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The internet race [starter activity]

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The aim of this activity is to illustrate the privilege that different people have when it comes to technology and the internet, and to show that there are sectors of society that are privileged on the internet. This activity could be used to start a discussion on the inequalities of different users based on technical, gender, language, age and race privilege.

Mechanics

Invite the participants to stand in one line, side-by-side. Where that line is will be the starting line, the facilitator moves across the room from that line. Let the participants know that the point of the game is to get to the finish line – where the facilitator is standing – based on the facilitator´s instructions.

The main point here is to show the inequalities among the participants when it comes to technology and the internet, specifically to challenge the very notion that technology and the

internet are neutral.

Suggestions for instructions based on themes:

> Note: These are suggestions only. Each context will have a different way of defining what being privileged on the the internet means. If a suggestion doesn't work in your context, think of another one that would. Remember, this also reflects the trainer / facilitators own biases and values around what privilege means.

Technical privilege

- If you understand what HTTPS means, take two steps forward
- If you understand what VPN means, take two steps forward
- If you use a VPN software, take three steps forward
- If you use Open Source software, take two steps forward
- If your Android phone is less than two years old, take three steps forward
- If you have the latest iPhone, take three steps forward
- If you have a laptop, a tablet and a mobile phone, take two steps forward

Language privilege

- If you read, write and speak English as a first language, take two steps forward
- If you read, write and speak English as a second language, take one step forward
- If you did not grow up with English as a language of daily communication, take one step back
- If you are more comfortable communicating with language that is not English, French, German, or Spanish, take two steps back.
- If you are more comfortable communicating in an Asian language, take two steps back
- If you can use the language that you are most comfortable communicating in on your computer, take one step forward

Race and geo-political privilege

- If you are American, take four steps forward
- If you are from North America and Western Europe, take three steps forward
- If you have been to the USA more than two times, take two steps forward

Gender privilege

- If you are a CIS male, take three steps forward
- If you are female, take two steps backward
- If you are queer, take two steps backward
- If you are trans, take two steps backward
- If you are heterosexual, take one step forward

Economic privilege

- Take a step forward for every credit card that you own
- If your gadgets are less than six months old, take four steps forward
- If your laptop is second-hand, take two steps backward
- If you have had your phone for over three years, take three steps backward

Experience-age privilege

- If you have been on the internet for longer than 7 years, take three steps forward
- If you started using the internet before Facebook, take three steps forward
  - Note: People who have been using the internet since they were children or teenagers may be more comfortable with technology than older people.
  - Alternative: If you've been using the Internet since childhood, take two steps forward
  - Alternative: If you've been using the Internet since you were a teenager, take two steps forward.

Based on your context you can create new instructions, or mix and match the one above.

Debriefing on the activity

After the race is over (either someone reaches the finish line, or you´ve exhausted the instructions), ask everyone to stay where they are and process the activity:

- Ask the person in front of the race how they feel about winning the race
- Ask the person at the back of the race how they feel
- Ask the participants what they felt during the race

Once that has been processed, deepen the discussion with the following guide questions:

- What was the race all about?
- Based on the activity, what is it that the internet and technology privileges?
- What type of person is the internet and technology built for?

Write down keywords from the discussion on flip chart paper.

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