commons, zero for internet rights, 1 for governance, 5 for resources and 5 for network development. This suggests relatively low levels of knowledge of APC’s work on information commons and environmental sustainability. Low levels of knowledge are not surprising for information commons as APC had only one large project, based in Africa, and which did not involve members.

Internet rights emerged as the most highly-rated KRA for APC, followed by governance. Emerging technology performed well when those giving a rating of either ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ are combined, but this KRA had fewer ‘excellent’ ratings than the top scorers. Scoring for the two internal KRAs was lowest if one measures by the combined number of ‘excellent’ and ‘good’ ratings. However, these two KRAs had fewer scorers as partners were not asked to rate them. Information commons was the lowest scorer among the external KRAs. None of the KRAs had any ratings of ‘nil performance’.

On **access**, the ‘excellent’ ratings were motivated on the basis of APC’s role in campaigns to lower the price of internet connectivity, and awareness raising in respect of open spectrum and digital migration. Performance on these issues was also acknowledged by several who gave lower ratings.

One of the ‘good’ ratings noted that fewer APC members than in the past were internet service providers, and this issue might thus now be less of a priority. However, another ‘good’ rating commended APC for the ability to shift focus, for example to increasing wireless access through the open spectrum project rather than focusing primarily on broadband, as in the past. Another ‘good’ was motivated by the excellent work in the Andean region, but noted that this was not the case for all countries in Latin America.



Yet another ‘good’ rating noted APC’s consistent work on access as a rights issue, but was not sure if there had been substantial policy impact at country level. This response similarly noted achievements in terms of research and knowledge building on open spectrum and other issues, but did not know if the research and knowledge had been used and had impact. The question of impact was also raised by many other respondents. Several responses referred to lack of effective follow-through on successful research or other activities. A staff response suggested that this lack of follow-through could be partly attributed to loss of staff members who were working on these issues.

The single ‘bad’ rating was motivated on the basis that APC had not supported its African members on this issue and had not convinced them that it was possible to lower the cost of broadband.

On use of **emerging technologies** for social change, there were 8 ‘excellent’ ratings but the only clear motivation was the innovative work done in the Take Back The Tech! campaign. The campaign was said to have inspired women’s rights organisations to experiment with the technologies in their own work. Another comment, for a ‘good’ rating, cited Take Back the Tech! and FTX as highlights, while a further ‘good’ rating specifically mentioned FTX, GenARDIS, small grants, Take Back the Tech! and training in storytelling. Two good ratings noted APC had done work in respect of Impact 2.0, but did not elaborate further.

One of the ‘good’ ratings observed that while APC had promoted FOSS, the organisation needed to find more projects that specifically promoted online tools, and to work strategically with developers such as Ushahidi. Another ‘good’ rating observed that APC’s work in the area of use of emerging technologies had decreased. This same rating expressed a wish to learn from other members who were doing more in the area, referring in particular to May First’s use of a database for social mobilisation for the Occupy movement. A staff group noted that it would be good if APC could influence Facebook and Google to fund work of APC members, but acknowledged the difficulty of doing so given the small size of APC. At least two ratings pointed to the need to look more at mobile. One of the ‘good’ ratings named the GEM tool as an example of using emerging technology for social change.

One of the ‘moderate’ ratings was motivated on the basis that APC was more policy focused than activist, and could thus not be considered strong in terms of social change.

Two comments – one linked with a ‘moderate’ rating and the other with a ‘bad’ rating – noted that most APC staff did not use free software, and that use of free software was particularly important in the case of the Communications team since that team’s technology choices had a greater impact on the use and adoption of free software by the rest of APC team. This comment was probably referring to the fact that many APC staff do not use the Linux operating system on their desktops given that staff do use free software for other purposes.

On **environmental sustainability**, GISWATCH was explicitly mentioned by two of the three ‘excellent’ raters who provided motivations. Reasons for ‘excellent’ ratings also included the research done on environmental sustainability and involvement of members.

Most motivations referred to environmental sustainability as a new area of work, but one of the ‘good’ ratings noted that it was a very relevant issue when APC started, had subsequently declined,

but had since re-emerged as a stronger area of work. Those responses which saw it as a ‘new’ issue for APC felt that good progress had been made. Building research capacity and involvement of members were again highlighted as areas of achievement. One response commented on achievements within APC’s own practices, such as use of online meeting tools to avoid the environmental and economic cost of face-to-face meetings.

One of the ‘moderate’ ratings, from a partner, explained that the relatively poor rating had less to do with APC’s performance than with a view that ICTs did not have a crucial role to play in climate change mitigation or environmental sustainability. Two responses referred to the need to engage with the private sector rather than focusing only on government policy.

