IGF 2020

Reviewing past Best Practice Forums (BPF)
to enhance future BPF work :

a “BPF on BPFs”

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Editors

Markus Kummer
Wim Degezelle

Contributors

- *Agustina Callegari,* Co-facilitator BPG Gender and Access (2018)
- *Anriette Esterhuysen,* MAG Chair 2020, IGF consultant BPF Local content (2019), BPF Gender and Access (2019)
- *Chenai Chair,* MAG facilitator BPF Gender and Access (2019-2020)
- *Ben Wallis,* MAG facilitator BPF Cybersecurity (2018-2020)
- *Brian Gutterman,* former IGF Secretariat staff supporting the BPF Multistakeholder participation mechanisms 2015 and BPF Cybersecurity 2016;
- *Bruna Martins dos Santos,* Co-facilitator BPF Gender and Access (2019-2020)
- *Carlos Afonso,* MAG facilitator BPF Local Content (2019-2020)
- *Concettina Casa,* MAG facilitator BPF IoT, Big Data, AI (2018-2019); MAG facilitator BPF Data and New Technologies in an Internet context (2020)
- *Giacomo Mazzone, Co-facilitator BPF Local Content (2018-2020)*
- *June Parris,* MAG member, participant and Remote Moderator BPF IoT, Big Data, AI (2019)
- *Markus Kummer,* MAG coordinator BPF work 2015; MAG Co-facilitator BPF Cybersecurity (2016-2020), Facilitator BPF on BPFs (2020)
- *Michael J. Oghia,* participant and remote moderator BPF IPv6 (2015-2016), BPF IXPs (2015-2016)
- *Raquel Gatto*, MAG facilitator BPF Gender and Access (2018-2019), BPF Local Content (2017)
- *Sumon A. Sabir,* MAG facilitator BPF IPv6 (2016), BPF IoT, Big Data, AI (2018)
- *Susan Chalmers*, MAG facilitator BPF IPv6 (2015), Lead Expert BPF Local Content (2014)
- *Wim Degezelle,* IGF consultant BPF IPv6 (2015-2016), BPF IXPs (2015-2016), BPF Cybersecurity (2017-2020); BPF Local content (2017-2018); BPF IoT, Big Data, AI (2017-2018), BPF Data and New Technologies (2020); BPF on BPFs (2020)
- *Wout de Natris,* IGF consultant BPF CSIRTs (2014-2015), BPF Mitigating Unsolicited Communications (2014-2015)

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A. Introduction

a. IGF Best Practice Forums

The IGF Mandate[1], set out in paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda[2], defines the IGF as a forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue to, amongst other things, '*Facilitate the exchange of information and best practices, and in this regard make full use of the expertise of the academic, scientific and technical communities'*[3].

The exchange of best practices has been prominently present in the IGF. Since the first IGF meeting in Athens in 2006, IGF annual meetings have served as a venue to share and discuss experiences, in main sessions, workshops or dedicated best practice forums organised by stakeholders.

Best Practice Forums (BPFs) were first introduced in 2007 as a separate track in the programme of the annual meeting. They were meant to provide a platform for an open exchange on what worked, but also on lessons learned from past mistakes. However, the format proved somewhat disappointing as the session organisers seemed reluctant to discuss difficulties they had encountered or admit mistakes they had made. This may have been one of the reasons why the BPFs generated limited interest and slowly fizzled out.

The BPFs were re-introduced in 2014 as part of the intersessional programme to complement the work of the IGF community's activities and develop more tangible outputs to 'enhance the impact of the IGF on global Internet governance and policy'.[4,5] They are organised under the supervision of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG), which selects the topics for the BPFs, and receive substantive IGF Secretariat support.

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[1] In the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16 December 2015, (70/125) 'Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society', the existing mandate of the IGF as set out in paragraphs 72 to 78 of the Tunis Agenda was extended for another 10 years.

[2] http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/6rev1.html

[3] Par. 72, d.

[4] This intersessional programme was designed in accordance with the recommendations of a 2012 report by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)'s Working Group on IGF Improvements. https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/4586/588

[5] Other IGF intersessional activities are the 'Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion(s) (CENB)' (2015-2018) to gather through rounds of public consultations possible diverse views from the community on how to address the

BPFs intend to discuss topics relevant to the future of the Internet, with the aim of facilitating dialogue between stakeholders and collecting emerging and existing good practices. The objective is to collect from community experience, not to develop new policies or practices. BPF output documents are expected to become robust resources that serve as inputs informing policy debates in other pertinent forums.

BPFs are expected to be open, bottom-up and collective processes, and their outputs to be community-driven, bottom-up and a true reflection of the multistakeholder nature of the IGF's intersessional activities. BPFs have the freedom to tailor their work to their theme's specific needs and requirements. BPFs are coordinated by one or more MAG facilitators, sometimes assisted by non-MAG co-facilitators, and supported by the IGF Secretariat. The number of BPFs in a given year depends on the number of proposals and the Secretariat's capacity to support BPF work.

A total number of 26 BPFs were organised in 2014-2019. The number in a given year varied between 3 and 6.

b. A 'BPF on BPFs'

In January 2020 the MAG decided to 'document lessons learned, outputs, and, where possible outcomes' of the BPFs organised since 2014 with the intention to 'inform the process for evaluating, proposing, and improving BPFs from 2021 onwards', and to develop 'a systematised evaluation tool, with proposals for metrics by which the MAG members could assess BPF proposals and outcomes, as well as to provide guidance for best practices on organising and leading a BPF'.[6]

This 'BPF on BPFs'[7] kicked off in April 2020 and, in line with its terms of reference (ToRs), reached out to key participants involved in the organisation of the BPFs in 2014-2019, notably the MAG facilitators and BPF co-facilitators, lead-experts, key contributors, and the IGF Secretariat's consultants or staff members supporting the work of one or more BPFs. Their observations and suggestions led to the first version of this report, presented to the MAG at its 11 August 2020 virtual meeting. The draft report was published on the IGF website with an opportunity for the MAG and IGF community to provide feedback[8]. The final version of the BPF on BPFs report was published on 29 September 2020.

c. Making BPFs future proof

This BPF on BPFs aims to provide practical suggestions to facilitate the selection of BPF topics, and tools to enhance future BPF work. It is an initiative by the MAG 2020, intended to inform the BPF process as from 2021, with recommendations that are immediately implementable.

The BPF on BPFs built on the experiences of those involved in organising BPFs since 2014 to formulate hands-on suggestions for future BPFs as from IGF 2021. It did not directly address the evolution of the IGF in the context of the ongoing efforts to advance global digital cooperation. However, the suggestions in this report are intended to strengthen BPFs in such a way that they further contribute to enhancing the IGF's footprint and its impact on global Internet policy. Several recommendations in this report may contribute to strengthening the IGF by strengthening the intersessional activities as suggested by:

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major policy challenge to connect and enable meaningful access for the unconnected, and the Dynamic Coalitions, self-established groups discussing specific issues in the context of the IGF, and a 2019 pilot initiative on Implementing Internet Standards and protocols for a safer Internet.

[6] The 'BPF on BPFs' ToRs can be found in Annex 2.

[7] The initiative became commonly known as 'BPF on BPFs'. However, this name may be somewhat misleading as the initiative is not part of the 2020 intersessional BPF programme and follows a different process and methodology.

[8] The draft report was published on https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/bpf-on-bpfs with an opportunity to provide feedback between 3 August and 15 September 2020.

