Proposal for a BPF on Gender and Access: Gender impact on shaping Internet policy
(revised in May 2020)

I - NAMES OF AT LEAST TWO CO-FACILITATORS (MAG member + non-MAG members as appropriate)

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II - BACKGROUND
Since its beginning in 2015, the Best Practice Forum (BPF) on Gender and Access has focused on different aspects of women's meaningful access to the Internet: online abuse and gender-based violence (2015); barriers for accessing the Internet (2016); identification of the needs and challenges of diverse women's groups with respect to Internet access (2017); and the impact of supplementary models of connectivity on women's Internet access (2018) were the topics addressed by the community. The 2019 edition of the Best Practice Forum on Gender and Access focused on the opportunities and challenges that women face to gain necessary skills to benefit from the future of work in the framework of the digital economy. During these years, the BPF Gender has worked in a bottom-up process that allowed it to collect, from diverse stakeholders, valuable data and anecdotal evidence of the challenges that formed the digital gender gap. In this process something that has naturally emerged has been the evidence of lack of sufficient and meaningful participation of women and gender diverse people in the decision making process that at public and private level shape the governance of the Internet. We aim to connect the work done in the past years by the Gender and Access BPF through this fundamental piece looking transversally to the opportunities for strengthened participation of women and gender diverse people in Internet-related policy processes and spaces.

III - DESCRIPTION

In 2020 we propose an assessment of Internet-related policy processes and spaces through a feminist approach, to determine whether and how they protect and foster participation of women and gender-diverse people, particularly young ones. Our focus will be on Internet-related policy processes and spaces that address issues related to violence, harm, pleasure and consent online.

Additionally, anticipating that the digital acceleration promoted by the current COVID-19 pandemics might inevitably result in a shift towards some of these policy responses, this BPF will also look at how digital policies focused on addressing the COVID-19 pandemic

consider gender perspectives related to violence, harm, pleasure and consent online and integrate the views of women and gender diverse people.

As such, we will look in particular at (global, regional and/or national) Internet-related policy processes and spaces that (may) foster discussions or develop policies, recommendations, guidelines etc focused on:
- Limiting violence and harm in the online space
- Foster the use of the Internet for self-expression and pleasure with consent as a guiding principle.

For these processes and spaces, we will assess:
a) Whether and how the policies, recommendations, guidelines, etc they develop approach the focus issues from a gender diversity perspective; and
b) Whether and how they include women and gender diverse people in their policy discussions and decision-making processes (i.e. Are women and gender-diverse people able to participate and have their concerns articulated on the focus topics?).

We will use the findings of these assessments to compile examples of good practices on the issues explored. And we will then develop recommendations on ensuring representation of women and gender diverse people in Internet-related policy spaces and decision making processes.

Timeframe:

- May: Restarting the BPF meetings to discuss the methodology of work.
- May-Sep: Community work (calls, surveys, outreach etc)
- Oct: First draft of the report for comments.
- Nov: BPF Session at IGF 2020
- Dec: Final Output Report

IV - OUTREACH PLAN AND MULTISTAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORK

As in previous years, the BPF Gender and Access will continue to focus on taking its work outside the BPF community to stimulate and expand collaboration with more stakeholders. We aim to:

- Take the findings and outcomes of the BPF Gender to spaces and forums in and outside the IG ecosystem (e.g., influence W20, local governments, regional agencies, private companies, technical standard international bodies, academic institutions,

among others) to present the work that has been done and identify possibilities of implementation in concrete policies.

- Further collaboration with others working in policy with a gender perspective from a feminist approach, to avoid duplicate work, to join efforts, to build a global network and to amplify messages.

- Improve engagement with relevant DCs, other inter-sessional activities and NRIs.

- Outreach and engagement through various online platforms identified as strategic (e.g., survey, twitter conversations, webinars)