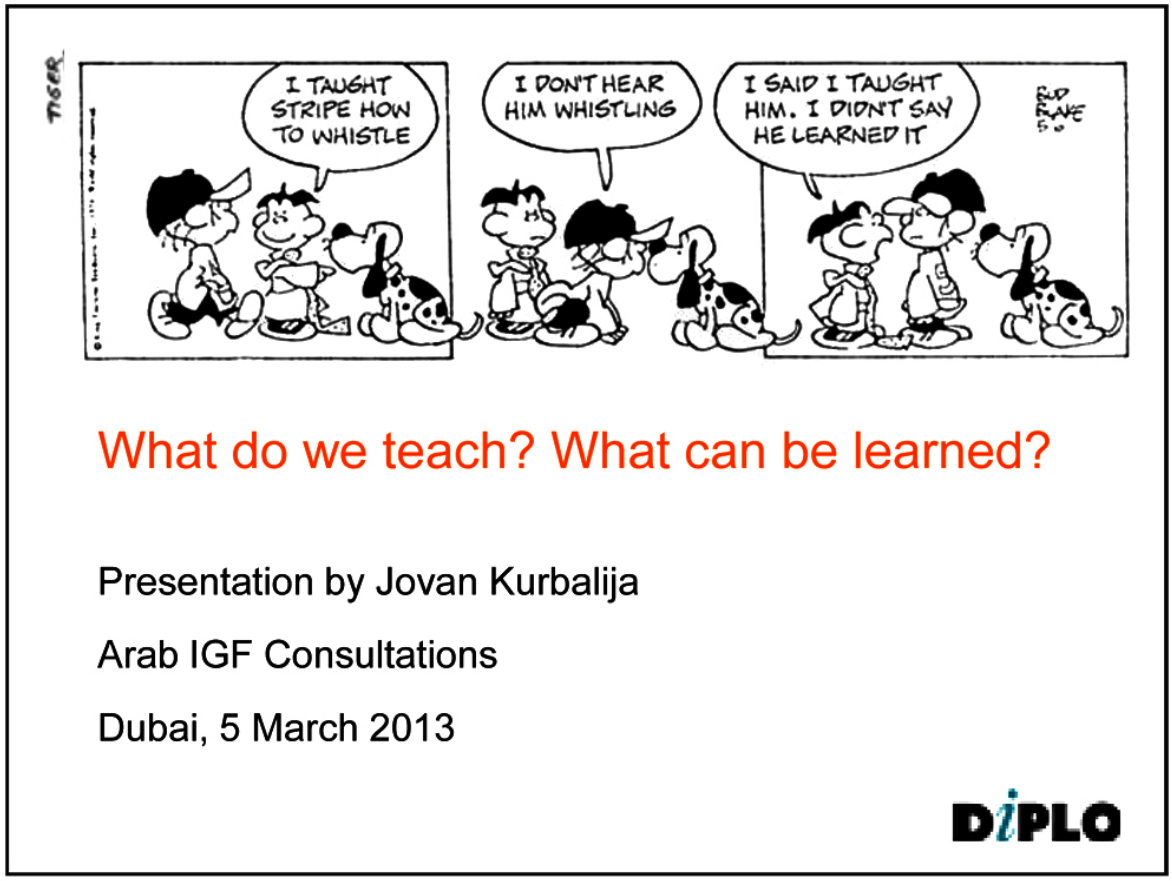
ANNOTATED PRESENTATION



This cartoon highlights one of the core issues of capacity development and training: when we teach, how can we ensure that learning actually takes place? While there are no ready-made prescriptions, there are a few useful approaches.

First, effective training has to be responsive to learners' social contexts. It should take existing national, institutional and individual specificities into consideration; in particular tacit ones: what are predominant learning styles (memorizing or critical thinking); how is training going to reflect career perspectives of participants (motivation)?

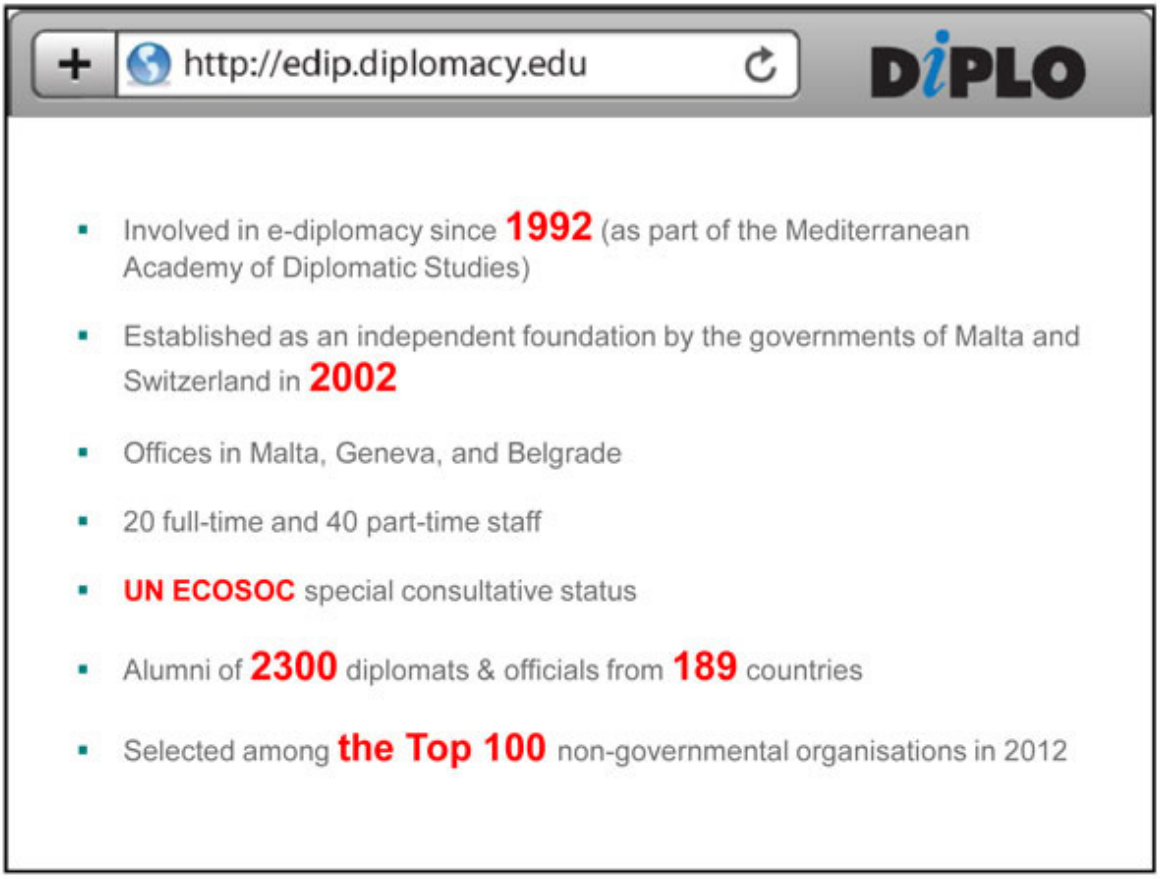
Second, it has to be adaptable to evolving circumstances during the learning journey. Like with any journey, new situations and circumstances will bring new issues and requirements. Trainers and teachers should look for signals from learners. They come in various forms, from yawning in the classroom to signals sent through questions participants ask (e.g. for more information, for more relevance for their practice).