- The UN Secretary-General's Road map for Digital Cooperation highlights ideas with a view to making the IGF more responsive and relevant to current digital issues, including a call to (art 93(e)) *'Better integrating programme and intersessional policy development work to support other priority areas outlined in the present report;'*[9]

- In his Letter to the MAG the UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs urges '*(...) the MAG to further integrate intersessional work and annual meetings both among the NRIs, and between the NRIs and the global IGF',* encourages *'to continue the conscientious effort to harmonize the inter-sessional activities of the Dynamic Coalitions, Best Practice Forums and the NRIs to strengthen linkages and coherence between sessions, as well as with other intergovernmental and international bodies (Para 93 (e))',* and notes that *'as the UN Secretariat Department mandated to support intergovernmental processes, UN DESA is uniquely placed to contribute to this effort;'* [10]

- The Options Paper for the Future of Global Digital Cooperation[11] in response to Recommendation 5A/B of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation[12] acknowledges that *'there is potential to build on and strengthen the existing Dynamic Coalitions and Best Practice Fora (...)'* and that '*they should be given a clear mandate, working procedures and principles and receive more resources and administrative support by the IGF Secretariat.'*

[9] 'Road map for digital cooperation: implementation of the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation', 29 May 2020, https://undocs.org/A/74/821 , https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/
[10] Letter by Under-Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin, 18 June 2020, https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/10358/2173
[11] '*Options Paper for the Future of Global Digital Cooperation'*, representing the views of diverse stakeholders from the private sector, governments, civil society, academics and technologist, submitted to the United Nations Secretary-General by Germany and the United Arab Emirates on 3 September 2020, https://www.global-cooperation.digital/GCD/Redaktion/EN/Downloads/options-for-the-future-of-global-digital-cooperation.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2 .
[12] 'The age of digital interdependence, Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation', 10 June 2019, https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/DigitalCooperation-report-for%20web.pdf

B. IGF BPFs 2014-2019 - Documenting experiences of 26 Best Practice Forums

a. BPFs 2014-2019 : themes and topics

A total number of 26 BPFs were organised in 2014-2019. The number of BPFs in a given year varied between 3 and 6, depending on the number of proposals and the available resources for the IGF Secretariat to provide BPF support.

There have been BPFs on:

- Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs)
- Cybersecurity
- Gender and Access
- Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, and Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- IPv6
- Internet Exchange Points (IXPs)
- Local Content
- Multistakeholder Participation Mechanisms
- Online Child Protection
- Unsolicited Communications ("Spam")

BPF topics, with the exception of online child protection (2014), returned at least one more time, usually in consecutive years. Cybersecurity, Gender and Access, and Local Content could be considered as recurring themes, under which the annual BPFs focused on different, more precise, topics and issues. The BPFs Gender and Access, for example, covered online abuse and gender-based violence, meaningful Internet access, and the participation in the digital economy.

The MAG selected the following BPF topics for 2020:

- Data and New Technologies in an Internet Context
- Exploring Best Practices in Relation to International Cybersecurity Initiatives
- Gender Impact on Shaping Internet Policy
- The protection, preservation and remuneration of creative work and collective wisdom, from a local content perspective

A thematic overview of BPFs 2014-2019 can be found in Annexe 1.
BPF Outputs and activities are archived on the IGF webpage:
https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/bpfs-outputs .

b. BPFs 2014-2019: achievements and successes

The BPF intersessional work

Between 2014 and 2019 the MAG selected 26 topics for intersessional BPF work. The BPFs kicked-off ahead of the annual meeting, collected experiences and best practices on their topics, produced draft reports, organised BPF sessions at the annual meetings, and published substantive output reports.

The BPF output reports are considered to be a part of the IGF's tangible outputs and BPFs are referenced in the Chair's Summary of the annual meeting. All BPF reports are published on the IGF website (BPF previous work), available to all interested, and intended to serve as a useful resource for discussions and policy processes elsewhere.

The BPF sessions at the annual meetings were overall well attended by a varied audience. Typically, the BPF draft report served as an introduction and discussion starter, followed by an open exchange on the subject matter with

an expert multistakeholder panel and opportunities for the audience to interact and provide feedback. BPF sessions were transcribed and recorded.[13] Insights and experiences shared by participants at these BPF sessions were summarised to further enrich the final versions of the BPF output reports, published after the annual meeting.

None of the BPFs was suspended prematurely or failed to deliver an output. Overall, BPFs received a positive evaluation from the community in the stocktaking after the annual meetings and the IGF Open Consultations.

While BPFs were established to create more tangible outputs, one should not underestimate the impact of the participation and engagement in itself. Several of the BPF's have seen the engagement of people and groups that traditionally wouldn't be involved in the IGF. The BPF helped to put the IGF on their radar and served, for some, as an entry point for further involvement in the IGF.

Highlights and achievements

The main objective of BPFs is to collect and document existing good practices on topics relevant to the future of the Internet, to serve as inputs into other pertinent forums. Vice versa, BPFs can bring into the IGF debates initiatives conducted in other relevant fora related to their field of expertise, what could cross fertilize the debate on IG aspects. BPFs have managed to bring stakeholders together fostering mutual exchange and learning from each other's experiences. BPF work has been picked up by organisations and institutions, or served as a practical guide on their topic.

As with the IGF overall, it remains difficult to assess and document real impact. Many people take things home from an IGF and might use or pass on the information, or people use IGF documentation archived on the website as a resource[14]. Much of this happens under the radar and there's only anecdotal information to prove. The diversity in topics and approach of BPFs complicates making general observations. Below are some examples of how BPF outputs found their way to other forums and processes or served as a platform for stakeholder exchange.

- The *2015 BPF Online Abuse and Gender-Based Violence Against Women* considered the increasing effort by different stakeholders at national and global levels to understand and address the problem of online abuse and violence against women. It served as a rich resource for others dealing with this issue, including the United Nations Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences, who in her annual report[15], in 2017, focused on online violence and drew extensively on the BPF's work. The BPF's research and recommendations also informed national policy aimed at dealing with online abuse and non-consensual sharing of intimate images in several countries around the world.[16]

- The UNESCO and UN Women 'Handbook to address Violence against Women in and through the Media' from 2019 refers to the report of the *2015 BPF Online Abuse and Gender-Based Violence Against Women* as a resource on the topic of gender-based violence in social media and information communication technologies. [17]

[13] Transcripts and recordings of BPF sessions at the annual meetings are kept on the IGF web

[14] For example, this research paper cites from recordings and meeting transcripts of the BPF on CSIRTs: Bradshaw, Samantha, *Combating Cyber Threats: CSIRTs and Fostering International Cooperation on Cybersecurity,* the Centre for International Governance Innovation and Chatham House, 2015. https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/gcig_no23web_0.pdf

[15] https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/184/58/PDF/G1818458.pdf?OpenElement

[16] https://www.genderit.org/resources/igf-2015-best-practice-forum-online-abuse-and-gender-based-violence-against-women-report
https://www.genderit.org/resources/igf-best-practice-forum-gender-and-access-2016-overcoming-barriers-enable-womens

[17] *The Big Conversation, Handbook to Address Violence against Women in and Through the Media,* UNESCO, UN Women, 2019, p. 78, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000369853 .

- A 2017 UNESCO report on advancing multistakeholder participation in Internet governance refers to the work of the *2015 BPF on Strengthening Multistakeholder Participation Mechanisms* for more insight in actions that could be construed potential examples of 'bad actors'' conduct in specific situations.[18]

- The best practices documented by the *2014/2015 BPFs on Establishing and Supporting Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs)* are a useful resource for governments and stakeholders supporting the creation of CSIRTs, and have been used, amongst others, by the parties involved in setting up a CSIRT in Serbia.

