yIGF 2019 Vladivostok, Russia
Program Report

16 - 19 July 2019 – Vladivostok, Russia

Youth Organiser

Supporting Organisation

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Introduction

The Asia Pacific Youth Internet Governance Forum 2019 (yIGF 2019) was held from 16 to 19 July 2019 in Vladivostok, Russia. The mission shared by NetMission Ambassadors was brought to Vladivostok, a beautiful city in Far-Eastern Russia with regional participants from the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. With the advisory support from APrIGF secretariat and the Multi-stakeholder Steering Group (MSG) of APrIGF, and the dedication of the NetMission Ambassadors from NetMission.Asia, the yIGF 2019 was completed successfully.

This year, we are pleased that our youth participants were provided with an invaluable opportunity to closely interact with Rajesh Singh, a veteran of the Internet Governance community and the chair of APrIGF MSG, in one of our sessions and to contribute to a project initiated by Youth4IG. We believe that the youth participants have gained tremendous insights by interchanging insightful ideas with our honourable guests, which might help encourage future initiatives and youth engagement in the Asia-Pacific regions.

What is yIGF?

Youth Internet Governance Forum (yIGF) has firstly been initiated by a group of NetMission Ambassadors (www.netmission.asia) in 2010 in parallel with the Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF). It aims to raise the awareness of youth on Internet governance discourse and to encourage the young generation to have more active engagement in policy discussion and the decision-making process.

Inspired by the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), a multi-stakeholder forum for policy dialogue on issues of Internet governance, the yIGF is also established in the same multi-stakeholder approach as the IGF.

yIGF is usually a 4-day-3-night camp which participants are assigned with roles as one of the interest groups, including government, private sectors and NGOs, to brainstorm their ideas and voice out their opinions on the issues of Internet governance from new perspectives.

yIGF provides an open platform for the youth to express and exchange their ideas and thoughts on Internet governance freely. It also serves as a preparation camp for them to understand various Internet issues and open their doors to the international policy discussion. You might find more details on www.yigf.asia.

Organiser

NetMission.Asia is a network of passionate youth from Asia dedicated to engage and empower youth on Internet governance discourse with the aim to enhance youth mobility and create impact in Asia.

Students from top tertiary institutes or universities are recruited every year and will be provided with a series of training workshops. We are endeavoring to empower young minds and to constructively contribute to the local, regional and global Internet governance discourse through organising the Hong Kong Youth Internet Governance Forum (HKyIGF), international conferences and community projects.

NetMission Ambassadors are actively participating in various international Internet conferences, including ICANN meetings, IGF, APrIGF, Asia Pacific Internet Governance Academy (APIGA) and Asia Pacific Next Generation Camp (APNG Camp).

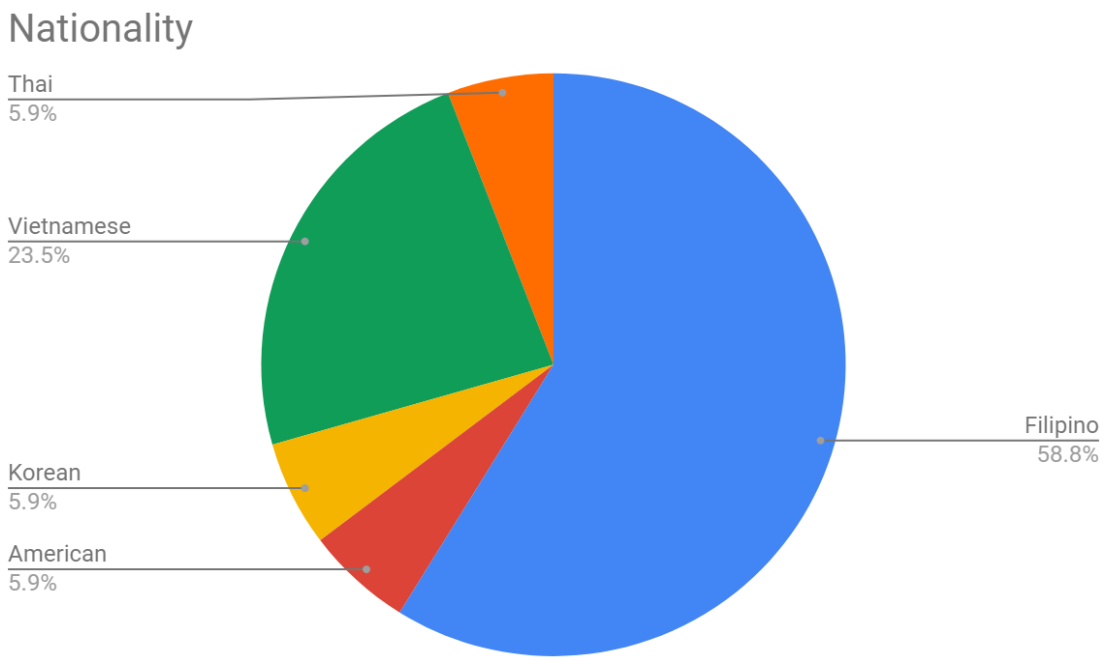
To support and encourage youth participation on Internet governance, the ambassadors have been organising the yIGF in the Asia-Pacific region, including Singapore, Tokyo, Seoul, Delhi, Macao, Taipei, Bangkok, Port Vila and Vladivostok since 2010.