The challenge of achieving real learning (not just teaching) is the underlying theme of my presentation today.

What is the difference between training and capacity development?

The terms 'training' and 'capacity development' are sometimes confused or used interchangeably. E-diplomacy illustrates very well the difference between training and capacity development. Training is just one element of capacity development. It usually focuses on providing skills for specific problems (e.g. using Facebook or Twitter). Capacity development encompasses a whole range of activities designed to empower individuals and institutions (including the analysis of policy contexts, awareness building, institutional adjustments, policy research, policy immersion and more). In Diplo programmes, training is embedded within a broad set of activities, carefully designed to take into account the local cultural, policy and organisational context.

Before, we move on here is a bit more info about Diplo and myself....



DiploFoundation (Diplo) is a non-profit organisation created in November 2002 by the governments of Malta and Switzerland. Diplo developed out of a project to introduce information and communication technologies into the practice of diplomacy, initiated in 1992 at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies in Malta.

Diplo works to address the gap between the limited capacities and the growing needs of small and developing states, as well as marginalised groups, for meaningful participation in global policy processes. It offers online courses in diplomacy, and capacity development programmes which combine high quality online courses and in situ workshops, seminars, policy research, and policy immersion (e.g. internships) in real contexts. Diplo also develops online tools for distance learning, knowledge sharing, and e-participation.

Diplo has received wide recognition for its work, including consultative status with the United Nations, the World E-democracy award 2009 and hosting the 2010 annual meeting of the International Forum on Diplomatic Training (the forum of directors of diplomatic academies and institutes). In 2012 Diplo was selected as one of the top 100 non-governmental organisations in the world.

Dr Jovan Kurbalija is the founding director of DiploFoundation. He is a former diplomat with a professional and academic background in international law, diplomacy and information technology. In 1992 he established the Unit for IT and Diplomacy at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies in Malta. In 2002, after 10 years of success in education, research, and publishing, the unit evolved into DiploFoundation. Dr Kurbalija currently directs online learning courses on IG, ICT, and diplomacy and lectures in academic and training institutions in Switzerland, the United States, Austria, Belgium the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Malta. His main areas of research are diplomacy, Internet governance, e-diplomacy, online negotiations, and diplomatic law.

If you expected a list of subjects that should be taught in IG courses, I have to disappoint you. I won't focus on that. You can find it on our website or other places where IG is taught (e.g. Summer School on IG). Today, I will focus on aspects of capacity development which have low visibility, but often carry high impact. I will illustrate them through three stories…

First: Learning is not restricted to classrooms/courses. It can take place in the most unexpected circumstances. Here is one of my experiences...

The first story happened during IGF Baku. Since the event – fortunately – did not require their services, a few policemen were wandering through the IGF village (an area with booths and coffee shops). They were walking around stands, collecting pencils, bags and other publicity souvenirs offered by exhibitors at the IGF. They came to our stand and showed an interest in our Internet governance book in Russian (which is widely spoken in Azerbaijan). Our conversation in my broken Russian went in the following way:

POLICEMAN – taking book from the stand: What is this all about… IG, IGF, etc?

JOVAN: Do you have children?

POLICEMAN: Yes, a daughter.

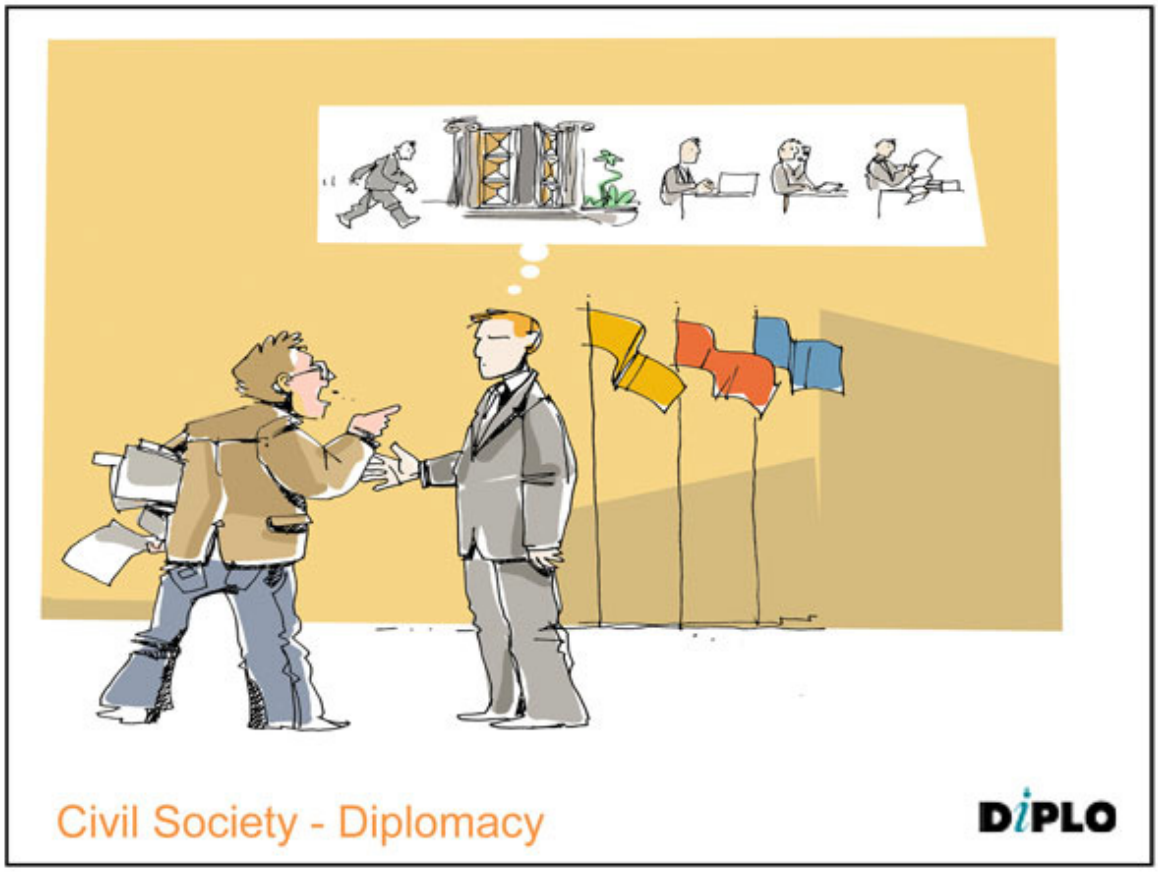
JOVAN: Does she use the Internet?

