

WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER AND INTERNET GOVERNANCE - AFGHANISTAN PERSPECTIVE

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WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER AND INTERNET GOVERNANCE

- Gender and women's rights feature in Internet governance, in multiple interconnected (not limited to), **access**, **content** and **representation**.
- When speaking of access, there is a noticeable inverse proportionality in the movement against the digital divide.
 - In Afghanistan, a country with pronounced gender discrimination, as the overall percentage of men with access grows, the percentage of women without access or with limited access remains steady, thereby increasing the gender imbalance.
 - Often there is a direct proportionality between **increased access for women** and **violence against women online**.

- The right to communicate is vital to developing politically, economically and socially.
 - Need to work to strengthen public education and public health and recognize the value of public spaces.
 - Internet is, or needs to be, a public good, with open content and access as a right.
 - Women contribution to decision-making and public policy on the internet and new communication technologies.

- Why should women be interested in these topics? What does the world of virtual communications has to do with women's rights and needs at present?
 - Internet can help women in different aspects of their life, even illiterate women who live in outlying regions.
 - Use of mobile phones have become a primary means of communication particularly in a country with poor telecommunications infrastructure like Afghanistan.

GENDER AND ICT

- The power of ICT tools and platforms for advocacy and organizing has long been recognized by women's rights activists.
 - Muhafezat, an application to help women avoid street harassment.
- Technological paradigms, assumptions about users' realities, institutional configurations, policy priorities and legislative frameworks must be developed with the participation of women's movements in order to reflect and respond to women's diverse knowledge, realities and needs.

TAKING CONTROL OF TECHNOLOGY

- We have to build capacity within women's movements in the creative and strategic use of ICTs so that they can shape technology.
 - We made sure that we have good women participation in AfSIG 2016.
- We should develop tools and resources for fostering a gender analysis of ICT projects and policies.
 - Gender and ICT policy advocacy
 - Violence against women and ICTs
 - Gender evaluation and research in ICTs
 - Training and capacity building

- And Roya Mahboob and what she is doing and how does that help women in ICT in Afghanistan
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSxZ4bhzhDY&feature=youtu.be>

END VIOLENCE: WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND SAFETY ONLINE

- To strengthen the capacity of women's rights activists and organizations to use technology tools in their work to end violence against women and to respond to the growing incidence of technology-related violence against women.
 - Cyberstalking
 - Surveillance
 - Unauthorized use and manipulation of personal information

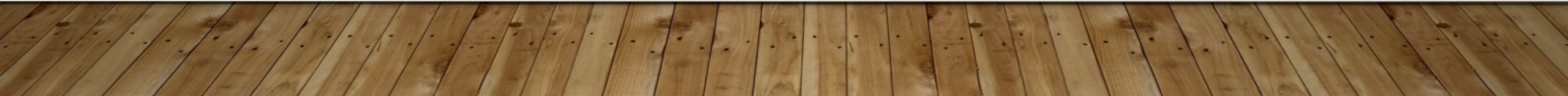
- In Afghanistan, policies, regulations or services that respond to these new forms of violence do not exist or are inadequate.
- Preventing technology-related violence against women is an important component in ending violence against women today and contributes to creating a safe and secure environment for women and girls in every sphere of life.
 - Social media platforms should adopt stricter standards for content posted on their site, and the ability to report and block abuse more quickly.

- If cyberstalking does not result in more serious offline crimes like identity theft, it has traditionally been treated as minor.
 - Stalking has since been defined as a man following or contacting a woman, despite her clear disinterest, or monitoring her internet usage or electronic communications.
- Future legislation must also be clearly defined to avoid criminalizing political and religious opinion.

- 2.7 Million Internet Users Afghanistan
- 1.7 Million has access to social media like Facebook, twitter etc.
- 10 % are women, out of which only 1% of them Uses their Own Photos in their social network profiles.

- Now the Question is what would be the real cause of this? Culture? Religion? or are they don't care about both of them and just trying to avoid any problems and threats ahead?
 - Lack of knowledge among people in society can be the main reason for it.

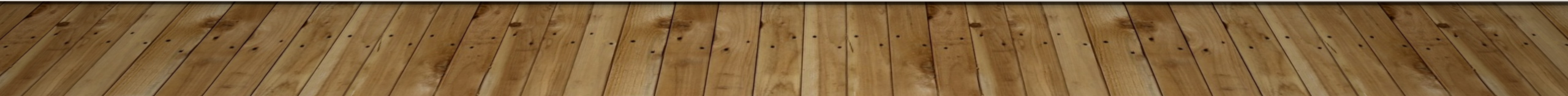
- For social media platforms:
 - Create ways for women to escalate reports of harassment, particularly incidents involving multiple accounts or lasting several days, indications that the activity is organized.
 - Employ local staff, particularly grievance officers, to ensure that workers can adequately evaluate complaints about posts made in local languages based on local cultural context.
 - Facebook should revisit its real-name policy and make it more flexible, especially for marginalized genders and journalists under threat. Right to privacy and anonymity are fundamental rights and Facebook must uphold them. Harassment continues despite the requirement, yet victims fear it can be used against them.



- For the government:

- Encourage women to report when criminals violate their rights online.
- Implement the law against individuals responsible for inciting and carrying out online violence against women and marginalized communities, regardless of their political or religious agenda.

- For law enforcement:
 - Foster an environment in which individuals feel confident enough to report online abuse to authorities, even if this challenges cultural norms and takes time.
 - Stop dismissing reports of gender-based abuse because they take place on the internet.
 - Educate officers that the response to online harassment is not to stop the victim using the internet.
 - Inform officers about the laws that apply to online harassment, and how to direct complainants to appropriate legal recourse.



THANK YOU

Q&A ?