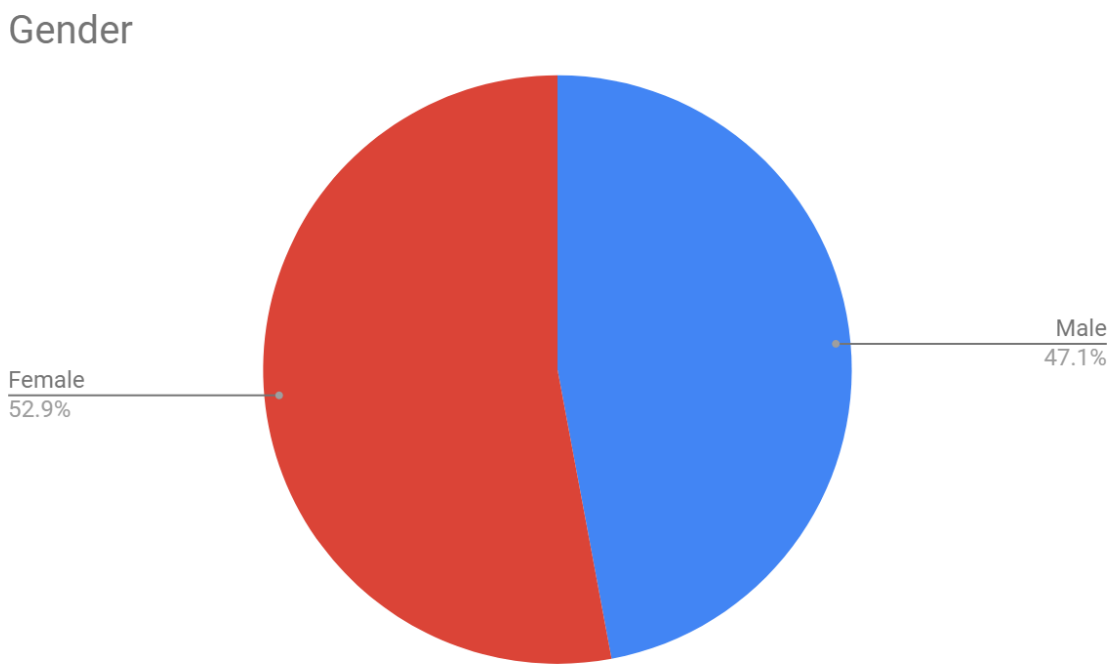
The NetY Program (www.nety.asia) is also initiated for further outreach to secondary school students from 2012 to 2014 by partnering with Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong. In 2016, it was firstly marked as HKyIGF (hk.yigf.asia) followed with a 3-day-2-night camp and an Internet Summit with the same approach used in the yIGF model.

The highlight of NetMission Activities in 2019 are as follows:

March	- Participants of ICANN64 Kobe in Kobe, Japan
May	- Organiser of 4th Hong Kong Youth Internet Governance Forum (HKyIGF) in Hong Kong
July	- Participants of Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum in Vladivostok, Russia - Organiser of Youth Internet Governance Forum in Vladivostok, Russia
August	- Youth Facilitators of Mock ICANN conference in Asia Pacific Internet Governance Academy (APIGA) in Seoul, South Korea
November	- Internet Governance Forum 2019 organised by United Nation in Berlin, Germany

Participants Statistics





List of Participants

Name	Gender	Economy represented
Alyssa Gabrielle Gaviño	Female	Philippines
Christian Bonao	Male	Philippines
Dustin Sampang	Male	Philippines
Ivana Saberon	Female	Philippines
Jan Patrick Pangilinan	Male	Philippines
Jon Eiron Buenaventura	Male	Philippines
Julian Antonio Laspoña	Male	Philippines
Kenneth Pamintuan	Male	Philippines
Mikyla Biel Gallego	Female	Philippines
Neil Patrick Dela Fuente	Male	Philippines
Long Pham	Male	Vietnam
Minh Anh Ngo	Female	Vietnam
Thi Le Nguyen	Female	Vietnam
Thi Trang Vu	Female	Vietnam
Bea Guevarra	Female	America
Minji Seo	Female	Korea
Kadesiree Thossaphonpaisan	Female	Thailand

List of Organising Committee

Name	Gender	Economy represented
Chan Ying Tung Mandy	Female	Hong Kong
Chen Yu-Jen Steven	Male	Taiwan
Fung Man Hau Jenna	Female	Hong Kong
Ko Yee Man Jasmine	Female	Hong Kong

Core Elements of yIGF

The yIGF is a platform for youth across Asia-Pacific region to voice their opinions on Internet Governance. It also serves the purpose of empowering youth to further engage themselves and their peers into immediately relevant and critical Internet Issues.

The highlight of 2019 yIGF program would be:

- Multi-Stakeholder Role-play discussion on the selected issues.
- Idea wall on the themes listed on the synthesis document.
- Mini-Townhall session for capacity building
- Contribute to the APrIGF's Synthesis Document Townhall session

Role-play Discussion

The Roleplay discussion session provided a chance for participants to discuss specific Internet-related topics. The two topics of the Role-play discussion this year, namely the **real-name system** and the **community standard**, were both closely tied with our overarching theme of yIGF - Cultivating a Sustainable Online Community: What Can We Do.

Participants were assigned different roles, ranging from academia, government officials to business representatives. Participants discussed in a multi-stakeholder approach and generated possible initiatives to solve the problems discovered.

Objectives:

1) To understand multi-stakeholders approach on Internet issues.
2) To go through the Internet issues from diverse perspectives.
3) To encourage youth engagement and contribution to Internet governance

The summary of the Role-play discussion and future initiatives can be found in the section titled Discussion Summary and Future Initiatives.

Idea Wall x Mini Townhall

This session aimed at exchanging views and thoughts on various hot Internet topics. Participants were expected to put their ideas on the idea wall by writing down their own thoughts on the sixth themes listed:

1) Safer Internet, Cybersecurity & Regulation;
2) Access & Universality;
3) Emerging Technologies & Society;
4) Human Rights Online;
5) Evolving Role Of Internet Governance & Multi-Stakeholder Participation;
6) Digital Economy;

Throughout the session, participants exchanged their insights freely and had a discussion all together on the selected themes after reviewing the posted ideas on the idea wall. Participants were split into six groups according to their own interests to have further discussions on the topics.

This session offered an opportunity for participants to explore different internet issues not just those from the conventional technical perspective, but also those that were more related to their daily use of the Internet. The session served as a starter for participants to apply what they had learnt after the capacity building session in APrIGF and to try to engage in discussion on internet issues.

After being familiarised with the basic ideas of the synthesis document, the Mini-Townhall session followed right after to build the capacity of participants for the Synthesis Document Townhall Session in APrIGF. In this session, participants were asked to publicly raise their concerns or comment on the synthesis document in a similar format of the Synthesis Document Townhall Session.

The participants showed their interests on topics related to use of social media. Others brought up topics related to cybersecurity and safety on social media, such as cyber terrorism. Some explained their worries on national security strategies being manipulated supported with the example of local human rights activists getting arrested. Ways to seek a balance between individual freedom and privacy and cybersecurity online was a major concern.

Other participants, from the Philippines, criticised how a large amount of population is not benefited from the improvement of IT technology in their home country, despite the fact that internet infrastructure across the world has been matured.

Digital economy and FinTech were also one of the focuses during the session. Participants were concerned about privacy issues under digital economy; some demanded for AI governance to monitor and regulate the use of AI in the light of rapid development of E-business.

All of our youth participants have joined an youth-oriented workshop at APrIGF 2019

Regional participants from the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan and Hong Kong have joined yIGF 2019 at Vladivostok this year

Program Agenda (yIGF 2019)

**All yIGF sessions are indicated in green colour, while those of the APrIGF sessions are indicated in yellow colour*

Participants were free to choose what APrIGF workshops they want to attend, information related to the APrIGF workshops can be found here: https://aprigf.ru/prog/

Day 0	
08:30–09:00	yIGF Participants Meet up
09:00–10:00	yIGF official introduction, ice-breaking games and expectation setting session
10:00–16:40	APrIGF - Capacity Building Days for Fellows and General Newcomers
16:45–16:55	Introduction of Youth@Synthesis document
16:55–17:40	Idea Wall X Mini-Townhall session
17:40–18:00	Introduction of Role play discussion
19:00–20:00	Welcome Cocktail for yIGF

Participant speaking up during the Idea Wall x Mini Townhall session.

Day 1	
08:30–09:30	Briefing Session
09:00–10:30	APrIGF Opening Ceremony
10:30–11:00	Coffee Break
11:00–12:30	APrIGF Pacific ICT Plenary (Internet Governance in Asia Pacific: The State of Play and Outlook)
12:30–13:30	Lunch
13:30–15:00	Role-play Discussion(stage 1): Implementation and Impact of Real-Name System: Are users being protected or restricted?
15:00–16:30	APrIGF Session:
16:30–17:00	coffee break
17:00–18:00	Synthesis Document Townhall Session
19:00–20:00	Welcome Gala

Participants expressing their opinions representing the civil society during the role-play discussion

Day 2	
08:30–09:00	Briefing session
09:00–10:30	Lightning Talk with Youth4IG
10:30–11:00	Coffee Break
11:00–12:30	APrIGF Session
12:30–13:30	Lunch
13:30–15:00	APrIGF Session: *WS6. Analysing Perspectives on Youth Participation in the Multi-stakeholder Landscape: A Contextual Follow-Through Session on Motivations to Sustainability Efforts*
15:00–15:30	Coffee Break
15:30–17:00	yIGF - Role-play discussion (Stage 2): Filtering What you see: Reviewing Content Policy and Way to Escape Echo Chamber Effect in Asia-Pacific
17:00–18:00	Synthesis Document Townhall Session
18:00–18:30	Debriefing

Lightning Talk with Youth4IG

Participants exchanging views with Mr. Rajesh Singh after the role-play discussion

Participants contributing to the synthesis document during the Synthesis Document Townhall Session

Day 3	
08:30–09:00	Briefing Session
09:00–10:30	APrIGF Session
10:30–11:00	Coffee Break
11:00–12:30	APrIGF Session
12:30–13:30	Lunch
13:00–15:00	yIGF - Participant presentation & program summary
15:00–15:30	Coffee Break
15:30–17:30	APrIGF Closing Ceremony

Participants with their presented future initiatives

Discussion Summary and Future Initiatives

After the 4-day-3-night camp, the participants had mainly gone through two Internet issues, which were the real name system and community standard in social media companies. Here are the summarised viewpoints of participants on two topics and the recommendations proposed by the participants.

Topic One: Real-Name System

I. Session Title: Implementation and impact of the real-name system: Are users being protected or restricted?

II. Key Issues Raised:
- Different implementation of real-name system in different countries
- Measures to protect the human rights online

III. Discussion Summary:

Participants were given roles of the Government (officials, opposing political parties, law enforcement agencies), Business (social media companies, system developer), Civil Society and Academia (victims of cybercrime, internet users, professors and researchers) in the role-play discussion. The following summarise the key points of the discussion.

The major dispute was the effectiveness and side effects of the real-name system. Participants representing government officials argued that the intention of implementing this system is positive. Eliminating complete anonymity, the system was said to help strengthen the responsibility of the internet users, and help facilitate the law enforcement process so that the safety of the online world can be maintained.

Yet, its effectiveness was doubted by participants from civil society, especially those representing the victims of cyber crimes. Citizens might not necessarily be more protected from cyber crimes even after the implementation because other crimes like identity theft might be more rampant. Apart from the uncertain effectiveness, participants representing the business sector were also concerned about the potential risk of suppression on the freedom of speech under the real-name system. The system, bringing the business sector high risk but low return, was unwelcomed.

With the fact that there was a big mistrust of government censoring dissenting opinions by manipulating the policy, participants representing the opposing parties believed that the increasing transparency of the system would be the key. In response to this, participants from the government sector reassured that rights of citizens are protected by law and information would be uploaded for citizens to check regularly on their own.

It was hoped that the government could be more open to seek advice from the business sector and collaborate with them. An inclusive discussion should be called for to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to work together to explore other possible ways other than the real name system to protect citizens from cyber crimes.

IV. Recommendations to stakeholder groups

Government

i. Multi-stakeholder communication and collaboration

The government should communicate with other stakeholders when drafting laws related to the real-name system. By holding numbers of public consultation, the government should seek to understand the public and business concerns in carrying out the real-name system. It was also expected that this process would help with the trust building and get people to cooperate with the government who are willing to listen.

ii. Check-and-balance system

Regarding the public concerns over the abuse of power and suppression of freedom of speech, the government should consider developing a check-and-balance system to guarantee that freedom of expression online would not be severely restricted. The key term "cyber crimes" should be clearly defined to prevent manipulation.

iii. Consistent public education

Awareness raising would be the key to combating cybercrime. Public education should be carried out to ensure that people have sufficient knowledge on laws related, the system to abide by the law. Responsible speech and act online should also be promoted.

Business sector

i. Maximising users' freedom under the system by having self-investigation

To maximise users' freedom, they would be granted freedom to remain anonymous in the front stage. A detailed set of guidelines that determine whether online activity was of a criminal nature should be made transparent. Social media companies should carry out self-investigation to determine if the guidelines have been breached before reporting to the law enforcement agencies in order to prevent the government from abusing her power.

Civil society and academia

i. Research to offer insights

Academia should be responsible for conducting research to explore ways to reach the middle ground of preventing cyber crimes and maintaining privacy and freedom before implementing the real-name system or other online regulations related to cyber crimes and privacy.

ii. Education and awareness raising campaigns concerning responsible act and speech

Public education should be done by sharing information related to real-name system and promoting privacy protection strategies and digital citizenship through social media platforms.

Topic Two: Community Standard in Social Media

I. **Session Title**: Filtering What you see: Reviewing Community Standard and Way to Escape Echo Chamber Effect in Asia-Pacific

II. **Key Issues Raised**:
- The punishment of the violation of community standards
- Ways to improve the fact-checking system in social media platforms

III. **Discussion Summary**:

Participants are given roles of the Government, Business (Social media company, traditional media company, fact-checking company), Civil Society (Human rights NGO, key opinion leader, Youth) in the role play discussion. The following summarise the viewpoints and future initiatives that each stakeholder raised. The discussion revolved around two issues, improvement of fact-checking system and the penalty for violations of community standards

Ways to improve the fact checking system

Some considered the current fact-checking system ineffective and flawed due to the prevalence of fake news and inaction against rule-breaking posts. A comprehensive fact-checking system with contributions from the government, fact-checking agency, social media companies and AI algorithms would be needed. There should be more resources for developing unbiased AI. Experts from traditional media industry should be recruited for fact-checking. To prevent potential breach of human rights, instead of deleting the flagged post immediately, an independent fact checking agency should play as a gatekeeper to double check whether the content violate the community standard. To ensure the quality of AI checking facts, the personnel who feed the right data should be selected. Unless AI technology make great progress, a manpower-oriented fact checking agency would be more appropriate.

