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## Media, communication and the struggle for social progress

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## **Title: Media, Communication, and the Struggle for Social Progress**

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### **Abstract**

This article discusses the role of media and communications in contributing to social progress, as elaborated in a landmark international project — the *International Panel on Social Progress*. First, it analyses how media and digital platforms have contributed to global inequality by examining media access and infrastructure across world regions. Second, it looks at media governance and the different mechanisms of corporatized control over media platforms, algorithms, and contents. Third, the article examines how the democratization of media is a key element in the struggle for social justice. It argues that effective media access—in terms of distribution of media resources, even relations between spaces of connection and the design and operation of spaces that foster dialogue, free speech and respectful cultural exchange—is a core component of social progress.

### **Keywords**

media access, media and internet regulation, media and communications governance, social progress.

## **Media, Communication, and the Struggle for Social Progress**

### **Introduction**

In January 2015, a group of academics from different disciplines and areas of the world convened in Paris to plan an initiative known as the International Panel for Social Progress: Rethinking Society for the XXI Century (IPSP). Spearheaded by Princeton University philosopher Marc Fleurbaey and Olivier Bouin, director of the College d'Etudes Mondiales in Paris, the IPSP examines pressing issues in contemporary society in an attempt to formulate a diagnosis and clear a path toward more just communities. Behind the IPSP is the realization that neoliberal economic models have become the dominant narrative in both the industrialized world and the Global South. As a hegemonic narrative, capitalism and neoliberal economic and political models have eclipsed alternative modes of thinking and envisioning how to organize our societies. And yet, since World War II, social scientists have produced a vast body of evidence and knowledge about the negative impacts of neoliberal economics on all areas of social life, from gender equity to environmental degradation and war. According to the IPSP: "Inequality has been the hallmark of neoliberal economic policies that have been well entrenched since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the signing of the World Trade Agreement, and the creation of the WTO" (IPSP 2016: 5). The IPSP seeks to harness the competence of 250 social scientists from all areas of the world and a wide variety of disciplinary fields to produce a report by 2017 (IPSP, 2017).

The IPSP approaches the concept of progress as a somewhat flexible compass that can help delineate the process of re-thinking society, but insists that progress must be conceived of in a pluralistic way, consistent with the diversity of our shared world. The IPSP's definition of progress includes "basic values of well-being (itself multi-dimensional), freedom and agency, esteem, and reconciliation & non-alienation. There are also various objective (or "merit") goods. The most important principles in this context are justice (of

various types, esp. distributive justice), respect for basic rights, and charity or beneficence” (IPSP 2016, 13).

The IPSP has established a critical dialogue with the Social Progress Index (SPI), a set of indicators developed recently in an attempt to “move beyond GDP” (Social Progress Index 2016). Under the heading “Foundations of Wellbeing,” the SPI includes a component on “Access to Information and Communication,” with three indicators: 1) mobile telephone subscriptions; 2) internet users; and 3) the Press Freedom Index. One of the goals of Chapter 13 of the IPSP report on Media and Communications was to critically assess such narrow approaches to questions of communication and information access and subsequently build a more encompassing narrative, both of what “media” are and media’s potential contributions, negative and positive, to social progress broadly defined.

Chapter 13 was written by a team of twelve primary authors and five contributing authors from China, South Africa, Colombia, Mexico, Lebanon, England, Japan, and several other countries. The original team was assembled by Nick Couldry with an emphasis on regional diversity and a commitment to working across the boundaries of disciplines that intersect in the media and communications field. Of particular value are the inclusion of the interdisciplinary insights of legal theorist Julie Cohen and the perspectives of media advocacy experts and activists.

In the following pages, we intend to present the core findings of IPSP’s Chapter 13, with the goal of encouraging an expansion of the public conversation around key issues of inequality, access, and governance of information and communication technologies and platforms, and the practical measures and policy tools that might enable media to contribute to social progress in the way that so many hope. Our effort clearly builds upon important foundations such as the MacBride report, *Many Voices, One World* (UNESCO, 1980), prepared for UNESCO in 1980, as well as decades of effort to foster media freedom and

collective and individual rights of expression, information, and ideas captured in the resonant Article 19 of the 1948 UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Our joint belief is that it is an important moment for the development of the field of Communication for Social Change. The expertise of media and communications researchers is called upon within a wider global debate about the future of social progress. That belief has motivated our shared efforts and will, we hope, stimulate further debate and discussion.

This article offers Chapter 13's findings for consideration and critique from researchers in the media and communications field itself, such as those generously and incisively offered in this special issue (Costanzo-Chock 2018, Gurumurthy 2018, Illiades 2018, Gómez 2018). In proposing a new analysis and approach to the present high stakes moment in global media and communications, we hope this article will serve to highlight the urgent research and developing policy, practitioner, and activist struggles that require our sustained attention.

### **Media and Digital Platforms: Key Factors of Global Inequality**

Much of humanity now holds in its hands the means to connect across the world: to family, entertainment, and the broadcasts of corporations, states, and, increasingly, counter-state organizations such as ISIS. This differently connected world has major implications for social progress and global justice, but the media and information infrastructures that make it possible must be part of any discussion of those lofty goals. Developments in digital technologies over the last 30 years have massively expanded humans' capacity to communicate across time and space. Media infrastructures have simultaneously become increasingly complex. By "media," we mean technologies used for the production, dissemination, and reception of communication, but also the content distributed through those

technologies and their associated institutions.<sup>1</sup> The relations between media, communications, and social progress are complex. More people can now connect and make meaning through media, providing an important resource for new movements for justice and social progress. Meanwhile, addressing the uneven distribution of opportunities to access and use media is itself a dimension of working towards social justice.

Media infrastructures and access have spread unevenly across the world. Traditional and digital media developed according to distinctive histories across the world, with varying marketization and state control. Inequalities of access are starkly evident both between and within regions and inside countries, with implications for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Cultural flows through media vary greatly within and between regions as well.

For example, the media system in Mexico is highly concentrated and deeply marketized. Its core is commercial broadcasting, owned by private corporations controlled by a handful of individuals. The power of those media corporations was built from alliances between powerful economic groups aligned with government interests that have benefited from discretionary grants, television and radio concessions, lucrative contracts for governmental advertising in print media, and ad hoc legislation (or lack of it) in favor of the sector's economic interests. After the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the country adopted a capitalist economic model and initiated corporatization of the Mexican state. Lack of regulation and communication policies led to a concentration of media in the hands of a few families. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, well-established industrial families (railway, mining, and banking) invested in radio broadcasting. Today there are 1,600 radio stations, 80% of which are owned by just 13 families. The Azcárraga family owns the Televisa conglomerate, the most influential global producer and distributor of Spanish-language audiovisual content, as

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<sup>1</sup> There are longstanding debates about the terms 'media' and 'communication', of which we are conscious — but in this paper wish to harness both categories in the most productive and expansive way.

well as free-to-air television channels, restricted television systems (satellite and cable), a leading Spanish editorial house, radio stations, entertainment companies, soccer teams and stadiums, music recording companies, and cinema distribution companies. Carlos Slim's Telmex/Telcel conglomerate started with landline telephone services (Telmex has 65% of the national market) and moved on to mobile telephony (Telcel has 65% of subscribers) and internet services (75% of subscribers). Mexico's mobile phone and internet service costs are in the middle of international rankings (ITU 2014), making these services out of reach for Mexico's rural poor majority.

In contrast, Sweden's media is shaped by a welfare state system (typical of Scandinavian Nordic countries) and characterized by a distinctive relation between media and state, market, and civil society. Traditionally, Sweden has had high voter turnout and high levels of literacy and newspaper reading, not least due to the national subsidy system for print newspapers, which has resulted in a plurality of local newspapers with high readership. Typically, the subsidy system provided for a plurality of political positions, with at least two local or regional newspapers representing divergent political viewpoints. Like other European countries, Sweden has had a strong public service broadcaster for radio and TV, which since the late 1980s has faced strong competition from commercial broadcasters. The communications infrastructure has been well developed, with high penetrations of landline phones, mobile phones, and computers.

