

TRAINING ON INTERNET GOVERNANCE AND DIGITAL RIGHTS

Report on Sri Lankan Workshop

28th – 30th December 2023
Colombo, Sri Lanka



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1. Executive Summary

The global community comprises over 1 billion individuals with disabilities, with more than 650 million residing in the Asia-Pacific area. Many face social and economic exclusion, limiting their opportunities and rights. The past two years have witnessed a rapid move towards digital platforms for education, work, and social interactions due to the pandemic. Unfortunately, this transition has not adequately accommodated persons with diverse disabilities, leaving them marginalized in online spaces. They lack representation in internet governance and struggle to access their digital rights fully.

Asia Pacific School on Internet Governance (APSIG), known for its expansive role in bolstering expertise in Internet Governance and related fields, orchestrated a session centered on Accessibility and Disability during its annual event in December 2021. This forum served as a catalyst, prompting a deeper exploration into enhancing capacity building efforts in Internet Governance and Digital Rights specifically tailored for Persons with Disabilities. In collaboration with the ISOC Standing Group on Accessibility, APSIG conceptualized a two-part initiative: an initial phase comprising a brainstorming workshop aimed at dissecting the challenges linked to this objective, followed by a subsequent phase involving the implementation of capacity-building programs in handpicked countries across South Asia.

Between June 24th and 28th, 2022, the Asia-Pacific School on Internet Governance (APSIG) conducted a workshop named “Training on Internet Governance and Digital Rights for Persons with Disabilities” in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The primary goal was to boost the skills of individuals across the Asia-Pacific area in including persons with disabilities in their initiatives and campaigns while championing their right to suitable employment. Eleven participants from various countries engaged actively, leading to the creation and formal approval of the Dhaka Declaration.

As the second phase, the Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG) conducted a face-to-face workshop in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 28th to 30th December 2023 for ten persons with disabilities three vision impaired persons, three hearing impaired persons, three persons with physical disabilities and one person working for persons with intellectual disabilities along with the gender representation. The workshop in Sri Lanka included two resource persons trained at the Dhaka workshop, three international trainers, and two domain experts.

The Workshop was organized in at Movenpick Hotel, Sri Lanka with specific requirements for accessibility. The hotel staff were given a special orientation before the workshop for assisting persons with disability and how to cater to persons with diverse disabilities as per their reasonable accommodation.

The Workshop Program focused on the concept of the Internet Society as ‘Internet for All’ and encompassed various subjects. These included introductions, initial activities to engage participants, crucial discussions on accessible policies, crafting an interactive accessibility course, talks on digital inclusivity, the integration of Smart Cities, composing funding proposals, and developing advocacy and leadership skills.

Special guests at the inauguration of the workshop included representatives from the key Ministries, representatives from key stakeholders, representatives from the Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG), internet pioneers in Sri Lanka, and ISOC Sri Lanka founders. Remote presenters included Mr. Sathish Babu, Former Chairman of APSIG, Chairman of Asia Pacific At Large Organizations, Board member of Internet Cooperation of Assign Names & Numbers and Dot Asia,

Ms. Gunela Astbrink, Chair Person of ISOC Accessibility Standing Group, Australian IGF ambassador and Dr. Mohamed Shabir, Vice Chairman of ISOC Accessibility Standing Group, Former Board of Trustees of ISOC Global.

According to feedback from both informal conversations and online feedback from participants, as well as the opinions of the resource persons, the workshop in Sri Lanka was deemed successful. It marked a promising start in enhancing the capacities of individuals with various disabilities in Internet Governance and Digital Rights. It was a collaborative effort taken to bridge gaps, remove barriers, for the cause of inclusivity in the digital sphere. As the program concluded, participants engaged actively, shared their perspectives, and established connections and catered to create more accessible, equitable, and rights-respecting online world.

2. Introduction

Globally, the population of individuals with disabilities surpasses one billion, with a substantial 650 million residing in the Asia Pacific region alone. This accounts for approximately 15% of a country's total population¹. Surprisingly, the participation of individuals with identified disabilities in key forums such as the Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF) has been minimal, with fewer than ten attendees in the past decade. Similarly, the Asia Pacific School of Internet Governance (APSIG) has seen the engagement of only two persons with disabilities.

Evidently, there exists a pressing need for greater involvement and leadership of individuals with lived experiences of disability within the Internet community. This imperative program aims to equip emerging leaders with disabilities, enabling them to become influential voices and active contributors in shaping policies and technical advancements. The long-term objective is to drive a substantial shift wherein accessibility receives greater acknowledgment and prioritization within the Internet community's discourse and practices.

3. Background

The Asia Pacific School on Internet Governance (APSIG), led by Mr. Satish Babu, was established to enhance expertise in Internet Governance among practitioners in the Asia Pacific region. Within the ISOC Accessibility Standing Group, chaired by Ms. Gunela Astbrink, a pivotal aim is to cultivate new leaders who passionately advocate for improved accessibility across the Internet landscape.

During the 2021 APSIG held in Sri Lanka, an impactful session on Inclusion was organized, chaired by Ms. Gayatri Khandhadai. The session featured presentations from Ms. Manique Gunaratne and Ms. Gunela Astbrink, leaving a lasting impression. Subsequently, based on a concept paper produced by Sagarika Wickramasekera, and with suggestions from Mr. Sathish Babu and Ms. Gunela Astbrink, APSIG committed to launching a pilot project aimed at bolstering the capacity of individuals with disabilities in South Asia concerning Internet governance.

This initiative received a significant boost when Article 19 approved the use of residual funds from the 2021 APSIG event. Coupled with support from the APNIC Foundation and the Internet Society Bangladesh Chapter, plans materialized for a disability leadership workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, focusing on digital rights and Internet governance as its inaugural phase.

As phase 2 unfolded, the Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG) presented a concept paper to the ISOC Accessibility Standing Group Global, highlighting the necessity to empower leaders and activists within the community of persons with disabilities in Sri Lanka. The primary objective was to deepen their understanding of disability-related issues within the realms of internet governance and digital rights. With the endorsement and funding from ISOC Accessibility Standing Group Global, LKSIG successfully implemented a program focused on Internet Governance and Digital Rights in Colombo, Sri Lanka behalf of persons with diverse disabilities.

¹ <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Disability%20The%20Facts.pdf>

4. Discussion & Logistics

Following the successful phase 1 workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, plans for phase 2 began in July 2022. This next phase focuses on conducting a program centered on Internet Governance and Digital Rights specifically designed for individuals with diverse disabilities. Scheduled to take place in Colombo from December 28th to 30th, 2023, the program aims to facilitate various components.

