

**Third Annual Meeting of the Arab IGF**  
**Arab Perspective for Shaping the Future of the Internet**  
**Beirut, 26-27 November 2014**

**Workshops Description<sup>1</sup>**

**WS1:**

**IXPs: The Untapped opportunity for the Arab region**

**Description:**

In the Arab region, Internet pricing is considered as relatively high, user experience is still very modest, and speeds are low when compared to other regions. In addition, most of the regional traffic is still exchanged over Europe, which means that not only traffic is flowing out of the region but also millions of dollars. On the other hand, we cannot neglect the fact that the Arab region is experiencing a very rapid Internet growth and the need for more traffic capacities, to deliver new services with higher quality, is increasing.

In this context, a wise development of IXPs can help not only to change/improve the situation in the region, by reducing Internet pricing and increasing connectivity speeds but also by improving the user experience. The challenge in the region is not to make the access available for everyone but to make it available at the right speed and with high quality of service.

This workshop is based on ESCWA's study (developed in 2014) on "Internet Exchange Points: The Untapped Opportunity for the Arab Region", and will cover the following areas:

Globally/Regionally:

- Landscape of IXPs in general and specificities of the Arab region in specific
- Different business models for IXPs whether national or regional
- Most common governance structures for those IXPs, and their mode of operation regarding transit traffic
- Efforts and activities of ISOC in other regions of the world
- Efforts and activities of the League of Arab States and ESCWA

Regionally:

- Selected Arab national experiences and barriers which have hindered the development of IXPs in the region
- Required national policy for building the regional pan-Arab IXPs

During this workshop, together with its main partners, ESCWA will present/launch its regional initiative in the field

**Organized by:** ESCWA – International and Regional Organizations

<sup>1</sup> *Editorial Note:* Overall theme and programme, including main sessions and workshops of the Arab IGF annual meetings, are produced by the Arab Internet Governance Community through the Arab Multistakeholder Advisory Group (AMAG), which represent all stakeholder groups, through an open bottom-up process with input from the public through Open Consultations. Workshops are organized by their independent proponents with the engagement of AMAG through an Open Call followed by an AMAG evaluation and selection process. Views and opinions reflected in various documents are those of their respective authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of any of the entities/individuals/Staff Members affiliated with the Arab IGF, including the UN-ESCWA, and the League of Arab States; which are not responsible for any misrepresentations, misinterpretations of information included in those various documents.

**Moderator:** Mirna El-Hajj Barbar, ESCWA

**Speakers:**

- **Ayman El-Sherbiny**, UN-ESCWA, IGO, Lebanon
- **Khaled Foda**, LAS, RO, Egypt
- **Gael Hernandez/Nishal Goburdhan**, Packet Clearing House, NGO, USA
- **Jane Coffin**, ISOC, Technical Community, USA
- **Osama Al-Dosari**, Business Sector, KSA
- **Saleh Mansour**, CTO, NGN
- **Nicolas Rouhana**, Executive Director, Berytech Technological Pole

**WS2:**

**Reshaping the way we think about privacy**

**Workshop description:**

Privacy has been a key topic in Internet Governance discussions. The angle of discussions mainly focused on highlighting the risks and exploring protection tools and mechanisms. This workshop will attempt to look at privacy as an area of opportunity and innovation and if this concept can apply to the Middle East audience. The current trend of data surge has prompted companies to focus on creating innovative services and applications which facilitate safe and anonymous online navigation. This shift prompts changing the focus on privacy protection as an area of governance, or as an obstacle to innovation and sharing to being viewed as the foundation for the evolution of digital media business models that understand digital media as an evolving architecture of human social relations, and privacy as a new basic market demand. In this view, the generation that is growing up with the open online networks is key to our understanding of the concept of privacy as it evolves today. The way in which young people approach and navigate their online private and public lives challenge how privacy is currently conceptualized, debated and regulated.

**Organized by:** Hivos

**Moderator:** Hanane Boujemi, Manager Internet Governance Programme MENA region - Hivos

**Speakers:**

- **Abdallah Absi**, CEO Zoomal
- **Amr Sader**, Univeristy of Torston
- **Mohamed al bashir**, ICT Qatar

**WS3:**

**Multilingualism Online: An Arabic Script Perspective**

**Workshop description:**

During the Arab IGF Algiers 2013, ICANN announced the call for participation for the TF-AIDN. One month later, the TF was formed and kicked off aiming at focusing on technical issues and solutions to promote Arabic IDN's definition, secure deployment and ease of use for the community.

This workshop focuses on how the work done by the TF could benefit the Arabic script community and addresses the challenges of working on Arabic script that includes community, linguistic and technical state of affairs. To this end, the workshop brings representatives from the private sector, language community, technical community, DNS industry, as well as community members to address the following questions:

- What is the status of IDN uptake? And what are the challenges facing it?
- What is the importance of working on IDN linguistic issues to the Internet? What is the value added to normal Internet users?
- What are the challenges in bringing together a diverse and representative Arabic script community to work on Arabic Script IDN issues in an aim to develop comprehensive solutions?
- What is universal acceptability of IDNs? What is the current status of Arabic IDN acceptability?
- How can institutions, national and regional bodies contribute to this effort?