People's increasing dependence on an online infrastructure that *mediates* daily life increases the importance of the corporations that provide that infrastructure. This has transformed the governance of media infrastructures, with a shift from formal to informal governance and the growing importance of transnational governance institutions and practices, whereby corporations, not states, exercise predominant influence, including through the design of algorithms, with ambiguous implications for corporate power,

individual rights, the public sphere, and social progress. This situation also creates new challenges and opportunities for nation states and state sovereignty (Flew and Waisbord 2015). On the one hand, the role of nation states and state sovereignty in media is diminished. On the other hand, nation states still play an important — if often quite different and novel — role in crucial areas of policy, infrastructure, and design. This is evident in the way that nation states have asserted their regulatory role over social media platforms, though not always successfully.

The project of “networking the world,” as Armand Mattelart once put it (Mattelart, 2000) is more than two centuries old. It has always been the project of states, but increasingly it has become the preserve of some of the world’s largest corporations: for example, Facebook, Google, and, less well known in the West, China’s Tencent and Baidu. Just as neoliberal economic models rooted in markets and consumption are expanding into ever more world regions and intruding into ever more domains of everyday life, so are corporate logics colonizing our media and digital platforms. Market forces have appropriated the design, regulation, and pricing of the platforms we use to connect, portray the world around us, express our political allegiances, and forge our visions for the future. Yet these platforms have so far been driven by only one goal: profit.

The emergence of a networked information economy and the globalization of mediated information flows have catalyzed two significant shifts in the nature and quality of governance. The first is a shift away from formal government regulation and towards informal and often highly corporatized governance mechanisms. The second is a shift away from state-based governance (and global governance institutions — such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) — organized around state membership) and towards transnational governance institutions, such as the Internet Corporation for Assigned



Names and Numbers (ICANN), which are more directly responsive to the asserted needs of private entities, often corporations that are those institutions' most powerful "stakeholders" (outflanking new constituencies of media users and citizens).

Particularly in the Global North, but also in the Global South, the information networks and communication protocols that underlie media infrastructures are designed and operated by private corporate entities. Direct technical authority over networks and protocols gives those entities an authority that is inherently regulatory. Global platform companies such as Google, Twitter, Facebook, Microsoft, and Apple, each of which occupies a dominant market position globally, enjoy correspondingly stronger and more pervasive regulatory power.

For citizens, networked digital media infrastructures may lower the costs of access to knowledge and enable new forms of participation in social, cultural, and economic life. At the same time, however, citizens' access to many important informational and cultural resources is subject to control by neo-authoritarian states and various information intermediaries, including internet access providers, search engines, mobile application developers, and designers of proprietary media ecosystems. Access to these resources may be offered at no financial cost to users on an advertiser-supported basis, but often such access has a price in the form of the automated collection of information about personal reading, viewing, and listening habits (Hoofnagle and Whittington 2014). Such information can be used both to target advertising and suggest content more likely to appeal to each user.

Such predictive targeting of information access has a number of troubling economic and political implications. To mention but one example, algorithms for predictive targeting based on data about personal habits and preferences enable the identification of population segments sorted by race/nationality, cultural background, religious affiliation, socioeconomic status, and political preferences.

## **Reclaiming Communication for Social Progress: Voices, Issues, Struggles, and Initiatives**

Journalism has, for centuries, been a key institutional forum for disseminating public knowledge and contributing to social progress. While digital technologies have expanded and citizens' media and citizens' journalism initiatives proliferate, other aspects of digitization have undermined the economics of journalism, with new threats to journalists from growing political instability.

Struggles for social justice through the democratization of media have acquired new prominence, echoing previous struggles and foregrounding the transparency and accountability of media infrastructures in general, and data flows in particular. This is not the first time, however, that the implications of media flows and infrastructures for social progress have been considered on a global scale. Such questions were central to the MacBride Report (UNESCO, 1980), which proposed a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) and challenged the assumption that a global media infrastructure dominated by “the West” was good for democracy, social order, and human rights. But the MacBride Report's proposals were not implemented, and a recent attempt to revive their broad agenda (the World Summit on the Information Society in 2003) has also achieved only limited success (Vincent and Nordenstreng, 2016).

Meanwhile, media control's ramifications for social progress continue to expand and digital infrastructures — for example, social media platforms and the vast new architectures for data collection and processing on which they rely — pose increasingly urgent questions about social life and democratic practice. Concerns include net neutrality, internet freedom, discriminatory algorithms, and the automated surveillance on which most online businesses now rely. There are implications for state and corporate power, which civil society has challenged, such as the case of Facebook's Free Basics in India. In 2015, Facebook

negotiated with the Indian government to introduce “Free Basics,” a platform that would expand internet access and at the same time give Facebook unrivalled access to a new market of 125 million users. However, Indian civil society succeeded in blocking Free Basics as an attempt by a commercial vendor to tether users to its product and monopolize the terms of access to the wider internet, compromising the tenets of network neutrality.

Similarly, other civil society initiatives have attempted to design governance frameworks. After the Snowden scandal of 2013 revealed massive digital surveillance and espionage on a global scale by U.S. intelligence agencies, diverse initiatives to defend the freedom of the internet emerged. At the time of writing, the most progressive regulatory framework for the internet, founded on principles of social justice and inclusion, is Brazil’s *Marco Civil da Internet* (Civil Rights Framework for the Internet), an initiative developed by Brazil’s civil society and centered on the protection of freedom and privacy, open governance, universal inclusion, cultural diversity, and network neutrality.

Media remain important channels through which many struggles for social progress are pursued. Back in 1994, the Zapatistas in Mexico provided a pioneer example of innovative media use for social justice, but social movements’ uses of media technologies have taken many forms across the world, exposing important constraints. Since old media generally do not disappear, instead linking up in new ways through digital platforms, movements that struggle for social justice have learned to operate within complex and always changing media ecologies that offer different resources and constraints in each historical case. Harbingers of this transformation include the fusion between Catholic radio and SMS in the EDSA II movement in the Philippines and the interaction between citizens’ journalism website OhmyNews and the Nosamo activists network during the South Korean presidential election of 2002 (Qiu 2008). The interplay among traditional and digital media reached new

heights as the Arab uprisings of 2010 and 2011 spawned a vibrant scene of dissident media and culture.

The affordances of mobile technologies and social networking platforms enable new kinds of everyday, intimate solidarity and dialogue. Notable cases of appropriation of mobile phones, internet, and social media have emerged among migrants and their dispersed families and cultural and political networks (Fortunati, Pertierra, and Vincent, 2012). Among Filipino and other domestic workers (generally women) who spend years away from their families and communities, mobile phones and social media provide a way to maintain bonds and connections with friends and families (Madianou and Miller, 2012). Chinese migrants who leave rural areas to find work in cities (Chu et al., 2012) rely on mobile phones to create a new “modern” identity, spanning urban and rural settings (Wallis, 2013).

It is a myth that rural communities, Indigenous peoples, and the Global South are disinterested in media and the digital world, but our current media infrastructures carry little if any input from these large sections of humanity. What if media infrastructures and digital platforms were designed with communities’ diverse languages, needs, and resources in mind? The results can be transformative, as when the Talea de Castro Indigenous community in southern Mexico designed Rhizomatica Administration Interface (RAI), a graphic interface for a local mobile phone network, to be responsive to their needs, resources, and languages (Magallanes-Blanco and Rodriguez-Medina, 2016). Much more often, however, the algorithmic mechanisms that shape what appears to users of digital platforms are driven exclusively by an advertising logic that undermines diversity and reproduces the social capital of those with power (Couldry 2014; Ochigame and Holston, 2016).

Work toward more just media infrastructures needs to hold a central place in social progress initiatives. Social progress is contingent on accessible, affordable, and inclusive media infrastructures — including traditional media, digital platforms, social media, and the

internet. Any intervention that works for social progress must also consider the need for a parallel struggle to democratize media infrastructures and demand better, more transparent media policies and governance. These technologies' potential to shape more sustainable, just, and inclusive societies will be hampered so long as decisions about the design and governance of media infrastructures are made without the wider body of citizens having the opportunity to be consulted on their needs.

