

UNESCO's Comprehensive Study on Internet Related Issues

Submitted by :

Name: Walid Al-Saqaf

Gender: Male

Category of Stakeholder: D. technical community

Country: Yemen

Region: Arab States

1. What can be done to reinforce the right to seek and receive information in the online environment?

Awareness of the tools and methods available to everyone to access such information and the importance for content and service providers to be digitally literate and proactive in publishing content in open formats.

2. What mechanisms can develop policies and common standards for open-licensed educational resources and scientific repositories, and for the long-term preservation of digital heritage?

Common best practices and methods already established in developed countries should be adopted in the other countries to maximize the reach and access. This would require training and capacity building through long term projects in educational institutes.

3. How can greater progress be made as regards inclusive strategies for women and girls as well as marginalized and disabled people?

Human rights policies already include aspects on gender and women. What is needed is just ensure legislations conform to those rights and protections of human rights are enforced and not remain on paper only.

4. How can accessibility be facilitated through increases in locally produced and relevant content in different languages?

Educational institutes including primary and secondary schools need to be equipped with trainers and resources to publish more content in local languages on the web.

5. What can be done to institutionalize Media and Information Literacy (MIL) effectively in national educational systems?

Aid should be linked and includes aspects of promoting digital learning in reforming educational institutions. Overseeing the implementation of those projects is a must to ensure conformity by governments.

6. What are the current and emerging challenges relevant to freedom of expression online?

Censorship and surveillance as well as poor cyber security practices are all negatively affecting it.

7. How can legislation in a diverse range of fields which impacts on the Internet respect freedom of expression in line with international standards?

We should ensure that implementation of such legislations should not collide with free speech as much as possible. In case of conflict careful examination of context and harm principle should be considered.

8. Is there a need for specific protections for freedom of expression for the Internet?

Yes because it is a new arena with a global universal impact that is not bound by geography or national sovereignty.

9. To what extent do laws protect digitally interfaced journalism and journalistic sources?

They don't do much because they don't give Internet its special position as a global network with no central control point.

10. What are the optimum ways to deal with online hate speech? How can Media and Information Literacy empower users to understand and exercise freedom of expression on the Internet?

There should be a way for users to actively report such hate speech and allow content providers to voluntarily remove or edit it.

11. What are the optimum systems for independent self-regulation by journalistic actors and intermediaries in cyberspace?

Ethical codes of conduct are the way.

12. What principles should ensure respect for the right to privacy?

Personal privacy should be protected and that includes everything not meant to go public such as email exchanges, internal data storage, etc.

13. What is the relationship between privacy, anonymity and encryption?

Anonymity should be granted to those who wish to remain safe from potential repercussions for whistle-blowing to report abuse or corruption in repressive environment. Privacy and encryption enforce each other and are a right for all people but also help anonymity in some cases.

14. What is the importance of transparency around limitations of privacy?

Government and power holders need limitations to privacy due to their potential of abusing power. It is important to hold them to account.

15. What kinds of arrangements can help to safeguard the exercise of privacy in relation to other rights?

Strict privacy settings should be provided by service providers. Users should be informed about those settings and have the right to be informed if it will be breached or if their data is logged.

16. How can openness and transparency of data be reconciled with privacy?

Openness and transparency need to be in public institutions and power centers such as global service providers. Individuals on the other hand need their privacy protected.

17. What may be the impact of issues relating to big data on respect for privacy?

Big data can involve personal data and can identify serious breaches of privacy in analyzing behaviour, habits, preferences, photos, etc., which may be quite daunting.

18. How can security of personal data be enhanced?

1. Users need to be aware of risks and good security practices.
2. Service and software providers need stricter and more secure platforms.
3. Law enforcement units need efficient means to deal with security breaches

19. How can Media and Information Literacy be developed to assist individuals to protect their privacy?

Educational institutes need to embed cyber security education and training in their curricula and government institutions as well as the private sector and civil society need to promote dialogue to find strategies to address cyber security.

20. How can ethical principles based on international human rights advance accessibility, openness, and multi-stakeholder participation on the Internet?

Human rights are broad enough to encompass all those aspects.

21. What conceptual frameworks or processes of inquiry could serve to analyse, assess, and thereby inform the choices that confront stakeholders in the new social uses and applications of information and knowledge?

22. How does ethical consideration relate to gender dimensions of the Internet?

23. How can ethics, - i.e. the simultaneous affirmation of human rights, peace, equity, and justice - inform law and regulation about the Internet?

24. What international, regional and national frameworks, normative guidelines and accountability mechanisms exist of relevance to one or more fields of the study?

25. How do cross-jurisdictional issues operate with regard to freedom of expression and privacy?

26. What are the intersections between the fields of study: for example, between access and freedom of expression; ethics and privacy; privacy and freedom of expression; and between all four elements?

27. What pertinent information materials exist that cut across or which are relevant to the four fields of the study?

28. What might be the options for role of UNESCO within the wider UN system in regard to the distinct issues of online Access to information and knowledge, Freedom of Expression, Privacy and Ethical dimensions of the information society?

29. What might be options for the role of UNESCO in relation to stakeholders outside the UN system?

30. For each study field, what specific options might UNESCO Member States consider?