

ITU Regional Capacity Building Workshop on
“Strengthening Capacities in Internet Governance in the Arab region”

Manama, Bahrain

1-3 Oct 2019

Organized by



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Final Report

INTRODUCTION

1. The ITU Regional Capacity Building Workshop on “Strengthening Capacities in Internet Governance in the Arab region” was held in Manama, Bahrain, 1-3 Oct 2019.
2. The workshop was organized under the patronage of H.E. Dr Majed Bin Ali Alnoaimi, Minister of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain.
3. The workshop was organized by the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau in partnership with ICANN, ISOC, RIPE NCC and Diplo Foundation and kindly hosted by the Regional Centre for Information and Communication Technology (RCICT) in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
4. The objectives of the workshop were to strengthen capacities of the ITU membership in the field of Internet governance, involving different stakeholders in the delivery of the workshop, and to provide a general overview of key aspects related to international Internet governance discussions. This corresponds to the outcomes of the ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) 2017, where ITU Member States agreed that capacity building of the ITU membership in international Internet governance is one of the priority issues to be addressed by ITU’s capacity building programme.
5. The workshop was officially opened by H.E. Dr Majed Bin Ali Alnoaimi, Minister of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain. In his speech, he shared the Ministry of Education vision for building future schools and universities that are centered on technology and knowledge transfer. He emphasized the role of ICTs as an engine for inclusive education as well as its impact on the education programmes in the new digital economy and consequently the critical role of Internet Governance (IG). He called for partnership with ITU, UN agencies and international organization to raise more awareness on Internet Governance, especially for kids and students in primary and secondary schools.
6. Preceding the guest of honor, Dr Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Digital Skills Development, ITU, delivered her welcome speech. In her remarks, she thanked H.E. Dr Majed Bin Ali Alnoaimi, Minister of Education for his generous hospitality and support he provided for hosting the event. She extended her thanks to the host (RCICT) and the partners (ICANN, ISOC, Diplo and RIPE NCC) for their support and ISOC for sponsoring the workshop. She highlighted that capacity development is one of the priorities of the ITU development sector as one of the key objectives is to strengthen capacities in countries, and to equip policy makers with knowledge and skills that will enable them to take informed decisions and help them in the effective implementation of their digital policies and programmes.
7. Dr May Ahmed Shamandy Yaseen, Acting Director General, Regional Centre for Information and Communication Technology (RCICT), Kingdom of Bahrain delivered her welcome remarks. She welcomed the participants and ITU for excellent collaboration. Her remarks were followed by remarks from Mr Amin El Sharkwai, UN Resident Coordinator (RC) in Bahrain.

DOCUMENTATION

The training workshop was paperless. Material for the presentations and breakout sessions were uploaded on the event website and updated during the workshop and participants were able to download them. Relevant documentation, including agenda, list of participants and final summary report are made available at the training workshop website ([Click here](#)).

The workshop conducted in English and documentation and presentations were given in English as well.

PARTICIPATION

The workshop attracted around 50 participants from 13 countries and 6 international/regional organizations including the office of UN RC in Bahrain, ICANN, ISOC, Diplo and RIPE NCC. Among the participants were professionals from governments, regulatory authorities, public and private organizations, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior, universities and research institutions.

METHODOLOGY

1. The workshop was designed to combine both presentation-led sessions and group exercises/break-out sessions. The workshop featured 8 topical sessions and three group exercises/simulations.



2. The objective of the presentation-led sessions was to provide participants with an overview and knowledge on a set of Internet governance relevant topics. Presentations were made by experts in the topics addressed in each session and were followed by Q&A periods with the audience.
3. The objective of the break-out sessions was to engage all participants more actively in the discussions on IG and provide them with an opportunity to approach a particular topic from different angles (through role play). During the break-out sessions/exercises, participants were divided into four groups per exercise. Each group designated a rapporteur who reported the outcomes of the group work back to the plenary sessions. All break-out sessions/groups were moderated/facilitated by experts in the field of IG.

PRESENTATION-LED SESSIONS

The subsequent sessions addressed the following IG-related topics:

a. Introduction to the workshop and setting the Scene

The session was facilitated by Susan Teltscher (ITU) and had 3 panelists: Mr Verengai Mabika (ISOC), Mr Baher Esmat (ICANN) and Dr Chafic Chaya (RIPE NCC). Dr Teltscher provided an introduction to the workshop and its main objectives, and put it in the context of ITU's overall work on capacity development. The subsequent speakers gave their perspective of digital policy priorities and challenges in Arab region. This was followed by an exchange of views among the audience. Some of the points highlighted include security issues related to digital infrastructure, data protection, quality and availability of high-speed infrastructure, and the importance of stakeholder engagement and dialogue among all players. Best practice examples from the region were also shared. It was noted that other industries (verticals, e.g. transport, automotive and health) have become key players in the digital economy.

b. Introduction to Internet Governance (IG)