On **information commons**, one of the few motivations for ‘excellent’ ratings was the number of documents and online resources that APC had produced to promote the use of open licences and FOSS. At the ‘good’ level, there were conflicting views. One response suggested that there was good communication on the issue, but there was also the suggestion that APC did not communicate enough about progress made in particular areas, such as piracy research and that awareness raising and advocacy were not sufficiently focused, for example through an issue paper. Further, there had not been follow up on the 2009 GISWATCH.

Among the ‘moderate’ raters, one felt that while the commons was the ‘spectacles’ through which APC and members viewed the world, the issue was not easily recognisable by others who were less involved. Another ‘moderate’ rater felt that the term ‘information commons’ did not give a clear enough sense as to what the KRA involved.

One of the staff teams, which answered ‘don’t know’, reflected that maybe this should be a cross-cutting issue rather than a KRA. This sense of the KRA as a cross-cutting rather than separate issue was also implicit in some of the other responses.

One of the ‘bad’ raters again pointed to the piracy issue and said that APC had not taken advantage of the ‘huge’ potential of making impact on this issue. Another ‘bad’ rater said that APC needed to highlight the link between rights and intellectual property. This rater suggested that it might be better to have a small number of strategic foci within this KRA rather than a ‘broad’ approach.

On **internet rights**, the motivations for many of the ‘excellent’ ratings referred to APC’s widely recognised lead role in this area. Specific areas of work highlighted included – but were not limited to – GISWATCH, the Internet Rights Charter, the dedicated website, and Erotics. A staff group felt that this needed to be ‘number one’ among the KRAs. Another ‘excellent’ rating noted that this was an area where there was especially good integration with APC’s women’s rights/gender focus. While overall very positive, a few of the ‘excellent’ raters also noted that continued work in this area was important to ensure lasting achievements.

The motivations for ‘good’ ratings echoed those of the ‘excellent’ raters.

On **governance**, ‘excellent’ raters again referred to the widely recognised lead role that APC had played in raising awareness and advocacy on the issue of internet governance, and the fact that it had provided the opportunity for members to engage at both national and international level. APC had also succeeded in raising the awareness of other actors – especially those in civil society – of the importance of internet governance.



Among the ‘good’ raters, one said that engaging in the area of internet rights entailed a lot of work but was not very fruitful in terms of achieving change. Another response also referred to the large expense involved in participating in the international forums but noted that engagement at national level was less expensive, and as, if not more, important. Other ‘good’ responses noted the ‘unique’ role APC played and the various ways it had been recognised.

One of the ‘moderate’ raters attributed the relatively low rating to the fact that internet governance was a less important ‘battlefield’ than several other issues on which APC could focus such as intellectual property, internet rights, traditional social change and social justice issues.

On **resource mobilisation**, it was mainly the staff groups that gave full motivations. Thus one of the ‘excellent’ ratings came from a staff group that noted that last year they did not know if there would be jobs for them – and thus saw the fact that they were still employed as reflecting good performance. Another staff group that also gave an ‘excellent’ rating observed that everyone on the team participated in resource mobilisation, that good results had been achieved given the (difficult) context, and that APC had managed to channel funds to members in various projects. Yet another staff group, which gave a rating of ‘good’, also commented on the fact that all staff members were aware of the need for work in the area of resource mobilisation.

Channelling of resources to members was also noted by several of the ‘good’ raters from among APC members. However, another response noted that there were now fewer resources for network mobilisation and training than previously. Further, one of the staff responses that gave a rating of ‘moderate’ noted that while there was awareness of the possibility of mobilising resources through, for example, consultancies, there was not sufficient time or resources to do this. This team noted the difficulty of staff with other responsibilities having to work on this issue. This and another team suggested that a dedicated resource mobilisation person was needed.

One of the ‘bad’ ratings, from one of the members, felt that appropriate mechanisms for resource mobilisation had not yet been found.

On **network development**, there was acknowledgement of good efforts, and confirmation of good performance through a survey done by Keystone. At least three responses would have liked to see more collaboration between member organisations, rather than only between APC and members. GreeningIT was named as a project that promoted such inter-member collaboration. There was also a concern about lack of new members.

ARN was mentioned several times as an activity that involved members. A range of other projects was also said to include funds and activities undertaken with members. These included ‘Connect Your Rights’ and the Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review process, ARN, GISWATCH and GreeningIT. Responses noted that there was a consistently good response to opportunities for collaboration from some of the members, although not all members. One ‘moderate’ rater observed there was room for improvement in the inter-member collaborations. Further, two ‘moderate’ raters had the perception that collective action and networking had decreased. One of these noted that this could, at least partly, be attributed to changes within the member organisation that affected the ability to be involved.