One aspect involves participants engaging in an interactive course focused on disability leadership training in Internet Governance. Another critical element of the workshop is to equip attendees with enhanced knowledge, leadership capabilities, and advocacy skills pertaining to Internet Governance and Accessibility. The goal is for participants to apply these skills within their respective organizations or communities.

4.1 Participants

The board of members of Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG) implemented the stage of selecting individuals with disabilities. The first main criteria for selection were participants' advocacy activities in their own organization, institute and the participants' potential to lead capacity-building in their communities along with the ability to disseminate acquired knowledge and skills to the local communities successfully. As per the term inclusivity, representation of individuals from all disability categories and the gender balance was considered as the second main criteria in the selection proceeding.

The following 10 participants were selected & finalized:

1. Vision Impaired:

Janitha Rukmal (Male) He is a double degree holder in Linguistics and in software engineering. Employed at an UN Agency and the Country Representative for G3ICT. Expert in digital accessibility for vision impaired persons with the screen reader.

Isuru Panditha (Male) He is a Law Graduate from a Sri Lankan University and Attorney-at-law from the Law College. Freelance practising lawyer. Expert in digital rights and on digital accessibility.

2. Low-Vision:

Abdullah Unis (Male) He is a Peace & Conflict Resolution under-graduate from a Sri Lankan University. Expert in digital accessibility for persons with low vision.

3. Hard of Hearing:

Rusiri De Silva (Female) She is a graduate from a Sri Lankan University and employed at a leading International Bank in Sri Lanka. Expert in working online. Provided input on digital accessibility for lip readers.

4. Hearing Impaired:

Ravindu Vithana (Male) He is a sign language user employed as a graphic designer.

Sanuli Ovitigama (Female) She is a young girl who is studying ICT and a sign language user.

5. Physical Disability:

Prasanna Kuruppu (Male) He is an Air Force Officer who had become a wheel chair user due to the war. Leading disability activist in Sri Lanka.

Kasunjith Satanarachchi (Male) A person with cerebral palsy. He is a law graduate and employed at an UN Agency.

Chani Jayathilake (Female) She is a Human Resources (HR) professional without both arms. A graduate from a Sri Lankan University and Masters from a Australian University. Employed a leading private sector company in Sri Lanka.

6. Parent of an Individual with Intellectual Disability:

Lakshmi Hewavithana (Female) She is a special education teacher working with children with intellectual disabilities.

There were 04 Females and 06 Males altogether. In addition, two sign-language interpreters were included in the programme to interpret for individuals with hearing impairments and support team to assist participants for all three days.



4.2 Accessible venue

The hotel venue was carefully selected for its excellent accessibility, ensuring it catered well to individuals with disabilities. Its strategic location near public transportation and key areas in Colombo added convenience for all participants.

In line with ensuring reasonable accommodation, the venue boasted several accessible features. Notably, the lifts were equipped with Braille markings and verbal announcements for each floor, enhancing accessibility for those with visual impairments. Nearby the program venue, accessible washrooms were readily available. The main entrance had a ramp, facilitating easy access for wheelchair users. Furthermore, individuals with physical disabilities were allocated specially designed hotel rooms to meet their needs. The reception staff and concierge were well-informed about reasonable accommodation requirements and readily assisted participants as needed.

To streamline the experience, all participants stayed at the same hotel where the workshop took place, ensuring a seamless and accommodating environment for everyone involved.

4.3 Logistics

The necessary logistics support was ensured by the Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG) and with the help of ISOC Global and Internet Society Accessibility Standing Group.

The venue selection considered the participants' needs. The conference hall was fully accessible including LED display monitors, projectors, sound systems, extension cables, moveable chairs and roving and stationary microphones.

Two dedicated hotel staff were assigned to the workshop. Care was taken to ensure sufficient staff during the serving of food—continental as well as vegetarian—was done smoothly via the hotel. All communications were done over the Mailing group as well as a WhatsApp group.

The event backdrops, banners, photography, videography, virtual sessions, sound management, decorations and event management were done through professional services. In addition, the workshop was documented through professional photos (stored in a shared drive), and videos, which are currently preserved in a hard drive.

5. Programme Schedule

The workshop was held over three days commencing on Thursday 28 December 2023 evening with an introduction to the sessions of the workshop and finishing on the evening on Saturday.

Summary of the Programme Schedule:

DAY 0	
Date	28th December 2023
Time	Description
6.00 - 6.10 pm	Inauguration Ceremony
	National Anthem
6.10 - 6.15 pm	Welcome Speech by Chairperson of LKSIG
6.20 - 6.25 pm	What Are We Expecting
6.25 - 6.35 pm	Speech by Guest of Honour
6.35 - 7.15 pm	Guest Lecture
7.15 - 7.45 pm	Overview of the Programme and Networking with the Participants
7.45 - 7.55 pm	Vote of thanks
7.55 - 8.00 pm	Group Photograph
DAY 1	
Date	29th December 2023
9.10 - 10.00 am	Warmup - Participants Share their Dreams on Accessibility
10.00 - 10.30 am	Update on Key Accessibility Policies and UNCRPD
11.00 - 11.30 am	Overview of Internet governance and the role of the ISOC Accessibility Standing Group ¹ .
11.30 - 12.00 pm	Internet governance globally discussing the Internet Society and the IGF
12.00 - 12.30 pm	Overview of APSTAR Organisations and Accessibility
1.30 - 1.40 pm	Warmup - Icebreaker
1.40 - 1.50 pm	Video clip

1.50 - 2.40 pm	Advocacy Skills and techniques including elevator pitch
2.40 - 3.30 pm	Sharing experiences on how to do advocacy in accessibility
4.00 - 5.30 pm	Writing funding and workshop proposals
5.30 - 5.45 pm	Summary of day 01 planning for day 02
DAY 3	
Date	30th December 2023
9.05 - 9.10 am	Feedback from day 01
9.15 - 10.30 am	Leadership Skills
11.00 - 11.30 am	Legal provisions for disability in the national and international arena
11.30 - 12.00 pm	Ideas to further develop the online module
12.00 - 12.30 pm	Challenges and Solutions on Digital Accessibility
1.30 - 2.00 pm	G3ICT - Smart Cities
2.00 - 3.00 pm	Group discussion on how to connect with organisation on the way forward
3.00 p.m. - 3.30 p.m.	E-governance Resources
3.30 p.m. - 3.45 p.m.	Evaluation
3.45 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Awarding of certificates and conclusion

The workshop was intentionally structured with a diverse range of sessions and facilitators, aiming to offer a dynamic experience that would engage participants and maintain their attention:

- Key sessions prioritized participant interaction, fostering engagement and discussion.
- Probing sessions were conducted to collaboratively identify solutions for effective lobbying and advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities.
- Practical exercises focused on honing participants' elevator pitch skills, allowing them to succinctly present their ideas.
- Remote presentations by experts like Mr. Saitish Babu on Internet Governance and Disability, Ms. Gunela Astbrink on the overview of Internet governance and the role of the ISOC Accessibility Standing Group, and Dr. Mohamed Shabir on elevator pitching were integrated into the workshop.
- Ms. Manique Gunaratne and Ms. Sagarika Wickramasekera who was trained at the Dacca Training conducted several sessions.
- Additional resource persons such as Ms. Deepashika Gunasekara, Regional Director Asia for BCS, did a session on funding proposal writing & Mr. Sachinda Dulanjana, Training Consultant and Lecturer in Leadership on leadership skills.
- Presentations were deliberately concise, and interspersed with opportunities for questions and interactive discussions.
- Each day concluded with a summary of key takeaways and a preview of the exercises planned for the following day, ensuring continuity and clarity in the workshop's flow.

5.1 Sessions

5.1.1 Inauguration Ceremony – DAY 0

The program commenced on December 28, 2023, amidst an inaugural ceremony filled with symbolic moments. As the traditional oil lamp flickered to life, esteemed guests, including Mr. Waruna Dhanapala, Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils, and Local Government, and Director General (Acting) of Data Protection Authority, Sri Lanka, and Mr. Harsha Wijayawardhana, CEO of Theekshana R and D and Board Director of Bank of Ceylon, were warmly welcomed by Mr. Kasun Tharaka, Chairman of Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG).

Ms. Sagarika Wickramasekera, a distinguished figure serving as a Board of Trustee at Internet Society Global and Secretary of Asia-Pacific School on Internet Governance (APSIG), as well as a Core Founder of Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG), provided an insightful introduction to LKSIG. Her presentation outlined the program's goals and expectations from both the initiative and its participants. In addition, she did a brief introduction about the Multistakeholder Model of Internet Governance which is known as a system where all interested parties have a say in how the Internet is run. This includes governments, businesses, civil society groups, marginalized communities, and individuals. This model is important because it allows for a more democratic and inclusive approach to internet governance. It ensures that all voices are heard and that everyone has a chance to contribute to the discussion.

During this ceremony, Mr. Wijayawardhana shared his profound experiences from his higher education, highlighting his study alongside vision-impaired colleagues who achieved remarkable success independently. His emphasis on accessibility resonated, stressing the significance of organizations driving initiatives for internet governance among individuals with disabilities.

To mark the program's commencement, Mr. Satish Babu, a luminary in the field, delivered an illuminating lecture on Internet Governance and Persons with Disabilities via Zoom. His discourse encapsulated various critical points:

- Challenges faced by individuals with disabilities encompassing the Digital Divide, accessibility hurdles, employment constraints, educational disruptions, social isolation, transportation barriers, discrimination, and the dearth of accessible information. He also addressed the differential experiences pre and post-COVID for this community.
- The collaborative ecosystem managing the internet, involving organizations like ICANN, IGF, and IETF.
- The importance and challenges inherent in Internet Governance, touching upon the dichotomy between multistakeholderism and multilateralism.
- The digital rights pertinent to persons with disabilities, specifically focusing on web accessibility and assistive devices.
- Strategies for involving individuals with disabilities in Internet Governance activities as users and stakeholders, highlighting the necessity for their active participation.
- The impactful work carried out by APSIG in the domain of disability.

In a subsequent session, Mr. Dhanapala, another distinguished guest, articulated the government's stance on accessibility development for persons with disabilities. He emphasized the necessity for policy interventions and elucidated on potential government actions leveraging accessibility technologies for this demographic.

The day further unfolded with Ms. Manique Gunaratne, a Core Founder of Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG) & Disability Activist, guiding a session offering an overview of the program and facilitating networking among the participants. Her engaging approach encouraged participants to introduce themselves, while she provided insights into the selection criteria for this training program.

Day 0 concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Mr. Kajan Subash, a Board Director and Treasurer of the Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG), expressing gratitude to all involved in this auspicious start.



5.1.2 Training Day – DAY 01

On 29th December 2023, the official training programme started. Following sessions were covered in the workshop:

- Dreams on Accessibility
- Update on Key Accessibility Policies and UNCRPD
- Overview of Internet governance and the role of the ISOC Accessibility Standing Group
- Internet governance globally discussing the Internet Society and the IGF
- Overview of APSTAR Organisations and Accessibility
- Advocacy Skills and techniques including elevator pitch
- Sharing experiences on how to do advocacy in accessibility
- Writing funding and workshop proposals

→ **Dreams on Accessibility:**

During a warm-up exercise led by Ms. Manique Gunaratne, participants were invited to share their dreams and aspirations regarding accessibility. Their insightful remarks reflected a collective vision for a more inclusive future:

- * "Aspire to live independently without relying on human assistance, solely depending on accessibility."
- * "Aim to enhance the digital landscape to achieve complete independence by 2048."
- * "Advocate for increased availability of assistive devices."
- * "Call for improved facilities to advance education opportunities."
- * "Strive to optimize digital technology, particularly focusing on STEM education for individuals with disabilities."
- * "Suggest enhancing technology catering to the needs of hearing-impaired individuals, like speech-to-text and voice call-to-text features."
- * "Envision a world where hearing-impaired individuals can navigate without needing an interpreter."

In the subsequent discussions, attention was drawn to the development of a National Identity Card specifically designed for individuals with diverse disabilities in Sri Lanka, reflecting ongoing considerations for greater inclusivity and recognition within the country.

→ **Update on Key Accessibility Policies and UNCRPD:**

Ms. Manique Gunaratne led this session, joined by field experts including Mr. Janitha Rukmal, Mr. Isuru Panditha, and Mr. Kasunjith Satanarachchi. It was structured as a focused group discussion, encouraging open dialogue where all participants could contribute their ideas.

Findings of the session:

UNCRPD & Disability Rights of Sri Lanka - Sri Lanka, among the first South Asian nations to sign the UNCRPD, took nine years to ratify it. In legal terms, there are two approaches to incorporating international conventions. Monism integrates the convention into the national legal system upon ratification, while dualism necessitates enabling legislation post-ratification. Presently, Sri Lanka follows dualism, where ministries, not the parliament, can ratify without its consent. However, the judiciary acknowledges the UNCRPD as part of national law, empowering persons with disabilities to utilize it for advocating accessibility barriers under Articles 9 & 21.

