BEST PRACTICE FORUM GENDER AND ACCESS 2016:
IGF BRAZIL
UNCONFERENCE (TUESDAY 12 JULY 2016)[1]

Background context: in May 2016, at the first open consultations and multi-stakeholder advisory group (MAG) meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Geneva, Switzerland, input was gathered and feedback was given on the progress and outputs of the 2015 best practice forums (BPFs), including the 2015 BPF on online abuse and gender-based violence against women. At this meeting,[2] the need was stressed for continuing to dedicate an intersessional[3] effort to the study of gender-related challenges where the Internet is concerned. It was decided to continue the BPF Gender in 2016 and, more specifically, to a) build on and improve the outcomes of the 2015 BPF Gender: online abuse and gender-based violence against women, and b) to dedicate the work of the BPF in 2016 to women's access to the Internet (or the gender digital divide).

1. The extra informal meeting of the BPF Gender and Access in IGF Brazil took place on 12 July 2016 in an Unconference session (Fórum Internet do Brasil - Desconferências). Renata Aquino Ribeiro and Jac Sm Kee led the online meeting, and Anri van der Spuy did the moderation on behalf of the IGF Secretariat. Those three participants joined remotely directly from the Second MAG Meeting in UN NY. Joining online in Brazil were participants Carolina Burle (W3C), Claudia Archer (UFMA), Sandra Friedman (UFPE) e Alyne Bezerra (IBDI). Onsite, at IGF Brazil, Raquel Saraiva (UFPE), Adriana Veloso (EGI.br 2015), Fatima Conti (EGI.br 2014), Flávia Lefévre (CGI.br) and Adriane Gama (UFPA). The agenda for the meeting was focused on barriers to women's access to the internet, participation in IG debates and initiatives of emporwerment. The meeting lasted approximately 90 minutes[4].

Adriane Gama (UFPA Researcher), Raquel Saraiva (UFPE Lawyer), Fatima Conti (EGI.br 2014), Adriana Veloso (EGI.br 2015) and Flávia Lefévre (CGI.br) at the IGF Brazil Unconference.

2. To prepare for this Unconference, participants of IGF Brazil and BPF Gender and Access exchanged ideas on an online space (Titanpad)[5]. The session was planned as a space which would begin with a series of lightning talks by volunteers, a small scale hackathon focusing primarily on data which could subsidize the debates of the BPF Gender and Access, and online debate with BPF participants in an attempt to dialogue with the onsite presentations at IGF Brazil. Both the session draft and part of the online and onsite sessions were in English as well as Portuguese. Simultaneous translation was done online for the most part of the speakers on the webconference platform.

Program at IGF Brazil site with session proposers

3. To invite participants for the session, the space used was the Facebook Group Governança da Internet (with almost 1000 participants) founded and moderated by Renata Aquino Ribeiro and other interested parties in Internet Governance in Brazilian School of Internet Governance 2014. An event was created in the group and posts began to be shared by the organizers and participants. Cristina Brites (RECID)[6] is one of the organizers who collaborated with this space. The event also referred to a sign-up form[7] for the event and a document[8] which listed the lightning talks themes. The Facebook event had over 50 participants expressing that they were interested or would be present at the event. The sign-up form, which wasn't as publicized as the Facebook event, had about 5 participants.

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6   Facebook event Unconference BPF Gender and Access on IGF Brazil:
https://www.facebook.com/events/933990980043443/

7   Sign-up form for the IGF Brazil session: http://bit.ly/bpgenweb

8   Lightning talks programme for IGF Brazil session: http://bit.ly/bpgenweb

Facebook event with a scene from the movie about women programmers "The Computers".