## Going forward

### ***Vision, mission, principles and strategic vision***

All respondents were then asked whether they agreed that the mission, vision, principles and strategic vision for the 2008-2013 period were still appropriate for the future period. The online questionnaire provided the wording of each of these as follows:

- *Mission: The Association for Progressive Communications is a global network of civil society organisations whose mission is to empower and support organisations, social movements and individuals in and through the use of information and communication technologies to build strategic communities and initiatives for the purpose of making meaningful contributions to equitable human development, social justice, participatory political processes and environmental sustainability.*
- *Vision: All people have easy and affordable access to a free and open internet to improve their lives and create a more just world.*
- *Values and guiding principles: APC members are bound together by common values. Since our official founding in 1990, the network has developed guiding principles that we endeavour to integrate into all our activities. These values and principles guide what APC does and how it is done.*

*Local initiative and ownership*

*Openness: freedom of information and expression*

*Open content*

*Free and open source software*

*Social equality and gender equality*

*Collaboration and partnership*

*Inclusiveness and diversity*

*Creativity and capacity building*

*Democratic, accountable and transparent governance*

*Appropriate and affordable ICT solutions*

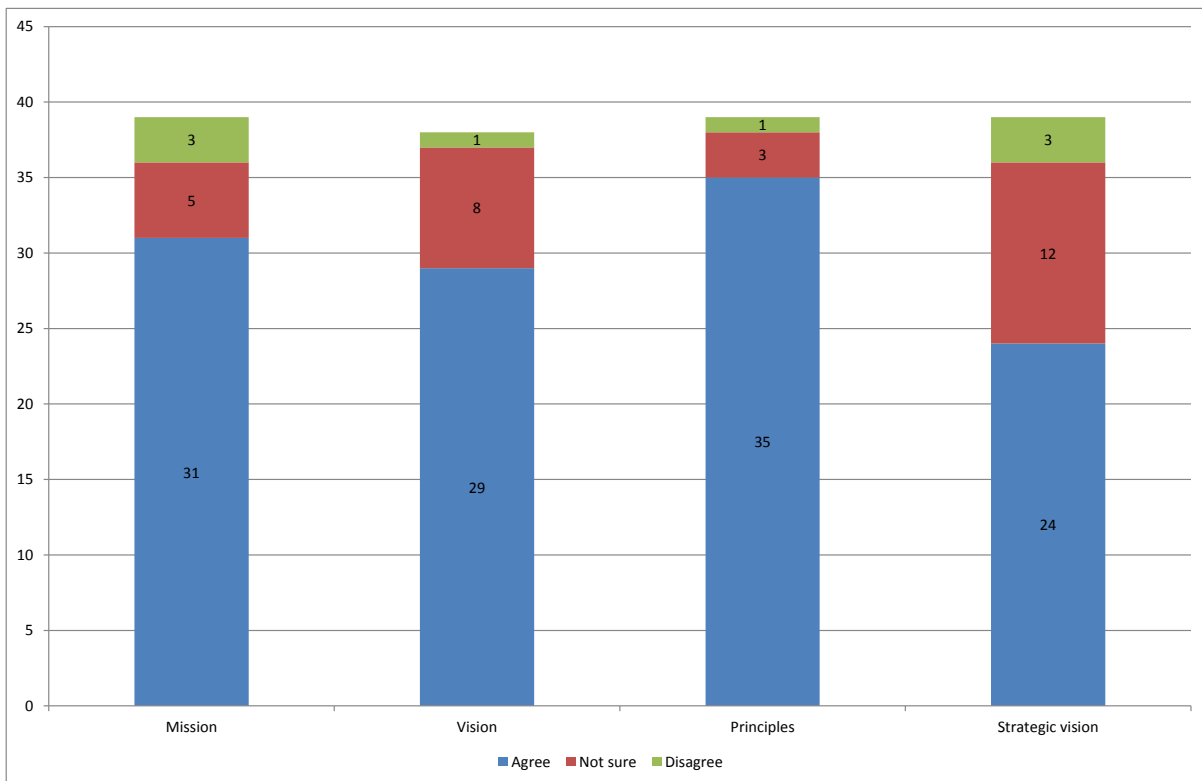
*Freedom of communications and information.*

- *Strategic vision 2008-2012 (Rio): APC is a vibrant and participatory network and organisation. We are an innovative leader in achieving the creative and effective use of ICTs for justice, and participatory governance. APC members, and APC the organisation, have the resources we need to be effective and sustainable. APC works with people, communities, organisations, networks and movements working for justice and social inclusion. They have the access and capacity needed to effectively engage appropriate and emerging technologies towards achieving their goals. ICTs are used to realise environmental justice, to campaign to minimise the environmental cost of ICT production, use and disposal and to help communities manage the consequences of climate change. Information and communication rights are understood, recognised and guaranteed. The global information commons has expanded and access to knowledge eased through shared learning the use of non-restrictive licensing strategies, applications and methodologies. Openness, social inclusion, gender justice, and recognition of diversity*

*are integrated into policy and practice in a way that makes a positive difference in people's lives.*

The graph below shows the pattern of responses. Overall, agreement with principles was strongest, followed by agreement with mission. The strategic vision was the aspect where the largest number of respondents either disagreed that it was still appropriate or were unsure. However, even for the strategic vision there were only three respondents who disagreed that the existing vision was appropriate, with a further 12 unsure.

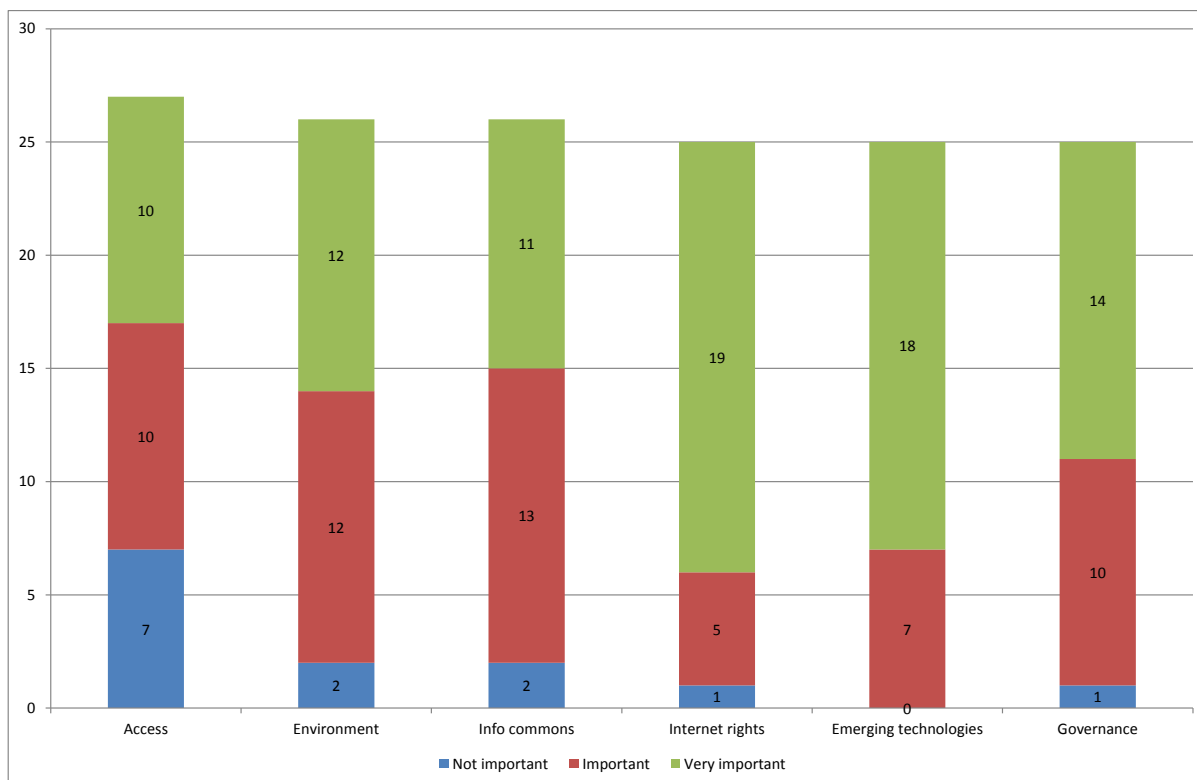
### Appropriateness of existing framework for strategic plan



## ***Future importance of existing KRAs for member organisations***

Member organisations were then asked to say how important each of the existing KRAs would be for their own organisation over the coming four years.

### **Relative importance of KRAs for member organisations over next 4 years**



Overall, access had the largest number of ‘not important’ ratings, while for emerging technologies there were no member organisations who said it was not important. For each of the other KRAs there were only one or two who said it was not important. Internet rights had the largest number of ‘very important’ ratings, followed by emerging technologies and governance. For these three KRAs half or more of respondents gave a rating of ‘very important’.

Members were asked to give reasons for their ratings, with space provided for one explanation across all KRAs rather than explanations for each one. Only eleven member organisations provided their reasons.

Several responses simply noted that the ranking they had given was aligned to what was emphasised in their organisation’s own strategic plan. APC focusing on these KRAs would thus aid their own organisation’s work.

Several responses explained lower importance accorded to access to the fact that access was now widespread and cheaper than before. In contrast, Fantsuam noted that broadband was a basic requirement for accessing the internet and without this baseline, discussion of governance issues was not an appropriate focus. Arabdev similarly said that while international advocacy and lobbying on governance was important, they currently focused on other issues. BFES was similar to Fantsuam in noting that, given the socio-economic status of Bangladesh, a priority was to ensure access for all with open source network and software. However, in contrast to Fantsuam, BFES felt

that a focus on internet governance was necessary to remove barriers to easy flow of information. Climate change – and thus environmental sustainability – was also said to be important for Bangladesh.

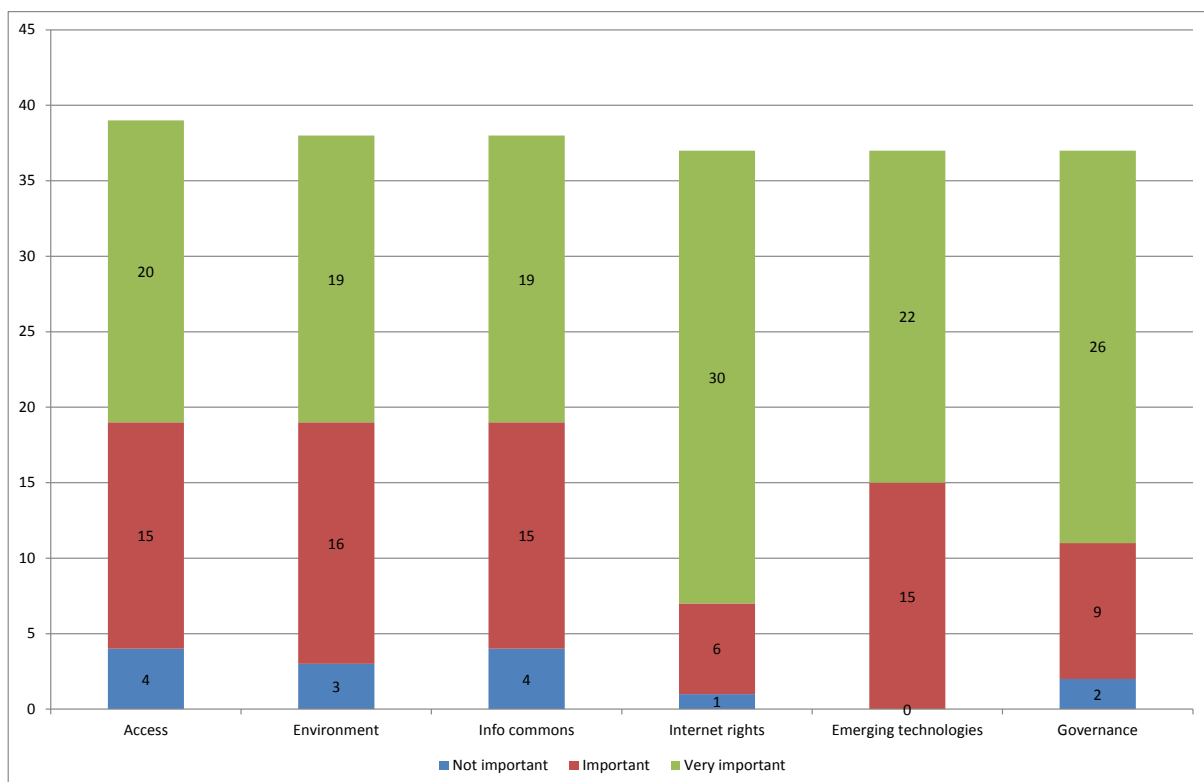
Colnodo noted that they would focus on spectrum issues and mobile access and that their impact would be very limited if not linked to a global or regional campaign. Internet rights and governance had become important because of growing threats to the internet. StrawberryNet also referred to constant threats to internet freedom which made a focus on internet rights a top priority.

EsLaRed ranked all six KRAs as very important. It noted that Venezuela was going through critical times, and in such times when government failed the people, ICT could provide support.

### ***Future importance of existing KRAs for APC***

All respondents were then asked how important these KRAs should be for APC for the next four years. The responses are shown in the graph below.

**Degree of importance APC should give to KRAs over next four years**



Internet rights emerged as the clear favourite, with 30 ratings of ‘very important’, a further 6 ‘important’, and only one ‘not important’. Governance was next highly rated, followed by emerging technology. The latter had no ratings of ‘not important’. The ratings of the remaining two KRAs – access and environment – were very similar, with about half of respondents rating them as ‘very important’, and a further 15 or 16 rating them as ‘important’.

What is noteworthy is that there were fewer ‘not important’ ratings for access than when members were rating the importance for their own organisation. WOUGNET explained its own responses,

which took this pattern, by saying that all KRAs were equally important to APC as the umbrella organisation even if some might be more important than others to particular members even within a single country.

A total of 20 respondents gave reasons for their ratings. Two of these responses said that the rating and the reasons were the same as they had given for their own organisation.

Several responses noted the importance of access as a right. A response that rated access and environmental sustainability as 'very important' and the others as 'important', stated: 'First things first: affordable broadband access should be possible for all APC members.' One partner response was uncomfortable with the current framing of 'access', noting that access was about more than simply infrastructure and affordable connections. It was also about markets and governance, and might therefore not need a theme separate from that of governance.

A staff group felt that while some work on environmental sustainability was important, other organisations could do this work more effectively. APC should thus rather influence others rather than doing a lot of work in the area itself. Similarly, information commons was seen as an 'influencing' area of work. This same group observed that governance was a 'counterpoint' to internet rights, and both were extremely important.

Several other responses also suggested that information commons was a cross-cutting goal rather than a KRA. This was also suggested in respect of emerging technologies, where it was said that this KRA reflected 'how' APC and its members worked rather than 'what' they aimed to achieve. Another response suggested that the way emerging technologies was described should change to reflect the scope of what was done. Yet another response noted that in this area APC's key role was one of sharing and analysing rather than 'doing' emerging technologies.

Several responses reflected uncertainty as to whether environmental sustainability would be an important KRA for APC going forward. All these responses acknowledged that the issue was important, but questioned whether it was an appropriate KRA for APC. The questioning frequently related to limited possibility of impact, and the need to delimit what APC envisaged doing in the area.

Many responses emphasised APC's strength in terms of global advocacy. This was highlighted, in particular, in relation to internet rights and governance.

Several responses noted the need for the KRAs to respond to ongoing changes in the terrain, including broader political and economic changes. One of these noted that while some KRAs 'capture a sense of fluidity and change', others (with environment given as an example) were more 'concrete' and this characteristic could limit what was done.

### ***Suggestions for new KRAs***

More than half – 21 in all – responses indicated that they had suggestions for new KRAs for the coming period. Respondents were allowed to offer up to two suggestions. Some of the suggestions (such as 'access' and 'affordability') are clearly already captured in existing KRAs. The motivation for these two foci was that many people in Africa still lacked access.

One of the suggestions was that there should be regional focus areas, but without specifying what



these should be. Some suggestions took the form of suggested activities rather than KRAs – for example, cross-country comparison of internet governance systems and research for advocacy.

Suggestions for a new KRA focusing on gender and women's rights were most common. Such suggestions came from four respondents (including one partner), with a further suggestion for a KRA on men's empowerment and a suggestion on 'building agency to end violence online' for which the motivation focused on gender-based violence. The motivations noted that gender was already a cross-cut but argued that establishing it as a separate KRA would give it more prominence. The suggestion for men's empowerment was motivated on the basis that attention to this issue was 'long overdue'.

Three respondents suggested a KRA relating to some aspect of language. The motivations for this revealed different foci, such as the potential of technology to overcome language disabilities of various sorts, contrasted with the observation that the digital divide was not only about affordability, but also about linguistic and other barriers. One of the three noted that language and disability might be a cross-cutting issue rather than a separate KRA.

Two respondents made suggestions relating to the internet and economic distribution or social justice.

The remaining suggestions were:

- Building connections across borders between APC members (motivated on the basis of past experience of the value of such connections with other APC members)
- Development of local community networks as a way for sustainable ICT social participation
- Digital and information literacy - Education on network culture
- [From a partner] Digital inclusion (for which the motivation pointed to exclusion of women, youth, linguistically marginalised communities, and physically challenged, and again pointed to APC's past good work on gender)
- Need for a new paradigm for international financial systems given their flawed nature (motivated on the basis that the global economic depression was largely the fault of so-called 'experts' who put profit before human well-being).
- Local innovations for global good
- Mobiles for social impact
- Role of multinational telecommunications
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) and Internet economy and freedom

One of the respondents who did not suggest further KRAs said that he would not want APC to 'spread itself too thin' by taking on too much.