### **A Proposal Toward Media Justice**

This survey of media and communications' potential contributions to social progress does not suggest easy conclusions. Without a doubt, media are an important resource for movements that promote social progress, and effective access to media is a necessary (and too-often ignored) component of social justice. By "effective access," we mean that all individuals and communities should be able to use media infrastructures to produce content, access information and knowledge, and actively participate in the realms of politics, culture, and governance. Issues of accessibility, as well as the potential affordances of these platforms, are particularly salient for people with disabilities, for example, captioning on TV and radio for the print handicapped. Despite their long histories, disability media such as Braille formats and sign language communication are still given little recognition in wider society, although there have been concerted international efforts on some aspects of digital technology (accessible computers and software, web accessibility, mobile phone accessibility, "apps" for people with disabilities).

Three major factors complicate the media and social change picture considerably. First, the distribution of media resources (including traditional media and digital platforms) is skewed towards the wealthy and powerful world regions and away from the majority of the world's population, especially poor, marginalized, and excluded groups. This basic fact is

ignored by the recurrent “social imaginary” (Taylor, 2004) that sees media infrastructures as automatically progressive and socially transformative (for critique, see Herman, Hadlaw and Swiss, 2014; Mansell, 2012; Mosco, 2004). Although people rely on media platforms for connection and communication, they generally have very little influence over the design and pricing of these platforms, or the conditions of access, use, content production, and distribution. Second, multiple simultaneous spaces of connection are enabled by media and the relations between these spaces are highly uneven: questions of language and culture, unequal influence over internet governance, software localization, and technical design all make the internet an unequal, highly uneven playing field for diverse groups, especially cultural and linguistic minorities. Third, even with access and more even distribution of opportunities for effective use, it may not be solidarity and dialogue that are facilitated when people come together via media (online abuse is also on the rise): the internet’s capacity, in principle, to enable multiple producers of content is not therefore sufficient. A central issue remains how to design and sustain online spaces that encourage dialogue, free speech, respectful cultural exchange, and action for social progress. The governance of internet infrastructures is crucial in all of this, but this itself is highly contested and uneven.

In response to these challenges, we propose that effective access to media and digital communication should be recognized as a new core component of social progress. While it is important that the SPI’s “Foundations of Wellbeing,” includes “access to information and communications” (defined in terms of numbers of internet users, mobile phone subscriptions, and a Press Freedom Index), this is insufficient; additional measures are needed to ensure the distribution of opportunities for effective access and use. Such measures would concern not only access to the technological means to receive information and content, but also access to appropriate affordable technologies to produce content. The design of media infrastructures and digital platforms needs to consider diverse language communities and individuals with

different ability levels, learning styles, and financial resources. While it is important that the SPI includes “personal rights” and “tolerance and inclusion” under the category of “Opportunity,” communication rights must be added to the basket of personal rights, and the direct relation between lack of participation and diversity in the design and governance of media infrastructures and lack of tolerance and inclusion at a cultural level must be addressed. The right to privacy should also be added, including appropriate regulatory frameworks to protect against surveillance and data extraction. In addition, references to “tolerance” elsewhere in the Social Progress Index need to be interpreted to include tolerance in the media (that is, the absence of hate speech against, women and girls, ethnic minorities, and so on).

Media and communications infrastructures should be regarded as a common good, in the same way as other infrastructures (such as roads, railways, power, and water). The recent wave of privatisation and concentration in the media and information industries should be reviewed by regulators for its effects on the quality of media and media’s diversity and ability to meet people's needs. Subsidies and spaces to encourage non-profit media should become an essential component of struggles for social progress and social justice. If progress is to be made towards these wider goals, major efforts are needed by civil society, governments, and international organizations to promote and sustain media that exist outside of market forces. Internet governance should not be in the hands of organizations who make decisions, implement policy, and design online architectures behind closed doors. Popular participation and transparency should be the guiding principles that frame internet governance, policy, and regulatory frameworks.

Equally, processes for the design of digital platforms and other means of accessing the internet should recognize and effectively include representation from the full range of human communities. Media infrastructures will not realize their potential for contributing to social

progress unless they operate effectively to facilitate the content creation by diverse communities. Access to media infrastructures as consumers, receivers, or audiences of content and information is not enough; individuals and communities need access as content creators; issues of language, affordability, user competencies, and technology design are fundamental. Since we can expect that core aspects of society such as health care, social services and financial services will be increasingly provided over the internet, access to digital systems needs to be equally distributed among populations, and such access should come free of commercial tracking and surveillance. The risk that the data infrastructures supporting today's media and communications will be used for increased state and corporate surveillance, censorship, and data gathering need to become the focus of extensive civic debate and regulatory attention.

