

Proposal for a Best Practice Forum on Local Content 2019

Local contents and services over the Internet as part of the SDG

Updated 11 April

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

- Carlos Afonso
- Giacomo Mazzone
- *would welcome an additional volunteer to co-facilitate, in particular from a different region*

II - BACKGROUND

Local Content in the Internet Universal Indicators

The penetration of the Internet in the world in June 2018 passed 55% of the total population. The driving engine for this penetration is the possibility for new sectors of population to access more and more to contents and services locally based and in local languages. The access to the Internet that doesn't provide access to local contents and services is perceived as incomplete. Relevant content and services that answer to the demand and needs of users drive Internet uptake and growth.

The UNESCO decision to launch the initiative to define the Internet Universality Indicators in 2018 that is now in the final phase, corresponds exactly to this need to define what is a healthy Internet within a community, how the Internet could help to better keep a community together and how could allow to make the community grow¹.

This is for instance what the UNESCO's Indicators define about the relevance of contents in its Theme E – Local Content and Language: “Relevant content, including content which is generated locally and concerned with local issues, is necessary if people are to use the Internet in order to improve their quality of life or livelihoods, and to contribute to national development. Defining and assessing local content is, however, problematic. People define content which they consider locally relevant in different ways. Language may be one of a number of potential indicators. Social media content posted by individuals may differ in this context from content on websites.”

Questions E.1 and E.2 are concerned with the availability of locally-generated content within and about the country, and should also be assessed with reference to the proportion of individuals generating online content (Category R Question B.5).” As indicator UNESCO adopts the following question: “Is a substantial and growing volume of content about the country available online, including locally-generated content?”

¹ <https://en.unesco.org/internetuniversality> - <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0026/002658/265830e.pdf>

The importance of digital heritage in the Internet Universal Indicators

In UNESCO's current version of its Internet Universality Indicators, detailed references to content are in category "A" and "O" of its ROAMX classification (openness), divided into five themes.

Theme "E" (local content and language) of category "A" (accessibility to all) extensively addresses the relevance of local content (local being understood at different localization levels), but is theme "F" of category "R" (rights) which brings to fore the preservation of content -- the digital heritage of local communities, regions, and countries.

Regarding the UN SDGs, an essential, cross-cutting element of the strategies to evaluate performance regarding the SDGs' targets is information preservation -- in order to determine advance or regression of targets, reliable historic records of the factors affecting each target ought to be kept.

In each country, political changes or managerial inefficiencies may affect preservation of official information. A ministry or relevant public department may disappear or be absorbed by another, possibly affecting information gathering methods and criteria, or the preservation of archives. In more extreme cases, newly elected officials might decide to rewrite chapters of the country's history, or even erase or make inaccessible legal data affecting institutions and individuals. Trusted official information and archives, preserved and accessible over the Internet are an important source to face today's "fake news" challenges.

The BPF could develop these two aspects of the UNESCO reflections (availability and preservation of local content).

Building on the work of the BPF Local content 2017 and 2018

Local content is a returning topic at the IGF and considered to be a subject that benefits from continued cooperation and coordination efforts among all stakeholders.

The [2018 BPF on Local Content](#) has focused on **Towards a sustainable local content value chain** and arrived to some conclusions about the necessity to consider the environment of local contents and media as an ecosystem, that deeps its roots in the past analogue world and now is moving into the digital world.

In some parts of the world there already exist consolidated models that today guarantee a flow of resources (from TV and radio, film industry, publishers, etc.) to professional creators. In the developed countries these mechanisms are slowly moving to extend their action also to internet contents. In other parts of the world such kind of mechanisms don't exist or are very weak.

Considering the insufficient transfer of resources from the Internet platforms to local creators in local languages (especially in small countries), the most efficient way to improve the quantity and quality of local content and languages over the Internet is to accelerate and facilitate the conversion of existing models into the Internet market, for example cinema becoming digital and on line, TV and radio becoming digital and producing ad hoc contents for the on-line distribution, or printed media becoming digital publishers of web-based contents and services;

Effective national and regional laws could stimulate this process of transformation, while International Treaties (such as UNESCO on cultural diversity and WIPO on the protection of authors, performers, producers and broadcasters rights) could represent a level playing field and provide appropriate framework for domestic policies.

