



**Report of the Seventh  
Annual Meeting**

**2025**



# Lebanon Internet Governance Forum Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting

Under the theme

**"Building The Future Together: Inclusive Digital Growth"**

December 10-11, 2025

Hosted by the American University of Beirut

At Beirut Digital District



Internet Governance Forum -  
Lebanon

# Lebanon Internet Governance Forum Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting

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# Lebanon Internet Governance Forum Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting

## A. Introduction

The Lebanon Internet Governance Forum (Lebanon IGF) is a national multistakeholder initiative established in 2017, with the aim of fostering dialogue on the challenges and opportunities related to Internet development and governance in Lebanon. The Lebanese Multistakeholder Advisory Group (LMAG) brings together representatives from the public sector, academia, civil society, the private sector, and the technical community (see Annex for the list of LMAG members for 2025).

Under the theme “Building the Future Together: Inclusive Digital Growth”, the LMAG organized the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Lebanon IGF on 10–11 December 2025. The meeting was hosted by the American University of Beirut at the Beirut Digital District and was held in a hybrid format, allowing participation both in person and remotely via Zoom.

The Forum welcomed 120 participants onsite, in addition to 55 online participants. Participation reflected strong diversity across sectors and gender, with 52% male and 48% female representation. Attendees represented the public sector (15%), civil society and academia (34%), the private and technical sectors (49%), and international organizations (2%).

The meeting opened with a live intervention by Ms. Anja Gengo from the Secretariat of the United Nations Internet Governance Forum in Geneva, who highlighted the importance of the Forum’s timing ahead of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting marking the twenty-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20), as well as discussions on the renewal of the global IGF mandate.

Opening remarks were also delivered by Ms. Zeina Bou Harb, Head of Lebanon IGF Secretariat and Dr. Marc Ibrahim, Chair of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group, and Dr. Youssef Asfour, representing the Host American University of Beirut.

The 2025 Lebanon IGF program comprised four main sessions and four workshops, bringing together experts and decision-makers from the public and private sectors, academia, civil society, the technical community, and regional and international organizations.

Discussions focused on key Internet governance priorities identified by the LMAG, including building digital trust and resilience; advancing inclusive access and digital rights; fostering sustainable and responsible innovation; and safeguarding information integrity.



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## B. Sessions of the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum 2025

### 1. Main Sessions

#### a. Session 1: Artificial Intelligence at a Crossroads: Paving the Way for Accountable Governance

**Organizer:** Eng. Manal Shihab, Senior Software Expert, Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA).

**Moderator:** Dr. Imad Bou-Hamad, Associate Professor of Statistics and Data Analytics, American University of Beirut, and TV Program Creator and Host.

**Speakers:**

- H.E. Dr. Kamal Shehadi, Minister of the Displaced and Minister of State for Technology and Artificial Intelligence;
- Mrs. Wadad Wazen Gergy, Director of Digital Innovation and AI Center, Saint-Joseph University of Beirut (USJ);
- Pr. Habib Kazzi, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Political Science, Lebanese University (absent); and,
- Mr. Ralph Boustani, Cyber Intelligence Unit Manager, Potech – Paths of Technology.

The poster features the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum logo at the top center. Below it, the session title 'AI AT A CROSSROADS: PAVING THE WAY TOWARDS RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE' is displayed in large white letters. The organizer's name, Eng. Manal Shihab, is listed below the title. The date and time, 'Wednesday 10 December 2025 10:00 - 11:30 AM BDD 1280 - Beirut', are also included. On the left, a circular portrait of the moderator, Dr. Imad Bou-Hamad, is shown with his name and title. Below this, four circular portraits of the speakers are arranged horizontally: H.E. Dr. Kamal Shehadi, Ms. Wadad Wazen Gergy, Pr. Habib Kazzi, and Mr. Ralph Boustani, each with their respective names and titles.



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### Discussion

The session addressed the growing role of artificial intelligence in daily life, focusing on its benefits and risks, regulatory gaps, cybersecurity and privacy issues, and data sovereignty. It also highlighted that Lebanon is still in the early stages of AI governance, noting the need to strike a balance between innovation and accountability by drawing on global models such as the European Union's AI law.