POLICEMAN: Yes, she spends hours browsing Facebook, and it worries me that she might be bothered by some criminals. What can I do about it?

JOVAN: Well, that's what we discussed today, and it's a big part of what IG is all about.

POLICEMAN: Interesting, let me share this with my colleagues.

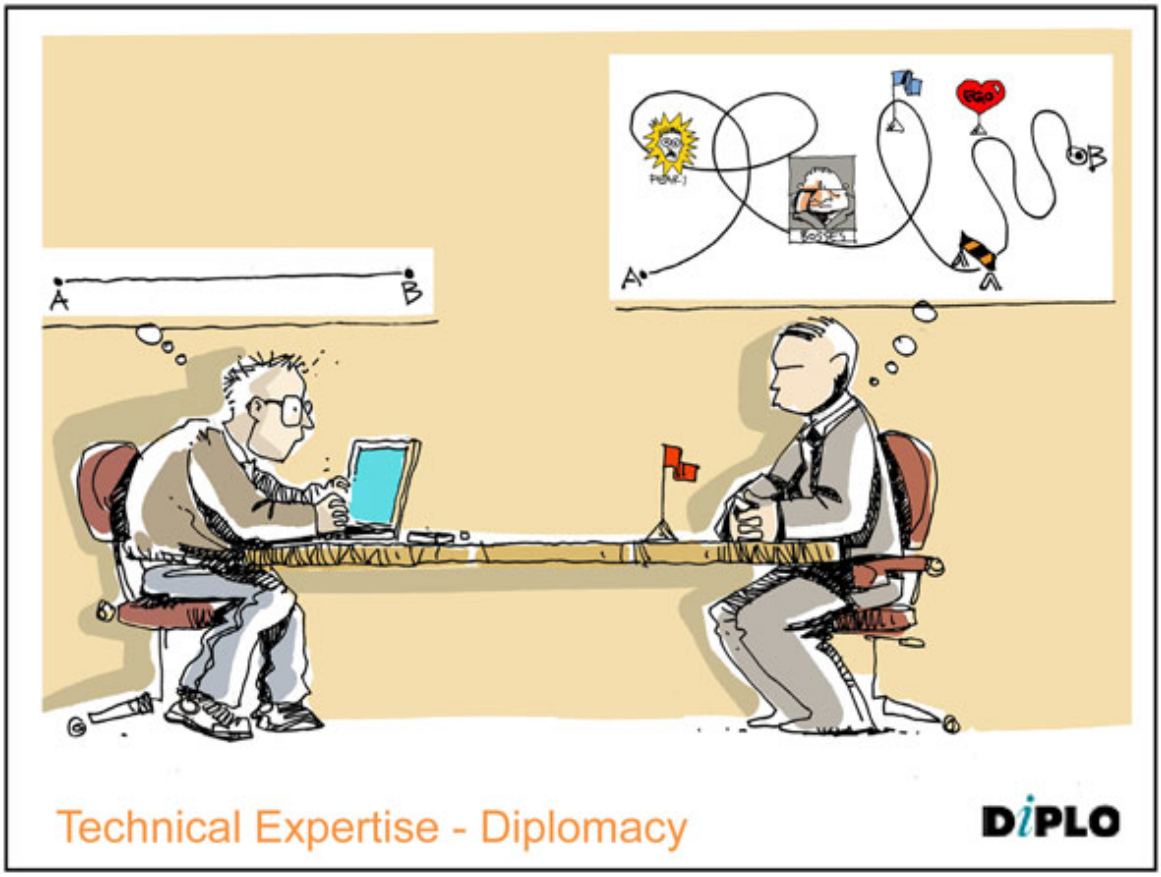
I do not know what will happen with his interest in IG. But, we should think about how many of the people supporting IG events (policemen, waiters, technical people) are aware of what we are doing. Most of them are Internet users. Should they know what it is all about? Are they ‘stakeholders’? This could be an interesting ‘test’ for the IGF Bali and other IG gatherings.



Here is the second story.

It is a typical situation in Geneva multilateral meetings, found in encounters between civil society activists and diplomats. There is often miscommunication caused by a lack of understanding of the different 'institutional metabolism' of, for example, small NGOs and big governments. While NGOs can often improvise on the spot, an answer from governments involves a much longer process of, typically, the diplomat informing his capital, where consultations are held, and instructions are sent back to the diplomats. Sometimes, diplomatic evasiveness is the way to buy time and consult with the capital.

An effective capacity development programme should put participants in the learning situation when they can develop their awareness of institutional differences. It can make processes smoother and increase ‘policy empathy’ (not necessary sympathy). All involved should be aware of the situation in which their counterpart operates.



My story moves to the third sequence, which could be labeled 'lost in translation'. It is frequent to encounter specialised negotiations such as telecommunication, climate change, and health, among other topics. This was summarised nicely by Professor Faure:

'On each side of the table, national culture and organisational culture unite while professional cultures divide. Across the table, the situation is the opposite: national culture and organisational culture divide whereas professional culture may facilitate communication and agreement' (Faure, 1999).

Different professional cultures frame policy issues differently. Here are a few main characteristics of the professional cultures involved in Internet governance:

DIPLOMATS – process/national interest

IT PEOPLE – respect facts, difference between assumption and knowledge, solution-oriented

ACADEMICS – comprehensive, explaining

CIVIL SOCIETY – flexible, expert, lack of understanding of multilateral communication context

Here is a dialogue that we use in our contextual exercises illustrating tacit aspects of different professional cultures:

EXPERT: All that's left is to formulate an agreement based on our technical analysis. We have a solution!!

DIPLOMAT: Yes. We are almost there. It will take some thought.

EXPERT: It's just a matter of accepting these two paragraphs.

