BEST PRACTICE FORUM GENDER 2016:
GENDER & ACCESS
MEETING VI (17 AUGUST 2016)

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,[1] the need was stressed for continuing to dedicate an intersessional[2] 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 sixth meeting of the BPF Gender took place on 17 August 2016. Jac SM Kee and Renata Aquino Ribeiro led the meeting, and Anri van der Spuy represented the IGF Secretariat. The agenda for the meeting was focused on the ongoing planning and preparations for the BPF's work; taking stock of progress made thus far; finalising the BPF's timeline until IGF 2016 and planning the dates and agendas of future meetings; providing feedback from recent national and regional IGF meetings; providing an update regarding survey responses; planning an updating session for the BPF 2015's work; and talking about the BPF's proposed methodology. The meeting lasted approximately 45 minutes, and was attended by three participants[3].

Survey

2. It was noted that 26 responses had been received to the survey thus far, with the majority of submissions coming from civil society. The responses are from diverse regions and countries, including Brazil, South Africa, Ecuador, Tunisia, Guyana, Palestine, Malawi, Panama, Mexico, Peru, Guatemala, Trinidad and Tobago, the USA, Costa Rica, France, Nepal, Indonesia, Australia and Sri Lanka.

3. It was noted that we haven't gotten responses from larger organizations working in the field that we know of, only from the Web Foundation. Mostly got responses from individuals. Jac said she would reach out to people she knows in the fields – A4AI, GSMA, RIA, the Broadband WG on the Gender Digital Divide, Facebook, Google, and a few other organizations working on access.

4. It was agreed that the survey would be closed on 30 September, and that the goal will be to receive at least 50 responses. The meeting was closed early to give participants an opportunity to do targeted outreach to people to encourage them to participate in the survey.

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[1] A transcript of the relevant session is available online: http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/3063.

[2] 'Intersessional activities' at the IGF refer to activities that take place throughout the year, and that thus continue in the period between annual IGF meetings.

[3] A meeting recording is available online: https://intgovforum.webex.com/cmp3100/webcomponents/jsp/docshow/closewindow.jsp

Participation at National and Regional IGF initiatives and other events

5. Renata provided feedback regarding upcoming NRI and other sessions related to internet governance (e.g. LACNIC in September; ICANN 57) where she hoped to hold future webinars/sessions for the BPF. While some of these meetings will happen after the BPF's first draft will be published, later submissions could be added to the document.

6. It was noted that other upcoming events where the BPF will gather information include a meeting organized by APNIC in October (Jac will participate); AWID forum in September (Jac will also be able to gather information and feed it into the BPF's work, and will try to organize an informal session for the BPF at the hub too). Anri noted that she had reached out to the Ghana IGF to request input on the survey, as their annual meeting is currently taking place and one of the organizers, Wisdom Donkor, is a BPF participant.

7. It was noted that the webinars will be used in a similar way that case studies were used last year. After each session, a summary output would be produced and attached to the BPF's report as an appendix. Where relevant, lessons/comments will be extracted from each summary and include in the BPF's draft document outcome.

8. It was also agreed that Renata would reach out to individual users and organizations to request testimonies/ case studies on the BPF's topic by 30 September, which would be included into the BPF's report in the same manner as summaries (as per paragraph 4 above).

Timeline

9. Participants discussed the need for a timeline to map priorities and deliverables for the next two months. It was noted that 1 November is the deadline for the BPF to publish a first draft for input on the IGF's review platform. In order to draft this document, it was proposed that 30 September be the last date for gathering input via the survey and other sources, although additional input from webinars hosted after this date could be incorporated in draft II along with comments received on the online platform.

10. It was proposed that a first version of Draft I be ready for discussion in the BPF by the third week of October. To enable this deadline, it was agreed that the next two meetings (meetings 7 and 8) would be dedicated to discussing barriers, while the two meetings thereafter (meetings 9 and 10) would be dedicated to discussing community-led or –based responses to overcoming barriers.

11. It was agreed that the IGF's website would be updated to reflect this timeline and that meetings would be pre-scheduled in advance. It was agreed that the same time slot would be used in the future (14:00 on a Thursday, every 14 days) to ensure consistency and encourage consistent participation.

Updating BPF 2015 report

12. It was noted that one of the BPF's priorities this year is updating last year's BPF report (by focusing on the ways in which the debate has shifted and platforms might have developed policies to address this challenge, in a positive manner) and finding ways to share the findings. It was agreed that a fortnightly BPF meeting would be dedicated to this purpose, and it was agreed that the 24th of November could be a potential date as a) it is close to the annual International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November) and

b) by that stage, the BPF's report for 2016 would have been drafted already and preparations for IGF 2016 would be underway.

13. It was agreed that to encourage participation of the contributors from last year's BPF, an email would be sent to some of the more active participants from last year to invite them to the next BPF call on 1 September to discuss the organization of this session, for 15 minutes (whereafter the focus would shift to discussing barriers).

14. It was noted that an email could be sent to the mailing list from last year to invite them to the session on 24 November and to ask them if and how they have used the BPF outcomes from last year.

Next steps

15. The meeting finished with a summary and the proposal of a number of follow-up actions, namely:

Action 1: scheduling next meetings and timeline: Anri agreed to update the website with all of the next meetings, including a description of each meeting's intended purpose.

Action 2: encourage survey participation: participants agreed to renew efforts to encourage input in the survey through direct outreach to stakeholders.

Action 3: invite BPF 2015 participants: Anri agreed to individually invite key participants from 2015's BPF to the BPF meeting on 1 September in order to discuss the session on 24 November.

Action 4: summaries from NRI participation: Jac and Renata agreed to finalise and share summaries from the sessions they had facilitated/ participated in as soon as possible.

Action 5: *outreach for case studies/testimonies:* Renata agreed to reach out to stakeholders for testimonies/ case studies.

Action 4: Summary of the discussion and scheduling of next meeting. A summary of the discussion will be prepared and shared on the BPF's dedicated mailing list by 22 August 2016.

Action 4: Next meeting: It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on or around 1 September 2016 at 12:00 GMT. The Secretariat would schedule the meeting and would distribute details enabling participation.

Meeting participants:

Anri van der Spuy (South Africa)

Renata Aquino Ribeiro (Brazil)

Jac SM Kee (Malaysia)