The speakers stressed the importance of adopting a national artificial intelligence strategy in Lebanon that focuses on people and rights, and includes legislation, secure digital infrastructure, data sovereignty, responsible regulation, institutional capacity building, and promoting inclusive innovation. The interventions also highlighted the role of universities in responsible education for artificial intelligence, ethical research, and the dissemination of digital culture, along with the role of the private sector in enhancing cyber resilience, developing local infrastructure, and raising public awareness.

Dr. Kamal Shehadi presented a comprehensive and implementable national strategy for artificial intelligence in Lebanon, based on a human-centered, rights-based approach that balances innovation with ethical responsibility. The strategy rests on four key pillars: establishing legislative frameworks and a secure digital infrastructure that safeguards data sovereignty; Adopting a responsible and context-appropriate organizational structure in priority sectors; strengthening institutional and human capacities through training and national coordination; and encouraging inclusive innovation through national pilot projects and public-private partnerships. This vision aims to transform Lebanese talent into an engine of growth, and to solidify Lebanon's position as a regional hub for reliable and ethical artificial intelligence.

Ms. Wadad Wazen Gergi emphasized the pioneering role of Saint Joseph University in promoting responsible artificial intelligence through education, research and community engagement. The university is working to integrate artificial intelligence into education and curricula in a conscious and responsible manner, with the training of more than 1,000 faculty and administrative staff members, and subjecting all research that uses Lebanese data to strict ethical oversight. She stressed that AI literacy is essential to rebuilding public trust, pointing to promising local initiatives, and noted that the absence of a national data-sharing framework is hindering expansion.

In its recommendations, Wazen called for the establishment of a national framework for the ethics and governance of artificial intelligence, the strengthening of data governance, the building of national capacities, and the dissemination of public awareness. Launching national pilot projects as ethical incubators, and promoting regional and international cooperation, paving the way for a responsible, inclusive and sovereign artificial intelligence future in Lebanon.

For his part, Mr. Ralph Boustani presented a comprehensive and forward-looking vision for integrating artificial intelligence in Lebanon, based on responsibility, security, data sovereignty and inclusivity. He stressed the importance of ethical and accountable AI governance, enhancing cyber resilience through AI-powered solutions and building local expertise, investing in national infrastructure that hosts artificial intelligence platforms to protect sensitive data and promote digital independence. He also stressed the role of inclusive education.



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## Recommendations:

### Responsible AI Governance

1. Establish clear ethical standards, accountability measures, and regulatory oversight, supported by human-in-the-loop systems to ensure transparency and reliability.
2. Adopt a National AI Governance Framework/Policy – grounded in six core principles: privacy, accountability, transparency, fairness, human rights, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – that informs and guides the development of sector-specific AI regulations (e.g., in health, education, and finance) with tailored safeguards.
3. Launch national pilot projects (in healthcare, public services, and education) supported by regulatory sandboxes to enable responsible, evidence-based innovation.
4. Establish a national AI Governance Taskforce bringing together government, academia, the private sector, and civil society to steer implementation and provide expert oversight.
5. Establish a clear AI liability regime: no-fault liability, joint responsibility, short complaint windows, and bans on liability waivers.

### Cybersecurity Resilience

6. Modernize digital infrastructure to support secure AI deployment nationwide.
7. Invest in Lebanon's digital backbone: cloud infrastructure, secure data environments, and enhanced cybersecurity.
8. Deploy AI-powered threat detection and response systems in organizations to counter evolving cyber risks
9. Build local expertise through training to strengthen national cyber defenses and ensure effective use of AI-driven defense tools.

### Data Sovereignty & Local Infrastructure

10. Enact a comprehensive data protection law and update existing legislation (IP Law, Competition Law, Consumer Protection Law, etc...) for AI compatibility.
11. Invest in locally hosted AI platforms to maintain control over sensitive data, support regulatory compliance, and enhance digital independence.

### Awareness, Education and Local/International Cooperation

12. Expand AI literacy and public awareness programs through comprehensive workforce trainings to promote informed, responsible adoption across all sectors while addressing both benefits and risks.
13. Launch AI education and upskilling initiatives, starting in secondary schools and involving public-private partnerships.
14. Stimulate AI research and development by offering targeted financial incentives (e.g. grants, public investments) and streamlining administrative support (e.g. dedicated innovation hubs, research centers).
15. Foster an open, inclusive, and innovative AI ecosystem by strengthening collaboration between public and private sectors (Public-Private Partnerships) and deepening international partnerships to share knowledge, align standards, and co-develop responsible AI solutions that benefit society globally.



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## b. Session 2: Resilient Internet Infrastructure for a Digitally Ready Lebanon: Connectivity, Capabilities, Trust, and Collaboration

**Organizers:** Dr. Chafic Chaya, Regional Director, Public Policy and Government Affairs, RIPE NCC and Ms. Zeina Bou Harb, Head of the International Cooperation Office, OGERO.

**Moderator:** Mr. Iyad Dirani, Technology journalist and film director.

### Speakers:

- Ms. Paula Yacoubian, Member of the Lebanese Parliament;
- Ms. Viviane El Zraibi, CEO of TediNet;
- Ms. Manele El Khoury, Vice President of Technology at GlobalCom;
- Mr. Wassim Mansour, Telecom Executive and Digital Policy Advisor;
- Mr. Mouhannad Al-Khatib, IT Director at OGERO (unable to participate)

The poster features the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum logo at the top center. Below it, the session title is displayed in white text on a dark blue background: "RESILIENT INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE FOR A DIGITALLY READY LEBANON: CONNECTIVITY, CAPACITY, TRUST AND COLLABORATION". The co-organizers are listed as Mrs. Zeina Bou Harb (OGERO) and Dr. Chafic Chaya (RIPE NCC). The event date and time are "Wednesday 10 December 2025 12:50 - 14:20 AM BDD 1280 - Beirut".

On the left, a circular portrait of the moderator, Eyad Dirani, is shown with his name and title: "Moderator Eyad Dirani Technology Journalist & Filmmaker".

At the bottom, five circular portraits of the speakers are arranged horizontally, each with their name and title below: Paula Yacoubian (Member of Parliament), Mouhannad Al Khatib (IT Director- OGERO), Wassim Mansour (Telecom Executive & Digital Policy Advisor), Viviane El Zraibi (CEO- TediNet), and Manele El Khoury (Deputy CTO Globalcom).



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## Discussion

In light of the accumulating political and economic crises, digital infrastructure stands out as one of the key elements for Lebanon's recovery and the building of a modern state capable of providing effective public services, enhancing trust, and stimulating economic growth. This session discussed the reality of the internet infrastructure, the legal, regulatory and structural challenges that hinder digital readiness, and the strategic options available to decision-makers. The discussions showed that Lebanon is still lagging behind in a number of digital readiness indicators, particularly in the areas of connectivity quality, network stability, and adoption of global technologies and standards.

The speakers agreed that the continuation of fragmented digital systems and the delay in legislative and regulatory reforms limit the state's ability to achieve a comprehensive government digital transformation and negatively affect the confidence of citizens and investors.

The session also touched on the Telecommunications Law and the importance of developing it to become modern and capable of keeping pace with technological progress, and highlighted the role of the private sector and its contribution to improving infrastructure.

The participants stressed that enhancing network resilience requires investment in the technical foundations of the Internet, including expanding the adoption of IPv6, strengthening routing security (RPKI), and developing Internet Exchange Points (IXPs), Ensuring the stability and security of the Domain Name System (DNS).

The impact of non-traditional communication services on the local market was also discussed, along with the need to approach them within a regulatory framework that balances improving internet access with protecting digital sovereignty and fair competition.



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## Recommendations:

1. Updating the digital governance framework by reviewing and activating relevant laws and regulations, enhancing the independence of the regulatory body, and improving institutional coordination, in line with the requirements of the digital economy and digital transformation.
2. Considering digital resilience and trust as a national priority by encouraging the widespread adoption of best practices and international standards in infrastructure, and linking this to clear national indicators to measure performance and progress.
3. Repositioning the digital sector as an engine for economic growth, and moving from an approach based on short-term revenues to stable and predictable policies that encourage investment and public-private partnerships.
4. Enhancing trust through transparency and accountability by publishing clear policies, performance indicators, and regular sectoral data that enable measuring results and assessing impact.
5. Institutionalizing multi-stakeholder cooperation as a cornerstone for building digital trust, through structured dialogue mechanisms and periodic public reports that reduce uncertainty and support long-term investments.
6. Building a resilient and secure internet infrastructure is a strategic imperative for Lebanon, not merely a technical matter. Adopting these recommendations is a crucial step towards a more efficient digital state, a more competitive economy, and a digital environment that restores the trust of both citizens and the international community.