Penalty for violation of community standards

The lack of legislation on the penalty of violation of community was brought up by our participants. The government should make clearer regulations and inform the citizens about the update of regulations. However, there existed the concern that legal penalty by the government would infringe human rights. Moreover, it is sometimes hard to define the criminal act by community standard set by social media companies. For example, people do not utter dirty words but the meaning behind do harm them. Therefore,

some participants believed we need to investigate the causes behind actions that violate community standards before enacting penalties so that appropriate penalties can be decided in accordance. Some people even insisted sanctions to be imposed only after users' contents were reported as harmful. In this case, they could regain control of the content they receive and cease the potential harm in human rights given the formation of penalty.

Participants also proposed if people seriously violate the community standard, social media companies should suspend the account instead of removing it to secure adequate freedom of expression. However, there were doubts that frequent suspensions would affect user experience and thus the profit of social media. Further discussion between Internet users regarding this proposal and social media companies was needed to address this.

IV. Recommendations to stakeholder groups

Government

i. Assisting with the fact-checking

The method of data triangulation could be adopted to verify facts. The reported "fake news" could undergo rounds of fact checking process by AI as well as manpower to maximise the accuracy. Verified facts and news should be timely reported on social media platform.

ii. Collaborating with both the civil society and the business sector

The government should seek to communicate more with them and develop ways to try to meet the middle ground, for example, if the government decided to intervene, culprits would be punished by suspension instead of termination to allow correction.

Business

i. Improving media literacy

Implementing the community standard alone is not enough to tackle fake news and hate speech. Business sector should be responsible to protect their users from fake news. Increasing media literacy by educating users to find and read news critically would help prevent the problem from the root. Since better users would improve the quality of the whole platform, they should consider allocating 5-10% resources to promoting media literacy.

Civil society and academia

i. Users' input in drafting the community standard

It was stressed that community standard should be for the people. Therefore, its input should come from people, particularly because they are the one who use social media the most and have a different perspective in viewing the whole issue. Marginalised people should also be included in the discussion.

ii. Creating trainings to empower people

Education and training materials should be designed to help people to understand the purposes and the content of the community standard. This is also to encourage and empower them to make input in drafting or modifying the community standard and contribute more to create a more peaceful online community.

Thoughts after yIGF and way forward

Thoughts on yIGF

Participants generally made positive comments after joining the yIGF 2019.

Improved understanding on Internet governance

Most of the participants reflected that they have gained new knowledge about Internet governance and got to know more about the situation in other countries after the event.

Some of them, particularly those with technical background, emphasised that they understood the importance of the multi-stakeholder approach better and realised the necessity of cooperating with other stakeholders to create a better solution for Internet issues.

They also discovered the value in participating in Internet governance after learning different issues that may heavily impact their daily life, such as echo chamber effect on social media. They are now more aware of their responsibility to voice their opinions as youth.

More connected with the youth community in Internet governance

Joining the yIGF allowed participants to meet people with common interests, from or outside their home country. Interacting with this diverse group of youth has inspired them in many ways. Not only can participants develop a more holistic view on Internet governance, but they can also learn about ways to continue engaging in Internet governance. Getting connected with the youth community in Internet governance encourage them to stay in and contribute to the community in the future.

Way forward

Many participants showed their interest in continuing their journey in Internet governance in the future, mainly in the following three ways.

Building own capacity

Some of them planned to participate in the global level Internet governance events such as the IGF, while some showed interest in applying for youth programmes, the NetMission Academy, mentorship program from Youth4IG to learn about Internet governance from different perspectives.

Involving in the youth community

Some of them would like to maintain a closer bond with new friends by joining youth community like NetMission or Youth4IG. By doing so, they hoped to keep involved in the youth community in Internet governance and keep receiving the information of youth related programmes or on Internet governance.

Contributing to local community

Ideas of holding awareness raising activities such as workshop for youth in their home country were raised by participants. Part of the participants from Vietnam would use their experience gained from yIGF 2019 to host their own yIGF in Vietnam next year. Some of them added that they, as individuals, would share more information on Internet issues and Internet governance among their social circles.

Our youth participants have contributed new ideas to the guidelines of the mentorship program of Youth4IG