Summary Report
Gender Dynamic Coalition
IGF 2014

The Gender Dynamic Coalition held a meeting on Day 1 of the Internet Governance Forum 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey. The panelists includedö Bishakha Datta from Point of View, India, Titi Akinsanmi from Google South Africa, Olga Cavalli from the Argentinian Government, and Kamilia Manaf from IPP in Indonesia. The panel was moderated by Jac sm Kee from the Association for Progressive Communications and the presentations was followed by a discussion with the 40 or so attendees.

The key discussions of the panel revolved around sharing experiences from across the multiple sectors on working on gender and ICTs: challenges faced, success stories, and the work ahead. Olga Cavalli spoke about the introduction of gender discourse into the Argentinian technical sector through the involvement of women at different spaces. She presented figures related to Internet access in Latin America and highlighted that the global gender gap in Internet access is 200 million more men than women online. This leads to lesser access of opportunities, information, tools, and economic freedom. Speaking about the role of governments, she discussed initiatives to improve the digital infrastructure in some Latin American countries, as well as the School of Internet Governance, which has had a strict rule of 50% women participants since 2009.

Titi Akinsanmi spoke about the role of the private sector in addressing gender issues, such as looking at women on staff and boards of companies, as well as the WAG (Women at Google) initiative that is an empowerment network for women working at Google. She also emphasized the need to encourage girls and young women to pursue not only engineering and science careers but also to advance careers in Internet policy work. On the economic impact of the Internet on women's lives, Titi discussed the necessity to make the case for the benefit of women's access to the Internet not only for information and communication (which are both very valuable for women's empowerment) but also as a means to advance economical benefits for women.

Bishakha Datta introduced the importance of looking at mobile phones as a facilitator of women's access to technology with the penetration rate in India being at 950 million, as opposed to 200 million broadband connections. She also spoke about the social challenges to women or LGBT people accessing the Internet and its content – besides just the infrastructural challenges. Bishakha also spoke about gendered challenges in the Wikipedia community and how language and content management systems also play an important role. Socialization process of gender lead women to question their authority on certain topics or their ability to speak up on the Internet.

Finally, Kamilia Manaf spoke about the issue of online content regulation when it came to LGBT content, such as the examples from the EROTICS research in Indonesia. She elaborated on strategies that LGBT groups have been using to circumvent censorship and the conflation of sexual content with harmful content or pornography. Engagement of LGBTs in Internet governance process was also an important topic discussed to enable intersections with internet and human rights work.

Together with the audience, the panelists then discussed action ideas for the Gender Dynamic Coalition to use the Internet Governance Forum to further examine and strategize around gender and the Internet – from access to expression to policy work. A few concrete proposals included building the Dynamic Coalition into a network of multi-stakeholder organizations in order to work together in national, regional, and international governance forums but also to think of projects to work on between the forums. The second was to create stronger relationships with the media in order to push the issues into mainstream awareness. The third was to work on Women's Internet Governance Schools in order to leverage gender and sexuality issues at internet governance forums through larger participation of feminist and LGBT activists.

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Report drafted by Nadine Moawad from the Association of Progressive Communications on September 24, 2014