

## IGF 2023 Youth Track

Asia Pacific regional IGF (APrIGF) | Brisbane, Australia

30 August 2023, 09:00 local time (23:00 UTC)

### Summary of Workshop II

*Empowering Young People in navigating privacy, security and freedom in the digital universe*

The third workshop of the [IGF 2023 youth track](#) was hosted at the Asia Pacific regional IGF (APrIGF). It discussed youth's perspectives on human rights online protection., underlining the existing challenges in areas of privacy, digital security, and freedom of expression. This session reflected the importance of digital literacy, online safety, and the responsible use of technology where the dialogue aimed to bring together young people with experts and policymakers having constructive discussions on how to address these challenges.

The workshop featured several expert speakers, ensuring the representation of both youth and senior backgrounds:

- Mr. Ananda Gautam, Nepal Youth IGF
- Ms. Lydia Akanvariba, Parliament of Ghana
- Ms. Joyce Chen, APNIC
- Ms. Ella Serry, Office of eSafety Commissioner, Australia
- Ms. Swaran Ravindra, Fiji National University; Member of the APrIGF Multistakeholder Steering
- Anja Gengo, IGF Secretariat

Rapporteurs:

- Phyo Thiri Lwin, Youth IGF Myanmar
- Saba Tiku, Youth IGF Ethiopia

Moderators:

- Luke Teoh, Youth APrIGF
- Dalili Nuradli, Youth APrIGF

Below is the overall summary of the exchanges.

*Safeguarding the online experiences and well-being of young people is of utmost importance. This entails the development of legislative frameworks, data protection laws, public education, coordination among stakeholders, rights-based regulation, and active involvement of youth in decision-making processes. Additionally, promoting digital literacy is crucial to empower young individuals to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly.*

- **Youth Predominance:** In the Asia Pacific region, children and teenagers constitute the majority of Internet users, emphasizing the critical need to prioritize their digital safety and well-being. Understanding their online experiences and challenges is paramount to ensuring a safer online environment for all.
- **Legislative Frameworks:** Policymakers are actively developing legal frameworks aimed at safeguarding children and young individuals in the online space. These frameworks encompass defining youth rights, setting age restrictions, enforcing consent mechanisms, promoting Internet safety awareness, educating the public on digital risks, and implementing sanctions for non-compliance. Effective legislation can serve as a cornerstone for enhancing online safety.
- **Data Protection Legislation:** Robust data protection legislation significantly contributes to the online safety and privacy of young people. Such laws establish guidelines for the responsible handling of personal data, which is crucial in safeguarding individuals, especially the youth, from digital threats and privacy breaches.
- **Public Education:** Continuous and comprehensive initiatives are indispensable for educating the general public about their rights and responsibilities concerning data protection. Cybersecurity groups play a pivotal role in identifying and mitigating online threats. Promoting a culture of cybersecurity awareness is vital to protect users, particularly the younger demographic, from online attacks and data breaches.
- **Role of Technical Community:** The technical community plays a vital role in upholding the fundamental rights of Internet users while ensuring their safety online. Their expertise is instrumental in supporting balanced policymaking that takes into account both technological advancements and user protection. Collaborative efforts with

decision-makers can lead to informed and effective policies.

- **Coordination and Collaboration Among Stakeholders:** Effective regulation for online safety, including measures against cyberbullying and child protection laws, necessitates strong coordination among diverse stakeholders. Collaboration between government bodies, industry, civil society, and advocacy groups is essential to formulate comprehensive policies that address the multifaceted nature of online threats.
- **Rights-based Regulation:** Digital regulations must align with international human rights standards, with particular emphasis on defending individuals' freedom of expression and their right to exist online without fear or harassment. Balancing regulation with these core principles ensures that online spaces remain open, inclusive, and protective of users' fundamental rights.
- **Youth Involvement:** Initiatives like the Youth Council formed by the eSafety Commissioner illustrate the importance of incorporating youth voices and interests into decision-making processes. Engaging with young individuals not only empowers them but also ensures that policies and practices align with their unique needs and concerns.
- **Digital Literacy:** Recognizing that young people may have gaps in their knowledge of their digital rights and access to information, it is imperative to prioritize digital literacy education. Bridging these knowledge gaps equips young users with the skills and awareness needed to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly.