BEST PRACTICE FORUM
GENDER & DIGITAL RIGHTS

IGF 2021

Best Practice Forum

Gender and Digital Rights

Kick-off call

Tuesday 18 May 2021

14:00 UTC

Draft call Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
   a. Purpose of a Best Practice Forum
   b. Presentation of the topic, intended work plan, coordinating team
2. Discussion and Feedback
   a. Introduction – survey update
   b. Discussion and Feedback
      • Definition of 'gendered disinformation'
      • Proposed BPF work plan
      • BPF outputs: what is useful? What can be achieved?
      • BPF outreach: who to involve? How to cooperate with other IGF initiatives?
3. Closing and Next Steps
   a. Fill in the BPF survey
   b. Subscribe to the mailing list
   c. Next meeting

IGF 2021
Best Practice Forum on Gender and Digital Rights

1. Welcome and Introductions

   a. Purpose of a Best Practice Forum
   b. Presentation of the topic, intended work plan, coordinating team

IGF Best Practice Forums

Provide a platform to exchange experiences in addressing Internet policy issues.

BPF outputs intend to contribute to an understanding of global good practice, and to serve as a resource to inform policy discussions, standards development, business decisions, as well as public understanding, awareness, and discourse.

IGF 2021 BPF Gender and Digital Rights

The 2021 BPF on Gender and Digital Rights intends to explore the concept of **gendered disinformation.**
As the phenomenon of disinformation advances, it gains nuances and levels of complexity. In the current context, it is timely to explore the concept of gendered disinformation, its relation with online gender-based violence and hate speech, as well as its immediate effects on women and gender-diverse groups' existence online and their freedom of expression.

draft BPF work plan

Kick-off phase

- Consultation on the definition of gendered disinformation

- Exploring community needs and available resources

BPF Learning sessions

- **Expert & stakeholder discussions** (BPF calls, dates to be announced)

Information gathering

- **Call for inputs** (June), additional information gathering (e.g. interviews, desk research) and outreach (including outreach to NRIs and youth initiatives) (June – Sept)

Processing of input, discussion and compilation of draft findings (Sept - Oct)

BPF Gender & Digital Rights Workshop at IGF 2021   (6-10 December)

Envisaged goals and deliverables

- Understand how gender based disinformation has been deployed as a strategy against women and gender-diverse groups.

- Understand how the negative effects on digital rights spill over to other sets of rights, such as political participation, what allows gendered disinformation to be used as part of larger political projects of moral policing, censorship, and hierarchisation of citizenship and rights.

- Map strategies and actions to halt the spread of gendered disinformation and build a less toxic environment for female and gender-diverse groups online.

- Showcase positive initiatives that set the beginning of what can be a long term multistakeholder dialogue on gendered disinformation.

BPF Gender and Digital Rights webpage

www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/bpf-gender-and-digital-rights

BPF Gender and Digital Rights mailing list

http://intgovforum.org/mailman/listinfo/bp_gender_intgovforum.org

BPF Gender and Digital Rights coordinating team

Ms Chenai Chair (*MAG facilitator*), Ms Amrita Choudhury (*MAG facilitator*), Ms Bruna Martins dos Santos, Ms Debora Albu, Ms Marwa Azelmat, Mr Wim Degezelle (*Consultant IGF Secretariat*).

Contact gender@intgovforum.org

Participation in the work of the BPF Gender and Digital Rights is free and open to all interested. Participants are expected to respect the *IGF Code of Conduct*.

1.B An attempt at defining 'gendered disinformation'

- **Disinformation**

  - **Differentiate from misinformation**

  - **Negative impact on democracies**

- **What about gender? Disproportion or imbalance with regards to:**

- **a) the target of disinformation campaigns (based on their gender); and**

- **b) reinforcing gender stereotypes**

Working definition gendered disinformation

The term "**gendered disinformation**" can be used to describe information activities (creating, sharing, dissimenating content) which:

a)   Attacks or undermines people on the basis of their gender;

b)   Weaponises gendered narratives to promote pollitical, social or economic objectives

(based on Judson et al, 2020, p. 7, https://dera.ioe.ac.uk//36786/1/Engendering-Hate-Report-FINAL.pdf)

1.B An attempt at defining 'gendered disinformation'

- **Range of concepts**
  - **Gendered disinformation**
  - **Misogynistic disinformation (Sessa, 2020)**

- **What does it entail?**
  - Misogynist comments that reinforce gender stereotypes;
  - Sexualization and the diffusion of graphic contents;
  - Online harassment;
  - Cyber-attacks;
  - Weaponization of online spaces to exclude women and gender-diverse groups;

- Specificity against women and gender diverse people in public positions such as politicians, journalists, leaders.

- Specificity against gender equality issues, such as sexual and reproductive rights

- **What are the effects?**
  - Perpetuating a negative perception of women and gender diverse groups in society / **perpetuate gender inequality;**
  - Undermines women's credibility in occupying positions of power;
  - Discourages women from participating in the public debate;
  - Serves to silence women in general; and
  - As OGBV, can have "offline effects" such as fear for physical safety.

- **Where to draw the line between 'gendered disinformation' and 'hate speech'?**

- **We should have an intersectional approach to this issue.**

2. <u>Discussion and Feedback</u>

- **Definition of 'gendered disinformation'**

- **Proposed BPF work plan**

- **BPF outputs: what is useful? What can be achieved?**

- **BPF outreach: who to involve? How to cooperate with other IGF initiatives?**

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First feedback from the BPF survey *(6 replies so far)*

Feedback on definition gendered disinformation

- General support

- Comments: 'weaponizing' can also apply in a positive context; social media play very active role; gendered disinformation online exists at the intersection of disinformation with online violence & emanating from the same source, engendering hate.

- Alternative and complementary more detailed definitions.

Community needs? Useful actions and outputs for the BPF?

- awareness raising and education on the issue;

- focus on impact, regulation and accountability;

- effective mitigation (processes, skills, tools) of gendered disinformation;

- support for ambassadors and volunteers who counter gendered disinformation in all parts of the globe.

Please continue to submit you input on the survey,

Including your suggestions for outreach to relevant initiatives and experts, and reference documents.

3. Closing and Next Steps

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    c. Next meeting

Thank you for participating !