REPORT OF THE DIGI-TALK / FOCUS EVENT

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1.0 Background

Paradigm Initiative (PIN) documented the 2020 digital rights and inclusion violations highlighted milestones and made recommendations for improving the digital landscape in Africa in Londa. The publication, comprising 20 African country reports including Tanzania, was launched on 12 April 2021 and is PIN's Digital Rights and Inclusion in Africa report which captures digital rights and inclusion infractions in Africa. The script for the short film was drawn from Londa and sought to give a visual representation of the challenges witnessed in 2020. Therefore, PIN contacted its partner in Tanzania Zaina Foundation to co-organize this event together. The event participated by a total of 37 participants whereby, 25 were female and 12 were men from Dar es salaam, Arusha, Morogoro, Geita and Tanga.

2.0 Proceedings of the Event

2.1 Welcoming Remarks

The event was started by the welcoming remarks from Executive Director of Zaina Foundation, who welcomed all the participants and introduced activities done by Zaina Foundation. She further introduced Mr. Tosin, PIN staff from Nigeria, and the representative from the government Ms. Furaha Libango who is a Social Welfare officer from Kinondoni Municipal. Each participant had the opportunity to introduce themselves and their organization they are coming from. Therefore, after that the director of Zaina Foundation explained in brief the state of digital rights in Tanzania.

2.2 About PIN, Tools and Objectives

Mr Abolaji Tosin staff representative of Paradigm Initiative Hq in Nigeria conduct a session of explaining to the participants about PIN, various tools PIN is using and objective of the event (Digi-Talk). Other activities of Paradigm Initiative (PIN) it includes Capacity building on life skills, ICT, Financial literacy, Entrepreneurship etc

During his session he also explained the word LONDA as a zulu word which means calling for action to protect. The research done in Africa countries to counter check the state of digital rights.

2.3 LONDA Tanzania Findings for 2021

This session was facilitated by Ms. Neema Ndemno who started by outlining her presentation and posing some question to the participants. She asked the participants to tell what happened in 2020 in relation to the state of digital rights in Tanzania. Where participants mentioned issues of shrinking of civic space, internet shutdown, hefty punishment to media, enforcement of EPOCA law and regulation, suspension of some media and fines, data surveillance, infringement of freedom of expression online, right to associate and assemble online etc However, the facilitator finalized her presentation by revealing the findings of Londa report. The findings were not far from what the participants mentioned.

2.4 Focus screening

Focus is a short film challenges viewers to be aware of the challenges happening in Africa and not to sail through the real lived experiences that come with digital rights violations in ignorance. The film presents a call to action, a call to focus. This is an imperative action relevant to defending digital rights and inclusion in Africa.

2.5 Strengthening the Internet and its Vast Benefits

This session was facilitated by Ms. Zaituni Njovu. The session explains in briefly on the importance of internet in this world. The facilitator went further explaining that internet has now turn to be a basic need after food, shelter and clothes. However, the number of internet user in Tanzania is reaching 29 million of people this is according to TCRA.

Statistical shows more than 90% of Tanzanian access the internet through their mobile phones. Where 83.2% used internet for academic, 50% for communication/ news and 43% used for social media platforms. The facilitator also said nowadays internet is a tool that facilitate different activities and it increase participation, connection, provide the space for a freedom of expression, online activism and protest reshaping daily activities, easier communication/political/social/economy.

Finally, the facilitator explained the challenges that are facing state of internet in Tanzania. It includes costs, speed coverage and accessibility, policies and regulations, surveillance and censorship, breach of privacy and security, proliferation of fake news, increase of OGBV (cyber bullying) etc

2.6 Joints Commitment

This session suggests what can be done to remove the gap / and to improve the situation of digital rights in Tanzania.

- ✓ Mr. Doto –a student from UDSM recommended that the process of data protect law should not have left to the government only. There should also be a collective involvement and consultation of other stakeholders.

- ✓ Ms. Shadida from Tamwa recommended that ZF, PIN other organizations should invest in providing digital awareness to the group of people in the rural areas.

- ✓ Mr. Samata recommended that CSO's should increase more engagement with the government since the government has opened the door to its stakeholders to advice the government.

- ✓ Ms. Jamila from DIT recommended that ZF should work together to find solution facing the technology subjects in public schools. This can also be done by initiating digital lab centers in each regional library. This will allow all people to engage in digital platforms.

- ✓ Ms. Rose recommended that we should involve kids in their forum to educate them the benefits of internet for their personal growth and development.

- ✓ Mr. Yahaya recommended that since digital rights is still new stakeholders and CSO's should work closely with the government in order to conduct more researches in Tanzania. This will help to the contribution of literatures.

- ✓ Ms. Sarah recommended that ZF should use its online platforms to share and spread the digital literacy for example twitter (use of info graphics and Instagram use of short videos.

- ✓ Mr. Mpilipili recommended that ZF should partner with youth disability so that to allow digital inclusiveness.

✔ Ms. Joyce recommended that since people with disability are facing a lot of challenges when it comes to the digital rights/ freedom of internet, she recommends that ZF and PIN should prepare special training/ workshop for PWD since this kind of trainings and knowledge is passing them due to their special needs. For example, deaf people used a lot of videos when communicating and during internet shutdown we were affected so much since we failed to communicate.

2.7 Closing Remarks

This session was facilitated by Madam Furaha Libango who thanked Zaina Foundation, PIN and all participants for the great discussion and presentations which were well prepared and analyzed. However, she recommended that whenever CSO's are conducting research it is good if the findings are shared and communicated to the government in order to find a sustainable solution for the problem raised.