IGF 2021
IGF Best Practice Forums
Template

- Proposals for the BPF should be submitted or seconded by at least one MAG member.
- 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.

- Proposals are requested to provide answers on the six questions in the template.
- Please address elements noted on the last page of this document throughout your proposal.
- Proposals should be submitted to reporting@intgovforum.org
- Deadline 18 January 2021

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'.[1]

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 policymakers, 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.

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[1] 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.

Proposal for a 2021 Best Practice Forum / template

1. Title

Best Practice Forum on Local Content

2. Names of at least two Facilitators *(at least one of which is a MAG member).*

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3. Background
Indicate the relevance and suitability of the topic for a Best Practice Forum, and the relevance of this BPF for the wider multistakeholder Internet governance discussion, different stakeholder groups and/or decision-making bodies.

The BPF on Local Content was first established in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) framework in 2014, with a focus on how to create an enabling environment for the development of online local content. The BPF was then reconvened in 2017 and over the past three years it has looked at various issues related to the development and promotion of locally- relevant content in the digital space, starting from the consideration that the lack of local contents and services is strictly interlinked with the access problems.

It is the IGF intersessional space which makes recommendations on these issues.

4. Description:
Topics covered, proposed objectives and focus of the BPF.

Basically it is suggested that the focus continues around the four thematic tracks of 2020:
1. Protection, preservation and promotion of local and indigenous languages
2. Protection, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage
3. Protection, preservation and promotion of other forms of local content in the digital age
4. Local content production: issues of sustainability and funding

For 2021 it is suggested that special attention is given to developing local content production skills in community networks, as a cross-cutting issue related to the four tracks. "Community networks" here would be understood as broader than just small villages' wi-fi networks – this could encompass all initiatives of local content production in organized communities to be made available on the Internet. A special attention will be given to the production of local news and of local services at the service of the communities.

The intention of the BPF is to collect and analyse examples of good practices through which community networks have been leveraged to support the development of local content locally, and to enable the protection, preservation and promotion of local and indigenous languages and of cultural heritage. It will also look at initiatives that have been successful in creating sustainable models (including financially) for the production of local content (e.g. the production of local digital content; the use of digital technologies to enable the production of other forms of local content).

5. Engagement and outreach plan
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. Clearly indicate confirmed commitments.

In the past years the BPF had the involvement of relevant representatives of all sectors, although it could have been broader and more regular. It is expected that they will continue this engagement. This includes:

- alternative publishers & media (like Voz de Galicia) to reach through their associations (WAN, etc.)
- members of community networks' coalitions
- international organizations specialized in cultural contents & local languages (UNESCO and WIPO)
- Internet Society and its chapters
- Alliance for Affordable Internet
- Wikimedia Foundation
- Rising Voices/Global Voices, Language Digitization Initiative, Canadian Indigenous Languages Technology Project, Hutukara Yanomami Association (for first thematic track)
- HIVOS
- Digital Empowerment Foundation
- Translation Commons

Members of the Dynamic Coalition on Community Connectivity (DC3) are expected to participate as well. As soon as there is a green light from the secretariat, the facilitators will restart contacting the relevant participants.

6. Furthering the implementation of the IGF Mandate and UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation

Please provide some ideas on how you intend to respond to the calls for supporting a collaborative work environment (IGF Project Document) and to better integrate programme and intersessional policy development work (UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation art 93(e)), and the suggestions 'to build on and strengthen the existing Dynamic Coalitions and Best Practice Fora (...)' (Options Paper for the Future of Global Digital Cooperation).

The outcomes of this and other BPFs are a key contribution to that call.

Both the "Roadmap for Digital Cooperation" and UNDESA stress the importance of somehow better integrating the entire intersessional processes -- and thus integrating the DCs is a far bigger challenge than doing the same for the BPF process, given the diversity and more autonomous nature of the DCs and that there is a much smaller number of BPFs. It is relevant to note that the work of the DC on Community Connectivity will have important synergies with this BPF as proposed.

It is important to recall that at least in the case of DCs the intersessional work since its inception does far more than the outcome reports of the IGF. It helps organize communities around relevant issues, build consensus around proposals for action, and generally is oriented to try and proactively influence in decision-making, which is not what the current IGF does.

UNDESA's call 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" needs a clear understanding of what UNDESA means by "harmonizing". This concept is perfectly defined, for instance, in the case of crossborder telecommunications regulations, but here we are talking about a possible interference in the autonomy of intersessional activities. In the case of the NRIs, autonomy is frequently appropriated as an asset of the specific national and regional processes. Besides, the entire intersessional process is fully based on volunteer work (with the exception of consultant support in the case of the BPFs). The beauty of the IGF (unintended or not) is that it stimulated autonomous Internet governance forums throughout the planet, and trying to somehow bring them to a UN herd is not achievable.

One crucial element of the BPF work is that the capture of best practices ends up touching many practices which are examples of what not to do, or which botched but could be successful in certain conditions. The BPF on Local Content last year worked with this perception in mind. As the BPF on PBFs Report recognizes, "[d]iscussion about less successful approaches and resulting lessons

learned can be as valuable as collecting good practices." Both lessons could be crucial to shape appropriate public policies in order to improve the production of local contents and services.

Criteria for the assessment of BPF Proposals

To allow a swift selection process, it is recommended that proposals dully address the following elements. Please address them in your proposal where applicable (a more detailed description of the metrics can be found in the BPF on BPFs report, chapter D, section c).

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)

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