IGF Best Practice Forums
Background note & Templates
Version as of 3 April 2018

I. IGF Best Practice Forums - definition and purpose

Best Practice Forums were introduced in 2014 as part of the intercessional programme to complement the IGF community's activities and develop more tangible outputs to 'enhance the impact of the IGF on global Internet governance and policy'.

BPFs offer unique platforms for multistakeholder discussion on topics relevant to the future of the Internet, with the aim of facilitating dialogue and collecting emerging and existing practices to address specific issues or themes. The objective is not to develop new policies or practices, but rather to collect existing good practices. Like other intercessional activities, BPF outcomes are designed to become robust resources, to serve as inputs into other pertinent forums, and to evolve and grow over time.

BPFs are in nature open, bottom-up and collective processes. Their open and transparent working approaches aim at encouraging and gathering broad stakeholder input and their outcomes are intended to be community-driven, bottom-up and a true reflection of the multistakeholder nature of the IGF's intercessional activities. Within these general principles BPFs have the freedom to define and delineate the parameters of their work in consultation with their respective multistakeholder communities; to define their own methodologies; and to tailor their work to the requirements of their theme's specific needs and requirements.

BPFs have been formed around the following themes:
2017
- Cybersecurity - Cybersecurity for an enabling environment for ICTs and Internet technologies to contribute to development
- Gender and Access
- Local Content - Local Content: Internet cultural and linguistic diversity as an engine for growth

2016
- Cybersecurity - Building Confidence and Security in the use of ICTs through Enhanced Cooperation and Collaboration
- Gender and Access - Overcoming barriers to enable women's meaningful Internet Access
- IPv6 - Understanding the commercial and economic incentives behind a successful IPv6 deployment
- IXPs - Contributing to the success and continued development of Internet exchange points (IXPs)

2015
- Strengthening Multistakeholder Participation Mechanisms
- IPv6 - Creating an Enabling Environment for IPv6 Adoption
- IXPs - Enabling Environments for Establishing successful IXPs
- Security - Establishing and supporting Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs) for Internet security
- Spam - Regulation and Mitigation of unsolicited Communications
- Gender - Online Abuse and Gender-Based Violence Against Women

II. **BPF working modalities and timelines**

Modalities

- The IGF Code of Conduct should be followed by all stakeholders involved in IGF community activities, including BPFs.
- BPFs have the freedom to define their own methodologies; tailored to each group's specific needs and requirements.
- Each BPF should discuss and decide on their respective working modalities in an open and transparent way on mailing lists and during virtual meetings.
- Decisions on working modalities should have support of the participants of the BPF and should also be made in an inclusive and transparent manner.
- MAG facilitators should act as stewards of the groups, assist in scheduling and chairing the working virtual meetings, guide work being carried out on the mailing lists and carry out outreach to encourage participation from all stakeholders in the work.
- The IGF Secretariat should primarily be acting as a neutral rapporteur, including responsibility for drafting meeting summaries and providing logistical support to the work of the groups.
- In this regard, in developing outputs the format of such outputs should aim to cover the elements of the structure suggested below, but also be dependent on the working methods of the respective BPF.
- Based on consultation with BPF participants, the output should indicate in a final segment whether or not it wishes to carry forward the work into the next year, and if so, what new substantive areas it would seek to explore.

IGF output documents

Rapporteurs of each Best Practice Forum (BPF) may incorporate the below elements into their respective outputs, also following the advice of BPF co-facilitators and those participating in the BPF's discussions. The reporting structure/outputs may differ depending on if the BPF theme has already been worked on previously by the IGF or if it is a new BPF topic, etc.

1. Definition of the issue(s)
2. Regional specificities observed (e.g. Internet industry development)
3. Existing policy measures and private sector initiatives, impediments
4. What worked well, identifying common effective practices
5. Unintended consequences of policy interventions, good and bad
6. Unresolved issues where further multistakeholder cooperation is needed
7. Insights gained as a result of the experience
8. Proposed steps for further multistakeholder dialogue

Note: The means employed to achieve a solution are as important a learning experience as the actual ends achieved. A discussion of unintended consequences, both positive and negative, of mistakes that were made, and of lessons learned will further enrich an understanding of what has been accomplished.

Timeline

1. Existing BPFs report on their activities at the first MAG meeting of the year, including whether or not they wish to continue their work.
2. The MAG would first examine the reports of existing BPFs before considering proposals for new BPFs, which should also be submitted to the first MAG meeting of the year, as in the template below.
3. Based on the desirability of advancing certain themes and an assessment of available resources by the Secretariat, the MAG decides which BPFs to approve for the following year and whether to add (a) new BPF(s).
4. BPFs begin to meet as soon as approved and channel their discussions into an eventual output document.
5. Approximately six weeks prior to the annual meeting and into the meeting itself, the BPFs' draft outputs should be made available for public comment online. (*The six-week timeframe for outputs will be as consistent as possible across all IGF intercessional groups.)
6. Each BPF will be responsible for organising a dedicated session at the annual meeting where they will present their work. (and appoint a spokesperson)
7. Following this, the outputs will be updated incorporating all comments and suggestions made by the community online and at the meeting.
8. MAG facilitators of the individual BPFs, as well as all MAG members generally, should carry out outreach activities to help disseminate the BPF outputs into other relevant fora and future meetings.

Proposals for new BPFs

MAG members that wish to propose a new BPF should submit a proposal (around 2-3 pages) ahead of the first MAG meeting of the year. The proposal should indicate the following:

- Names of at least two Co-Facilitators (MAG member + non-MAG members as appropriate)

- Background
  This should include the relationship to multi-stakeholder internet governance discussions and the relevance for the different stakeholder communities.

- Description: topics covered, proposed objectives and focus of the BPF

- Outreach plan and multistakeholder engagement in the work
  This should mention the anticipated engagement from different parts of the multi-stakeholder community, including the names of organisations which have signalled a desire to participate, and intended outreach to attract further involvement in the work of the BPF.