Despite numerous amendments, the bill remains pending in parliament. Sri Lanka's constitution (Article 1 & 12) recognizes the importance of elevating persons with disabilities within the nation. The Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 1996 allows access to provincial courts for defending fundamental rights, showcasing Sri Lanka as supportive of disability rights.

The national disability policy prioritizes digital rights and access to information, yet policymakers struggle with digital accessibility. While physical accessibility is monitored, the lack of regulations for web accessibility hinders equal access. Activists have filed cases against government publications for using inaccessible fonts, despite guidelines advocating for Unicode fonts. Though slow, progress is expected, signifying judicial backing for disability rights.

Accessible formats in digital spaces exist, but public awareness remains limited. Direct information access for persons with disabilities is crucial, emphasizing formats like Braille, large print, accessible e-copies with Unicode fonts, audio (Daisy format), sign language, and simple texts.

In terms of internet governance, adherence to W3C (The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) develops standards and guidelines to help everyone build a web-based on the principles of accessibility, internationalization, privacy, and security²) standards ensures website accessibility. Furthermore, offering sign language, audio descriptions, and captioning in programs aligns with UNCRPD Article 9. Overall, Sri Lanka showcases legal acknowledgment of disability rights, but challenges persist in ensuring comprehensive accessibility, both digitally and in public awareness. Compliance with standards and advocacy efforts are crucial for promoting equitable access for persons with disabilities.

→ **Overview of Internet governance and the role of the ISOC Accessibility Standing Group:**

During a session led by Ms. Gunela Astbrink, the spotlight shone on the ISOC Accessibility Standing Group, a driving force dedicated to nurturing an inclusive digital landscape. Through advocacy, education, collaboration, and resource provision, they steadfastly champion internet accessibility for all, irrespective of abilities or disabilities.

Initially, the focus centered on defining Internet governance. Contrary to being governed by a single entity, organization, or body, it encompasses various processes managing the internet. The term was first outlined in 2005 by the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG), delineating it as the shared principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures shaping the internet's evolution and usage by governments, the private sector, and civil society³.

Ms. Astbrink emphasized strategies for advocating web-accessibility, including involvement in key internet forums, discussions, policymaking, and participation in fellowships. The role of ISOC in supporting the Accessibility Standing Group and fostering an internet for everyone was highlighted, particularly through partnerships with ISOC chapter groups.

She underscored the group's pivotal role in capacity building through workshops, training sessions, and educational endeavours. Their objective is to equip diverse stakeholders—developers, designers, policymakers—with the skills to craft accessible digital spaces.

² <https://www.w3.org/>

³ "What is internet governance?", digwatch, Accessed 30 December 2023, <https://dig.watch/what-is-internet-governance-digital-policy#primary>

Collaboration with experts and stakeholders emerged as crucial in shaping guidelines and disseminating best practices for internet accessibility. These guidelines serve as a beacon, facilitating the creation of digital environments catering to a wide range of user needs.

In essence, Ms. Astbrink encapsulated ISOC's tireless efforts, emphasizing their dedication to fostering inclusivity in the digital sphere through proactive initiatives, education, collaboration, and the formulation of accessible digital guidelines.

Findings of the session:

Fellowships – Internet organizations such as Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF), The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) & The Asia-Pacific School on Internet Governance (APSIG) offer fellowships. Applications are offered at certain months of the year. The ICANN offers fellowships to attend ICANN meetings. These fellowships aim to increase the diversity of voices and participation in the ICANN community, providing opportunities to learn about and engage in Internet governance policy discussions. The APrIGF is a significant regional platform for discussing Internet governance-related issues in the Asia Pacific. The APSIG typically offers fellowships to individuals interested in attending their programs. APSIG aims to provide comprehensive educational opportunities and networking platforms focused on internet governance issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

→ **Internet governance globally discussing the Internet Society and the IGF & Overview of APSTAR Organisation and Accessibility:**

Ms. Sagarika Wickramasekera conducted an informative session encompassing an expansive view of Internet governance and the Internet ecosystem. Beginning with a comprehensive overview, she outlined key components, including the fundamental landscape of Internet governance and its various entities.

Highlighting pivotal organizations in Internet governance, Ms. Sagarika shed light on the roles of significant bodies like ISOC (Internet Society), ITU (International Telecommunication Union), and IGF (Internet Governance Forum). The genesis of ISOC, rooted in the vision of 'Internet for all,' was introduced, emphasizing its pivotal contributions in community building, technological advancement, and policy advocacy. She delved into the hierarchical structure of ISOC, elucidating its operational functions via the ISOC website, and underscored the role of the Internet Society Foundation in extending support and funding for impactful community initiatives.

Continuing her discourse, Ms. Sagarika elaborated on the roles of ICANN, ITU, and IGF within the sphere of Internet governance. She provided insights into Sri Lanka's participation in IGF initiatives and discussed forthcoming endeavors. Furthermore, she highlighted the significance of Schools of Internet Governance, such as the Asia Pacific School of Internet Governance (APSIG), dedicated to fostering awareness and enhancing capacities within the Asia Pacific region.

Her presentation also spotlighted the APSTAR Organization, elucidating its roles, membership structure, and outreach efforts, along with its pivotal program, the Asia Pacific Internet Governance Academy. Additionally, Ms. Sagarika delved into the DotAsia Organization's mandate of fostering internet development and adoption in Asia, highlighting its support for numerous community projects since the launch of the .Asia TLD in 2007-2008.

Concluding on a proactive note, she encouraged participants to explore opportunities for engagement and involvement with these esteemed organizations, offering avenues for individuals keen on contributing to the realm of Internet governance. Overall, her session provided an extensive understanding of the Internet governance landscape and avenues for active participation within these influential entities.

→ **Advocacy Skills and techniques including elevator pitch:**

During the initial part of the session, Dr. Mohamed Shabir, joining remotely, delivered a comprehensive lecture on cultivating advocacy skills and mastering the art of an elevator pitch. His discourse commenced with an exploration of disability rights advocacy, underlining its pivotal role in championing inclusivity, accessibility, and equal rights for individuals with disabilities.

Dr. Shabir meticulously detailed strategies for fostering self-advocacy among individuals with disabilities, nurturing their confidence to assert needs and advocate for personal rights and accommodations. He further illuminated the significance of engaging with a spectrum of stakeholders, from policymakers to community leaders and advocacy groups, stressing the power of partnerships in amplifying advocacy endeavours.

Highlighting the prevalent barriers faced in disability advocacy, Dr. Shabir delved into overcoming challenges encompassing societal stigma, attitudinal biases, and hurdles in physical or digital accessibility. He guided participants through the nuances of engaging in policy discussions, crafting impactful campaigns, and evaluating the effectiveness of advocacy initiatives.