The BPF 2018 observed three "realities" related to the local creation of local content:

1. New self-sustaining models for local content creation: Local businesses, entrepreneurs, SMEs, etc. develop their own new models to create and commercialise content and be self-sustaining. New companies and start-ups are well placed to test innovative models, but also existing companies can search and develop new ways to create and commercialise local content.
2. The development of an enabling environment for local content creation: Numerous policies, projects, and initiatives in all parts of the world contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for the development of a sustainable local content industry. There's a broad spectrum of examples, such as IP legislation to protect online content of local creators², initiatives to provide affordable local hosting to local content producers³, etc., but also schemes and programmes providing support to start-ups, SMEs, etc. to help them become self-sustainable.
3. Existing models promoting, supporting or subsidizing local content creation: Existing models in legislation, regulation, incentives, international or national policies etc. have as goal to promote, support, and subsidize the local creation of local online content. An important part of these models are particularly focused on or limited to the creation of local online content of a cultural and educational nation and the transition from traditional media to digital platforms.

The [2017 BPF on Local Content](#) built on the 2014 effort by collecting case studies and examples of successful projects from various stakeholders. These case studies and examples demonstrate best practices and are intended to inspire policy and decision makers seeking for ways to stimulate local content creation, and motivate and support local developers or entrepreneurs to create content and services for the local population.²

III - DESCRIPTION

Proposal BPF Local Content 2019: Local contents and services over the internet as part of the SDGs

Inspired by the discussions during the BPF workshop at the 2018 IGF meeting and by the large mobilization around this topic by a community of civil society actors (NGO) and international organizations (IGO), it is proposed to continue the BPF Local content in 2019 with a focus on both **enabling favourable conditions for the production, development and exchange of local contents and services, and for the preservation of the information heritage of the various communities.**

Commitment already confirmed by WIPO, EBU/WBU, UNESCO and other international organizations

The BPF intends to reflect on work done in other forums or by International organizations such as WIPO, UNESCO and WBU/EBU around the need to advance or enhance local content as part of the cultural assets of a community.³

² <https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/bpf-local-content-0>

³ See the conclusions of the recent WSIS thematic workshop on this topic organized by these 3 organizations:

http://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2018/Content/Uploads/DOC/1de190dce61e4d3ab740a1a5b185227a/session-158_summary.pdf

Topics & perspectives to cover: (to be prioritized and structured by the BPF)

- Protection of digital heritage as part of the identity of local community
- Identify possible role for civil society, business partners and technical community in preserving and protecting digital heritage
- Business models and related issues:
 - Monetization of content, secure payment platforms, paid content versus free content and the use of ads, banners and other methods
- Freedom of speech and access to information
- Multilingualism, education and skills
- Infrastructure and related issues such as Net Neutrality
- Trade related issues such as the cross-border transfer of content, geo-blocking, use of quota
- IP & copyright as enablers of sustainable local contents industries
- Consumer protection
- Appropriate regulatory frameworks promoting the creation of local content, Government initiatives and their intended and unintended impact
- Stakeholder involvement and cooperation: content creators & producers, right holders, media platforms, / governments and regulators
- etc

What intends the BPF do?

- Concretely promote experiences of cooperation among actors of various part of the world
- Further identify and describe critical issues
- Seek for best practices and tested solutions in different contexts
- Identify stakeholders and parties involved
- Provide a platform to strengthen the discussion between stakeholders
- Providing solution to protect and save digital heritage at risk to disappear

IV - OUTREACH PLAN AND MULTISTAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORK

Outreach & support BPF 2019

The BPF has already received the confirmed commitment from organisations such as WIPO, UNESCO, WBU/EBU, FIAPF, WAN-IFRA and many others to participate in the discussions and share their research and expertise.

- The BPF will reach out to those who actively participated in the BPF discussion at the IGF in Paris - some of them explicitly expressed their interest to be involved if the BPF continues. Among the active participants in the BPF discussion at IGF2018

were representatives from the Internet Society, Armenia ; **Ema Edesio**, Award winning filmmaker and film director, and **Enyi Omeruah**, Music and audiovisual entrepreneur, both from Nigeria ; **Gonzalo Laguado Serpa**, from Proimagenes Colombia, Columbia ; **Grégoire Ndjaka**, Association of the African Broadcasters AUB/UAR ; **Jean Hubert Nankam**, Producer of reality TV shows, documentaries, and drama, Ivory Coast ; **Roberto Gaetano, ALAC**, Italy ; **Ucha Seturi**, Telecom Operators Association of Georgia, coordinator of the Tusheti project, Georgia; **Bertrand Moullier**, International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF)

Outreach will remain high on the BPF's agenda and participants to the BPF will be invited to make additional suggestions for outreach to and potential cooperation with organisations, projects and forums.

BPF activities 2018

The final output document of the 2018 BPF on Local content is available on the IGF website at the following link: http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/5005/1441 .