- The 2014 *BPF on Establishing and Supporting Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs)* emphasized the importance of a good interaction between CSIRTs and governments to prevent misunderstandings on their work and is believed to have stimulated further cooperation between FIRST (the global CSIRT organisation) and the OECD. A 2015 report[19] by the OECD Working Party on Security and Privacy in the Digital Economy quotes the BPF's suggestion that "the CSIRT community needs to continue working with policy makers and the statistical community to improve the quality and international comparability" of their statistics.

- The key findings of *2015 BPF on Creating an Enabling Environment for IPv6 Adoption* were presented at the 2016 E-Commerce week[20] organised by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

- The *2017 BPF Cybersecurity*, which examined how a well-developed cybersecurity strategy helps to create an enabling environment for ICTs and Internet technologies to contribute towards achieving the SDGs, is listed in the report of the UN E-Government Survey 2018[21] as a global cybersecurity initiative.

- The *2018 BPF on Local content* saw the involvement of various governments, companies and civil society bodies, but also of the main multilateral institutions dealing with the production, or the support, or the legislation related to local contents, such as UNESCO (the UN agency for culture), WIPO (the international body for copyrights and intellectual property) jointly with the world publishers, broadcasters and community media associations.

- A presentation[22] by the *2019 BPF Cybersecurity* at the December 2019 Consultative Meeting of the United Nations' Open-ended Working Group (OEWG)[23] on developments in the field of information and telecommunication in the context of international security was well received. The findings and conclusions of the BPF's work on identifying spaces of norms development across the global community and collecting best practices on how signatories put cybersecurity agreements into actions, are a substantive part of the IGF paper[24] (February 2020) to provide the OEWG with information, insights and recommendations that came out of the exchanges among stakeholders in the context of IGF 2019.

[18] Van der Spuy, Anri, *What if we all governed the Internet? Advancing multistakeholder participation in Internet governance,* UNESCO, 2017, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259717 .
[19] https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DSTI/ICCP/REG(2013)9/FINAL&doclanguage=en
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[23] https://www.oewg-intersessional.org/
[24] https://unoda-web.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/igf-cybersecurity-oewg-feb2020.pdf

C. Organising and leading BPFs: observations, challenges and way forward

The 'BPF on BPFs' reached out to those involved in organising BPFs in 2014-2019: the co-facilitators, lead experts, key contributors, and IGF Secretariat staff and consultants. Their experience makes them well placed to assess how BPFs function, point at hurdles and hindrances, highlight where there is unused potential, identify areas for improvement, and suggest ways forward.

In this chapter, observations, challenges, and recommendations are organised under different headings, loosely corresponding to different stages in the BPF cycle.

a. BPF Definition and purpose

Observations

- The overall BPF definition and purpose ('*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.*') are still valid and relevant.
- Some question if formulating recommendations derived from the collected best practices is within the remit of a BPF, and opinions differ on whether BPFs should be stimulated or discouraged to do so.
- BPFs distil high-level policy goals into concrete policy challenges that lay within reach of individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups.[25]
- BPFs have helped to build common ground about what policy challenges should be addressed in order to achieve the overarching goal.[26]
- Discussion about less successful approaches and resulting lessons learned can be as valuable as collecting good practices.
- BPFs can contribute to fulfilling different aspects of the IGF mandate. In addition to '*facilitate the exchange of information and best practices*,'[27] BPF work can help the IGF to become an '*Interface with appropriate inter-governmental organizations and other institutions on matters under their purview*;'[28] and to '*Identify emerging issues, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, where appropriate, make recommendations'*[29].

Challenges & Areas for improvement

- The perceived value of BPF work would increase if the purpose of a BPF were better understood and its outputs better communicated and distributed.
- Unclarity on the BPF's purpose may lead to misunderstandings and impact the enthusiasm to participate.
- Documenting best practices and working towards recommendations are distinct activities that require different approaches and methodologies and set different expectations to the BPF output. The definition of what a BPF is should guide the work plan of the BPFs when it comes to documenting best practices and formulating recommendations.
- The definition should also highlight a BPF's potential to foster common understanding of what concrete policy challenges are related to the policy goal studied by the BPF.

[25] This happens throughout the BPF cycle, for example when discussing focus and methodology and deciding what kind of best practices the BPF intends to collect, or when analysing collected case studies and documenting what the current approaches are.
[26] For example, the BPF Gender & Access 2015 on gender based violence contributed to creating a common understanding that online speech can be violence, and, in 2019, BPF stakeholders discussed whether providing training to use the Internet is sufficient to help women and gender-diverse people to participate in the digital economy or if other challenges need to be addressed in order to achieve this goal.
[27] Tunis Agenda, par. 72, d.
[28] Tunis Agenda, par. 72, c.
[29] Tunis Agenda, par 72, g.

Recommendations

- Suggested update to the BPF definition: *(bold = addition)*
  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. **BPFs foster a common understanding of the concrete policy challenges stakeholders may address in order to contribute to achieving the Internet policy goal the BPF is focussing on.** The objective is not to develop new policies or practices, but rather to collect existing good practices, **share positive and negative experiences**, **and flag challenges that require additional multistakeholder dialogue and / or require the attention of policy-makers, including in specified decision-making bodies.**
- BPFs could serve as sounding board for decision-making bodies (especially those that are only representing governments), to provide them a multi-stakeholder vision and feedback on IG issues.
- BPFs should be encouraged not only to collect best practices, but also testimonials about bad and less successful approaches as the latter often contain valuable lessons.

b. BPF modalities and selection of topics, MAG as steward of the intersessional programme

Observations

- The MAG is the steward of the intersessional BPF programme, approves the topics and sets the modalities for BPF work. BPFs remain free to choose a methodology and organise their work as best fits, in function of their topic.
- The MAG's approach to selecting BPF topics has evolved from plenary brainstorming towards a more formal approach, with written proposals.
- BPFs typically work on topics for which the debate has sufficiently matured to make way for some form of consensus in the community and the focus of discussions has shifted to implementation and exchange of experiences (for example establishing IXPs, IPv6 deployment, removing barriers to enhance women's access to the Internet).
- The notion of a trajectory which starts with a topic that emerges at the annual meeting and for which the MAG forms a BPF to continue the exchange intersessionally, and ends with the BPF reporting into the next annual meeting has been somewhat lost.
- Questions on BPF modalities typically arise around the time the MAG has to take a decision on BPF topics or during the BPF session at the annual meeting. There have been several attempts to compile a BPF modalities document, including drafts shared and discussed on the MAG list, yet there is no consolidated BPF modalities document that gives guidance to the MAG and BPF organising teams.

Challenges & Areas for improvement

- A BPF modalities document, adopted by the MAG and published on the IGF website, will help to streamline the process of selecting BPF topics and provide useful guidance to BPF co-facilitators and others involved in organising BPF work, or an introduction for those interested in joining.
- Restoring and strengthening the link between annual meetings and the intersessional work in the subsequent year may help to strengthen the IGF Program, better embed BPFs in other IGF activities and change the perception that BPFs are an independent parallel track.

Recommendations

- Consolidate existing drafts of the BPF modalities document[30] and publish the document ahead of next year's cycle of BPFs:
  - cover to the extent possible all aspects of the BPF cycle, including roles and responsibilities, the process to propose and select BPF topics, and timelines, without limiting the BPFs' freedom to organise their work in function of their respective topics.

[30] A consolidated draft of the BPF Definitions, Procedures and Modalities in included under chapter E of this report.

    - Include a narrative to explain what makes a topic suitable for a BPF.
- Consider BPFs as a space where work can continue on issues discussed at the annual meeting, to collect best practices and feed them into continued policy discussions at the next IGF or elsewhere.

c. BPF cycle versus BPF 'active' period

Observations

- The 'active period' of a BPF is much shorter than the 12 months between two annual meetings and depends on the date of the first MAG meeting, on how long it takes the MAG to select the topics, the procedure to hire BPF support, and the date of the next annual IGF meeting.
- It has been challenging for BPFs to work through an ambitious program (discussing and developing a methodology, outreach to stakeholders, collecting and processing community input (contributions and case studies), conducting an open and iterative drafting process, and organising a session at the annual meeting) in a relatively short time frame of six months or less.
- Activities in many organisations and institutions slow down in July and August. This may have an impact BPF activities (slower feedback, lower participation).
- Returning BPFs have not been able to utilise the momentum created by the annual meeting, the BPF session, and the publication of the final BPF output because of the long inactive period (of up-to 6 months) before receiving the confirmation that they could continue their work.

Challenges and Areas for improvement

- A bottom-up, community-centred approach requires time. The earlier a BPF can kick-off, the more time there is for outreach and involving new stakeholders and collecting community input.
- Ideally, BPFs can kick-off timely and have substantive discussions and work done before July and August.
- A 2-year framework may allow BPFs to overcome the break and better use the momentum to recruit an involve participants.

Recommendations

- Launch a call for BPF proposals early, possibly at or immediately after the annual meeting, to allow the MAG to confirm the topics at its first face-to-face meeting.
- A BPF discussion on possible future topics should be included in the BPF work plan.
- BPFs that wish to continue could be requested to compile a proposal together with their final report or submit their proposal well ahead of the first meeting of the new MAG.
- Consider chartering BPFs for two consecutive years. This would allow them to use their session at the first IGF meeting for a mid-term update, discussion on findings and exchange on next stepsand for active outreach and recruitment of participants.

d. Participation, outreach, and raising the profile of BPF work

Observations

- Many IGF participants do not distinguish BPFs from regular workshops and other sessions at the annual meeting. They are not familiar with the intersessional programme, nor aware of the possibility to actively contribute.
- BPF participants often seem to be waiting for the coordinating team (BPF facilitators and Secretariat's consultant) to make the decisions on how to move forward.
- Participation of relevant institutions and organisations can give a boost to the BPF, enhance discussion and output. Buy-in from key stakeholder groups and institutions makes it more likely that the BPF output will be be picked up by organisations or institutions and impact other discussions and processes.
- BPF sessions at the annual meeting gather an interested audience and create momentum. After the

session, facilitators are often approached by people interested or specialised in the topic, willing to participate further. Unfortunately, at that time a BPF is at the end of its cycle.
- A BPF can be an attractive place for researchers and academics, to pick up new ideas or share results or pre-publications with a 'first audience'. This already occurred for the BPF on Gender and Access.
- In addition to its workshop, the BPF Cybersecurity in 2017 (Geneva), organised an informal gathering to consult with interested community members on a way forward for the BPF and a proposal for the following year. This conversations was also an opportunity to hear from stakeholders what motivates to or withholds them from participating in the BPF.
- In many cases BPF coordinators have been leaning on their own efforts and networks to raise awareness and attract participants to the BPF.

Challenges and Areas for improvement

- It can be a challenge to get key people, organisations, and institutions involved in the BPF. There's little pressure or 'fear of missing out' for those who are not participating in the BPF. A BPF should be unavoidable for key stakeholders and its output not something they can ignore.
- BPFs need an active outreach strategy, which includes outreach to the broader community, direct outreach and efforts to get the involvement of key institutions and organisations.
- One or more open webinars or hearing-type sessions by the BPF throughout the year[31], dedicated to the topic or sub-topics that are standing out and are in need of additional information, can help to gather input from so far absent stakeholders.
- Consistent and reliable communication, institutional support and active promotion by the MAG leadership are key, for example to promote BPF activities and calls for input within targeted institutions and organisations (e.g. WIPO, CoE, UNCTAD).
- New stakeholders should be included in the process to avoid working solely with the usual suspects.
- When a BPF identifies a relevant debate that is going on in other fora, it should be explored how the BPF/IGF could reach out at and involve high level contacts (by UNSG, DESA, MAG Chair, etc.).[32] Where relevant, BPFs could identify IGOs and other bodies and ask for 'liaison officers' to be appointed to act as go-between with the work of the IGF.
- The involvement of key stakeholders in the BPF will raise its profile and may enhance its impact. It is likely that when one key player gets involved, other will follow.
- BPF participants need to be encouraged to take ownership of the BPF and take a more active role in the process. Shared ownership of the BPF will have positive effects in terms of active participation and will motivate participants to take the outputs further and leverage the BPF's impact. The role of the coordinating team (facilitators and Secretariat/consultant) should be clearly defined and shared with the participants in advance. Guidance from the coordinating team is needed to keep the work going, but the participants should play an active role in defining the way forward.
- More participation and involvement of individual MAG members in BPF activities would be welcome and MAG members should be stimulated to actively help with BPF outreach efforts to their communities and regions.

Recommendations

- IGF communications should not assume that BPFs and intersessional activities are well understood concepts in the community but keep explaining their purpose and highlighting the opportunities to participate in their work whenever informing on BPF activities.
- Targeted outreach is of key importance for a BPF:
    - Outreach planning should start as early as possible and BPF proposals should include a list of key organisations and institutions they intend to invite.
    - BPFs should explore how to target meetings and networks where relevant organisations meet to discuss issues related to the BPF topic, be present where key stakeholders gather, present the BPF and invite them to get involved.

[31] Such open webinars or hearings are stand-alone events, organised on a need-basis, next to the regular BPF virtual meetings.

[32] I.e. when WTO starts negotiations for a new Treaty electronic commerce, BPF on local content, could ask MAG to contact WTO to try to create bridges in order to create synergies and exchanges between the existing discussions ongoing within BPF and IGF.

    - BPFs should invite MAG members, Secretariat, BPF participants, and others to help with reaching out to stakeholders and provide them with basic tools to promote the BPF (e.g. a fact sheet that explains why and how to get involved).
    - Special effort is recommended to support BPFs with establishing contact in case relevant debates are going on in IGOs and related bodies.
    - BPFs should consider open webinars or hearings, in addition to their regular virtual meetings, to gather additional input and reach so far absent stakeholders.
- BPF participants should be stimulated to take ownership of the BPF process. It might be necessary to remind participants that BPFs are expected to be community-driven with the facilitators and Secretariat in a coordinating role.
- All MAG members should be expected to participate in at least one BPF, informing the Secretariat at the outset of the year which BPF(s) they will participate in.

e. Setting expectations and keeping BPFs focused on a realistic goal

Observations

- The open and bottom-up approach in combination with a changing and varying participation in BPF activities throughout the year can lead to changes of focus and result in a BPF that tries to cover all and everything at the same time.
- It has occurred that BPFs spent a lot of time on (re-)explaining, (re-)discussing, and (re-)amending the BPF's focus and workplan as result of a changing participation in the BPF's online discussions and virtual meetings with new people joining and others seeming to have lost interest.
- A lack of focus easily reduces the interest among key stakeholders and experts in the BPF.
- BPFs have proven to be successful when their focus coincides with relevant policy discussions and their output can serve as a relevant resource for stakeholders participating in these discussions.[33]

Challenges and Areas for improvement

- The BPF coordinating team has the delicate but important role to keep BPF discussions focussed and work towards a defined realistic goal, while at the same time secure the inclusive and bottom-up character of the BPF work.
- A longer-term perspective of an IGF multi-year plan with clear achievable targets per each year (of course, adjustable yearly, based on the progress of global digital environment and debates) would be useful to mobilize efforts, including BPF work. This would allow BPFs to better align their activities with the agenda of the MAG and other global digital cooperation bodies and increase opportunities to feed into their discussions.

Recommendations

- The proposals for BPF topics should include a clear and realistic goal for the BPF.
- As early as possible BPFs should discuss and further refine this goal and, together with their coordinating team, develop a realistic workplan.
- The workplan should help the coordinating team to keep the BPF focussed and moving towards the defined goal, while still benefitting from the open and bottom-up character to enrich its content.

[33] For example, in 2015, when there was a BPF on Online Abuse and Gender-Based Violence, the Special Rapporteur to the Human Rights Council and several national policy processes were looking for input; in 2019 the work of BPF Cybersecurity on norms and international cybersecurity initiatives was relevant for stakeholders following and participating in the OEWG.

f. Cooperation with other IGF activities and workstreams

Observations

- The IGF program, overarching theme and thematic tracks are defined after the selection of the BPF topics. Consequently, the BPF topics are not necessarily well-aligned with the overall IGF program of that year.
- There have been efforts to integrate the BPF work in the overall program with a main session on BPF activities (for example in Guadalajara (2016), João Pessoa (2015), Istanbul (2014)). These sessions were mainly reporting sessions with limited interaction between the BPFs due the lack of common ground between the different BPF topics.
- There have been a few examples where BPFs and Main sessions reported into each other's sessions.
- There have been efforts to better connect the BPFs and NRIs.[34] The mixed success of these efforts underlines the general communications challenge.
- The summary of the BPF work during the closing sessions on the last day of IGF2019 was a nice opportunity to inform on the BPF work.

Challenges and Areas for improvement

- While there is interest and willingness on both sides to cooperate, it is complex to establish concrete links between BPFs and NRIs.
- The ongoing discussions in some DCs could be a valuable input for BPFs and vice versa.
- When the MAG decides to allocate plenaries to topics covered (fully or partially) by a BPF, the main session's organising team should include the BPF and eventually involve relevant DCs. On the other side, also BPFs should be invited to submit proposals for plenary sessions that they believe are relevant for that year edition of the IGF. The presence of a multiyear plan of MAG and Digital Cooperation would of course help with identifying priority topics for each year.

Recommendations

- It would be good practice if main session organising teams include relevant BPFs, and so allow to early on in the planning process, consider the ongoing intersessional work and look for synergies or ways the BPF work could feed into their respective main session.[35]
- BPFs and NRIs should continue to explore ways to cooperate and look for synergies.
- BPFs and Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) working on the same or related topics should be encouraged to reach out to each other to explore synergies, cooperation or ways to provide input in each other's work.
- The BPF summaries during the closing sessions on the last day should be kept in the programme.

g. Sharing and disseminating BPF outputs / increasing BPF impact

Observations

- BPF activities wrap up at the annual meeting after which co-facilitators and the Secretariat/consultant coordinate the publication of the final output report. The MAG facilitator may be at the end of his/her term and the contract of the Secretariat's consultant supporting the BPF terminates soon after the meeting, upon the presentation of the final report.
- BPF outputs are published on the IGF website and disseminated by the Secretariat, as a part of the outputs of the annual meeting.
- Efforts to promote and disseminate BPF outputs, for example in blog posts or presentations, have typically been individual and independent initiatives by people who participated in a BPF. There is no clear strategy to promote and disseminate BPF outputs.

[34] For example, the BPF Cybersecurity in 2018 launched a separate call for contributions for NRIs.

[35] A similar recommendation could be made for the work conducted by DC's and their potential input in mains sessions on the same or related topics.

- The ‘BPF Handbooks’ with summaries of the intersessional work, intended to help create interest for the BPF outputs, are not well known and lack a well-defined target audience.

Challenges and Areas for improvement

- The style of BPF outputs is very traditional. Their current look and feel may be a handicap when competing for the audience’s attention in a time when the visual aspect is very important.
- BPF outputs are published as part of the IGF outputs, but there is no strategy or mechanism to bring the BPF work to organisations, institutions, processes and other places where they may serve as useful input. UN Channels, the interinstitutional relations as well as the UN marketing and communications teams, could help to raise awareness about calls for participants input as well as help to disseminate final outputs.

Recommendations

- BPF outputs would benefit from a professional lay-out and attractive look and feel.
- Proposed procedure to support a targeted dissemination of BPF outputs:
    - BPFs to identify institutions, organisations and forums that should receive the BPF output (contact person preferred);
    - BPF coordinating team to prepare a cover letter/summary;
    - IGF secretariat / DESA to send the BPF output report on behalf of the BPF to these organisations; (this could replace the ‘BPF Handbooks’)
    - IGF Secretariat / DESA to publish a press release informing that a BPF output is published. This press release could include the list of institutions/organisations the report was sent to.

D. Towards a mechanism supporting the selection of BPF topics

a. Assessing BPF proposals - quantitative and qualitative aspects

One of the tasks of the BPF on BPFs is 'the development of a systematised evaluation tool, with proposals for metrics by which the MAG could assess BPF proposals and outcomes'. The use of predefined metrics is expected to facilitate the selection of BPF topics, enhance the transparency and accountability, and make it easier to understand why certain BPFs are selected or renewed.

BPFs were introduced as an intersessional IGF activity to complement the IGF community's activities concentrated around the annual meetings, and to develop more tangible outputs to enhance the impact of the IGF on global Internet governance and policy. To serve this purpose, a mechanism to evaluate and select BPF proposals should allow the MAG:

- to select topics that are timely and relevant, and for which it is possible to collect and document best practices, and
- to identify the proposals that best guarantee a qualitative multistakeholder output, which has the potential to be picked up and inform policy discussions and processes.

The BPF on BPFs discussed how to approach the assessment of BPF proposals and developed a framework consisting of a limited set of quantifiable metrics complemented with metrics that require a qualitative assessment. We suggest that the metrics are translated into a template to help those proposing a BPF topic with compiling more detailed proposals that cover different aspects of the BPF work. This will facilitate the MAG's assessment.

Before diving into the assessment of proposals, it is important to remind that BPFs are expected to discuss and develop their work plan and methodology with the BPF participants after the selection of BPF topics by the MAG. This has an impact on the level of detail that can be expected, and proposals should be allowed to remain vague on these points.

b. Assessing BPF work - proposals to continue a BPF

The BPF on BPFs discussed how the MAG may best approach proposals from BPFs that wish to continue their work, and how the MAG could assess the work completed by the BPF in the previous year.

It was concluded that the time between the publication of the BPF output report and the submission of a proposal to continue the BPF in the new cycle of intersessional work is too short to be able to fully assess the impact of the BPF and whether its report has been picked up.[36] Therefore, it is suggested to evaluate the proposals for returning BPFs in a similar way as the proposals for new topics, based on the same set of metrics, but request returning BPFs to provide sufficient evidence in their proposal of how they functioned as a community driven multistakeholder process. To help the MAG with assessing proposals from BPFs that wish to continue:

1) The BPF on BPFs developed a set of metrics related to the functioning of the BPF as a community driven process. It should be expected that a returning BPF ticks all the boxes.
2) Returning BPFs should provide sufficient proof in their proposals of how the BPF succeeded in building a multistakeholder group of participants, involve relevant institutions, networks and key stakeholders, and interacted with other IGF initiatives (NRIs and DCs in particular).

To speed up the process and avoid long inactive periods for BPFs that wish to continue, the MAG may choose to first take into consideration proposals from BPFs that wish to continue before opening the call for proposals on new topics. BPFs that wish to continue could be requested to compile a proposal together with their final report or

[36] Several metrics were suggested, such as the number of references, citations, and the extent to which BPF produced text is being reused. However, when the MAG assesses the proposals of BPFs that wish to continue, only a few months after the publication of the BPF outputs, it is too early for such an assessment.

submit their proposal well ahead of the first meeting of the new MAG. This would allow the BPF to make better use of the visibility and momentum created by its workshop at the annual meeting and be more effective in attracting interested stakeholders to become BPF participants.

c. Suggested metrics

❑ *Relevant and suitable topic*

The MAG has to consider whether a topic is suitable for a BPF and choose the topics for which a BPF output has the potential to contribute to ongoing and future Internet policy and governance dialogues. BPF topics are typically topics for which the focus of policy discussions moved from the issues and principles to implementation. It would be difficult to collect best practice examples on issues that are still controversial and widely discussed.

The following guiding questions can help to assess proposals.

- Is the topic mature enough?
- Does the topic allow for the identification of best practices?
- In what ways is it still relevant and useful to collect best practices on this topic?
- Is there a distinct need or call for greater insight into a particular topic, and if so, by which audience(s)?
- Is this topic on the agenda of International bodies at a stage where IGF inputs on IG dimension and aspects could provide a valuable contribution?

❑ *Functioning of the BPF as a multistakeholder platform*

Secondly, the MAG should consider whether an open and bottom-up multistakeholder dialogue on best practices related to the topic is possible and can result in a tangible output. This relates mainly to the functioning of the BPF and whether it will be able to gather sufficient community interest and stakeholder involvement, and to a lesser extent to the content or subject matter.

Proposers could provide a description of the community of interest and relevant stakeholder groups. It is recommended that, next to a more general description and outreach plan, proposers also include a detailed list of organisations, institutions, and networks that already committed to participating in the BPF. They should also be asked to provide a list of intergovernmental organisations, decision-making bodies or ongoing policy development processes for which the BPF output would be relevant and useful.

For BPFs that wish to continue their work into a new year, the MAG can use the below set of basic metrics to evaluate if a BPF functioned as expected and delivered an output. It is suggested that a BPF that wishes to continue ticks all the boxes.

Metrics to evaluate the functioning of completed BPFs

- ❑ minimum of 3 open virtual meetings;
- ❑ an active BPF mailing list; (a minimum number of subscribers, a basic amount of traffic)
- ❑ the BPF process is documented on the IGF website;
- ❑ a draft BPF output is published ahead of the IGF annual meeting, with the possibility for the community to provide feedback;
- ❑ a BPF session is organised at the annual IGF meeting;
- ❑ the BPF has published a final BPF output report

❑ *BPF impact and success*

An important part of the assessment of a BPF proposal boils down to predicting the 'success' of the BPF and its potential to contribute to enhancing the impact of the IGF on global Internet governance and policy. Based on the experiences shared by BPF facilitators, supporting consultants and key participants it was possible to identify elements that have contributed to the success of a BPF. They could be used as

indicators[37] to assess the potential of the proposals. The BPF proposals should provide sufficient detail and arguments to allow the assessment.

- *Clear BPF Objectives*
  BPFs that set clear goals and objectives tend to be more focused. Focus can help to create a community of interest and keep people and organisations involved. Working towards clear objectives may have a positive impact on the quality of the output.

- *Involvement of relevant organisations or institutions*
  Experience shows that the active involvement of key organisations in the area is an important contributor to the success of a BPF and increases its chances to be picked up. BPF proposers should be encouraged to seek support/commitment of at least one key organisation (Returning BPFs can refer to the previous year).

- *Involvement of experts and expert networks*
  It's important for BPFs to receive input from experts and expert networks working on the same or related topics as the BPF. It often proves difficult to get in touch and to engage them in BPF work. Proposals could indicate which networks or experts they intend to invite.

- *Immediate relevance of BPF work for on-going discussions elsewhere*
  BPF proposals should provide examples of forums, intergovernmental organisations, decision-making bodies or ongoing policy development process for which the BPF work can be relevant.

- *Enlarging the IGF footprint across sectors and regions*
  BPF proposals should include an outreach strategy aimed at connecting with individuals, organisations, or initiatives that are outside of the IGF's typical communities and networks. The strategy should also address the need for a regional balance in inputs and views.

- *Building common ground*
  By collecting visions and experiences, BPFs have the potential to contribute to building common ground and mutual understanding in areas where not all stakeholders understand the issue(s) in the same way. A BPF proposal can indicate a specific area where such a common understanding is still missing and the BPF can contribute to building one.

- *Longer term contribution to IG(F) / BPF's ripple effect*
  BPF proposals should describe how the work is expected to contribute to the maturing of a topic and foster further discussion at the IGF, NRIs, and other IG fora.

- *Planned Interaction and synergies with other IGF activities (including DCs, NRIs, Main sessions)*
  BPF proposals should identify synergies and opportunities for cooperation with other IGF activities, including DCs, NRIs and Main sessions.

[37] The assessment consider the full proposal, not all of the indicators might be relevant for all proposals or all topics, nor is the list exhaustive.

E. BPF Modalities

One of the recommendations made in this document is to compile and publish a BPF Modalities document that covers the different organisational aspects. The modalities document is based on earlier efforts to compile such a document in 2017 and 2018.

IGF Best Practice Forums
Definitions, Procedures, and Modalities

draft

I. IGF Best Practice Forums - definition and purpose

Best Practice Forums were introduced in 2014 as part of the intersessional 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'.[38]

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. BPFs foster a common understanding of the concrete policy challenges stakeholders may address in order to contribute to achieving the Internet policy goal the BPF is focussing on. The objective is not to develop new policies or practices, but rather to collect existing good practices, share positive and negative experiences, and flag challenges that require additional multistakeholder dialogue and/or require the attention of policy-makers, including in specified decision-making bodies.

BPFs typically work on less controversial topics for which the debate has sufficiently matured to make way for some general consensus in the community and the focus of discussions has shifted to implementation.

Like other intersessional activities, BPF outcomes are designed to become robust resources, to serve as inputs into other pertinent forums, and to grow and evolve 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 intersessional 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.

[38] This intersessional programme was designed in accordance with the recommendations of a 2012 report by the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)'s Working Group on IGF Improvements.

II. BPF working modalities

General Principles

- 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 which suit the chosen topic and are tailored to each group's specific needs and requirements.
- BPF activities are open to all interested stakeholders. 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.
- BPF activities should be documented on the IGF website.
- BPFs are expected to work collaboratively and produce tangible outputs, of which drafts are shared as inputs to the annual IGF meeting.

Roles & Responsibilities

- **The BPF Coordinating team** consists of the MAG facilitator(s), BPF co-facilitator(s), and the IGF Secretariat.
- **MAG facilitators** should act as stewards of the groups, assist in scheduling and chairing the working virtual meetings, guide work being conducted on the mailing lists, and engage in outreach to encourage participation from all stakeholders in the work. MAG facilitators are expected to act as guardians of the open and inclusive character of the BPF and regularly report to the MAG on BPF progress.
- The MAG facilitators can invite one or more non-MAG **Co-facilitators** to share the workload and help with coordinating the BPF or serve as Lead-expert(s).
- The **IGF Secretariat** should primarily act as a neutral rapporteur and editor of the BPF output, including responsibility for drafting meeting summaries and providing logistical support to the work of the groups.
- **BPF participants** agree to respect the IGF Code of Conduct. Anyone can become a BPF participant by joining the mailing list or participating in BPF activities.

III. Selection of BPF topics

Proposals for BPF topics

MAG members can propose topics for the BPF intersessional program. MAG members that wish to propose a BPF should submit a proposal ahead of the first face-to-face (or equivalent) MAG meeting of the year. Proposals can be for new topics or topics that build on previous BPF work.

The proposal should indicate the following:

- **Title**
- **Names of at least two Facilitators** (at least one of which is a MAG member)
- **Background**
  This should include the relationship to multistakeholder Internet governance discussions and/or decision-making bodies and the relevance for the different stakeholder communities.
- **Description**: topics covered, proposed objectives and focus of the BPF (the description should provide sufficient detail to allow an assessment and selection as described below).
- **Outreach plan and multistakeholder engagement**
  This should mention the anticipated engagement from different parts of the multistakeholder 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.

Selection of topics
When discussing and assessing the different proposals, the MAG may use the following quantitative and qualitative metrics. To allow a swift selection process, it is recommended that proposals dully address the following elements:

Relevance and suitability of the topic

- ❑ Is the topic mature and does it allow for the collection of best practices?
- ❑ In what ways, is it still relevant and useful to collect best practices on this topic?
- ❑ Which are -in the global agenda- ongoing negotiations or debates or problems going on , which is their timeframe, and how could an IGF contribution be useful and appropriate.

Community of interest

- ❑ Will there be sufficient community interest and stakeholder involvement?
- ❑ Description of the community of interest and relevant stakeholder groups
- ❑ List of organisations, institutions, and networks they intend to invite or which have already committed to participate

Metrics to evaluate the functioning of completed BPFs

- ❑ minimum of 3 open virtual meetings;
- ❑ an active BPF mailing list (a minimum number of subscribers, a minimum amount of traffic);
- ❑ the BPF process is documented on the IGF website;
- ❑ a draft BPF output was published ahead of the IGF annual meeting, with the possibility for the community to provide feedback;
- ❑ a BPF session was organised at the annual IGF meeting;
- ❑ the BPF has published a final BPF output report

Expected output and contribution to IG discussions and decision-making processes

- ❑ BPF objective(s)
- ❑ Involvement of relevant organisations (topic leads or institutions)
- ❑ Involvement of experts and expert networks
- ❑ Enlarging the IGF footprint across sectors and regions
- ❑ Immediate relevance of BPF work for ongoing discussions elsewhere
- ❑ Building common ground
- ❑ Longer term contribution to IG(F) / BPF's ripple effect
- ❑ Planned Interaction and synergies with other IGF activities (including DCs, NRIs, Main sessions)

(a description of the above metrics can be found in the 'BPF on BPFs report, chapter D, section c)

IV. BPF Outputs and Timelines

IGF output documents
BPFs have the freedom to structure their outputs depending on the topic, chosen methodology and work plan. The following three elements are considered key components that should be reflected in BPF output documents:

1. Definition of the issue(s) and overview of policy challenges
2. Brief presentation of the used methodology and BPF activities
3. Compilation of collected case studies and/or best practices

In addition, it is recommended that BPFs consider addressing the following elements in their work and output documents:

4. Regional specificities observed (e.g. Internet industry development)
5. Existing policy measures and private sector initiatives, impediments
6. What worked well, identifying common effective practices

7. Unintended consequences of policy interventions, good and bad
8. Unresolved issues where further multistakeholder cooperation is needed
9. Insights gained as a result of the experience
10. Proposed steps for further multistakeholder dialogue, collaboration, and joint action

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

- BPFs begin to meet as soon as approved and channel their discussions into an eventual output document.
- Approximately six weeks prior to the annual meeting, 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 intersessional groups.)
- Each BPF will be responsible for organising a dedicated session at the annual IGF meeting where they will present their work and invite input.
- After the annual meeting, the outputs will be updated incorporating comments and suggestions made by the community online and at the meeting, and the final BPF outputs will be published.
- MAG facilitators of the individual BPFs, as well as all MAG members generally, are invited to carry out outreach activities to help disseminate the BPF outputs into other relevant fora and future meetings.

F. Concluding remarks

The BPF on BPFs reviewed the IGF Best Practice Forums (BPFs) as a whole, in terms of their effectiveness as a tool for the IGF to structure intersessional work.

With the input from those directly involved in organising and leading BPFs between 2014 and 2019 (MAG facilitators, Co-facilitators, key contributors, IGF Secretariat/consultants), the BPF on BPFs was able to identity a number of challenges and not yet fully used opportunities of the IGF Best Practice Forums. This allowed to formulate concrete suggestions, best practices and recommendations for improvements, most of which are hands-on and could serve to strengthen BPFs from 2021 onwards.

The BPF on BPFs also reflected on ways to evaluate BPF proposals and outcomes that would allow the MAG to develop a more systemized process of assessing and selecting BPF topics.

The BPF on BPFs is pleased to provide its final report to the MAG, and would like to recommended that the content of this report is further developed into three standalone documents that are made be easily available on the IGF website and serve as guidance for future BPF coordinating teams, participants and MAG members:

- a BPF modalities document;
- an overview of suggested improvements, which may serve as a scorecard to track progress;
- a template for BPF proposals, which reflects the metrics discussed in this report.

Annexes

Annexe 1 IGF Best Practice Forums - overview BPF topics 2014-2019

IGF 2014

- Establishing and Supporting Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRT) for Internet Security
- Creating an Enabling Environment for the Development of Local Content
- Developing Meaningful Multistakeholder Mechanisms
- Online Child Protection
- Regulation and Mitigation of Unsolicited Communications (e.g. "spam")

IGF 2015

- Establishing and Supporting Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs) for Internet Security
- Online Abuse and Gender-Based Violence Against Women
- Creating an Enabling Environment for IPv6 Adoption
- Enabling Environments to Establish Successful IXPs
- Strengthening Multistakeholder Participation Mechanisms
- Regulation and Mitigation of Unsolicited Communications

IGF 2016

- Building Confidence and Security in the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) through Enhanced Cooperation and Collaboration
- Overcoming Barriers to Enable Women's Meaningful Internet Access
- Understanding the commercial and economic incentives behind a successful IPv6 deployment
- Contributing to the success and continued development of Internet exchange points

IGF 2017

- Cybersecurity as an enabler of development
- Unique challenges for unique women, An exploration of the unique needs and challenges women from diverse communities face in gaining meaningful Internet access
- Internet cultural and linguistic diversity as an engine for growth

IGF 2018

- Cybersecurity Culture, Norms and Values
- Impact of Supplementary Models of Connectivity in Enabling Meaningful Internet Access for Women and Gender Non-Binary Persons
- Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Developing a Local Content industry

IGF 2019

- Cybersecurity Agreements
- Beyond access: Women and gender-diverse people's participation in digital economies
- Best Practices (for policy and business) to enhance justified trust in IoT, Big Data, AI applications and to stimulate their use to address societal challenges that otherwise would be more difficult to address.
- Lost and gained in digitisation: Responding to the impact of political and social upheaval on local content, language and culture

Annexe 2 ToRs IGF 2020 BPF on BPFs

IGF 2020
ToRs of the BPF on BPFs

Objectives

1. Develop and execute a work plan for reviewing IGF Best Practice Forums (BPFs) as a whole in terms of their effectiveness as a tool for the IGF to structure intersessional work. The aim is to document lessons learned, outputs, and, where possible, outcomes of BPFs organised between 2014 and 2019 and inform the process for evaluating, proposing and approving BPFs from 2021 onwards.
2. Part of the work will be the development of a systematised evaluation tool, with proposals for metrics by which the MAG could assess BPF proposals and outcomes, as well as to provide guidance for best practices on organising and leading a BPF.

Actions and deliverables

3. In line with the agreed work plan, collect and document experiences, best practices and other input related to the BPFs organised between 2014 and 2019 (eg desk research, surveys, interviews, etc.). Identify key participants such as former coordinators, lead experts, key contributors and consultants/Secretariat staff.
4. Analyse the collected information (for example SWOT analysis) and formulate best practices and recommendations for improvements, Prepare a substantive draft report for the MAG.
5. Open up the process and invite the MAG and other interested parties to provide feedback. Collect and analyse the feed-back received. Organise calls as necessary to discuss the ongoing work.
6. Publish a final report, that takes into account all the input received from the MAG and other participants. The report will be issued ahead of the annual IGF meeting so that recommendations can be taken up in the process of selecting the BPF themes for 2021.

Tentative time table:
Research and analysis: March - April
Draft report by 1 June (2 weeks before the physical MAG meeting)
Open process/ MAG discussion and feedback: June - July - Aug
Final report by 1 October 2020

Annexe 3 BPF Toolkit - practical tips and tricks to organise a BPF

Below a number of practical suggestions shared by BPF coordinators, it is a living document intended to inspire future BPFs. They should be considered as a non-exhaustive list, and future BPF teams are encouraged to continue to share good ideas.

- BPF Gender and Access organised a series of webinars in 2016 to present its work and themed webinars in 2019 where it invited organisations and institutions to present work they are doing on gender and digital economy.
- BPF Cybersecurity in 2019 formed a small group of experts group that worked on a background document that was published together with the call for contributions;
- Ask help to promote the BPF and reach out (Secretariat, MAG volunteers, DESA)
- Social media and other communication tools should be used to support communication and outreach.
- Repeated outreach and calls for contributions to gather as many written inputs as possible.
- Publish received inputs as standalone documents (people and organisations like to see their input published and get credit for their contribution).
- If a MAG facilitator is at the end of his/hers term, it is advisable that there's 2nd co-facilitator.

Annexe 4 Draft Template BPF proposals

IGF Best Practice Forums
Template for proposing a BPF topic

Draft

- Title
- Names of at least two Facilitators (at least one of which is a MAG member)
- Proposed topic and focus
  (narrative to cover proposed topic, focus, and objective of the BPF)
- Relevance of the topic
  (narrative to describe why the collection of best practices on the topic is relevant, for example by defining the community of interest and relevant stakeholders, linking the BPF to ongoing multistakeholder Internet governance discussions and/or decision-making bodies, etc.)
- Outreach plan and multistakeholder engagement in the work
  (narrative to cover anticipated engagement from different parts of the multistakeholder 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, planned or potential synergies with other IGF activities including DCs and NRIs, etc.)

(a description of the metrics that will be used to evaluate BPF proposals can be found in the BPF Modalities document.)

Note:
The summary of the 26 OCT MAG meeting was added to the BPF on BPFs report as published on 29 September 2020 without changes to its content.

IGF 2020
MAG call 26 October 2020
'From the BPF on BPFs to the BPF Process 2021'

Summary

1. On 26 October 2020, 13:00 UTC, the IGF 2020 Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) held an extraordinary meeting to discuss the findings and recommendations that came out of the 'BPF on BPFs', which was initiated by the MAG to review past Best Practice Forums (BPFs) to enhance future BPF work. The meeting was moderated by MAG Chair Ms. Anriette Esterhuysen.

   Documents and links:
   - BPF on BPFs MAG approved Terms of Reference https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/3405/2213
   - BPF on BPFs Report - Reviewing past BPFs to enhance future BPF work https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/3405/2212
   - BPF on BPFs - Overview of recommendations https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/3405/2272
   - Draft IGF Best Practice Forums Definitions, Procedures, and Modalities https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/3405/2270

   - BPF on BPFs webpage https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/bpf-on-bpfs
   - The meeting's recording can be accessed at https://intgovforum.zoom.us/rec/share/q3EBr98B4g0erHZA4-8m9xpLJqbJWM3o4PDxrWw8ehvlupPYIVJT0zdkZ3tbgKzE.7MwNuY2BQKziB6kO
     Access Passcode: aR3GG*D5

2. The Chair welcomed MAG members and clarified that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the BPF on BPFs final outcomes(1), reflect on the learnings, and endorse the report and recommendations that will then be provided to the new MAG responsible for preparing the IGF in 2021.

3. Mr. Markus Kummer, facilitator of the BPF on BPFs, presented the draft 'BPF Definitions, Procedures, and Modalities' that were developed in line with the BPF on BPFs own recommendation to consolidate existing draft BPF modalities in one document ahead of the next cycle.

4. The suggestion by Mr. Carlos Alfonso to rephrase the text pertaining to BPF proposals to allow the community to suggest BPF topics received support. Ms. Sylvia Cadena shared that she was

preparing a proposal for a BPF in the 2021 cycle, and welcomed the modalities document as a useful tool. It was clarified that a topic is considered to be 'mature' enough for a BPF when controversy has made room for a sufficient degree of understanding and the topic lends itself to writing up common good practices, or when there is sufficient buy-in from different stakeholder groups that a topic is relevant and important and it allows itself to exchanging practices and sharing solutions.

5. Mr. Markus Kummer provided an overview of the recommendations to enhance future BPF work that are compiled in the BPF on BPFs report, and invited MAG members to comment.

6. Ms. Concettina Cassa noted that BPFs might need help with reaching out to key institutions and expert organisations. She also suggested that BPFs procedure short documents with key takeaways and recommendations (max 2 pages) in addition to their reports. Mr. Wim Degezelle, penholder of the report, stressed the importance of stakeholder engagement in BPF work so that the community takes ownership of the BPF and the MAG and IGF secretariat can focus on their role as steward and support of the BPF process. Mr. Ben Wallis said to support the recommendation to allow BPFs to apply for 2-year terms, but suggested to limit BPFs to maximum two two year terms. Mr. Carlos Alfonso warned against imposing end dates to BPF terms without taking into account the relevance and importance of a topic at that moment. Ms. Sylvia Cadena suggested stimulating BPFs to reflect on, and formulate proposals if appropriate, for the BPF work to continue after the BPF term within or outside the IGF.

7. Ms. Anriette Esterhuysen concluded that there was consensus to endorse the modalities document, thanked MAG members for their feedback on the recommendations, and acknowledged the authors and all involved in the BPF on BPFs for their work.

(1) The draft BPF outcomes were presented to the MAG at its 11 August 2020 virtual meeting and published on the IGF website with an opportunity for MAG members and the IGF community to review and provide feedback. The final version of the BPF on BPFs report was published on 29 September 2020.

Annexe: Suggested Amendment to the draft BPF Definitions, Procedures, and Modalities

(old text)
Proposals for BPF topics MAG members can propose topics for the BPF intersessional program. MAG members that wish to propose a BPF should submit a proposal ahead of the first face-to-face (or equivalent) MAG meeting of the year. Proposals can be for new topics or topics that build on previous BPF work.

(new text)
Proposals for BPF topics Topics for the BPF intersessional program should be submitted or seconded by at least one MAG member. BPF proposals should be submitted ahead of the first face-to-face (or equivalent) MAG meeting of the year. MAG members submitting or seconding a proposal are expected to take on the role of MAG Facilitator should the MAG select the topic for a BPF. Proposals can be for new topics or topics that build on previous BPF work.