The workshop will also be used as a venue to attract more volunteers to the work of the TF-AIDN as expertise in some areas is needed.

**Organized by:** Task Force on Arabic Script Internationalized Domain Names (TF-AIDN)

**Moderator:** Fahd Batayneh, Coordinator, Global Stakeholder Engagement, Middle East – ICANN

**Speakers:**

- **Siavash Shahshahani**, Bazar, CORE
- **Inam Ullah**, Linguistic community
- **Tarik Merghani**, AfTLD Board member
- **Abdulrahman Al-Ghadir**, SaudiNIC, Universal acceptance [remotely]
- **Emily Taylor**, Director, Emily Taylor Consultancy

**WS4:**

**Between Protecting Rights of Access and Openness Online and Combating Extremism**

**Description:**

The rising of Internet penetration in the Arab world provided a platform for different voices to speak louder, and communities to mobilize, those that did not have presence in mainstream media, or any access to media tools. Among the voices that the internet facilitated in spreading and mobilizing was those promoting hate speech and extremist narratives. The rise of these voices (regardless of their sponsored sources) have led governments and content hosting platforms to justify placing limitations on the access to the medium or the content. Also, many companies that serve as intermediaries between users and content are still debating how to regulate hate speech.

This session tries to answer the question of: should the internet's basic principle of neutrality and openness be compromised to combat hate and extremist speech? to what extent? Should the removal of content, or the kill switch of the internet, be justified to prevent extremist groups from using it as a tool to mobilize? What are the roles of governments and intermediaries in responding to online hate speech and extreme rhetoric?

**Organized by:** 7iber Dot Com & Internet Society, Palestine Chapter

**Moderator:** Reem Al Masri, Internet Research Lead, 7iber Dot Com, Jordan

**Speakers:**

- **Haydar Hamzoz**, Coordinator of Iraqi Network for Social Media, Civil Society, Iraq
- **Jillian York**, Electronic Frontier Foundation
- **Ashraf Zeitoon**, Facebook's Head of Policy in the Middle East
- **Hazem Mohsen**, Ministry of Communication, Iraq
- **Ahmed Ezzat**, Human Rights Lawyer and Activist, Iraq

**WS5:**

## The continuous attacks on online activism by various governments in the region

### Workshop description:

The proposed workshop will focus on the ongoing attacks on online activism. The international human rights organizations including the Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR) have documented a clear clampdown on online activism across the region. Any criticism and call for reform by an e-activist using the various social media technologies could lead to harassment, fabricated charges, trial using the most politicized judiciary and as we witnessed on various occasions, probably it will be ended up with torture and imprisonment.

Restrictions on the right to freedom of expression on the Internet is taking the form of prosecutions under libel laws, defamation, trumped up security charges and charges under recent Cyber Crime Laws. Tightening restrictions on the use of social media reflect government recognition of the power of such platforms to immediately document and share information on human rights violations, provide a tool for organizing events, share experiences and call publicly for reform. Experiences in Yemen for example show that social media can also be hijacked to harass e-activists.

The reality governments are buying the most advanced tools to hack into our e-accounts and trying their best to stop e-activists from conducting their legitimate and peaceful human rights work. As such this topic needs to be addressed in a way that includes, showing solidarity with activists who are in prison solely for their peaceful and legitimate online activities, also to highlight challenges that are facing e-activists and find best ways to protect and support bloggers and others who are doing their best to use the social media technologies to defend people's rights and to speak out on behalf of those who have had their freedoms confiscated by repressive measures.

**Organized by:** Gulf Centre for Human Rights

**Moderator:** Jillian York, Director for International Freedom of Expression Electronic Frontier Foundation

### Speakers:

- **Khalid Ibrahim**, Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR)
- **Samar Badawi**, Monitor for Human Rights in Saudi Arabia (MHRSA)
- **Maryam Al-Khwajah**, Online activist

## WS6:

### Online content and Social Media in the Arab region ; where are we?

#### Workshop description:

The Internet has become the most important method of content creation and distribution. Creators, producers, distributors, publishers, consumers as well as regulators become more and more interacting in this very dynamic ecosystem searching for a balance between creative innovation and economic incentive.

The proposed workshop discusses patterns of online content and social media usage in the Arab region and compares them to those of developed countries. In light of the widespread use of Internet services in the Arab world and the broadband penetration in a number of countries as well as the rapid spread of new technologies in personal computers or smart phones - with all of those factors and others, the use of social networks spread widely among Arab users especially among young people and children.