## ***Cross-cutting goals***

Respondents were then asked whether the two cross-cutting goals – of (a) gender equality and women’s empowerment and (b) openness – should stay the same for the period of the next strategic plan. The wording of the two goals which follows was included in the questionnaire:

- *Gender equality and women’s empowerment - To integrate gender equality in information society policy and practice and to build leadership and capacity within the women's movement to use ICTs effectively to eliminate discrimination against women and promote empowerment.*
- *“Openness” - To promote open content and alternative licensing of content, freedom of expression and information, open access to infrastructure, information and policy processes, and free and open source software.*

A clear majority – 31 – answered ‘yes’ – that the two cross-cutting goals should stay the same, with 8 ‘no’ answers.

When the ‘no’ responders were asked how the cross-cutting goals should change, the most common response was that the current cross-cuts should be retained but with further cross-cuts – such as respect for diversity, human rights, sustainability, information commons, and using technology for social change added. Conversely, one respondent suggested that gender empowerment and women’s rights become a separate KRA rather than being a cross-cut. Another suggested that the gender cross-cut be reworded, as follows (underlining shows changes from current wording): ‘To integrate gender equality in internet policy and practice and to build leadership and capacity within women's movements to transform and use ICTs to eliminate discrimination against women and advance women's rights.’

In contrast to the those who wanted gender to have increased prominence, one respondent suggested that APC had an over-emphasis on gender as a cross-cutting goal, and that while there were gender components to every issue, they should not necessarily always be ‘at the forefront’.

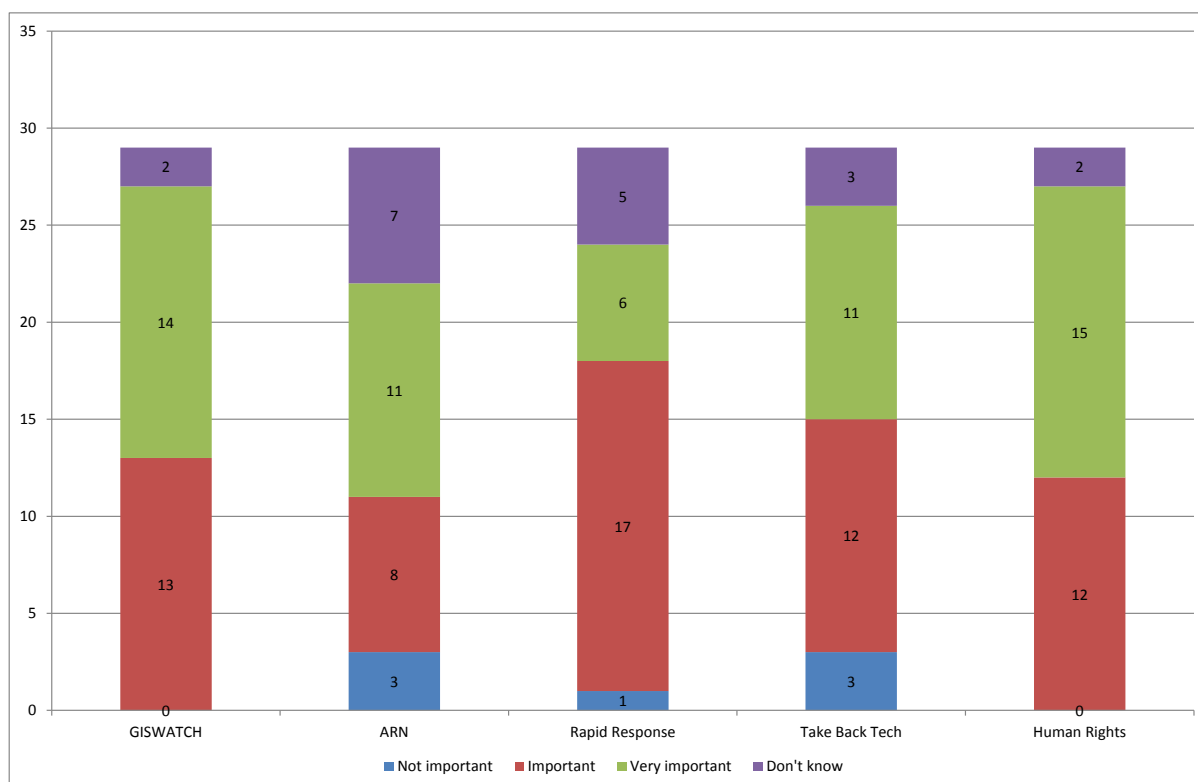
## ***APC-wide campaigns and activities***

Member organisations were then asked about the five APC-wide campaigns and activities that were included in the 2008-12 strategic plan. The five were:

- Global Information Society Watch (GISWATCH)
- APC’s Action Research Network (ARN)
- The Rapid Response Network
- Take Back the Tech!
- Internet Rights and Awareness (Internet Rights are Human Rights project)

They were asked how important each was for their organisation. The responses are shown in the graph below. For this graph the responses of ‘I don’t know this activity’ are included as it seems relevant to know how many members did not know about particular APC-wide activities.