The session was moderated by Mr Verengai Mabika (ISOC) and had 2 presenters: Vladimir Radunovic (Diplo Foundation) and Mr Laurent Ferrali (ICANN). The session provided an overview of Internet governance, covering its definition, the principles that guide its evolution, the key topics encompassed in the field, the main actors, the global nature of the Internet and other information that provided a solid background to this workshop. It also provided an overview of the work of ICANN and its partners, in particular the role of the multistakeholder community. The participants actively debated issues on the regional perspectives and priorities and highlighted several challenges that need to be addressed, such as trust and security, the fragmentation of the Internet, and the importance of education and training on how to use the Internet effectively. Participants commended the collaboration between the workshop organizers and the regional technical community.

c. Telecommunications Infrastructure: Traditional and Emerging Challenges

The session was facilitated by Dr Chafic Chaya (RIPE NCC) and had 3 presenters: Mr Mustafa Al Mahdi (ITU Arab Regional Office), Mr Juan Peirano (ISOC) and Ms Christine Arida (NTRA-Telecom Regulator, Egypt). The session discussed key components of the ICT infrastructure developments, ICT infrastructure trends, opportunities as well as emerging challenges, such as over-the-top services (OTT) and the efforts to connect the 'Internet of everything'. In addition, the session highlighted the main indicators that influence the readiness to exploit new digital technologies in the Arab region as well as the Internet infrastructure, including traditional and emerging regulatory challenges.

d. Names, Numbers and Standards: Technical and Policy Aspects

The session was moderated by Ms Rajalakshmi Devarajan (Information Technology Authority, Oman) and had 3 presenters: Mr Fahd Batayneh (ICANN), Mr Chris Buckridge (RIPE NCC) and Mr Max Stucchi (ISOC). The session discussed matters related to the basic principles and the governance models of Internet names, numbers and standards. The challenges associated with

the growth of the Internet including the transition to IPv6, new gTLD programme and preserving interoperability was also discussed. The debate that followed the presentations focused on the needs of the Arab region to migrate from IPv.4 to IPv6 based networks, the challenges in IPv6 adoption in Arab region, the impact of IoT, the availability of test beds and the need of Arab policy makers and the technical community to be more engaged. A call for a partnership for technical community to work with ITU on capacity building and skills developments on IoT and IPv6 was made and partners showed interest to work with ITU on this promising areas.

e. Building Confidence and Security in the use of ICTs

The session was moderated by Mr Baher Esmat (ICANN) and had 4 presenters: Mr Vladimir Radunovic (DiploFoundation), Max Stucchi, (ISOC), Ms Rouda AlAmir Ali (ITU Arab Regional Office)-[remotely] and Mr Tarik Babikir Merghani (TPRA-Telecom Regulator, Sudan). The session provided an overview of areas of cybersecurity, such as the establishment of Computer Incident Response Teams (CIRTs), the CIRT development framework and CIRT services, cybercrime, security of the core infrastructure, Child Online Protection (COP) and ITU's Global Cybersecurity Agenda (GCA) and venues for international cooperation.

f. Capacity Building Priorities in the Arab region

The session was moderated by Dr Susan Teltscher (ITU) and had 3 presenters: Mr Mustafa Al Mahdi, Programme (ITU Arab Regional Office), Dr Chafic Chaya (RIPE NCC), Ms Manal Ismail (NTRA Egypt; covering for Mr Fahd Batayneh (ICANN) who had a conflicting commitment) and Ms Layal Jebran (ISOC). The session highlighted the priorities in capacity development in the Arab region, including the ICTs skills gaps that needs to be filled and best ways to deliver training as well as the role of the ITU Centers of Excellence network in the region. ICANN, ISOC and RIPE NCC showed their interest to work with ITU and deliver capacity-building activities in the region and on the areas that they are worked on.

g. Legal Aspects of Internet Governance: Privacy as an Example

The session was moderated by Mr Vladimir Radunovic (DiploFoundation) and had 2 presenters: Dr Riyadh Al-Balushi, (Ministry of Legal Affairs, Oman) and Mr Mostafa Meharam, (Moharram & Partners, Public Affairs & Strategic Communications, Egypt). The session provided an overview of the different types of legal instruments and their role in Internet governance with a focus on legal issues concerning content regulation, service provider liability, intellectual property, accessibility, online privacy and data protection from a legal standpoint and from a practical perspective, covering some privacy enhancing technologies. It also highlighted the differences around the concept of privacy in the Arab world in comparison with other regions.

h. Digital Economy and Digital Financial Services

The session was moderated by Mr Mustafa Al Mahdi (ITU Arab Regional Office) and had 3 presenters: Mr Karim Abdelghani, (ITU Arab Regional Office) [remotely], Ms Rajalakshmi Devarajan (Information Technology Authority, Oman) and Mr Samir Amri (RCICT, Bahrain). The session presented ITU's Digital Financial Inclusion work in the Arab region including a case study

on the impact of mobile money on peoples' lives, an overview of recent trends in the digital economy and the key forces shaping the global economy. In addition, the session highlighted digital economy governance issues, including access to financial services through ICTs. Furthermore, the session shed light on key challenges and hurdles in a data-centered economy, the use of blockchain technology for governance transparency and sustainability and discussed how legal frameworks could facilitate e-commerce and the development of related services, such as local online marketplaces and e-payment mechanisms, as well as digital financial services. The issues that emanated from the discussion were related to which authority/ entity should lead the DFI and DFS regulations, the responsibility for driving digital literacy between banks and/or regulators, challenges with fraud, regional initiatives on DFI and DFS, and the importance of collaborative regulatory framework for DFI and DFS development.