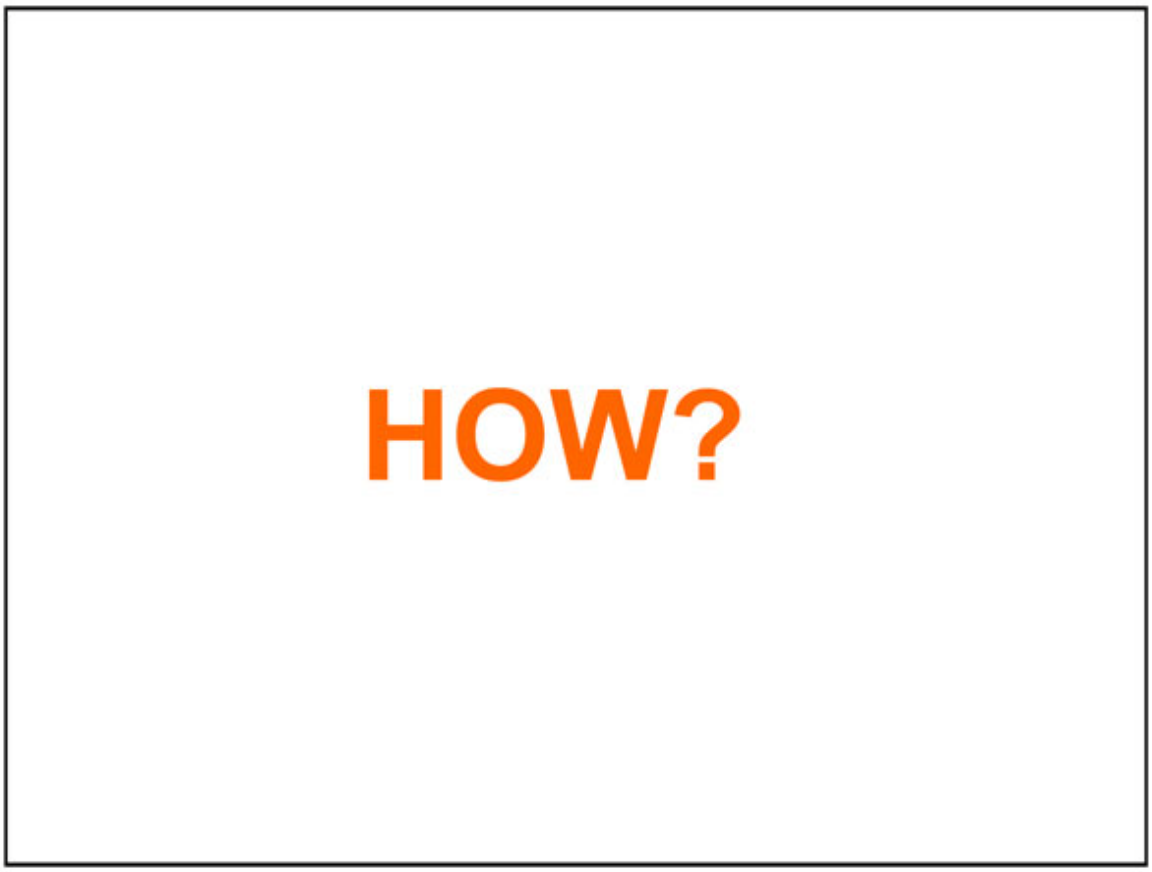
DIPLOMAT: Yes, it provides us with a very solid background. Perhaps we can take a break now.

EXPERT: A break? We just had one. This really shouldn't take very long. And then we're finished.

DIPLOMAT: Yes. Very easy. Maybe just a short break.

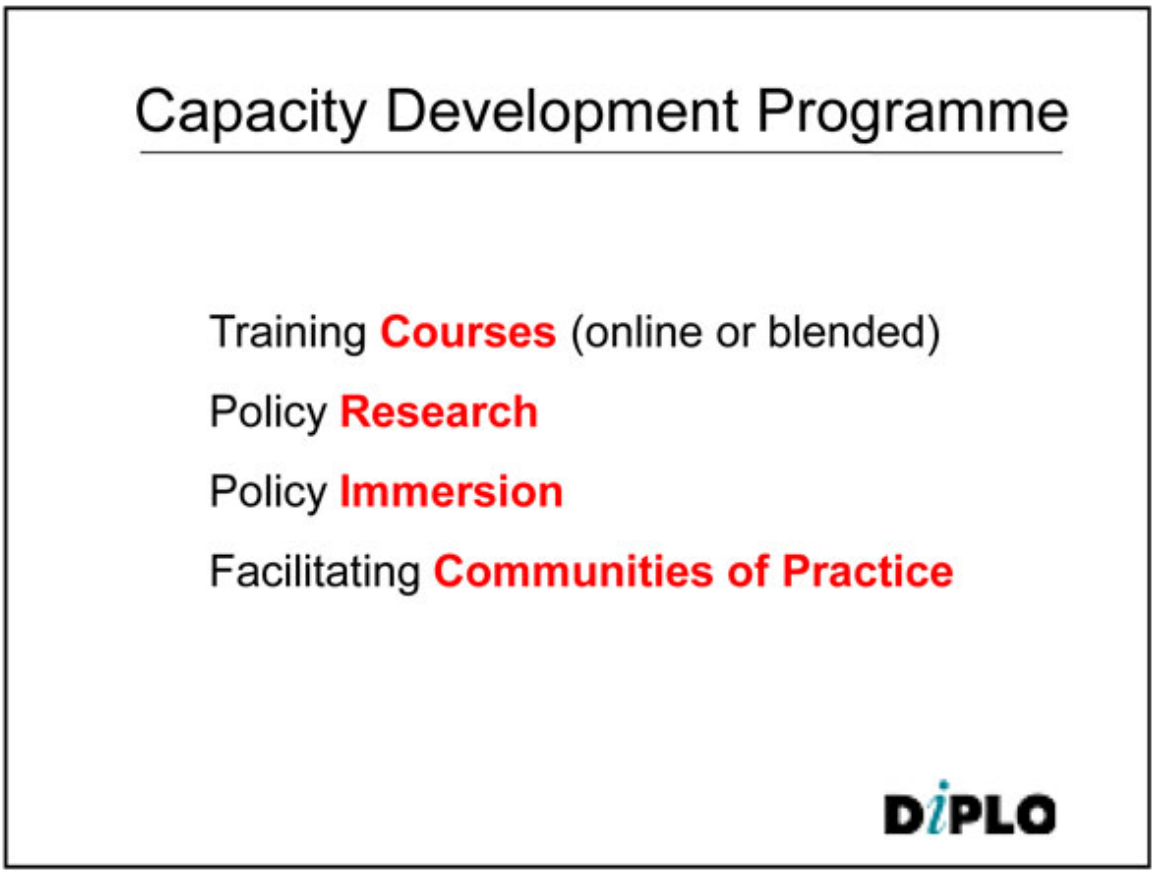
EXPERT: OK. But let's make it quick.

Here is how the well- known cartoonist, Chappatte, illustrates one of the core inter-professional dialogues in Internet governance, between legal and computer professionals. Since computer code increasingly shapes legal code, there is a need for better understanding on both sides.



These three stories: of policemen at IGF-Baku, of the interaction between civil society and diplomats, and of inter-professional communication, illustrate a few challenges that effective capacity development has to address. Carefully designed capacity development should encourage incidental and unplanned learning (e.g. policemen in Baku), and more understanding between different institutional and professional cultures.

Let us move to the next step of how effective capacity development can be delivered...

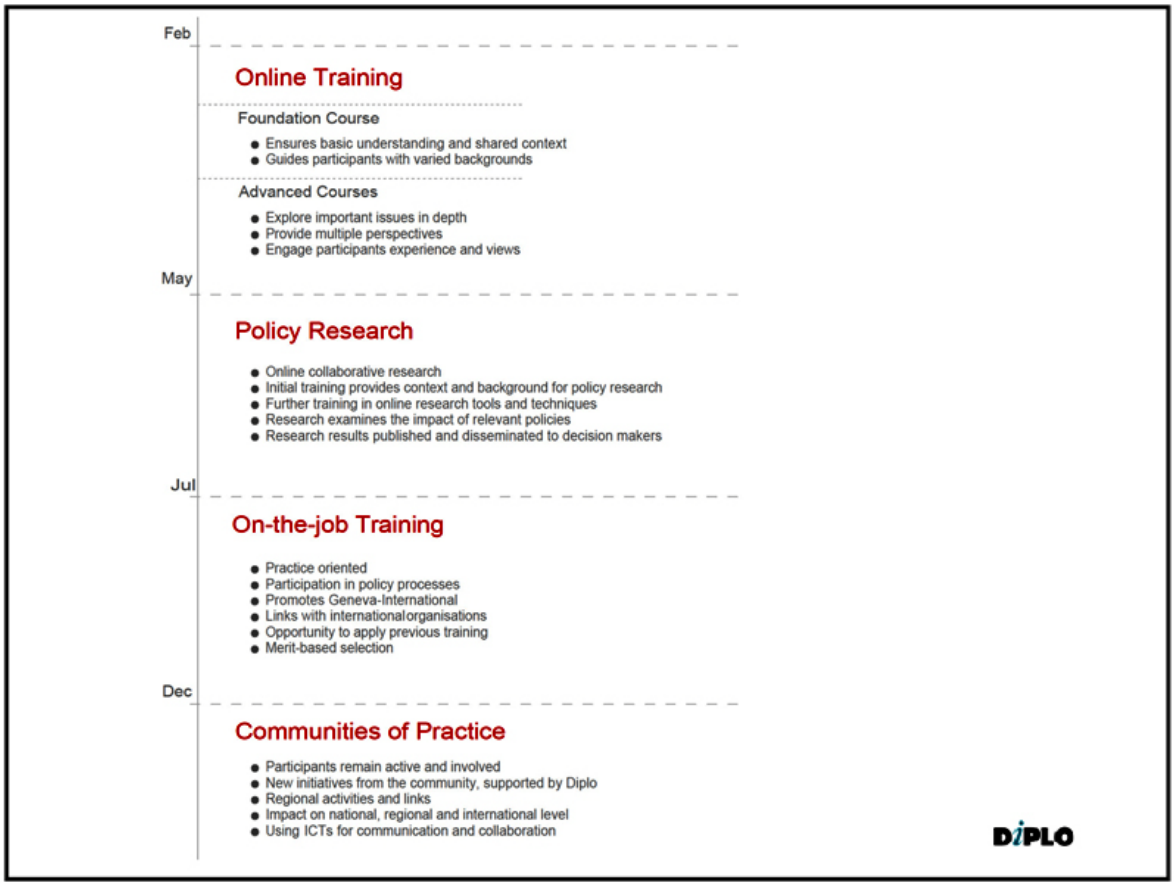


This slide lists the main components of Diplo's capacity development. The learning journey starts with acquiring knowledge and skills, and participating in training courses delivered online, in situ, or in a blended methodology.

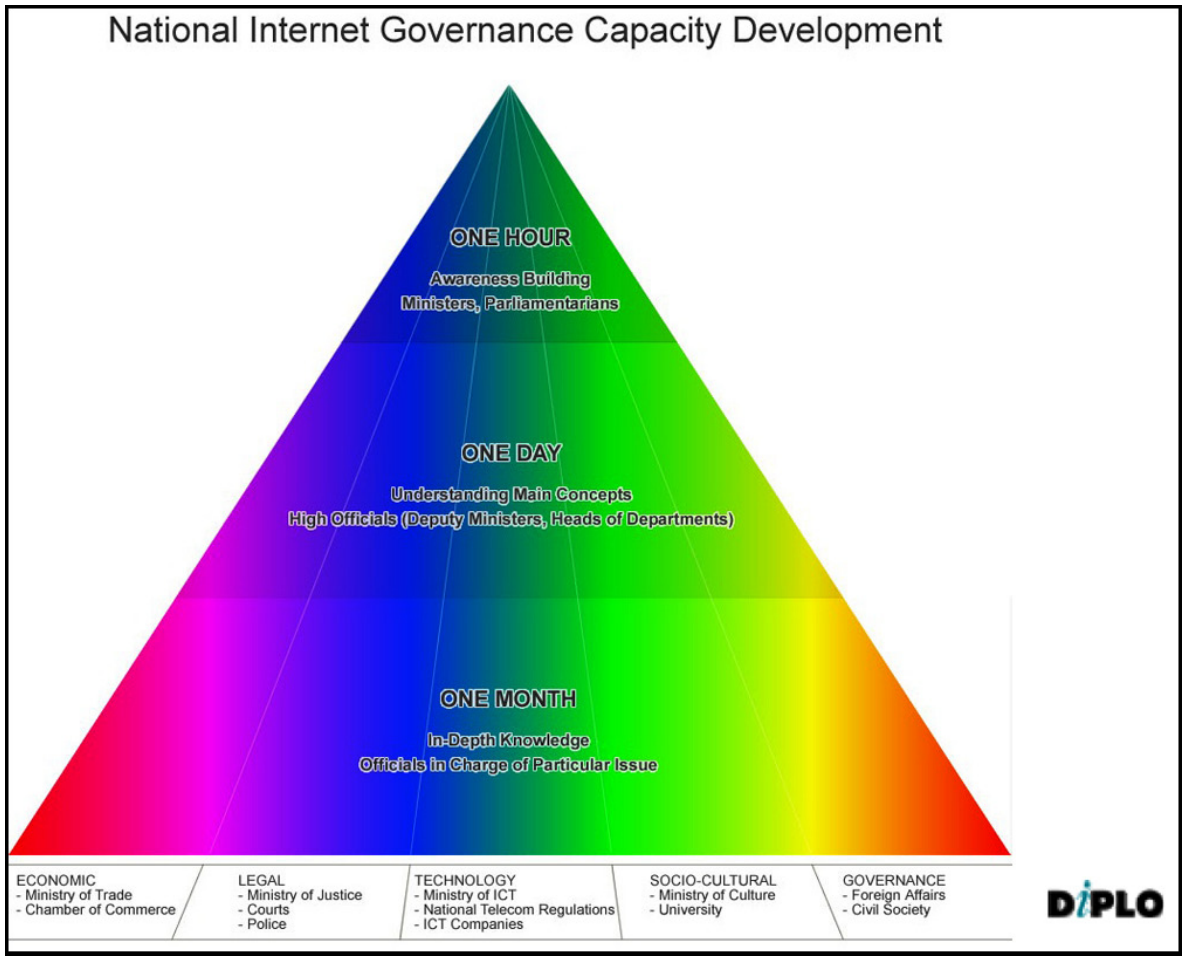
In the next step, participants apply gathered knowledge to their burning policy issues, through policy research. They prepare white papers for their ministries, policy initiatives for their NGOs, policy strategies for their companies, etc. At this point they see the first tangible results of capacity development.

