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Middle East and Adjoining Countries School on Internet Governance

Internet Governance for Development

Impact of the Internet on …
The Distribution of Power & Development

- How will Internet-accelerated changes affect the already existing divide between the North and the South?
- Will the Internet reduce or broaden the existing divide?
- How and when will developing nations be able to reach the ICT levels of more industrially developed countries?

The Relevance of Development in Internet Governance Context

Almost every Internet governance issue has a developmental aspect:

- Existence of telecommunication infrastructure facilitates access .. First precondition to overcome the digital divide
- Current economic model for Internet access burdens developing countries .. Financing access to backbones in developed countries
- Spam .. Higher negative impact on developing countries due to lack of capability and bandwidth limitations
- Global regulation of intellectual property rights .. Reduce opportunity of developing countries to access knowledge and information online

WSIS Context

- WSIS strongly positioned in the development context
- The WSIS Geneva Declaration and Plan of Action (2003) ..
  - Highlighted development as a priority and
  - Linked it to the UN Millennium Declaration (2000) .. Promotion of access of all countries to information, knowledge, and communication technologies for development

IGF Context

- IG4D already highlighted in Athens (2006) .. Special dedicated session in Vilnius (2010)
- Development-related concerns among the top five issues raised in continuation of IGF discussions .. Improving participation from developing countries and increasing priority given to development
- Development was the cross-cutting theme in Nairobi (2011) .. Concept of Internet Governance for Development (IG4D) emerged

Internet Facilitates Economic Development of a Society. Yes or No?

No	Yes
• Firstcomers have dominant position .. Local companies in emerging economies frozen out of e-commerce • Power shift from seller to buyer: alternative supplier is just a mouse-click away .. Producers mainly from developing countries harmed • High-tech interest higher in rich economies .. Investor interest in developing countries reduced	• Offshoring enabled .. Lower labour costs in developing countries • Rapid technology diffusion across borders compared to earlier technologies • Opportunity to leapfrog old technologies .. Skip intermediate stages • Firm size optimization .. Closer to the needs .. Easier startups

The Digital Divide

- A gap between those who, for technical, political, social, or economic reasons, have access and capabilities to use ICT/Internet, and those who do not.
- Exists at different levels:
  - Between countries but also within countries
  - Between rural and urban populations
  - Between old and young people
  - Between men and women

The Digital Divide

- OECD Definition: *'The gap between individuals, households, businesses and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels with regard both to their opportunities to access information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to their use of the Internet for a wide variety of activities.'*
- G8 Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOT Force): *'There is no dichotomy between the "digital divide" and the broader social and economic divides which the development process should address; the digital divide needs to be understood and addressed in the context of these broader divides.'*

The Digital Divide

- For some the digital divide is continuously and rapidly widening
  - Developing world is left behind at a faster rate due to ICT/Internet development
  - Developed world has all necessary tools to best use technological advances
- Others argue against a widening gap .. Examples of digital success from emerging economies (such as Brazil, India, and China)

Universal Access

= Access for All

- At global level:
  - A policy issue
  - Are developed countries ready to invest to realize this goal?!
- At local level:
  - An economic and legal concept
  - Telecommunication access to all citizens
  - Regulations, policy and financial mechanisms to subsidize access costs in remote regions

Bridging the Digital Divide: Availability of Technology?!

- Not only .. Technology necessary but not self-sufficient
- Other elements such as: regulatory framework, financial support, available human resources, and other sociocultural conditions … and the key challenge of how and when they should be used, combined, and interplayed

Bridging the Digital Divide: Access to Internet a Major Element

- Access to international Internet backbones:

  Submarine cables – satellite connections (especially for remote islands) – Internet exchange points (IXPs) nationally and regionally

- Connectivity within developing countries:

  Usage concentrated in main cities – poor access in rural areas – mobile and wireless communication as a solution for faster development of access networks (radio spectrum policies)

Bridging the Digital Divide:

Link Costs Developed vs. Developing Countries

- Prices of international calls shared between countries in traditional telephony
- Internet model .. Developing countries connect to backbones in developed countries .. ISPs pay international connectivity .. End-users pay higher subscriptions .. Entire burden put on one side → small and poor countries subsidize Internet in rich countries
- Situation aggravated with VoIP/Internet telephony .. Shifting telephony traffic (and international telecom revenue) from national operators
- Telephone financial settlement model not suitable to Internet .. Different traffic characteristics
- Need to improve current settlement system for Internet connectivity/traffic expenses .. Need for more balanced distribution of access costs .. Issue discussed repeatedly in ITU, WTO, WSIS, WGIG .. IGF?!

Bridging the Digital Divide: Financial Support to Bridge the Gap

- UN-administered Digital Solidarity Fund proposed by WSIS:
  - Help technologically disadvantaged countries build telecommunication infrastructures
  - Not widely supported by developed countries
  - Established later in Geneva as an independent foundation
- Bilateral/multilateral development agencies (such as UNDP and World Bank)
- Regional development initiatives
- Foreign direct investment in emerging markets of developing countries .. Opportunity for future growth with oversaturated markets of developed countries

Bridging the Digital Divide: Socio-Cultural Aspects

'The existence of communications infrastructure is useless unless people possess the means (the devices) and the knowledge (ICT literacy) to access and benefit from the Internet.'