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS AND ROLE PLAY

1. Break-out groups were an essential component of the workshop. They provided an opportunity for participants to apply the knowledge acquired from the sessions and their own professional experience to real-life situations related to Internet policy issues. During break-out exercises, participants engaged in tasks such as issue-identification, prioritization, role-playing, negotiation and problem-solving.
2. Each break-out group was facilitated by an expert in the field of Internet governance. The following experts facilitated the break-out sessions:
 - Vladimir Radunovic, Director of e-diplomacy and cybersecurity programmes, DiploFoundation
 - Verengai Mabika, Senior Policy Advisor, ISOC
 - Chris Buckridge, Head of External Relations, RIPE NCC
 - Fahd Batayneh, Stakeholder Engagement Senior Manager, Middle East, ICANN
 - Chafic Chaya, Regional Communication Manager, Middle East Region, RIPE NCC
 - Riyadh Al-Balushi, Assistant Legal Advisor, Director of Treaties and International Cooperation, Ministry of Legal Affairs, Oman
3. The workshop comprised three break-out exercises, one held on each day:
 - Issue prioritization for the agenda of a regional Internet Governance Forum (IGF)
 - Simulation of national response to cyberattacks and de-escalating tensions with a neighbouring country
 - Fish-bowl: agreeing on the agenda of the national/regional IGF
4. Issue prioritization: Participants were divided into four groups, each representing one set of stakeholders (government, private sector, civil society, technical community). Each group was invited to define their proposal for the agenda of the regional IGF, by agreeing on 5 priority topics (from a previously proposed list of 11 topics).
5. Simulation: Participants were divided into three groups, each being composed of representatives of several key stakeholders (ICT Ministry, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Security services, major telecom operator, prominent NGO, knowledgeable technical community, etc). Participants were asked to look at different aspects of a crisis emerging after cyber-incidents, and suggest steps to undertake to deescalate situation.

6. Fish bowl: Participants were divided into the same four groups as in break-out exercise 1 (issue prioritization). Through several iterations of internal discussions and discussions with other stakeholders, they were asked to agree on 4 topics that will be on the agenda of the regional IGF (using agreed priorities of each group from Exercise 1).
7. The break-out sessions turned out to be highly successful. They were characterized by lively discussions and strong engagement from participants. In particular, assuming the role of a particular stakeholder group provided participants with the opportunity to discuss the topics from different angles. The fish bowl exercise was for many participants the first time to simulate a policy negotiation and highlighted the challenges related to the process of finding an agreement among different stakeholder groups often faced in real negotiations.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

8. The workshop provided participants with a comprehensive overview of key IG relevant topics globally and in the Arab region. Some of the main results and conclusions are the following:
 - a. The topic of IG includes many different thematic and policy aspects, ranging from infrastructure deployment and quality, to e-commerce and financial services, cybersecurity and data protection as well as the management of names and numbers. For IG to be effective, it is essential to understand how these different aspects are related and what the role of policy makers is in addressing them.
 - b. The multi-stakeholder approach in the delivery of the workshop and in the group exercises was a key element of the workshop methodology that was recognized and appreciated by the participants as it reflects the nature of IG policy making. The diversity of views and approaches that exist in the IG community is an essential part of any capacity development programme in this field. In particular, participants appreciated the partnership between ITU, ICANN, ISOC, RIPE NCC and Diplo in the organization of this workshop and highlighted the importance of continuing with this collaborative approach. A mapping of capacity development activities offered by the different institutions could be the next step, along the information already provided on the ITU Academy website related to Internet governance training and capacity development: <https://academy.itu.int/main-activities/capacity-development/internet-governance>.
 - c. While it is important to understand global discussions and issues that need to be addressed in global forums, it is equally important to look at regional (and national) issues and in identifying and taking a regional approach to IG.
 - d. Strengthening active participation in global and regional IG forums is important for countries in the Arab region. In this respect, the breakout sessions and group exercises were useful for participants to practice and prepare for a more pro-active engagement in IG related discussions/forums.
9. A number of participants filled out the evaluation forms provided at the end of the workshop. Some of the key takeaways include:
 - a. While all topics were considered as highly relevant, the issue of cybersecurity (including legal aspect and data protection) is of high priority in the region and the related group exercise was considered useful in this regard. Future IG capacity building workshops should focus more on this topic.

- b. Other topics that received high consideration and should be addressed in future IG workshops include policies and regulation, IoT and big data, telecommunication infrastructure and the digital economy.
- c. The breakout sessions were considered as the most useful element of the workshop by many participants.
- d. More time should be allocated to the discussion period during the presentation-led sessions and less time to presenters. This could also be addressed by increasing the number of days of the workshop.
- e. More in-depth discussions on the topics would be helpful. This could be done by delivering technical training on specific topics, such as those offered by ITU's training programmes.