4. Before, during and after the IGF Brazil session, a mobile messaging group was set up on Telegram to discuss themes related to the general idea of the BPF. The group was titled "Gender and Internet Governance" and messages were exchanged mainly in Portuguese. The group is formed only by women and has 31 participants. It is moderated by Renata Aquino Ribeiro. The idea to have only women in the group was agreed by the community since hearing women's voices in IGF Brazil as well as the parallel event International Free Software Forum (FISL) was a focus for the women participating in these events, which were a minority in attendance (in both events).
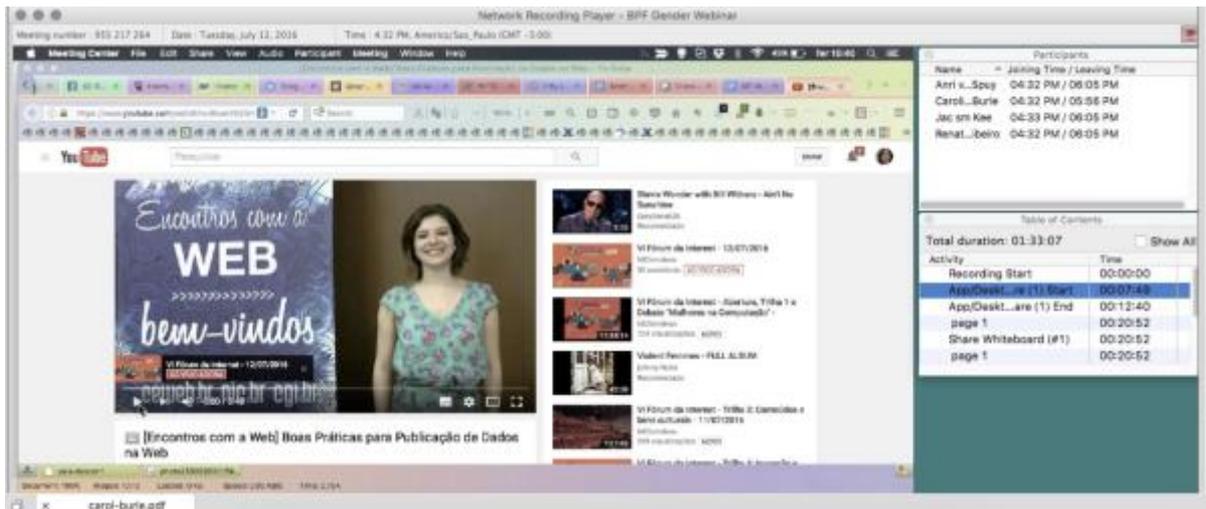

Gender and Internet Governance Telegram Group created to support the session.

5. The online meeting began with presentations by Jac Sm Kee on the history of the BPF. Carolina Burle then presented about the importance of openness and the web, focusing on open data. A video hosted on Youtube[9] featuring this work was also presented in an exclusive preview at this event. Claudia Archer presented then the expectations of gender and technology groups for the IGF Brazil and FISL.

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9   Youtube video on openness and the web: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bwxYh29m2g
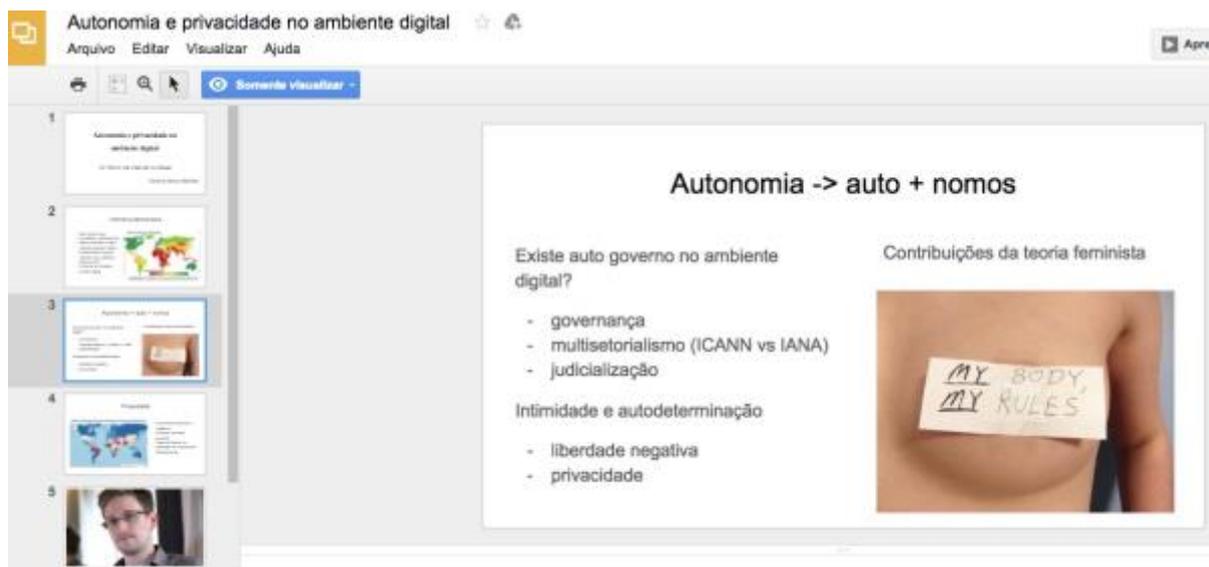
Caroline Burle from W3C presented online about openness and the web

6. The debate online was centered around some highlights taken from the lightning talks presentations. Mainly these were some of the points discussed:
* Standards for open and equitable access to data and interconnectivity (Caroline Burle)
* Recording and sharing the strategies and initiatives for women's participation on technology (Claudia Archer)
* Privacy as an encompassing theme to discuss online safety (Sandra Friedman)
* Work in communities: bring together different generations of women to technology to dynamize local economy (Adriane Gama)
* Brazilian Bill of Rights and questions of gender and internet governance (Raquel Saraiva)
* Rethinking gender issues (Fatima Conti)
* Autonomy and privacy in the digital world (Adriana Veloso)
* Women as active participant in the digital economy (Flávia Lefévre)

7. A second session to discuss further the Latin American perspective was already proposed for LACIGF, which was scheduled to happen two weeks after IGF Brazil. In the audience at IGF Brazil and on the Telegram group, several participants were already confirmed for LACIGF and its previous event Youth LAC IGF. Among them, Kimberly Anastacio and Louise Hurel, who had already participated in previous BPF activities. IGF 2016 workshop proposers were also on the online and onsite audience like Ana Paula Lourenço, Christiane Borges, Viviane Vinagre and Joana Varon. One of the presenters, Adriana Veloso, shared in advance her presentation[10] with the audiences.

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10   Autonomy and Privacy on the Digital World, presentation by Adriana Veloso: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1iU6chiFvtRAFFohzqISJ8RUXBGOyKUQ6SQjrlTkwjY4/edit?usp=sharing

Presentation on Autonomy and Privacy in the Digital World, by Adriana Veloso

8. The mailing list of the BPF Gender and Access address was reinforced among participants as well as the #IGF2016 #BPGender tags. Due to technical instabilities, the dialogue with audience online and onsite had a few challenges but, as a workaround, webconference mirroring via Youtube/Hangout was made to establish the connection. Part of the video remains hosted online on Youtube[11].

Summary of inputs

9. Throughout all the sessions, participants agreed that initiatives to increase women's access to the internet in Brazil, and Latin America, were very of great importance. Whether from the yet mostly unpopulated Amazon region (like Adriane Gama and her group) or from the overpopulated São Paulo (like Flávia Lefévre), participants identified the gender digital divide as a main deterrent for evolution in the debates of internet governance for sustainable development and empowerment.

Next steps

10. Participants continued on to interact via mobile and email messages and participate on the online meetings of BPF Gender. For LACIGF, in the following weeks, participants also helped build and publicize the session and send ideas.

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11   Hangout BPF Gender and Access: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGJlwhPvkJA