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APrIGF 2017

"ENSURING AN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA PACIFIC:  
A REGIONAL AGENDA FOR INTERNET GOVERNANCE"

BANGKOK, THAILAND

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MERGER 2

UNDERSTANDING SOLUTIONS TOWARDS ONLINE HARASSMENT

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>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: Hello, everyone. We will start soon. We are waiting for a panelist to join. Please give us five minutes before we start.

Thank you.

Good afternoon, everyone. Hello. Hi. I hope you had a nice lunch. I hope none of you are drowsy after lunch, and I hope the topic of the discussion today will be really interesting. To ensure that you are awake.

So the title is understanding solutions towards online

harassment. The panel is co-organized by Digital Rights Foundation Pakistan and SFLC India. We have four speakers. We are waiting for Malavika to join us.

The Internet, it's brought all of us together here at the APrIGF. This is a medium that has ensured that all of us an ability to express ourselves. It has given a voice, especially to the minorities -- sexual minorities and others. What is happening now is that these voices are threatened by abuse and harassment online.

Harassment is often used as a means to silence these voices. It is often used to silence people who are critical majority, who are sometimes critical of the government, or critical of any majority view.

We have a great panel here who have experiences in their respective country on this specific issue.

Let me introduce my panel. We have Shmyla Khan, from the Digital Rights Foundation. She's an activist and a lawyer. And she hosts an important project on the Cyber Harassment Helpline. She will explain the problems they had in a specific area.

We also have Liza Garcia from the Foundation for Media Alternatives from the Philippines. She specializes in human rights and ICT. We also have Vaishali Verma. She will explain about the project that the organization is running in India in this regard.

Okay, over to you, Shmyla. Shmyla, your organization has been running a very successful project which specifically tried to offer solutions to this issue that we are facing and how has your experience been? What are the issues that you have faced and what are the solutions that over time you have come up with, if you could explain?

>> SHMYLA KHAN: Is the idea behind our helpline was we really wanted to -- we didn't want to create an alternate system. We didn't want to do what was already being done. But we wanted to fill the holes within the structure that was already created regarding addressing online harassment in Pakistan and to see what was missing and sort of offer those services. As it turns out, a lot was missing, and they were -- and as we sort of engaged with the structure and the existing system even more, we realized that there are a lot of problems with not only, like how the system and the processes are managed but also how they are, like, sort of on the ground. What is happening. But also there were problems with the -- conception of these systems.

When we started the helpline it was born out of this passion and recent events that had sort of occurred just before we started to, like, plan to establish the helpline. So I don't know if a lot of you have heard, but our protest was the killing of a social media star in Pakistan, who was specifically targeted through an honor killing. Her own brother took her life, and her name was Qandeel

Baloch. And so following the debate that it generated, we felt it was very important to address this issue, head on, and to sort of reach other women who were literally losing their life. We realized it was a good opportunity to kick start that opportunity. It becomes much more sort of -- it's within the public discourse. So you can sort of join the conversation and try to make it more nuanced.

So in addressing online harassment -- so I really want to highlight three different issues, which might seem -- so I will be using examples from our helpline and our experience in Pakistan. But to let you know about the region, especially south Asia, these issues are cross cutting and they are actually experienced in other countries as well.

So, first of all, like, the way that online harassment currently in Pakistan is being addressed is through the criminal justice system. So the only place that you can go to -- for addressing if you have experienced online harassment is by filing a complaint with the law enforcement agency, which is a federal investigation agency, and specifically their cybercrime unit.

So there are a lot of problems with that. Once -- the only sort of mechanism for addressing online harassment becomes the criminal justice system, all the problems that women face and sexual minorities face within that very structure, then are sort of grafted on to the issue of online harassment.

So -- and also, within Pakistan, because -- I think because of lack of resources, they felt the only law enforcement agency that can address this is the federal investigation agency, which is -- which only has cybercrime offices in four major cities of Pakistan. So that means that if you are not living in an urban center in Pakistan, you will -- you will actually not have access to these services. You have to physically go to these offices to file a complaint and if you can't do that, then tough luck.

So part of with the helpline, one of our major sort of goals was to fill that gap. And so frankly, when we started out the helpline, we didn't know how to do that, like, exactly. But we sort of developed a system with the FIA, that whenever a complaint from outside these four major centers comes in, we have a network in three major cities and one physically situated and we try to get power of attorneys from the victims and we sort of pursue the case on their behalf.

But this is only -- this is not a long-term solution. This has to be supplement -- this is supplemented by advocacy work we do, to make sure that there are more offices that are geographically dispersed so that filing a complaint can be done. It's not just a problem in Pakistan. Like from what I understand, even in India if you go to a normal police station and try to file your complaint,

there's to capacity at the local level to address this.

So we sometimes struggle with this. Like should we advocate for more offices that are ill equipped to investigate cybercrimes and cyber harassment? So this is an issue because the only sort of redress is through this system. So there was no sort of holistic strategy that was developed to make sure that online harassment is addressed.

So these efforts are then complimented -- so another major issue within this is that the law that was created to address online harassment, it also fits in in a larger structure of paternalistic legislation that is enacted by the state to sort of address gender issues. And this is indicative of most legislation, that even the title of most of this legislation is, like, protection of women against. So even with this law, it creates a sort of double bind for us, because we're encouraging people to use a law that we are ourselves resist.

So that creates a sort of, like -- we get criticized a lot for that effort, that seeming contradiction. And the law itself is specifically addressing online harassment and it's also quite problematic and regularly used by the state to clamp down on dissent rather than online harassment. So because it is framed within this larger paternalistic negotiation of decency of how victims should look. And these are experiences that are coming -- like, we get complaints for online harassment, but we also get complaints against law enforcement authorities handling online harassment.

So what happens at all of these times that when -- if a victim who fits into that negotiation of the state of victim goes to the FIA, they -- they are -- they are sort of given space, sometimes the FIA also -- they have also encouraged us to send them high-profile victims because they don't have enough resources to tackle the problem at a larger level but what they try to do because the law has attached big punishments like -- for like, up to 14 years for these crimes, they try to make examples of people. And you don't need to sort of be an expert in the criminal justice system to know that the sort of deterrence tactic does not help or address the issue at a systemic scale.

And also what happens if you don't fit into that narrative, that the state -- like, when the legislation was being passed, like, the intension of the state was also sort of manifested, like the language that they use. We need to protect our daughters from online harassment and things like this.

And so when somebody goes to the FIA and they -- and they -- and so they also -- there's a notion -- their particular notion of consent also. So that the law says that anybody who disseminates pictures or any content that is yours without consent is committing

a crime. But even that is undercut by how the larger sort of justice system and how consent is being interpreted.

So consent can be -- if you have shared, according to their interpretation that they are positing, if you have shared pictures with your own consent and afterwards they are being disseminated without your consent, that doesn't come under the purview of the law. So if -- if the passing legislation oftentimes is hard enough and it's part of our sort of work to act as a pressure group with law enforcement agencies to make sure that the right interpretation goes through to sort of -- sometimes even tracking to sort of embarrassing these law enforcement agencies if they are presenting these paternalistic notions of people.

And I don't think I managed my time. Something that other panelists will discuss. There's also a huge sort of gap in terms of when the -- when the content removal requests are made by the law enforcement agencies to remove certain content on social media and most of the complaints over 50% of the complaints that we get are from Facebook. The law enforcement agency actually just -- all it does is send the request to Facebook or Twitter or whatever platform the harassment is occurring and then they are powerless. So there's a power dynamic with the state but also beyond the state.

And there's something to be ahead about the politics of the policies that -- and the community guidelines that the social media companies develop in the absence of voices from countries such as Pakistan.

Yes.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: Yes, thanks, Shmyla. Definitely this is one topic where heated debates are happening across the world. I understand that's very difficult. Then we have only one hour to discuss the topic. Thank you.

There are aspects like non-state responses that can be used which I'm sure other panelists will be talking about. Now, I would like to move over to Liza. To give us an idea of the experiences that they had in the Philippines, specifically on harassment.

>> LIZA GARCIA: I will share with you the vat that we have done in the Philippines. When we talk about the Philippines we have several laws that deal with issues about violence against women, as well as electronic violence against women. Examples of this would include the antiviolenace against women and children. We have the anti-trafficking law. We have the Magna Charta of women. We have the anti-photo and voyeurism act, and then we have pertinent laws included in our revised penal code.

When we look at laws, it's unable to catch one technology. There's so much that's happening online. There's so much violence, abuse and harassment that's happening online. We feel that there is a need

to review existing laws and also the bills that legislators are coming up with because we feel that they are -- rather than support women, they are quite repressive and perhaps they might even curtail our freedom of expression.

The state is the justice barrier. They are there to protect and fulfill the rights of all citizens, in all spaces including cyberspace but they are finding difficulty in fulfilling that right.

I think there's a lot to be said about training of law enforcers, the judiciary as well. So that they can understand what technologies are all about, how it intersects with rights of women. At the FMA, we have partnered with the Association for Progressive Communications and on this online mapping of technology-based violence against women. So it's -- it is being done in several countries.

So what we do is to encourage women and girls to report cases of technology-based violence against women. So they report the case. They identify what type of violation it is, the harm faced, the technology platform which is used, who the abuser is, whether the abuser is known or unknown to the victim, what action the victim took, and the age of the person who experienced the violence.

When we did this, when we started collecting cases in 2012, there was really no -- no data. There were no data coming out from the Philippines in cases of online harassment, technology-related violence against women. There were only statistics on violence against women offline, and these are not updated.

So we were able -- from 2012 until the present, we were able to collect 216 cases, I think, such cases. These are -- it's not much. You may say that it's a small number, but what we're saying is that these are actual cases of women. These are experiences of women. These are women's voices crying for help, expressing themselves, looking for changes in policies.

So when we did the -- based on the cases that we had, we had an analysis, and we were able to get the trend. It is mostly young people -- young women and girls who are experiencing online harassment, and most of the time, it is the platform similar to Pakistan, it is Facebook where the harassment is happening. And some of the women have their own strategies they have reported these cases, either to law enforcers or to the platforms themselves, but, you know, action isn't that fast.

When you file a case in the Philippines, it takes ages. It takes years before a case is resolved. So the justice system is very, very slow. So how do you resolve that?

So what -- so we have engaged actually with some legislators, with some partners on what to do about this. So the -- based on whatever they thought we have, we were able to share this with some

government agencies. We shared this with legislator and this is -- and they have used the information that we have, no matter how small it is. At least there is a basis for when they file a bill for online harassment. We were invited to have a congressional hearing, and we presented the statistics that we have, at least the chance, the stories of the women. So that is one.

If he same time, there were -- there are some women who come to our office asking for assistance because they have experienced online abuse. Most of the time, it's the sharing of sex videos. So they do not know what to do.

So what we do is to advise them. We are not a service provider. Our organization is not a service provider but we give advice and refer them to authorities. Of course we have the Philippine national police, the national bureau of investigation, the -- they are supposed to be good at cyber forensics so we refer cases to them.

At the same time, what we do is also conduct some digital security training, online safety training for some are partners that we have, and we -- and based on the cases also that we collected, what we did was to come up with a mobile application. It's called Action VAL, violence against women. And it's an mobile application, actually. There's identity theft, cyberbullying, online harassment, and what -- and if you click one story, then -- it's like you build your own story. What to do if this thing happens to you? Do you report it to law enforcement? If you report it, this is what happens? If you don't report it, then what happens to you? And then we have some tips there on what to do in case you are cyberbullied or you -- and then we also have -- we identified some laws that can be used in case -- wherever there are cases.

And then we also included some numbers there of -- of law enforcement agencies that can help when -- if -- if and when women would want to file cases.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: Thank you, Liza. That gave us some view about the issues that Liza and her team are facing in the Philippines. It's almost the same across the region where we have problems with the criminal justice system, and it takes forever for our cases to be, like, finalized and a final judgment to be arrived at.

Going over to Vaishali. You have done an extensive study as far as the Indian landscape is concerned and conducted a lot of interviews. Can you explain the learnings from these interviews and the harassment people have faced and your answers?

>> VAISHALI VERMA: Sure, sure. So at SFLC.in we have been working on online harassment on two levels. We released a copy of the report that's there outside on the table, on online harassment, studying this aspect in the form of a censorship issue.

So we have this problem of people since most of us are there on

Internet on social media platforms these days. So we are participating in all of those policy issues that the government is making. Whenever a government comes out with a new policy, coming up with new laws. So it is natural for us as citizens of our country, as a democratic country to participate in the discussions and give our opinions. Now, the government, as a measure of censorship, you can say it has started censoring the discussions that we have been having on social media platforms. So whenever you engage in some meaningful policy discussion, if it is against the views of the government on the -- against the views of the majority, not just the government.

So it will kind of censor that -- that discussion that is going on, and it might also fall under Indian laws. We did a study last year, over time, so we conducted interviews of relevant stakeholders from different areas including the legislators, journalists, civil societies, actors and -- who are the targetters of the online harassment.

And we came up with certain findings. So with respect to the part where we have to approach the law enforcement agencies, there were a number of criticisms that were reported.

So while in an interview with a police officer, they said that because this online harassment, these reports, they generally involve social media, which may be located in different countries. So they generally face jurisdictional issues. Because of that, if they want certain information regarding the perpetrators of the crime, they refuse to give the information. So there was recently a very well known incident in India as well, wherein a person who was a female, would was abused on Facebook, she wanted to have information regarding the people who were putting up some post -- some abusive posts regarding her. She tried to approach the Facebook authorities. She couldn't find information because apparently the people over there, they didn't have access to all of that information. The service was located into another country, and therefore they could not give her the information.

Also it brings up the issue of being a privileged member of the society. Sometimes if you have high contacts, then information is easily accessible, available to you, but if you are just a common person, then that same information will not be accessible. So you need to have high contacts apparently.

Secondly, apart from the law enforcement part, when we approach the non-state responses, when we go for non-state responses there comes the intermediaries, the Facebook, Twitter and all of these, the policies, the content moderation policies that they adopt.

So the first thing that we face, generally when a person is being harassed, the first is going to face -- that he is going to take on Facebook or Twitter is block that person or maybe delete that

tweet or the Facebook post or report that person. So when you report, for example, on Facebook, if you take, for example -- so if you are being harassed on Facebook, if you report that particular page or post, there are certain community guidelines which are followed by Facebook, the standards that they follow when they sift through these complaints, the reports that you have made. And then following the standards, they maybe block that person or maybe just do away with all the content.

So maybe at times action is taken on your post, or maybe at times it is just let loose. So there lies a problem with the content, moderation practice over there as well. So what exactly happens is there are human interventions when we talk off the content moderation that is to develop, people would be actually involved while sifting through the contents. So Facebook, apparently, and the other platforms have adopted common standards to sift through these complaints.

So if you are, for example, one of those contents, that has been blocked, you cannot show the private parts, including the breast of females. If case you are raising awareness, you are posting a picture for raising awareness or some important issue, then also they will pull down your picture. You cannot post these.

So the question arises whether there has to be a certain level of uniformity or it has to be seen on a country to country basis, there lies a problem. So we interviewed people and in there, we received certain responses. The most common of them being was we should not go to the state law enforcement agencies because they take years get into your complaint and finally solve that problem. It's always better to go for the state responses first.

And what exactly matters is the trust in your own online platform systems. So there has to be a greater responsiveness from the side of these intermediaries and also a greater transparency when they adopt these moderation practices. So what level of what measures do they undertake? What other guidelines? They should be very transparent and also there's a need for capacity building. So not many people over there are aware of the tools that we can use to safeguard ourselves for the online harassment.

Also, when you talk about capacity building, it is with respect to the common people as well as the state agencies, the law enforcement agencies. So even the police stations, when you go and report your complaint, they are not very well aware of the technical measures, and the technical know-how. It takes a lot of effort to go into all of these online complaints. So they generally -- so what is needed over here is capacity building for these people as well.

So as you can see, we have been undertaking workshops to teach people how to approach law enforcement agencies and what resources

do you have in such cases?

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: Thank you, Vaishali and moving on to Malavika. She studied from her law firm in India, and working across jurisdictions, she worked with Harvard university, and now in Hong Kong. The executive director of digital Asia hub. She's done quite a lot of work in the area of intermediary liability. And I will focus on her to focus on the intermediary debate.

>> MALAVIKA JAYARAM: Hi, everybody. Thanks for being a little late. I had to take an urgent call.

I want to talk from an academic perspective how we can tackle some of these issues and even what are some of the questions we should be asking. I think a lot of it comes back to platforms.

This was a wonderful workshop at the media lab that MIT hosted last year that tried to explore a lot of these questions. It didn't have as much of an Asia focus within it, which I wish it did. And I think that's also an opportunity for us to have more interactions with different kinds and, you know, textures of harassment around the world so we actually learn from each other.

But I think what was -- I'm going to list some of the questions that came up in this workshop, because I think they really help inform what we are doing here. So I think one was sort of looking at not just the personal costs of harassment but the social cost of harassment, looking at it as a system -- as an ecosystem issue as opposed to something that just affects individuals.

The other thing was looking at what methods can we even use to study harassment, right? And I think that that's particularly important because if all of the focus is on the victims of harassment, and we don't want to research the people who are doing the harassment as much, one for a very functional reason, that is the accounts are blocked, the data doesn't exist on the platform anymore, right? So that causes issues in terms of research, like what data do we have to even study them.

Also, I think in terms of if we are using measures to counter harassment, it's very hard to actually study the effect of what works and what doesn't, if we don't have a lot of data about this. So some of the participatory methods and some of the ways of looking at different groups to test what works and doesn't, some of them have ethically challenging issues because do you really want to be working with some of these communities and, like, are you exposing victims to even more harassment in a view to study them. I think it raises challenging issues.

I think one of the fundamental things that comes up, why do people harass online? Is it a proxy for something else they are not getting? What gap is there that this helps to fill? And I think if we don't look at the causes so much, and just looking at the way the law

treatment and the way the law criminalizes it, I think we are not doing enough in a criminal sort of way.

How do we improve the definitions. The whole taxonomy issue comes up over and over again. I think it's especially important in the view of platforms because everyone has their own definition of what constitutes harassment. At a functional level, it's interoperability issue but it's also an issue of if everyone uses their self-serving definition that fits with their sort of business model or their ideas of what data is and is collected and what other goals they may be trying to further through the platform, if they have certain dependencies that come out of those models.

I think if you don't look at the taxonomy question, you are missing out on all of these other things around the edges.

There are high-impact things that deal with these. The wiki detox project, right, which is trying to use the terminology of detoxing hateful content in the ways that people most things on Wikipedia and there's all kinds of efforts where people are saying let's use machine learning, let's use artificial intelligence to identify certain classifiers and pull these things out and detox it. But I think there are very fundamental problems here because first of all, the technology may not be there yet, but our expectations of the technology are immensely high. We sort of think that this is going to magically fix things, that you know, the platform can be terrible, and people are terrible and skewed towards an outcome. And technology will solve it. We will wave a magic wand at the end even though we don't think about building it into the guidelines and the ethical practices.

It raises challenging questions about what is the taxonomy. What are the classifiers? What are you tagging as obscene? Or blasphemy? Does it actually reflect the embodied examples of people? Does it actually reflect lived experiences or is it some very academic sort of view of this, of people or machine learning experts but are not actually dealing with communities that are working with harassment? So I think you need to have those kinds of connections as well.

I think testing the outcomes of interventions is really, really critical because to some extent, we are functioning in the dark if we are not doing that. We say, oh, yeah, more speech is account as to hateful speech. Do we know that's true. Brandeis might have said it. Do we actually know that when you look at the data does it hold that out? Is more speech better? Is more speech, actually like more noise? What is the signal to noise ratio in these things.

And in the interventions that we are coming up with are missing the mark, maybe we should be focusing not just energy but very valuable resources. All of us suffer from funding issues in this room.

If we could pick one problem to tackle or one solution as an attack, maybe we want to know that that's hitting the mark and is fruitful. Otherwise we should really be doing something else.

I think what works and what doesn't is really critical. Unfortunately, I think in a lot of this, the focus is in a surveillance heavy, privacy intensive arena of saying would is likely to do this. Can we predict certain people who can be identified as high-risk individuals would based on other things they have done, we can predict that they are more likely. We might want to limit their access. We might want to block them and I think that's really troubling. It's a minority report on the online harassment space.

I think those are some of the things that I think are really critical and I think -- I understand that platforms have a difficult role to play. They are intermediaries. They want to believe the old school notion that we are just the pipes. We are not editorial, you know, content providers. We don't actually care what is going through the pipes. I think that position has become absolutely untenable. You can't just say I provide the pipes and this stuff keeps flowing in both directions. I don't look at it.

Often they use very disingenuous, you say you want privacy but you want me to monitor content. If I monitor, I have to look at who you are and what you say. Do you want privacy or do you want to monitor content? I think that's disingenuous. I understand it's a difficult problem for platform provider because if they actually end up solving the harassment, they will say what about my free speech? Under this law, it might be legitimate but it may not work with your content guideline in some other country that I'm not connected to in any way. I think the jurisdictional challenge is huge in this space.

I think these are some of the issues that we should be talking about, and I think this approach that, you know, we just block and move on. We don't study the effects of blocking or certain interventions. I think for me, that's one of the most critical things. Just sort of as a last point, we say that platforms are a problem. Are there ways that we can engage them to be part of solution, not just in terms of saying, you know, use your community guidelines or, you know, do, X or Y or in sharing data with the community. It could be an ethical, confidential way and it could be researchers if they don't want to give one person an advantage and there's so many ways in which we can do this as a community in the public interest.

If edge they could tell us, you know, this is what this person did once they were blocked or this is how they responded to these videos about this or this is how -- these are the things they posted afterwards. We don't need to know their names or where they live

or where they come from. It would be very useful to see some of the finely grained empirical data in this space. I have think that's something that only the platforms hold. It would be interesting to see that.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: The platforms, I'm not sure how they will be accessed, and we can have meaningful conversations in these platforms. Moving now to Shmyla, to compensate for cutting you short earlier.

So how has your experience been interacting with these platforms? How useful have they been in dealing with the issue? Have you faced any issues specifically?

>> SHMYLA KHAN: Yes, one of the most basic issues that you face like a day-to-day level is the issue of language. Most of the content that is generated in Pakistan increasingly is either in the Arabic script. And the problem with that becomes is that a lot of times when abusive comments are reported, they are not registered by the system.

And there's not enough being done to address this issue, like translation, or sort of -- developing technologies that picks up on different languages. So that's a big issue, and this is something that we have continuously raised with the social media platforms.

There is a case where that was pursued. The Congress was in -- so the language used on a particular page was in Pashto. So it was actually even more complicated because it was not a recent language. That's not a good enough excuse.

What we try to do at the helpline, we try to serve as translators for these social media platforms. So we contact Facebook on our own and we are having translated these sort of posts, and -- and also, I think, the notion of -- and it's a very good point about what constitutes harassment and the problem with the sort of overarching sort of definition is that oftentimes what can -- what is harassment and, like, the consequences of harassment depends on the cultural context. So in Pakistan, sometimes someone sharing a photo of a perfectly sort of innocent photo for someone who belongs to the western context can even result in offline violence.

So sort of translating that sort of context, we also, like -- that's -- for us, at times, like these are not easy questions. Sometimes for us, that we will have this consequence. We won't sometimes be able to tell. So this is a very difficult issue for the social media mat forms. Like sometimes they -- when we tell people to report on their own, they get this -- the system sort of tells them this is just a photo. It's not explicit. So that really needs to be addressed. We have had cases where family members have found pictures posted somewhere and somebody sort of at a school function was taken, but they belong to a conservative family.

Although this is civil, it should hinge on consent and if somebody is declaring to the social media platform that this picture has been shared without their consent, that should play a role. That's an open question for people on the panel and so how that would happen, but just like with the sort of offline crimes and consent should be the guiding principle regarding that.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: We need to wrap it up in 10 or 12 minutes. Can I have a couple of comments from the panelists before we open it up for questions?

Keep it short.

>> VAISHALI VERMA: So a couple of points, the point about the harassment policies about content moderation practices whether they should be uniform or they should be company specific or cultural based, because what may be harassing for one person may not be harassing for the other. So that varies from person to person. So how do you actually base it on the -- sort it out, the issue?

So I think these are certain issues including the issue of jurisdiction which need to be addressed and so the cyberspace can be a secure place to have a conversation.

>> And I would just like to point out that most of the time when there are -- when we hear of cases of harassment, of women, the burden is on the women. They should protect themselves they should have used privacy in the -- in whatever platform they are using. They should be knowledgeable about online safety, et cetera. The onus should not rely on the women only? What is the state doing as well? Is it addressing the issues of women? And it goes deeper, actually. The problem isn't just online, offline. It's what kind of society is there? Is it a patriarchal society, then it speaks of how the issue is being addressed by government. And then we look at the role of private companies, ISPs, et cetera.

>> SHMYLA KHAN: I always, like, mention conservative values, to sort of make this logical point about cultural context, like, this should not be an excuse to feed into more paternalistic laws that codify regressive values. That's why I mentioned consent and I just want to preface the discussion. Yeah.

>> MALAVIKA JAYARAM: I think I said stuff. I would like to hear from people and what they are concerned about.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: Questions?

Please raise your hand so that -- yeah.

(Off microphone comment).

>> PARTICIPANT: If we start to break that down more, I think we may be able to get out of that fix in terms of what we can do. I got a bit worried when we say, oh, you know, maybe -- you know, maybe is this context specific and maybe we should change the standards. I got concerned if we are going to lower standards for censorship

and countries where censorship is already high and as Shmyla was saying, it's constantly used against women's rights activists, among other countries, women who want to share pictures of their own bodies and exactly the way they want to represent them.

So if you start to break it down more, is there a difference between where the speech takes the form of words and where the speech takes the form of image? If it takes the form of image is it privacy rather than censorship and privacy protections are not that strong. Governments aren't so enthusiastic to implement them.

But they often recognize online abuse as an issue partly because it makes them look good. Is there perhaps a way forward in using privacy as an argument there?

And so can we be a bit more granular about what is the form of abuse that we are talking about? And then think about what are both legal and nonlegal solutions that start to make sense?

Thanks.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: I think we will take more questions before we answer.

>> PARTICIPANT: Hello, I'm from Pakistan. I help to investigate cybercrimes around the country. Most of the fora I found, was they are most concerned -- they do not work more on the capacity building and rather on things like discussing after effects or whatever afterwards. I would recommend to work more on capacity building and work with law enforcement because I personally work with the law enforcement. I work on capacity building. Because they are the first responders and you guys -- organizations like you, you should work with the local law enforcement and the local communities and work on the preemptive measures rather than other things.

Thank you.

>> PARTICIPANT: Hi. Thank you for everything you have shared. My name is Santi, I am from Sri Lanka. I wanted to comment but also get your perspective as well. I think we talked about a lot of reactive solutions, but I was also wondering whether, like, you are also, like, looking at more proactive and preemptive strategy. Things like comprehensive sexual education in school or relationship educations that deal with consent already.

And, again, like, there are different kinds of activities advocating for implementation of things like that and so working with people like that to ensure that these things, like the scope of like curriculums like that are expanded to include these kind of issues as well, whether those are, also, like the kind of strategies you are exploring.

Thank you.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: If we could have answers. I'm sorry we are running out of time. So I don't think we can take more questions.

So, yeah.

>> SHMYLA KHAN: You can talk to us personally.

But for first question, I thought that it's a very, like -- I think that's a good approach to take, talking about privacy, because if -- and this was something that I think was discussed in earlier sessions as well. These are not just, like, gender-based issues. This should be integrated into wider debates around privacy, pushing for data protection laws. And women rights activists can take the lead, especially digital rights activists who work on gender issues can highlight these particular issues to then would work for a comprehensive -- because there's no data protection law in Pakistan and India as well and a lot of other jurisdictions. This can be something that -- I really like the top down approach. Like, that's what sort of also feminist method also says you should allow the experiences of women and the law should reflect those experiences rather than top down approach.

So I completely agree with your -- the third question about -- the problem with sort of curriculum design around sex-based education is that you -- for it to be sort of integrated into the public school system, at least in Pakistan, I don't see that happening any time soon, because we don't have -- there were efforts in a private school to include sex education in the curriculum, and that opened up that school to a lot of security issues from clerics and militants.

So that conversation was sort of shut down. So hopefully we can find a way to integrate it without maybe -- that is something that definitely needs to be looked into.

Again, with -- again, in our experience, when we try to talk to the FIA, the law enforcement agency in Pakistan, about, like capacity building that's something that we have actually proposed to them, like we worked on a whole proposal and everything. So, I mean, a lot of times civil rights activists and, like, NGOs are told, like, stop complaining. Work with the authorities. But they only work with you to a certain extent. They don't feel comfortable. They don't tell us how to do our work and so that's -- and I think that's bureaucratic mind-set, like, before, they are, like, oh, if wasn't to do a training then we will have to get permission from this person, and this person, and this NOC. Yes, we would love to, if you could connect us with people. Yeah.

>> I think I only had one sort of closing comment. This needs to be closely linked to the idea of access because if we keep sort of saying we want to bring everyone online, what type of online are we creating for them? And if they are going to a world that's full of chose and abusers that's not the Internet we expect them to stay on.

Unless we show them the value of a space that's genuinely free,

I don't think it's going to work. I think we need to mainstream this conversation to every single other conversation that we are having about the SDGs and the other goals you can't describe this as an harassment problem. It is an ecosystem that we need to.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: The timekeeper tells me we are out of time, but we started five minutes late and I extend it by five minutes.

>> Yes, if they can come up with some modules, it can be included in the curriculum, then that would be good. In the Philippines, I know that the Department of Education has partnered with one organization to develop a module on online harassment. Unfortunately, it is not being implemented. They just have the module but it's not being cascaded down to the schools. It's not being taught.

>> Yeah, as also was pointed out regarding the education module, it all boils down to how effective is it? How effective is it implemented in schools and how comfortable or the teachers teaching the students.

Many times in especially in India, the government has incorporated sex education in the education system but then teachers tend to skip upon those topics or maybe just talk to people and just do not talk about certain topics.

So also is the comfort level between the teachers and the student.

Also with respect to the content, the questions that are being raised, I think it's not just about the education because the abuse, online abuse takes place, it's irrespective of the background of the person, especially the trolls. People are well educated in certain cases, but still maybe due to the mentality, due to the menial status, I wouldn't comment on it, but, yes, this has already somewhere to do with how -- is your thinking goes?

So trolls may not be -- with respect to the education you have, it may be how you think about certain things. So that's what I would like to say.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: Malavika?

>> MALAVIKA JAYARAM: I think we need to be very creative in what we think about education. I think it's deeply uncool and awful socially to indulge in this type of behavior. If you want to youth to actually engage in these type of activities. I will give you a great example Jillian York and gave a great, great talk about encryption and why it's necessary and could you send people to sleep discussing encryption.

They said would you have sex without a complete stranger without a condom? You wouldn't. So why can't you think of encryption as sort of digital, you know, contraception and whatever you might think of that as an idea, you will never think about the idea of condoms and encryption, right? There are so many ways that we can mainstream

this idea of hating on trolls and saying abusers are so uncontrolled, and I don't talk to trolls and I don't have friends that abuse. We need to use pop culture and work with influencers and with rock stars and all kinds of cool people. We need something that can be put on a T-shirt, right, not on a curriculum.

I think there are ways we can work as a community to make it deeply uncool to abuse.

>> PRASANTH SUGATHAN: Yeah. On a closing note, you see, this is a topic where all of us are kind of trying to learn. No one is very clear about starting with the definition of what is harassment? Intermediaries are trying out ways in which harassment can be contained online. We need to work with law enforcement and ensure that there's capacity building. It comes from all stakeholders. Yes, it will be a long process and we need all the help that we can get. Thank you.

(Applause).

(End of first session).