In the next phase, they are 'thrown' into policy waters. They participate in international meetings and are coached and supported by diplomats and subject experts. Participants prepare submissions, speak, intervene, engage. In this way they gradually move from learning/research to a policy immersion phase. This has been the learning journey of hundreds of Diplo students who are members of the leading global, regional and national IG bodies. (See some of Diplo's alumni in action).

But, the end of the programme should not be the end of participants' engagement. Here we facilitate communities of practice. Traditional practices often do not work effectively to keep alumni engaged and involved in dynamic debate. People are too busy. Our facilitation consists of finding topics and issues that are of direct relevance for new professionals. Often, ideas come from the alumni themselves. In some cases, it could be 'trivial', such as arranging travel to the IGF Hyderabad after the terrorist attack in Mombasa. In other cases, it is the coordination of their policy efforts. In yet other cases, our online community provides them with the possibility to zoom out on policy issues and see their work in the broader policy context. (See one of our networks).



This slide illustrates how the capacity development process looks as a timeline, with a description of each phase. In this process, various tools are used, including webinars, interactive video sessions, illustrations, simulation exercises, role-playing, etc.



The pyramid visualizes a national capacity development approach, aimed at addressing two challenges:

Vertical: how to engage the various layers of the policy making process, from citizens to the top leadership, in the global IG debate.

Horizontal: how to engage the various stakeholders and diverse professions (technology, security, human rights, etc.) in order to overcome 'policy silos'. This is done by creating functional links among different ministries and other stakeholders.

This pyramid summarises the approach 'one hour – one day – one month' aimed at adjusting activities to both needs and available time of different national actors ('one' is used as a descriptive; in some cases it may take 2 to 3 hours). This approach is flexible and can be adjusted to the training needs and available time of different players (e.g. it is not likely that ministers and top leaders can spend one month in an intensive online course on Internet governance).

ONE HOUR

The 'awareness' level aims to provide busy policymakers, including ministers, high officials, parliamentarians, and corporate leaders, with just the information they need, when they need it. The main focus is in anchoring particular policy issues in the national policy context (greater awareness of political sensitivities, priorities, implicit concerns).

Capacity development at this level is delivered in short, focused sessions (i.e. half-day) using video, animation, drawings, and illustrations.

Diplo has delivered this type of training in the field of Internet governance. Here are some of the materials used: Illustrations 1, Illustrations 2 & Video

ONE DAY

At the next level, high officials may need a greater understanding of the policy area as a whole. A programme may last from one to five days, and make use of materials such as short booklets and printed materials, instructional materials, short self-paced courses.

The IG Book (translated into eight languages) is an example of the kind of material used to support capacity development at this level. The book is written in simple and direct language, with numerous illustrations.

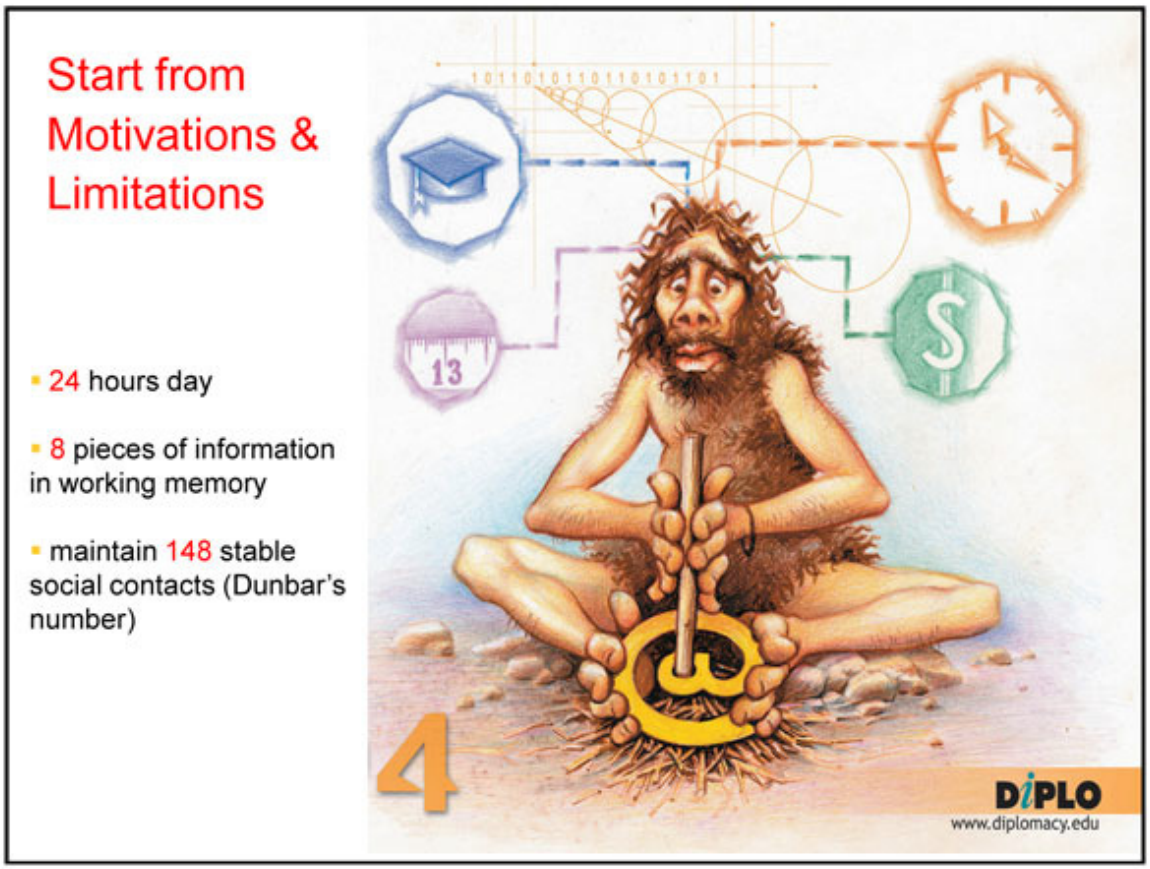
ONE MONTH

The third level, aimed at officials in charge of particular policy issues, offers in-depth coverage. Capacity development at this level will last at least one month (part-time participation) and includes reading and academic study, policy analysis, and individual or group research.

Diplo's online courses provide an example of capacity development at the comprehension level. Guest access to an online classroom can be provided upon request.

Special groups, events, concepts or controversies may be addressed 'just-in-time' with, for example, customised interactive online seminars (webinars). Live, dynamic debate classrooms, in a planned strategic setting, requiring just one hour to attend, give an academic and policy overview of urgent topics. With guest experts, and a stimulating, concise session, participants easily grasp the message. Our methodology delivers dynamic learning that participants will remember because it is vital information for them.

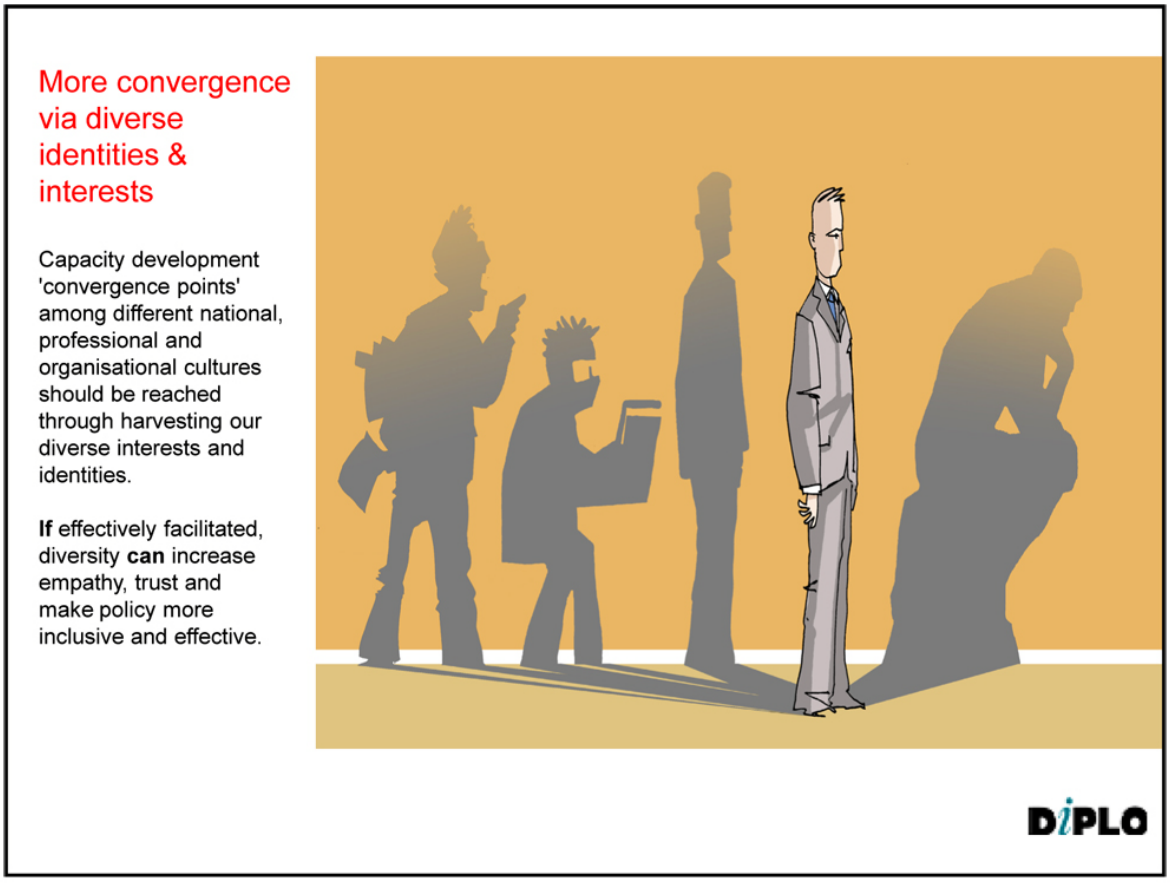
Here are the main challenges that we have encountered while delivering Internet governance capacity development over the last 15 years, with participation of more than 2000 officials and other professionals from 189 countries.



Capacity development programmes should start from motivations and limitations. As the cartoon illustrates, both motivations and limitations are what defines us as humans. These are also deeply embedded in our nature. We have limited time (24 hours in each day). Like our far predecessors, we can still keep only 8 pieces of information in our working memory, and we can maintain – according to Durbar's research – 148 stable social contacts. Even Google specs, new apps, and platforms have not yet managed to extend these limitations.

If we add other limitations, including our family life and institutional complexities, our available time and attention are even more limited. Thus, the effective use of time becomes essential for the success of capacity development.

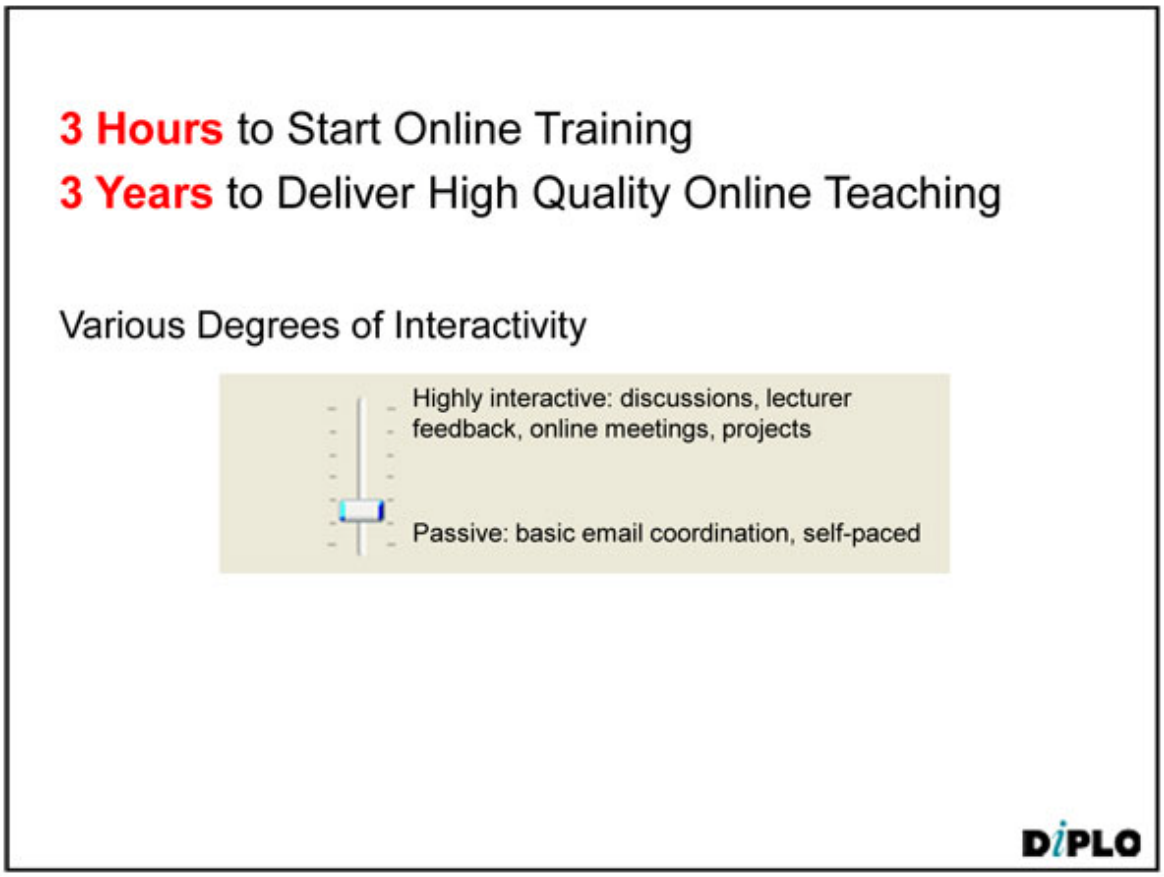
Capacity development needs to be 'portioned' in order to address absorption capacity of learners (available time and attention). MA students may have the motivation to stretch these limits, but working professionals do not. We must give them what they need in 'packages' they can use. This highlights the main challenge: While scheduling to available time, we have to keep in mind that learning does, in fact, require time. Shortcuts in learning are limited, but a few are possible with smart didactics, and the use of multimedia and graphics.