**Figure 1. Importance of APC-wide activities and campaigns for members**



For GISWATCH and Internet Rights are Human Rights, there were none who said it was not important. For Human Rights slightly more said it was ‘very important’ than said it was ‘important’, while for GISWATCH the responses were balanced between the two options.

Rapid Response Network had the fewest members – only 6 – who said it was ‘very important’ for their organisation. However, this was balanced by the largest number saying it was ‘important’. This activity had only one member saying it was not important at all.

For each of the activities there were some members who said that they did not know about the activity, but the number was largest for ARN, followed by Rapid Response Network.

Member organisations were then given the opportunity to suggest up to three additional APC-wide activities for the next strategic plan period. Seven members offered suggestions, as follows:

- A more concrete activity or campaign linked to environmental sustainability involving the members, motivated by APC’s potential to improve mobilisation and ‘articulation’ around the issue, starting with members
- Greening information technologies in organisations, with the motivation proposing the development of case studies of good practice in relation to how NGOs, government agencies and business can use ICTs in a more sustainable way
- Analysis of the current global scenario, identifying problems and outlining activities
- Work to support and evaluate micro and social enterprises, motivated by the need for on-the-ground practical work to inform policy

- Better and joint dissemination of APC research- learning-projects. This and the next item were motivated on the basis of better networking support through having materials to disseminate, and taking discussions further into activities and debates
- Inter-member, regional, or sub-regional member interaction with APC learnings so as to increase impact
- Member exchange programme, with the motivation referring to the success of previous member exchange
- Membership mutual awareness beyond what is available in the yearly report, motivated on the basis that this would assist members in ‘counterbalancing’ APC staff.

The following suggestions were not clearly activities, but instead were comments suggesting the economic or development outlook that APC might adopt:

- Opposition to capitalist mode of operations and questioning of economic aspects in the interests of developing countries
- Adoption of a view of development as a comprehensive model rather than issue based, including linking Internet to socio-economic conditions. The motivation noting the need for APC to provide ‘alternative intelligence’ rather than being too ‘mainstream’

### ***Final open-ended comments***

Finally, respondents were asked if they had anything to add.

Some of these additional comments repeated responses offered earlier. These repeats included the suggestion that environmental sustainability be a cross-cut, and that women’s rights and sustainability receive more prominence.

Several comments emphasised the need for involving all members so as to increase ownership and improve advocacy. The need to find ways to foster inter-member collaboration was also highlighted. These comments sometimes pointed to perceived unevenness in support to and involvement of members, for example across regions. One comment also highlighted the imbalance between APC staff and members, where the member felt there had not been any progress in avoiding staff playing too great a role when compared to members. There was also a call for APC to have an internal goal in respect of supporting members ‘in crisis’.

Greenet offered a list of ideas in respect of both strategic and tactical areas of activity that APC might want to include in the new strategic plan. These included the following:

- providing more resources that can be used by members on issues of national policy
- looking more closely at which specific aspects of the internet assist a flourishing participatory democracy and human rights
- shifting from ICT4D to ICT for public health, ICT for community resource management, ICT for participatory democracy

- considering inclusion of work related to ICT and conflict prevention and disarmament
- working closely with Reporters Without Borders, Index on Censorship and others over censorship cases
- involvement in technical standards in internet rights work including establishing baseline international standards.
- expanding the "Green IT" topic further in respect of software efficiency
- using apc.tech more to transfer skills between members.

The APC Communication team suggested that the words ‘and human rights’ be added to APC’s mission. The APC Finance team noted that they did not feel very confident, from their support role position, in assessing KRAs, but had found discussing and answering the survey very useful and interesting. They would like the next strategic plan to include specific strategies for this particular team.

Several members also noted their appreciation of the opportunity to contribute to the new strategic plan by completing the survey. However, one hoped that this would not be the only way in which they would contribute.

One member noted that in order to obtain the necessary internet access to fill the survey required a four-hour round trip to the city. This member called for monitoring of the impact of the KRAs on member organisations, and a more robust strategy for resource mobilisation and capacity building in new technologies for members.

This was not the only response that referred to resource mobilisation. Another response that raised this issue noted that low performance in some areas could largely be explained by lack of resources. This response also noted that members would be in a better position to suggest new KRAs once they had a better idea of the work and areas of interests of others.

One response called for monitoring, for example through indicators, of the extent to which cross-cutting goals were integrated. One suggested measure of openness was the extent to which staff used open-source software.

One member suggested greater emphasis on corporate ownership of public and private communication as a policy issue.