

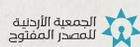


Words Matter Regional Forum

Event Programme

 Zoom Online Event

31 October, 1st & 2nd November 2023



About the Forum:

The «Words Matter Network Regional Forum» is an event focused on combating disinformation, hate speech, and online harms in the MENA region. In this gathering, we bring together thought leaders, activists, academics, and policymakers to tackle the pressing challenges posed by harmful digital behaviours.

Event Objectives:

The forum aims to promote knowledge sharing, raise awareness, identify emerging trends, and empower resilience against hate speech and disinformation on social media.

Thematic Areas:

The event's sessions will explore various aspects, including understanding the landscape of online disinformation and hate speech on social media in the MENA region, case studies, insights to new research, identifying and countering hate speech, unravelling disinformation, cyberbullying prevention, policy implications, tech industry responses, civil society initiatives, and holistic solutions.

Why Attend:

By attending this event, you will have the opportunity to engage with prominent voices in the field, learn about the most recent research and strategies, and gain practical insights into countering online harms.

Who Should Attend:

This event is tailored for individuals and organizations engaged in countering disinformation, hate speech, and online harms, including but not limited to academics, civil society activists, tech industry experts, media professionals, and legal practitioners.

First Day

Tuesday,

of October 2023



Session Intro



From 09:00 to 09:15

Opening Remarks

Speakers

Nicolas Schmidt
Executive Director
DRI

Wael Abu Anzeh
DRI

Session 1



09:15 to 10:30

Panel Discussion: 75 min

AI Solutions Detecting and Countering Online Violence and Manipulation in MENA

Speakers

Wafaa Heikal
DRI (*moderator*)

Session Description:

This session explores the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in detecting and countering online violence and manipulation in the MENA region. It introduces various AI tools and techniques used for monitoring and fact-checking online content.



Session Topics

Panel Discussion **10 min**

**Introduction to
AI Solutions**

Tool Demo **15 min**

**Arabic, Hebrew, and
Hostility: Tackling
Violence Online**

**Rama Salahat
7amleh**

Tool Demo **15 min**

**E Monitor+ : A Social
Media Listening and Fact-
Checking Tool Using AI
Techniques**

**Ghassen Selmi
UNDP**

Tool Demo **15 min**

**AI «NUHA» Tool: Detecting
and Classifying Hate
Speech Technique**

**Tamim Hamoudi
JOSA**

Panel Discussion **20 min**

Q&A

First Day - Tuesday, 31 of October 2023



From 10:30 to 10:40

Coffee Break



Session 2



10:40 to 11:25

Panel Discussion: 45 min

How to Expose a Network: Identifying and Analyzing a Disinformation Campaign

Speakers

Faycel Souissi
(moderator)

Layla Mashkoor
DFR Lab

Ahmed Chikhi
Lab'Track

Makrem Dhifalli
Expert

Session Description:

This session delves into the techniques and methodologies used to identify and analyze disinformation campaigns. It provides insights into the tools and strategies employed by experts to expose the networks behind online disinformation.



From 11:25 to 11:35

Break



Session 3



11:35 to 12:20

Panel Discussion: 45 min

The Technical Challenges in the Usage of AI Tools Within the New API and META Policies

Speakers

Faycel Souissi
(moderator)

**Lena-Maria
Böswald**
Expert

**Tony Michael
Maharat**

Session Description:

This session discusses the technical challenges associated with the usage of AI tools within the context of new API and META policies. Panelists explore the implications of these policies for AI-driven content moderation and fact-checking.



From 12:20 to 13:30

Launch Break



Session 4



13:30 to 14:30

Panel Discussion: 60 min

Understanding Landscape of Information Environment in WANA: Trends & Challenges

Speakers

Amira Kridagh
(moderator)

Daniel Arnaudo
NDI

Sadok Hammemi
Lab'Track

Amer Abu Dalo
Al Hayat

Wafaa Heikal
DRI

Session Description:

This session aims to provide an overview of the information environment in the West Asia-North Africa (WANA) region, focusing on emerging trends and challenges. It brings together experts and partners to analyze the current state of online information and its impact on democracy and society.

Second Day

Wednesday,

of November 2023



Session 1



09:15 to 10:30

Panel Discussion: 90 min

Countering Online Violence in MENA: Case Studies

Session Description:

This session presents case studies on countering online violence in the MENA region. Panelists share insights and experiences from their work in monitoring and combating online hate speech and gender-based violence.