One of the main challenges of the Internet governance debate is to overcome the numerous barriers in communications among different national, professional and organisational cultures. This can create 'noise' and even endanger successful outcome of processes where actors have convergence of interests/objectives/goals. These risks are real and they can lead towards sub-optimal policy processes. Capacity development programmes should help create inclusive and effective Internet governance by facilitating better communication among different cultures/professions/stakeholder groups.

This can be achieved by encouraging diversity in the programmes (e.g. lawyers and engineers). However, diversity does not work by itself, just by having different people in the same room. Diversity requires careful facilitation. One of the building blocks is to start with the high diversity of interests and identities that we each have today. This diversity of interests and identities increases possibilities for 'linking' with others. For example, I was born in the former Yugoslavia, lived in Malta and am now based in Switzerland. I play table tennis. I am interested in history and Mediterranean culture, and so on. It makes at least five linking points that could help me to engage with others across national/professional/institutional divides and develop a certain level of empathy.

Exposed to new information, travels, and other experiences, each of us develops numerous interests and identities. It is an important 'reservoir' for developing better policy processes.



This slide illustrates two points of importance for online courses.

First is the approach to development of online training. You might say that it takes three hours to start an online learning programme – to set up Moodle or a similar platform – but three years to develop a system to deliver effective learning via the Internet. What happens between three hours and three years is related to pedagogy and organisational challenges. Ultimately, this makes or breaks online learning.

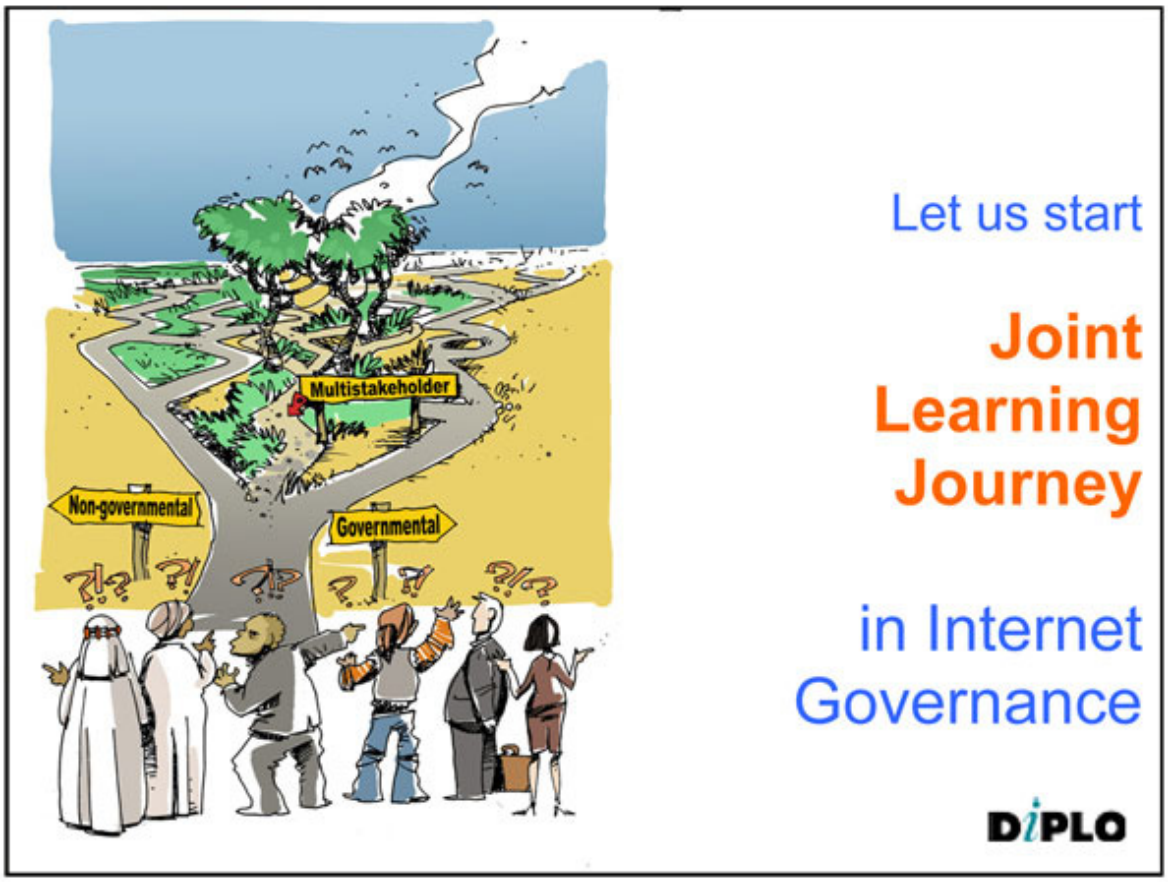
Second is the question of interactivity in online learning. Interaction usually depends on the design of the methodology and the level of support that participants receive from lecturers and tutors.

Last, we find the following challenges which are not technical or academic. They are as relevant for Internet governance as for any policy field.

The first is **overcoming policy silos**. By involving engineers and lawyers, discussing IG issues together, the barriers between their respective professional silos are likely to decrease. We insist on engaging different national, institutional and professional cultures in our training programmes. However, diversity does not automatically lead to effective learning. And the more diversity there is, the more careful facilitation it requires.

An effectively moderated diverse programme usually leads towards the creation of more **empathy**. Each participant involved in the capacity development will begin to understand how others reason, and how they shape their problems.

This should lead towards more **trust** among all those involved in the IG process, which is the ultimate precondition for successful policy-making.



The learning journey is the underlying metaphor of capacity development. The journey does not stop at the end of the training programme. It is a continuous process involving formal and informal learning. It should also include coaching and other ways of building understanding. On this journey we will have to make many choices. And as we take this journey, we must be open to adapting to the needs that arise along the way and to the changing context we meet.

Note: the concept of a joint learning journey was developed by GTZ.