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Mapping sexual rights activists and groups in internet governance

Developed for APC by Serene Lim and Angela M. Kuga Thas of KRYSS Network

About this learning activity

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This learning activity is one of two suggested deepening activities on “Sexuality and internet governance”. This is the second of the two deepening activities, and should ideally follow the first. This activity is designed to get participants to examine more closely the link between social capital and internet governance, and to critically assess to what extent “support” has actually advanced sexuality rights in internet governance and through what kind of framing.

Learning objectives

1. To demonstrate the link between social capital and internet governance (by looking more closely at the multistakeholder approach, the power/influence that each stakeholder has, and the men in internet governance who claim they are feminists).
2. To impart understanding on the intersectionality between internet rights and sexuality rights.

Who is this activity for?

Participants of all levels of experience.

Time required

1.5 hours

Resources needed

- Flip chart paper
- Marker pens

Mechanics

Individual reflection or group reflection if they come from the same organisation.

Get participants to locate themselves as sexuality rights activists and groups in internet governance, based on the following questions:

- Where are they in internet governance spaces, globally, regionally and nationally?
- Who facilitated them entering and engaging in these spaces?
- Who are they able to speak with to influence and bring about the change they seek?
- Why do they think that engaging in internet governance is important?
- How long did it take for them to realise that internet governance is critical to advance sexuality rights? What convinced them?
- How much can they talk about sexuality rights in internet governance spaces or to what extent is the subject prioritised vis-à-vis other internet governance issues?
- What issues do they raise in internet governance spaces that relate to sexuality rights?

Get participants to identify online movements related to sexuality rights.

Then, based on these movements, divide them based on an issue they are most familiar with or by country to work in groups of 4 (maximum) to think about why the issue of sexuality rights has not advanced in internet governance, looking specifically at what kind of social capital they have access to in relation to movements, mobilisation or initiatives that they have been involved in online or taken online, and allies.

Examples:

- #MeToo
- #TakeBackTheTech
- #WomensMarch
- #LoveWins
- Dehijabbing/hijab
- Women’s bodily autonomy
- Sexual respect
- Consent
- Privacy.

Discussion and sharing

Reflections

- What changes/advances were made?
- What are the ongoing obstacles/challenges?
- Who is in this internet governance space as civil society but not taking up or reluctant to take up sexuality rights (specific identification)?
- Are there men in internet governance who support these movements/initiatives?
- Why is having men as allies not enough?
- Are all initiatives around sexual abuse and harassment? Why the heavier focus on fear and harm?
- How do we talk about the positive aspects of sexuality?

Facilitator’s preparation notes

The idea is to get participants to recognise their social capital but also to recognise the limitations of their social capital, and to further think about which framing works better with allies and supporters of sexuality rights who are not necessarily fully invested in promoting the issue of sexuality and sexuality rights in internet governance. It would help if the facilitator is familiar with some case studies that relate to participants (if the profiles of participants are known beforehand, i.e. which countries they come from, etc.).

Additional resources

Freedom of expression, the role of intermediaries, and misogynist hate speech: Security in exchange for rights?
http://gigx.events.apc.org/2015/07/21/freedom-of-expression-the-role-of-intermediaries-and-misogynist-hate-speech-security-in-exchange-for-rights/

Turning from Tumblr: Where is sex positivity on the internet going?
https://genderit.org/feminist-talk/turning-tumblr-where-sex-positivity-internet-going

Gender and internet governance
https://afrisig.org/recommended-materials/gender-and-internet-governance/

Possible related deepening activity: Social movements: What’s in a tool? What’s in a space?
https://ftxreboot.wiki.apc.org/index.php/Social_movements:_What%E2%80%99s_in_a_tool%3F_What%E2%80%99s_in_a_space%3F

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