Additionally, Dr. Shabir delved into the art of delivering a compelling elevator pitch within a concise timeframe. Drawing from personal experiences, he emphasized the essence of a pitch that encapsulates the entirety of the message, ensuring its effectiveness in conveying key points succinctly and persuasively.

During the latter segment, Ms. Manique Gunaratne took the reins, introducing an engaging exercise where participants were tasked with practical pitching exercises tailored to diverse scenarios. Each participant was presented with a unique situation, challenging them to craft and deliver a concise two-minute pitch.

The primary aim of this activity was twofold: first, to prompt participants to actively engage in pitching their ideas, and second, to identify common mistakes prevalent in such presentations when conveying concepts to varied audiences.

The session unfolded with participants earnestly delivering their pitches, each honing in on their respective situations. Subsequently, the group engaged in a collaborative feedback session. Constructive critiques were exchanged among peers, focusing on various facets such as tone, word choice, etiquette, non-verbal cues, language proficiency, and time management.

This interactive exercise proved fruitful, not only allowing participants to practice their pitching skills but also fostering a dynamic learning environment where individuals received actionable feedback to refine their presentation techniques. The emphasis on diverse aspects of communication and delivery ensured a holistic approach to enhancing their pitching ability.

Findings of the Session:

Terminology – The discussion delved into the significance of employing appropriate terminology when addressing various segments of society within a pitch. Highlighting the fact that certain roles or positions may not readily relate to the term 'accessibility,' opting instead for more familiar references like 'request for facilities.'

Moreover, the conversation stressed the importance of adopting the correct mannerisms when engaging with different individuals, ensuring the use of language that reflects respect and courtesy. Recognizing the need to tailor communication styles to resonate effectively with diverse audiences, acknowledging their perspectives and preferences. Sharing experiences on how to do advocacy in accessibility.

→ Sharing experiences on how to do advocacy in accessibility:

This session was given for the participants to share their experiences on how so far, they have done advocacy and what needs to be improved. This was simultaneously done together with the previous activity.

Findings of the Session:

Collaboration and Networking: Effective advocacy often means teaming up with different groups like government bodies, businesses, communities, and individuals. By working together and forming partnerships, the advocacy message becomes stronger, leading to more impactful changes.

Policy Engagement: Advocacy involves talking to policymakers and decision-makers to shape rules and laws. This means joining discussions, sharing expertise, and pushing for accessibility to be a key part of making new policies.

Legal Frameworks: Advocacy also means understanding and working with laws related to accessibility. This includes making sure that laws protect the rights of people with disabilities. For example, advocating to have the proper regulations for websites based on W3G.

→ Writing funding and workshop proposals:

Ms. Deepashika Gunasekara, Regional Director Asia for BCS led an insightful session focused on effective proposal writing for securing funding. Engaging participants in discussions, she delved into essential aspects crucial for compelling donor engagement.

The discussion commenced with an exploration of donor-convincing strategies. Ms. Gunasekara emphasized key areas pivotal in persuading donors, including showcasing the genuine need for funding, addressing marginalized communities, and aligning proposals with donor policies and values. Participants gained insights into various donor types, spanning bilateral, and multilateral entities, international development agencies, and individual or family donors, illustrated with pertinent examples.

Continuing the discourse, the session unravelled the step-by-step process of proposal development. Starting from identifying the problem and proposing solutions, Ms. Gunasekara elucidated on constructing a logical framework (log frame) and underscored the importance of cohesive proposal writing.

Moreover, the session outlined the dos and don'ts in funding proposal composition, providing participants with critical guidance on best practices and potential pitfalls to avoid in their writing

endeavors. Overall, Ms. Gunasekara's session offered comprehensive guidance, equipping attendees with valuable insights to craft compelling and persuasive funding proposals.

Findings of the session:

Understanding the Funder - Know the funder's mission, priorities, and guidelines. Tailor the proposal to align with their objectives and demonstrate how a person's project fits their interests. (E.g., Global Affairs Canada funds women-related projects mainly)

Clear and Compelling Narrative - Craft a clear, concise, and compelling story about the project. Define the problem, articulate the solution, and showcase the impact the initiative will have.

Specific Goals and Objectives - Clearly define the goals and objectives of the project. In addition, a SWOT analysis is necessary.

Budget and Justification - Develop a detailed and realistic budget that aligns with the project's scope. Provide a clear breakdown of expenses and justify each cost in relation to project outcomes.

Sustainability and Impact - Highlight the sustainability of the project beyond the funding period. Emphasize how the project will continue and its lasting impact on the community or cause.

Partnerships and Collaboration - Showcase partnerships or collaborations that strengthen the project. Demonstrate how these relationships enhance the project's effectiveness and reach.

Evidence-Based Approach - Support the proposal with data, evidence, or research that validates the need for the project and the effectiveness of the proposed solution.

Engagement and Communication - Explain how the team plan to engage stakeholders, communicate progress, and involve the funder in project updates and results.



5.1.3 Training Day – DAY 02

The training workshop commenced its second day on December 30, 2023, marking the culmination of the entire training program.

Following sessions were covered in the workshop:

- Leadership Skills
- Legal provisions for disability in national and international arena
- Ideas to further develop the online module
- Challenges and Solutions on Digital Accessibility
- G3ICT - Smart Cities
- Group discussion on how to connect with organisation on way forward
- E-governance Resources
- Evaluation
- Awarding of certificates and conclusion

→ **Leadership Skills:**

In a compelling session led by Mr. Sachinda Dulanjana, the spotlight shone on leadership skills and the pivotal role individuals with disabilities play in leading digital rights advocacy. Mr. Dulanjana highlighted the innate adaptability of those navigating the world differently, noting how this quality aligns seamlessly with the dynamic landscape of digital rights advocacy. Participants echoed this sentiment, sharing personal experiences that underscored the vital importance of inclusivity, accessibility, and equal opportunities in the digital sphere.

A focal point of the discussion was on leadership styles that prioritize collaboration and the integration of diverse voices. This approach ensures that policies and initiatives are crafted with consideration for all, regardless of ability. Furthermore, an engaging activity emphasized how these leaders serve as living embodiments of resilience and determination. Their ability to surmount challenges in a world often unaccommodating to their needs serves as a beacon, instilling a sense of determination within their communities.

The session underscored the imperative for individuals with disabilities to harness their resilience as a driving force in advocating for digital rights. Their unwavering resolve calls for technological advancements that cater inclusively to the diverse needs of every individual.