Although social media and digital platforms have accelerated access to information, solid independent journalism, especially investigative journalism, is essential to democratic life. Citizens need curated, credible, verified, and contextualized information to be able to make reasonable decisions in political, cultural, and social arenas. Alternative forms of funding investigative journalism need to compensate for the threat to the commercial newspaper business model.

The environmental impact of the waste generated by today's communication devices and the vast data-processing infrastructure that supports their use requires serious attention as well. These environmental consequences are an unintended long-term side-effect of intensified connection through media (Maxwell and Miller 2012).

The indispensable first step for social progress is to perceive media and communications flows and infrastructures not as mere background to social struggles, but as a site of struggle. This, in turn, requires acknowledging the overall lack of progress in media reform over the past forty years. Since 1980, when the NWICO's MacBride Report was



presented by UNESCO, numerous initiatives have attempted to reform media infrastructures, including the World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS), the Free Press movement in the U.S., and the net neutrality and free software international movements. However, international organizations have not generally pursued such concerns. The international organizations assuming responsibility for proposing new aspects of media policy, such as ITU and ICANN, have limited their scope to technical matters discussed with little input from civil society or social movements. At the level of nation states, key issues of media justice and social progress are often raised, but then are not necessarily developed or represented by governments in their negotiations, policy, and governance work with either other states and parties at the international level, or with the large, influential media corporations in either the national or transnational sphere in which they operate. All in all, a renewed, comprehensive, and more inclusive debate on media reform must be launched.

### **A Plan of Action**

Chapter 13 of the IPSP, on which this summary is based, provides a resonant, bold, and detailed analysis and normative argument about the pivotal role of media and communications claims and struggles in any vision of social justice, equality, and rights. Developing a strategy to turn this agenda into a powerful, concrete, and achievable program with pragmatic force is the next challenge. Based on the above diagnosis, we propose the following action plan:

1. To add effective media access as a new core component of social progress in the SPI, to “ensure affordable, reliable, sustainable and effective access to communication infrastructure,” while acknowledging the long-term environmental waste from IT devices and data processing infrastructures.

2. To open a public discussion in which matters of inclusion, affordability, and diversity in media take precedence over markets and profit.
3. To position communication rights as central to official definitions of social progress. Communication rights include the right to be a content creator; the right to free expression; the right to knowledge and information; and the right to privacy.
4. To pressure international and national regulatory bodies and policy-makers to design and implement processes for civil society participation in internet and media infrastructure governance and policy. Media infrastructures should be governed by transparent and open multistakeholder bodies.
5. To pressure governments, the private sector, and universities to be accountable for designing media platforms that are accessible to input from diverse individuals and communities – especially marginalized communities such as communities of color, gender minorities, LGTBQ communities, disabled communities, and communities in the Global South.
6. To push for media and internet regulation that protects users from state and/or corporate surveillance and data extraction for control or marketing purposes.
7. To promote media and internet regulatory regimes that forbid any type of censorship or discrimination based on disability, gender, sexual orientation, or political, religious, or ethnic affiliations.
8. To promote the notion that “access” also includes opportunities for content creation and not just technological access to platforms for media consumption. Media and information literacy, technical competencies, linguistic diversity, and capacity building are fundamental elements of access.
9. To re-establish independent, sound journalism as an essential element of democracy.

10. To promote free access to software and free knowledge as the commons of humankind.

Such principles, however, also need to be converted into a map of practical actions to be taken by a range of actors involved in the regulation of media and digital platforms. To lay out the key initiatives required, we have created a toolkit, as follows:

### Toolkit<sup>2</sup>

Goals/Values	Policy Makers	International Orgs	Corporate media and tech sector	NGOs	Citizens
Effective access to communication infrastructures	<p>Develop regulatory regimes that guarantee affordability, cultural inclusion and linguistic diversity of media and digital platforms</p> <p>Develop regulation that allocates a significant proportion of communication resources (frequencies, budgets, R&amp;D) to citizens' media initiatives</p>	<p>Promote the notion that "Effective access to media infrastructures" includes using technologies to create and disseminate content</p> <p>Monitor media and digital content for diversity, inclusivity, and access. Sanction corporate media and technology corporations if they fail to comply</p>	<p>Produce tolerant, inclusive, and diverse media and digital content</p> <p>Design media and digital platforms that can be used by citizens to produce and disseminate their own content</p>	<p>Promote and support citizens' media</p> <p>Promote media production and software design programs in schools</p> <p>Promote training in data literacy and writing code</p>	<p>Develop and support citizens' media (produced by local communities for local communities)</p> <p>Develop and support school media</p> <p>Implement citizen-run media literacy programs</p> <p>Demand tolerant, inclusive, and diverse media and digital</p>

<sup>2</sup> Note: we have allocated the tasks in the toolkit matrix to the actor who should have the *main* responsibility for each task, however various tasks should be developed by multistakeholder bodies.

	<p>Develop regulatory systems to deal in an environmentally friendly way with waste from IT products and their use</p> <p>Promote net neutrality in national regulations</p>		Adopt net neutrality		<p>content from the private and public media sectors</p> <p>Defend net neutrality</p>
Transparency and accountability for media and digital platforms	Incorporate transparency and accountability in global and national legislation on media and Internet	Organize multistakeholder international and regional forums to discuss the future of media and digital platforms	Help subsidize non-profit media and digital platforms	Mobilize civil society to participate in global and local discussions about the future of media and digital platforms	Demand inclusion and voice in global and local discussions about the future of media and digital communication
<p>Communication Rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* right to be a content creator</li> <li>* right to free expression</li> <li>* right to knowledge and information</li> <li>* right to privacy</li> </ul>	<p>Include communication rights as fundamental human rights in national legislations</p> <p>Develop the necessary regulatory frameworks for the implementation, regulation, and enforcement of communication rights</p>	<p>Include communication rights in SDGs, SPI, and any other similar global blueprint to assess progress, wellbeing, and sustainable development</p>	<p>Review and adjust business models for consistency with communications rights</p> <p>Advocate policies, regulations, and treaties that advance communication rights</p> <p>Produce and disseminate content that informs audiences about</p>	<p>Raise awareness around communication rights among social justice organizations and social movements</p> <p>Promote the notion that all social justice movements should join the struggle for media reform</p>	<p>Demand communication rights from national governments, the private sector, and international organizations</p>

			communication rights		
Participatory governance of media infrastructures and digital platforms	Design media and digital platform regulatory regimes that include civil society participation, and participation by representatives of Indigenous people and people with disabilities	Establish a global international body responsible for monitoring and assessing access, inclusion, diversity, and communication rights in media infrastructures  Promote the notion that civil society input is essential to the governance of media and digital platforms  Implement educational programs for citizens about media and internet regulation and governance	Include civil society participation in all aspects of media and internet governance (e.g., ICANN, WAN-Ifra)	Promote the notion that civil society participation in media and internet governance is a right  Implement educational programs about media and internet regulation and governance	Demand participation in media and internet governance  Implement citizen-run educational programs about media and internet regulation and governance  Participate in media and internet governance discussion and implementation
Participation of civil society in the design of media infrastructures and digital platforms	Budget public funds for citizen-led research and design of digital platforms and software	Monitor and assess the appropriateness of media, digital platforms, and software for diverse communities (e.g.,	Establish the necessary channels to incorporate citizen input into research and design of communication technologies, especially	Promote research and design of communication technologies in schools  Promote design of communication	Implement citizen-run, local communication technology research and design initiatives

		<p>Indigenous communities, disabled communities, linguistic minorities, etc.)</p> <p>Promote civil society participation and input in the research and design of communication technologies</p>	<p>Indigenous communities, disabled communities, and linguistic minorities</p>	<p>ion technologies and software driven by the needs of disadvantaged communities and specifically (a) women and girls, (b) Indigenous peoples and (c) disabled people</p> <p>Develop and fund initiatives for sharing knowledge, know-how, technical expertise, and content between disadvantaged communities</p>	<p>Demand participation in corporate and public communication technology research and design</p> <p>Promote the use of open access software</p>
<p>Protection from surveillance and data extraction</p>	<p>Design and implement regulation that protects citizens from surveillance and data extraction by media and internet corporations, governments, and security organizations</p> <p>Regulate the use of algorithms for</p>	<p>Promote multistakeholder regional and international forums to address surveillance and data extraction</p> <p>Re-position civil society organizations as key participants in regulating the consequences</p>	<p>Review and adjust business models to be consistent with rights of privacy and data protection</p> <p>Advocate policies, regulations, and treaties that advance rights of privacy and data protection</p>	<p>Promote a public conversation on surveillance and data extraction as threats to privacy</p> <p>Expose unlawful government surveillance activities</p> <p>Support the design and distribution</p>	<p>Demand the right to privacy and protection against data extraction by corporate or government entities</p> <p>Demand transparency and accountability in data collection, filtering, and the use of</p>

	<p>marketing or surveillance purposes</p> <p>Develop legislation that protects whistleblowers and investigative journalists</p>	<p>of surveillance and data extraction</p> <p>Lead a public conversation about filtering and predictive algorithms</p>		<p>of ad blockers and tracker visualization tools</p>	<p>predictive algorithms</p>
<p>Media infrastructures and digital platforms free from censorship</p>	<p>Develop regulatory regimes that demand transparency and accountability of content filtering mechanisms</p> <p>Include the social responsibility of media and digital platforms as a key element of international and national media and Internet legislation</p>	<p>Monitor the transparency of content filtering mechanisms used by corporate and government media and digital platforms</p> <p>Promote the need for investigative journalism as an essential component of democratic life</p>	<p>Commit to supporting independent investigative journalism as the social responsibility of media and digital platforms</p>	<p>Fund civil society initiatives to monitor and catalogue content removal in digital platforms and social media</p> <p>Support independent investigative journalism initiatives (in universities, foundations, or government-sponsored organizations)</p>	<p>Demand access to knowledge and information</p> <p>Support investigative journalism as an essential element of democratic societies</p>
<p>Information and media literacy</p>	<p>Promote the inclusion of media and information literacy as a core element in school and university curricula</p>	<p>In collaboration with NGOs, civil society, and citizens' media, implement media and information literacy initiatives at the local level,</p>	<p>Develop transparent and accessible conventions for disclosing sponsorship and describing the use of predictive algorithms</p>	<p>Fund/ sponsor media and information literacy initiatives developed by international orgs, NGOs, civil society, and citizens' media</p>	<p>Develop local initiatives of media and information literacy – linked e.g., to schools, universities, community organizations, and local media</p>

		especially targeting children and youth, disabled communities, ethnic minorities and other vulnerable populations	Develop free and accessible media and information literacy initiatives in collaboration with NGOs and citizens	Promote public conversation about the improvement of media and information literacy	citizens' media
Linguistic diversity	<p>Implement policies that mandate subtitles and translation</p> <p>Design regulatory regimes that mandate the production of media content and software for linguistic minorities and disabled communities</p> <p>Include Indigenous people and people with disabilities in the formulation of media and Internet regulatory regimes</p>	<p>Coordinate and support local initiatives for linguistic diversity</p> <p>Enable global visibility of linguistic diversity</p>	<p>Produce content in various languages, including Indigenous languages</p> <p>Design communication technologies and software appropriate and accessible to diverse linguistic communities and disabled communities</p>	<p>Promote alliances and collaboration between media and digital communication NGOs and Indigenous NGOs and social movements</p> <p>Mobilize civil society and social movements to demand linguistic plurality in media infrastructures</p>	<p>Demand media content be made available in local languages</p> <p>Demand media content and digital platforms tailored to disabled communities</p>
Human knowledge as commons, instead of commodity	Balance intellectual property rights with notions of information and knowledge as the	Pressure trade agreement negotiations to balance intellectual property protections with the	Recognize the limits to proprietary claims over information, expression, and innovation	Pressure schools to embrace free/libre/open source software in the classroom	Demand access to knowledge and information as a right, not a privilege



	commons of humankind	rights to free knowledge and information  Promote free culture and free/libre/open source software	Acknowledge the importance for social progress of the availability of non-proprietary information, expression, and innovation  Advocate policies, regulations, and treaties that advance a global knowledge commons		
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