- Literacy
- Education and training
- ICT skills
- Affordable devices and low-cost equipment
- Language protection
- Outsourcing/offshoring to overcome brain drain and migration of skilled labour
- Digital Diaspora Networks: UN initiative to promote development by mobilizing technological resources and professional expertise of the diasporas in the ICT field

Bridging the Digital Divide: Policy and Institutional Aspects

Create an enabling environment and facilitate fast growth of the Internet sector:

- Liberalization (de-monopolisation) of the telecommunication market and introduction of regulatory frameworks to develop the national ICT sector (more competition - lower cost - wider range of services)
- Introduction of Internet-related laws (covering copyright, privacy, e-commerce, etc.)
- Granting of access to all without political, religious, or other restrictions
- Creating institutional and legal environment that are conducive for investment in Internet development

Questions ???

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Languages on the Internet

- The Internet predominantly an English-language medium
- Statistics: 70% of the world's population does not speak English .. Yet almost 56% of Web content in English

[Source: W3Techs.com, 26 May 2014]

English	55.8%
German	6.0%
Russian	5.9%
Japanese	5.0%
Spanish, Castilian	4.6%
French	4.0%
Chinese	3.1%
Portuguese	2.3%
Italian	1.8%
Polish	1.7%
Turkish	1.4%
Dutch, Flemish	1.3%
Arabic	0.8%
...	

The Need for Multilingualism & Cultural Diversity on the Internet

- Internet a catalyst for socio-economic development .. Countries taking actions to promote multilingualism and protect cultural diversity .. Local content initiatives
- Promotion of multilingualism not only a cultural issue .. But also directly related to the need for further development of the Internet .. To achieve its full potential
- For the Internet to be used by wider segments of societies (not just national elites), content must be accessible in more languages

The Need for Multilingualism & Cultural Diversity on the Internet

Removing cultural and linguistic barriers to:

- Enable global access to knowledge
- Preserve languages, identity and cultural heritage
- Enhance participatory governance across language/culture communities
- Diversify and enrich user generated content

Geneva Plan of Action

Action Line C8

C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content

23. *Cultural and linguistic diversity, while stimulating respect for cultural identity, traditions and religions, is essential to the development of an Information Society based on the dialogue among cultures and regional and international cooperation. It is an important factor for sustainable development.*

a) Create policies that support the respect, preservation, promotion and enhancement of cultural and linguistic diversity and cultural heritage within the Information Society, as reflected in relevant agreed United Nations documents, including UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. This includes encouraging governments to design cultural policies to promote the production of cultural, educational and scientific content and the development of local cultural industries suited to the linguistic and cultural context of the users.

b) Develop national policies and laws to ensure that libraries, archives, museums and other cultural institutions can play their full role of content ***...***

Tunis Agenda Recommendations 29 and 53

29. *We reaffirm the principles enunciated in the Geneva phase of the WSIS, in December 2003, that the Internet has evolved into a global facility available to the public and its governance should constitute a core issue of the Information Society agenda. The international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations. It should ensure an equitable distribution of resources, facilitate access for all and ensure a stable and secure functioning of the Internet,* ***taking into account multilingualism****.*

Tunis Agenda Recommendations 29 and 53

53. *We commit to working earnestly towards* ***multilingualization of the Internet, as part of a multilateral, transparent and democratic process****, involving governments and all stakeholders, in their respective roles. In this context, we also support local content development, translation and adaptation, digital archives, and diverse forms of digital and traditional media, and recognize that these activities can also strengthen local and indigenous communities. We would therefore underline the need to:*

- *Advance the process for the introduction of* ***multilingualism in a number of areas including domain names, e-mail addresses and keyword look-up****.*
- *Implement programmes that allow for the presence of* ***multilingual domain names and content on the Internet and the use of various software models in order to fight against the linguistic digital divide*** *and to ensure the participation of all in the emerging new society.*
- *Strengthen cooperation between relevant bodies for the further development of technical standards and to foster their global deployment.*

Efforts on Standards & Governance Frameworks

- Technical standards to enable the use of non-Roman alphabets
  - Early initiatives on multilingual use of computers by the Unicode Consortium (standards for character sets for different languages)
  - Machine translation (wide support by EU)
  - Important steps by ICANN and IETF for Internationalized Domain Names(domain names in non-Latin alphabets) .. IDN ccTLDs and gTLDs
- Appropriate government frameworks
  - Adoption of the Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity by UNESCO
  - EU embodies multilingualism as one of its basic political and working principles

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Many Levels for Multilingualism

- Domain names
- Email addresses
- Search engines
- Translation tools
- Social media
- Cloud applications

Diversity at the IGF

- Diversity one of the four main program pillars at the first IGF in Athens (2006)
- Consistently part of the IGF agenda through the years .. Sometimes coupled with Access and/or with Development

Opportunity or Challenge

- Web 2.0 tools and user generated content .. Opportunity for greater availability of local and multilingual content
- Users pressured to use common language in order to reach a wider audience
- A wider framework for the promotion of multilingualism needed to avoid a deepening linguistic/cultural gap

NETmundial Multistakeholder Statement - April, 24th 2014

Principles

- ***CULTURE AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY***

  Internet governance must respect, protect and promote cultural and linguistic diversity in all its forms.

- ***ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY***

  The ability to innovate and create has been at the heart of the remarkable growth of the Internet and it has brought great value to the global society. For the preservation of its dynamism, Internet governance must continue to allow permissionless innovation through an enabling Internet environment, consistent with other principles in this document. Enterprise and investment in infrastructure are essential components of an enabling environment.

'Technology will never achieve the desired developmental targets unless it respects the different cultures and supports the different languages.'

Questions ???