Ultimately, the session illuminated how these leaders, by embodying resilience and championing inclusivity, are instrumental in shaping a digital landscape that honors equity and embraces the full spectrum of human abilities.

Findings of the session:

Adaptability and unique perspectives - Individuals with disabilities brought out inherent adaptability and unique perspectives to leadership roles. Their diverse experiences navigating the world differently equip them with valuable insights that align with the ever-evolving landscape of digital rights advocacy.

Driving force for change - The session underscored the critical role of individuals with disabilities as a driving force in advocating for digital rights. Their unwavering commitment calls for technological advancements that prioritize inclusivity and address the diverse needs of all individuals.

Utilizing Resource Persons – Although persons with disabilities do not advocate for the charity model, it is important to get help from other people when it comes to resource sharing legalizing a particular area. As it is essential and believed to be fruitful for these resource persons to share their experiences to empower the communities. In such matters, digital or internet literacy can be enhanced and avoid the digital gap among persons with disabilities.

→ **Legal provisions for disability in the national and international arena:**

The session was preceded by Mr. Prasanna Kuruppu, Mr. Kasunjith Satanarachchi and Mr. Isuru Panditha as they shared their views and experiences when it comes to the legal provisions for disability based on Sri Lanka & international context.

The session focused on the legal provisions concerning disabilities, both within Sri Lanka and on the international stage, critical insights surfaced, shedding light on the multifaceted legal frameworks designed to protect and promote the rights of individuals with disabilities.

The session delved into the evolution of disability rights in Sri Lanka, highlighting the nation's commitment to upholding these rights through both domestic and international legal mechanisms. It was underscored that Sri Lanka ratified the UNCRPD in 2016, reaffirming its dedication to ensuring equal opportunities and rights for individuals with disabilities.

Throughout the session, there was an evident recognition of the progress made in establishing legal protections for individuals with disabilities, yet a consensus emerged on the need for sustained efforts. Speakers emphasized the importance of effective implementation, enforcement, and continuous improvement of these legal frameworks to ensure their tangible impact on the lives of individuals with disabilities.

Findings of the Session:

Challenges in Implementation - Despite significant strides in establishing legal protections for individuals with disabilities, concerns persist regarding the effective implementation and enforcement of these provisions. Speakers at discussions emphasized the crucial need to translate legal frameworks into tangible improvements in the daily lives of individuals with disabilities. They stressed that the true measure of success lies in the practical impact these laws have on enhancing accessibility and opportunities for this community.

Social Model – In Sri Lanka, there's been a notable shift towards embracing the social model of disability, which places emphasis on societal barriers as the primary cause of disability. This perspective underscores the critical role of environments, attitudes, and insufficient accommodations in disabling individuals, rather than solely attributing it to their impairments. While the international space tends to prioritize the rights-based model, Sri Lanka is navigating a transition, increasingly adopting the principles of the social model to address societal barriers.

Policy Implementation - One particular challenge lies in policy implementation, especially concerning digital accessibility. Despite the presence of legal provisions safeguarding disability rights, there remain gaps between the creation of policies and their practical implementation on the ground, particularly in ensuring digital accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

→ Ideas to further develop the online module:

Participants offered valuable suggestions to enhance the online module on internet governance for individuals with disabilities:

- **Expanded Resources:** Incorporate additional organizations like G3ICT & International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP) to augment accessibility-related resources within the module.
- **Cybersecurity Module:** Considering its unique importance, propose a separate module dedicated to cybersecurity within the broader context of digital space concerns.
- **Procurement Emphasis:** Encourage procurements that prioritize accessible internet governance, distinguishing between accessible and inaccessible options.
- **Resource Links and Interpretation:** Rectify non-functional URLs within the module and ensure that video links include sign-language interpretation, extending this feature to all relevant videos.
- **Accessibility Focus:** Enhance accessibility for individuals with vision impairments, particularly by ensuring screen-reader compatibility for all content. Explore tailored accessibility formats for individuals with hearing impairments.
- **Detailed W3G Chapter:** Amplify the depth and interactivity of the chapter discussing W3G (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) to better assist web designers.
- **Highlight ERA Index:** Emphasize the ERA Index, offering a professional knowledge base and research information catering specifically to persons with disabilities.

→ Challenges and Solutions on Digital Accessibility:

During this session, participants were encouraged to shift their focus primarily towards solutions for digital accessibility. Previous discussions had centred on identifying challenges and barriers to accessibility. Therefore, the emphasis was redirected towards proactive and constructive approaches aimed at generating solutions and strategies to overcome these challenges. The intent was to inspire a mindset geared towards innovation and problem-solving, fostering a collective effort to pave the way for a more inclusive digital landscape.

Following are the solutions stated:

- **Establishing Clear Regulations** - We need specific rules guiding digital accessibility, rooted in strong values and ethics. Communities should be engaged to understand ethical standards on digital platforms, ensuring inclusivity and fairness.
- **Increasing Public Awareness** - There's a need for greater publicity on making the digital world accessible for persons with disabilities. More information and guidance should be shared widely to promote understanding and action.
- **Accessible Videos for Messaging** - Creating accessible videos can be a powerful tool to spread the message about accessibility through various networks. This approach can effectively reach diverse audiences and emphasize the importance of digital inclusivity.
- **Incorporating Diversity & Inclusion Strategies** - It's crucial to implement strategies for diversity and inclusion in internet governance and digital rights within organizations. This ensures that considerations for accessibility are an integral part of decision-making processes.
- **Implementing an Award System** - Websites should introduce a rating system to evaluate their accessibility for persons with disabilities. This incentivizes web developers and designers to enhance their websites, making them more accessible to everyone.

→ **G3ict - Smart Cities & E-governance Resources:**

Mr. Janith Rukmal, an esteemed expert in the work done by G3ict, led an illuminating session delving into the realms of smart cities and e-governance resources. Commencing with an overview of G3ict, the global initiative for inclusive ICTs, he underscored its alignment with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in advocating for accessible Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Assistive Technologies worldwide.

Emphasizing the pivotal findings from the Digital Accessibility Rights Evaluation Index (DARE Index), Mr. Janith highlighted the repercussions of policymakers neglecting accessibility issues. This neglect often leads to a dearth of progress in digital inclusion strategies, insufficient funding for assistive technologies, and a lack of technical infrastructure in areas requiring such technologies. Notably, he shared insights into the top ten countries leading the charge in promoting digital accessibility according to the DARE index in 2020.

Drawing attention to the instrumental roles played by the Global Advisory Network (GAC) and Country Advisory Network (CAN), he elaborated on the Digital Accessibility Rights Education (DARE) academy. This platform offers scholarships, training, and fellowship programs, inviting participation from anyone interested in advancing accessibility rights education.

Shifting focus to the concept of smart cities, Mr. Janith expounded upon their myriad benefits. These forward-thinking cities, with a core emphasis on ICT accessibility, serve as catalysts for pioneering technologies like artificial intelligence, natural user interfaces, and machine learning. Notably, many contemporary mainstream products owe their origins to accessible technology innovations, such as voice recognition, text-to-speech, and predictive text software. He underscored how ICT accessibility policies in cities foster local accessible technology ecosystems by nurturing IT professionals' capabilities and attracting top-tier talent.

Additionally, Mr. Janith introduced toolkits on smart cities and elucidated their practical applications. He also shed light on the crucial role of the International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP) in providing professional certifications for accessibility, underlining their significant contribution to the field.

Overall, his comprehensive presentation provided a multifaceted view of the significance of digital accessibility, smart cities, and the essential resources and networks available for furthering inclusivity in the technological landscape.

→ **Group discussion on how to connect with organization on way forward:**

This session was open to all participants to emphasize the suggestions on how to connect with organizations to have a way forward in the field of digital accessibility.

Following are the suggestions stated:

- **Identifying Stakeholders** - It's crucial to recognize key stakeholders across government, private sectors, and international organizations to advocate for digital accessibility as a moral imperative rather than mere assistance for individuals with disabilities. Engaging with these individuals allows for strategic lobbying and a deeper understanding of the shared responsibility in providing accessibility.

- **Partnerships and Funding** - Collaborating with organizations like Microsoft, which earmarks funds for digital accessibility, presents an opportunity. By consolidating efforts and crafting a comprehensive proposal, securing such funding can spearhead initiatives that promote local digital accessibility through well-thought-out strategies.
- **Conference Participation** - Active involvement in national and international conferences and workshops dedicated to digital accessibility is essential. This participation not only ensures the uptake of beneficial programs but also facilitates networking opportunities with industry professionals in the field.
- **Advocacy and Empowerment** - Increasing the number of advocates, especially among youth, is pivotal. Empowering them to engage with society and advocate for digital accessibility is a transformative step. Organizations like the Sri Lanka Association for Software Services Companies (SLASSCOM) play a crucial role in empowering and amplifying the voices of these advocates.
- **Policy Integration** - Aligning digital accessibility initiatives with international policies such as those from the IMF strengthens the cause. Promoting universal design principles through these policies reinforces the importance of accessibility across different spheres.
- **Engaging Innovators** - Involving innovators in the development of digital accessibility solutions is paramount. Their contributions can drive significant advancements in ensuring inclusivity in digital spaces.
- **Government Awareness** - Raising awareness among government entities is pivotal, considering their direct influence on societal change. Educating them about the significance of digital accessibility can prompt proactive measures towards implementation.





6. Evaluation

The training program evaluation encompassed a Google Form for participants to complete before the program's conclusion. Additionally, participants offered verbal feedback at the conclusion of the workshop.

6.1 Summary of the Workshop Evaluation

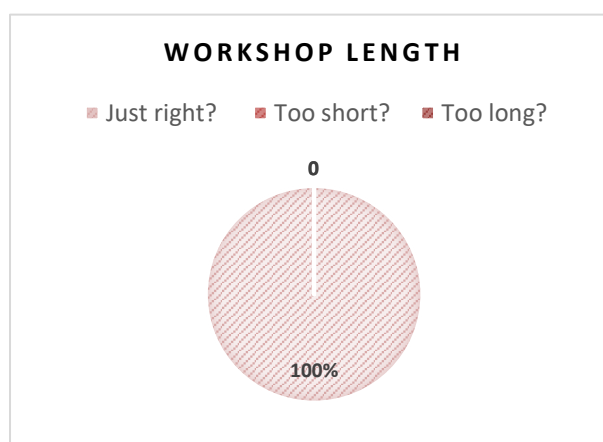
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. The subject matter was adequately covered.	8 – 80%	2 – 20%	0	0	0
2. The content was suitable for my background and experience.	8 – 80%	2 – 20%	0	0	0
3. The workshop was well placed.	9 – 90%	1 – 10%	0	0	0
4. The hand-outs and tools were relevant.	7 – 70%	2 – 20%	1 – 10%	0	0
5. Participants were encouraged to take an active part in the event.	10 – 100%	0	0	0	0
6. The activities helped me understand the content.	8 – 80%	2 – 20%	0	0	0
7. The facilitator/s helped me to understand.	9 – 90%	1 – 10%	0	0	0
8. The facilitator/s answered questions appropriately.	8 – 80%	2 – 20%	0	0	0
9. Overall, the training organization, administration and scheduling were handled well.	10 – 100%	0	0	0	0
10. The workshop venue and facilities were suitable to my needs.	10 – 100%	0	0	0	0

11. Was the workshop length:

Just right? 10 – 100%

Too short? 0

Too long? 0



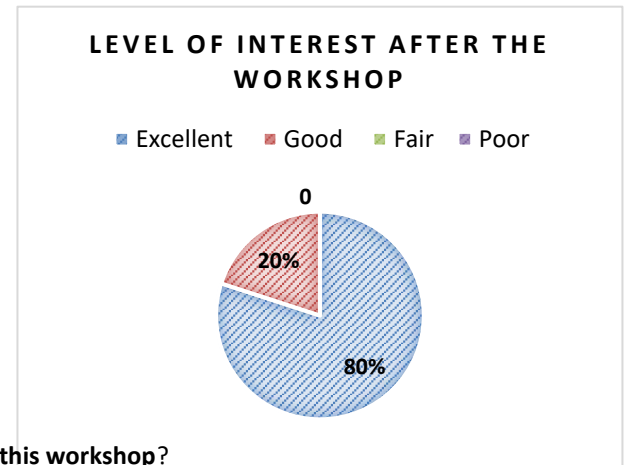
12. What was your level of interest before the workshop?

Excellent – 3 – 30%
 Good – 3 – 30%
 Fair - 4 – 40%
 Poor - 0



13. Your level of interest after the workshop?

Excellent – 8 – 80%
 Good – 2 – 20%
 Fair - 0
 Poor - 0

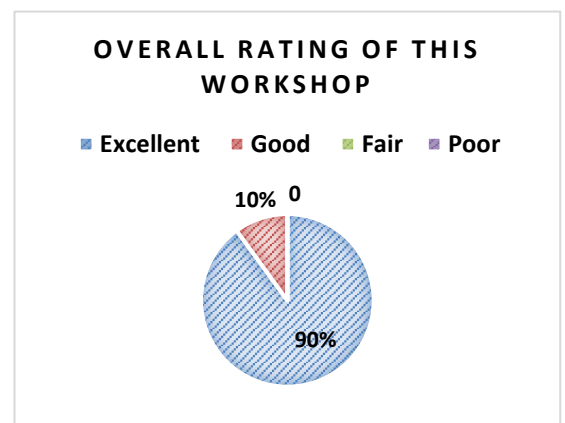


14. Do you have any suggestions that you feel could improve this workshop?

- As informed it would be much appreciated if you could translate the documents in to Sinhala language.
- Conduct the workshop in Sinhala language as well.
- To mobilize more youth participants
- Invite more hearing-impaired persons to this training programme.
- Give an outline of the training before the start of the day.
- The organizers have covered each and every topic required.
- Provide more slides on the relevant topic.
- Have similar type of workshops again in the future.
- Give more opportunities to network with the stakeholders and resource persons and initiate a mechanism such as a human library.
- Everything is more than expected.
- Great workshop. Much better if there were more hands-on activities which would enable participants to understand different concepts associated with Internet governance.

15. What is your overall rating of this workshop?

Excellent – 9 – 90%
 Good – 1 – 10%
 Fair - 0
 Poor - 0



16. Do you have any other comments on the workshop?

- The workshop was well planned and it went really well.
- It was simply an excellent attempt.
- Well organized with active participation of LKSIG officials.
- We would like if we could have another workshop after 2 or 3 months.
- If we could able to continue this work...as outcome am so interested to move towards digital rights.
- This workshop was really good and we found it really useful.
- It was excellent
- It went really well. We find it very useful to our future endorsement.
- To share and improve knowledge of the persons with disabilities, there should be more workshops like this.

17. How can you contribute to Lanka School of Internet Governance on way forward on Internet Governance?

- Currently employed at MAS Intimates Ayathi, where a significant number of colleagues are hearing-impaired, I frequently utilize information technology for our office tasks. I aim to collaborate with LKSIG to organize an awareness program for my co-workers, enhancing their understanding of Internet Governance and Digital Rights.
- Leveraging my role as a graphic designer, I am committed to dedicating my time and skills to LKSIG, crafting engaging presentations and informative handouts. Furthermore, I aspire to champion this cause within the deaf community, drawing upon my own experiences as a hearing-impaired individual.
- Open to future consultations, training opportunities, and actively participating in awareness initiatives.
- Being deaf and working at HSBC alongside other hearing-impaired colleagues, I've recognized our collective oversight regarding internet governance and digital accessibility. Attending the workshop highlighted the importance of this knowledge. I'm motivated to conduct awareness programs within my workplace, educating my colleagues accordingly.
- Enthusiastically interested in any forthcoming initiatives and fully committed to participating and contributing wholeheartedly.
- As someone with hearing impairment, my goal is to disseminate knowledge about internet governance and digital rights within the deaf community.
- Eager to help in any capacity required.
- I aspire to serve as a valuable resource for LKSIG.
- I can contribute my legal expertise and knowledge of assistive technologies to assist Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG) in policy development, accessibility audits, and monitoring and evaluation processes.
- Ready and willing to share my knowledge with other individuals with disabilities.
- Equipped to support as a trainer or facilitator, even at the TOT (Training of Trainers) level. Additionally, the organizations I am associated with can offer support in policy advocacy and awareness mobilization efforts.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Internet Governance and Digital Rights workshop provided a comprehensive platform for fostering dialogue and understanding among diverse stakeholders in the ever-evolving landscape of cyberspace. Throughout the sessions, participants engaged in fruitful discussions on key issues in shaping the digital future. The workshop underscored the pressing need for a collaborative and multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance, emphasizing the importance of balancing innovation with the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. As the digital realm continues to expand and influence every aspect of our lives, it is evident that ongoing efforts in education, policy development, and international cooperation are essential to navigating the complexities of the digital age while upholding the principles of inclusivity, transparency, and human rights.

8. Recommendations

a. Advocacy:

Advocate for inclusive Internet governance policies that explicitly address the needs and rights of persons with disabilities. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to ensure their voices are heard in policy-making processes.

b. Capacity Building Programs:

Develop and implement ongoing capacity-building programs for persons with disabilities, focusing on digital literacy, online safety, and accessibility. These programs should empower individuals to navigate the digital landscape effectively.

c. Accessible Technologies:

Encourage the development and adoption of accessible technologies. Work with technology companies to prioritize and incorporate features that enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities, ensuring that digital tools are usable by everyone.

d. Monitoring and Evaluation:

Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the impact of Internet governance policies on persons with disabilities. Regularly review and update these frameworks to adapt to evolving technologies and challenges.

e. Collaborative Partnerships:

Foster partnerships between government bodies, civil society organizations, technology companies, and disability advocacy groups. Collaborative efforts can amplify the impact of initiatives and ensure a holistic approach to addressing digital rights for persons with disabilities.

f. Awareness Campaigns:

Conduct awareness campaigns to educate the general public, businesses, and government agencies about the digital rights and needs of persons with disabilities. This can help reduce discrimination and foster a more inclusive digital environment.

g. Legal Advocacy:

Advocate for the integration of digital rights for persons with disabilities into existing legal frameworks. Work towards the development of specific legislation that protects their rights in the digital space.

h. User-Centric Design:

Promote user-centric design principles in the development of digital platforms and services. Encourage businesses and developers to prioritize accessibility from the initial design phase, rather than as an afterthought.

i. Data Privacy and Security:

Advocate for robust data privacy and security measures that specifically address the vulnerabilities faced by persons with disabilities. Ensure that their personal information is protected and that they can use online services securely.

j. International Collaboration:

Engage in international forums and collaborations to share best practices and learn from global efforts in promoting digital rights for persons with disabilities. This can contribute to a more harmonized and effective approach on a global scale.

9. Acknowledgment

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Internet Society (ISOC) Global, Accessibility Standing Group (ASG), Asia Pacific School on Internet Governance (APSIG), and Lanka School on Internet Governance (LKSIG) for their unwavering support and invaluable contributions in fostering awareness and understanding of internet governance and digital accessibility.

A special thank you goes out to our dedicated volunteers whose passion and commitment have been instrumental in driving our initiatives forward. We also express our appreciation to the exceptional team at Movenpick Hotel for their outstanding hospitality and support throughout our endeavours.

Additionally, we extend our sincere thanks to our assistants and support staff whose dedication and hard work behind the scenes have been integral to the success of our programs. Your collective efforts have made a significant impact, empowering communities and advocating for inclusivity in the digital sphere.



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