This rapid and unconditional spread of technology is not necessarily accompanied with the dissemination of the proper use of these technologies and a comprehensive understanding of the primary purpose of social media, and the importance of following security and confidentiality rules for each user to avoid threats and risks that could arise while using social media

**Organized by:**

- Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Egypt
- ESCWA
- Google MENA Policy team

**Moderator:** Mirna El-Hajj Barbar, ESCWA

**Speakers:**

- **Farouk Kammoun**, President SESAME University, Tunisia
- **Mohamed El Beshir**, ICT Qatar
- **Yomna Omran**, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Egypt
- **Nada Hamzeh**, e-mediat country Director, Lebanon
- **Ayman Itani**, Digital media strategist

**WS7:**

**Digital Citizens and Digital States: Protecting civil and political rights and responsibilities in an Internet Age**

**Description:**

This panel will focus on existing legal limitations to free speech and their application to the online space, as well as the effects of new antiterrorism and cybercrime laws and developments in the area of surveillance.

We will share SMEX's existing research on legal provisions and use it to provoke discussion on the contradictions between constitutions, laws, and international conventions and how civil society, government, and other actors can begin a dialogue on legal reform. We will also discuss efforts to create and provide better educational resources in these areas to promote inclusive conversations on Internet governance.

**Organized by:** SMEX & Electronic Frontier Foundation

**Moderator:** Jillian York, Director for International Freedom of Expression Electronic Frontier Foundation

**Speakers:**

- **Matt Duffy**, Assistant Professor, Berry College
- **Mohamad Najem**, SMEX
- **Walid Karam**, Ministry of Telecommunications, Lebanon
- **Charbel Kareh**, Head of Communications, Syndicate of Lawyers
- **Renata Avila**, Global Campaigns Manager, Web Foundation

**WS8:**

**The Middle East Strategy and ICANN's Initiatives in the ME Region**

**Description:**

When the Middle East Strategy document was finalized during Q2 2013, the working group that developed the strategy decided to implement its outcomes on annual basis as annual implementation plans.

While July 1, 2013 marked the beginning of the execution of Implementation Plan for the first year, July 1, 2014 marked the beginning of the execution of Implementation Plan for the second year. The session intends to cover the following items:

- The Middle East Regional Strategy, Year 1 Implementation Plan, and Year 2 Implementation Plan;

- Update on the ME DNS Forum, New gTLDs, and Opportunities for Business in the Domain Name Industry;
- Capacity Building and Train-the-Trainer Model
- Dedicated Outreach Efforts
- Update on the Middle East and Adjoining Countries School on IG (MEAC-SIG) and the Importance of IG Capacity Building in the Region
- Developing National and Regional Multi-stakeholder IG Bodies.

**Organized by:** ICANN

**Moderator:** Fahd Batayneh, Coordinator, Global Stakeholder Engagement, Middle East – ICANN

**Speakers:**

- **Christine Arida**, External Relations Manager – Egyptian NTRA
- **Nabil Bukhalid**, President – ISOC Lebanon
- **Mahmoud Lattouf**, Executive Director – TAG-Domains
- **Walid Al-Saqaf**, Researcher -- Orebro University
- **Hania Dimassi**, Policy Officer – UN-ESCWA – IGO

**WS9:**

## Copyright law challenges on the internet in the Arab World

**Description:**

Copyright law cannot be further from the reality of how of Arabs use the internet today and there is very little respect for this area of law by young and adult users alike. This could be due to the lack of legal alternatives to pirated content in the Arab World, the lack of enforcement mechanisms for copyright law on the internet, the lack of awareness of the law, and the failure of copyright law to create a balance between the right of authors for protection and the right of society to have fair and reasonable access to culture in the digital age.

The lack of respect for copyright law can make it difficult for individuals and businesses in the Arab world to innovate as their works will hardly be protected online and they might not be able to make a living out of their creative craft, but attempting to establish strict rules can also easily stifle innovation as it may block access to fundamental sources of knowledge necessary for young Arabs to learn how to create something of their own.

The panelists on this workshop will explore the challenges that face copyright law in the Arab world through a number of case studies in the government, private sector, and civil society and will attempt identifying potential solutions to ensure that copyright laws in the Arab world succeed in providing individuals and businesses with an incentive to create more works, while providing society with a fair opportunity to access knowledge and culture.

**Organized by:**

- Riyadh Al Balushi, Phd Student at SOAS University of London.
- Issa Mahasneh, President of Jordan Open Source Association

**Moderator:** Riyadh Al Balushi, Phd Student at SOAS University of London

**Speakers:**

- **Issa Mahasneh**, President of Jordan Open Source Association
- **Fahad Al Saidi**, Project Manager, Information Technology Authority, Oman
- **Fawzi Baroud**, Assistant Vice President-Information Technology, Notre Dame University - Lebanon
- **Dhouha Ben Youssef**, Regional Business Developer at Yala Music