Speakers

Wafaa Heikal
DRI (*moderator*)



Session Topics

Panel Discussion **10 min**
Introduction

Panel Discussion **15 min**
**Anti-Immigration
Hate Speech**
Ikram Hajji
LabTrack

Panel Discussion **15 min**
**Hate Speech Against
Journalists and Activists
in WANA**
Zeineb Ismail
SMEX

Panel Discussion **15 min**
**Wafaa Bani Mustafa
Case Study**
Shrouq Al Naimat
Alhayat

Panel Discussion **15 min**
Hala Ahed Case Study
Yara Al Rafie
JOSA

Panel Discussion **20 min**
Q&A



From 10:30 to 10:40

Coffee Break



Session 2



11:40 to 12:40

Experts Talk: 60 min

Promoting Freedom of Expression while Countering Hate Speech, Disinformation, and Gender-Based Violence in the MENA Region: The Importance of Multi-Stakeholders and Multi-Faceted Approaches

Speakers

Faycel Souissi
(moderator)

Imen Ladjimi
Article-19

Marina Al-Sahawneh
JOSA

Amro Al Nawaiseh
Alhayat

Session Description:

This session emphasizes the importance of multi-stakeholder and multi-faceted approaches in promoting freedom of expression while countering hate speech, disinformation, and gender-based violence in the MENA region. Panelists discuss collaborative strategies.



From 12:40 to 13:40

Launch Break



Session 3



13:40 to 14:40

Panel Discussion: 60 min

The EU Digital Services Act and Opportunities for Adaptation in MENA: The League of Arab States Social Media Strategy as an Example

Speakers

Faycel Souissi
(moderator)

Rachelle Faust
NDI

Amer Bani Amer
Alhayat

**Lena-Maria
Böswald**
Expert

Session Description:

This session explores the implications of the EU Digital Services Act for the MENA region and opportunities for adaptation. Panelists discuss the evolving regulatory landscape and its impact on social media platforms.

Third Day

Thursday,

of November 2023



Session 1



09:00 to 10:00

Panel Discussion: 60 min

Informational Disorder and Political Transitions: Lessons Learned from the Arab World and Post-25th July 2021 in Tunisia

Speakers

Emna Mouelhi

DRI (*moderator*)

Makrem Dhifalli

Expert

Sadok Hammemi

LabTrack

Yasmine Dakhli

TuniFact

Session Description:

This session delves into the challenges of managing informational disorder during political transitions, drawing insights from experiences in the Arab world. Panelists share lessons learned and strategies to address this complex issue.



From 10:00 to 10:10

Coffee Break



Session 2



10:10 to 11:10

Panel Discussion: 60 min

Social Media Platforms in MENA: Addressing Online Harms and Accountability

Speakers

Faycel Souissi
(moderator)

Zeinab Ismail
SMEX

Marina Al-Sahawneh
JOSA

Shrouq AlNaimat
Alhayat

Wafaa Heikal
DRI

Session Description:

This session focuses on the role of social media platforms in addressing online harms and ensuring accountability. Panelists discuss the responsibilities of platforms and the need for transparency.



From 11:10 to 11:20

Coffee Break



Session 3



11:20 to 12:20

Research Presentation: 60 min

Information Environment in Lebanon and Iraq

Speakers

Faycel Souissi
(moderator)

NDI MENA

Tony Michael
Maharat

Mohammed A.Ali
INSM-IRAQ

Session Description:

This session provides a detailed look at the information environments in Lebanon and Iraq. Panelists discuss the specific challenges and dynamics related to disinformation and hate speech in these countries.



From 12:20 to 13:20

Launch Break



Session 4



13:20 to 14:20

Panel Discussion: 60 min

The Misuse and Malpractices of The Penal Codes Towards Journalists and Activists' Oppression in The Digital Space During Elections

Speakers

Faycel Souissi
(moderator)

Tony Michael
Maharat

Dina Sadek
DFR Lab

Amira Kridagh
Expert

Session Description:

This session sheds light on the misuse of penal codes to suppress journalists and activists in the digital space during elections. Panelists discuss cases of oppression, legal challenges, and the importance of safeguarding digital freedom.



From 14:20 to 14:30

Closing Remarks

Contact Us:

*For any queries about the event or the project,
contact us at:*

menahub@democracy-reporting.org