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## Session 3: Leaving No One Behind: Digital Inclusion and Accessibility in Lebanon

**Organizers:** Dr. Mirna Barbar, Project Manager of the Arab Platform for Digital Inclusion, ESCWA, and Ms. Zeina Bou Harb, Head of the International Cooperation Office, Ogero

**Moderator:** Dr. Nawwar Al-Awa, Regional Advisor for Technology for Development, ESCWA

### Speakers:

- Ms. Lynn El-Sayed, disability specialist at the Ministry of Social Affairs, and representative of Her Excellency Ms. Haneen El-Sayed, Minister of Social Affairs;
- Dr. Jihad El Hokayem, Founder and President of Rethinking of Lebanon;
- Ms. Maha Zouwayhed, Director of the Innovation and Digital Access Oasis at the American University of Beirut; and,
- Ms. Leila Serhan, Vice President and Regional Director of NALP at Visa.

The poster features the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum logo at the top center. Below it, the title 'NO ONE LEFT BEHIND: DIGITAL INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY IN LEBANON' is prominently displayed. The event is co-organized by Mrs. Mirna El Hajj (ESCWA) and Mrs. Zeina Bou Harb (OGERO). It is scheduled for Thursday, 11 December 2025, from 09:30 to 11:00 AM at BDD 1280 in Beirut. The moderator is Nawar Al-Awa, Ph.D., Regional Advisor on Technology for Development at ESCWA. Four speakers are listed: H.E. Haneen Sayed (Minister of Social Affairs), Ms. Maha Zouwayhed (Director at AUB), Jihad El Hokayem, PhD (President of Rethinking Lebanon), and Ms. Leila Serhan (Senior VP & Group Country Manager for NALP - Visa). The poster also includes logos for the American University of Beirut, Ogero, Rethinking Lebanon, PCA, RIPE NCC, and DCTalks.



### Discussion

This session highlighted strategic projects and initiatives, such as national digital policies and regional frameworks like the Arab Digital Inclusion Platform, which promote digital inclusion with a focus on empowering marginalized groups and vulnerable communities, including persons with disabilities, older persons, women, youth, and rural populations. The session showcased the transformative potential of emerging technologies in removing barriers to access and participation, and how technology can be leveraged to address challenges related to accessibility, connectivity, affordability, and digital literacy.



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The session also addressed ways to align Lebanon's efforts with regional best practices and international frameworks. Through a multistakeholder dialogue, it presented successful models and proposed collaborative pathways involving government, civil society, academia, the private sector, and international organizations, with the aim of building an inclusive digital future. The discussion covered key issues related to digital inclusion challenges and proposed solutions for implementation, reviewed the challenges faced by persons with disabilities as well as anticipated solutions and initiatives undertaken by certain institutions and organizations to support them, and emphasized the interlinkages between digital transformation and financial inclusion.

The session opened with a presentation of the core pillars of digital transformation:

- First, universal internet availability and comprehensive infrastructure coverage across all areas, particularly remote and rural regions.
- Second, ensuring that the cost of internet services is kept to a minimum, not exceeding 2% of individual income.
- Third, accessibility—designs must be flexible and inclusive, enabling everyone to access internet services, especially persons with special needs and older persons.

The discussion was launched with the perspective of the Ministry of Social Affairs on the obstacles facing digital transformation. It was emphasized that digital transformation is not merely an option, but a fundamental tool for achieving social justice, and that it must be at the heart of the work of every administration and institution to serve people effectively. The Ministry noted that the primary starting point lies in updating legislation and laws to keep pace with rapid developments, pointing out that Law No. 220/2000 on the rights of persons with disabilities has become outdated and is in urgent need of revision. The importance of dedicated training programs was also stressed, as many existing digital platforms are difficult for persons with disabilities to access and use.

In turn, the American University of Beirut presented its experience in the field of inclusion. The services provided by the university were not initially accessible to all groups, particularly persons with disabilities, prompting the institution to research systems and countries that had adopted inclusion initiatives and accessibility programs, and to engage with them for support, especially in terms of training. Speakers provided concrete examples of technical challenges, such as the complexity of online election registration platforms and electronic payment processes, which constitute major barriers for persons with disabilities. Participants emphasized the need for simple and user-friendly designs that enable everyone to access and use digital services, as well as the importance of strengthening partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society.



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Even with limited funding and resources, meaningful change can begin with small but impactful steps. Any text written today can be programmed in a way that allows persons with disabilities to read it easily through screen readers. However, to achieve real and sustainable impact, a national framework or policy for digital inclusion must be developed—one that goes beyond training and awareness alone to encompass all aspects of digital access, including education, institutions, public services, and the technologies used. Such a national framework would position digital inclusion as a strategic national objective and make its integration an integral part of societal culture and everyday practices.

### **Recommendations:**

Governance and legislation to enforce compliance and standardization:

1. The establishment of a clear coordination and oversight body is essential, alongside the development and/or updating of relevant legislation and agencies, the harmonization of terminology, and mandatory compliance to ensure the effective implementation of digital accessibility.

2. Digital accessibility by design through technical standards, procurement, and continuous development: Adopting the principle of accessibility by design in the development of websites and digital services; setting clear technical accessibility standards; integrating accessibility requirements into procurement processes and contracts; and emphasizing that the cost of accessibility is limited compared to its significant impact.

Inclusive digital initiatives and services that support equity and transparency:

3. Expanding “internet for all” initiatives; digitizing the unified registry to ensure transparent support; directing assistance for persons with disabilities toward essential services (electricity/internet); and developing support tools such as chatbots to improve accessibility and build trust in services.

Advancing digital inclusion through a national policy and practical initiatives:

4. Adopting a national digital inclusion policy that ensures the integration of digital access across all sectors, while encouraging small-scale individual and institutional initiatives to guarantee tangible, practical, and sustainable steps.

Empowering society and the economy through skills, education, employment, and financial inclusion:

5. Developing digital skills, training, and awareness in universities; integrating accessibility into curricula; promoting inclusive employment in both the public and private sectors; supporting digital financial inclusion and electronic payment methods; and expanding partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society organizations (including memoranda of understanding) to ensure broad economic and social impact.



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## Session 4: Protecting Information Integrity in Light of the 2026 Lebanese Elections

**Organizer:** Maharat Foundation

**Moderator:** Journalist, Mr Walid Abboud

### Speakers:

- Dr Elissar Naddaf, Chair & Director General, Tele Liban;
- Dr. Nasri Messarra, Head of Sociology and Communications Dept. at USJ and Int'l expert in digital communication;
- Ms. Guilnard Asmar, Media & Communication officer, UNDP; and,
- Mr. Ghassan Moukheiber, Legal Expert and former Member of Parliament.

The banner features the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum logo at the top center. Below it, the session title and date are displayed: "PROTECTING INFORMATION INTEGRITY IN LIGHT OF THE 2026 LEBANESE ELECTIONS" on Thursday, 11 December 2025 - 12:15 PM - Beirut Digital District. The organizer is listed as Maharat Foundation. The moderator, Journalist Mr. Walid Abboud, is shown in a circular portrait on the left. Four speakers are listed in a row, each with a circular portrait and their respective titles: Dr. Elissar Naddaf (Board of Directors Chair and Director-General - Tele Liban), Dr. Nasri Messarra (Head of the Sociology and Communication Department (USJ) / International expert in digital communication), Ms. Guilnard Asmar (Media & Communication Officer, UNDP Lebanese Elections Assistance and Parliament Project), and Mr. Ghassan Moukheiber (Legal Expert and Former Member of Parliament).



### Discussion

The session examined the roles of various stakeholders in protecting information integrity during electoral processes in Lebanon, with a focus on public media, civil society, digital challenges, and the legal framework.



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The role of public media in safeguarding information integrity:

The Chair of the Board of Télé Liban, Ms. Elissar Naddaf, emphasized that information integrity is a prerequisite for transparent elections. She highlighted the role of public media in ensuring equal opportunities for candidates, combating disinformation through fact-checking and training, and rejecting paid political advertising in order to preserve the principle of equality. She also underscored the importance of the independence of public media and the need for internal reforms to limit undue influence on public opinion.

The role of civil society in countering disinformation:

The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) explained the role of civil society in addressing disinformation through partnerships, awareness-raising campaigns, the establishment of fact-checking platforms in cooperation with media outlets and university students, and support to the Supervisory Commission for Elections. She also stressed the importance of civic education for youth.

Digital and technological challenges:

Studies have shown that disinformation spreads faster than fact-checking efforts, particularly with the rise of artificial intelligence and deepfake technologies, and that WhatsApp is the primary platform for its dissemination. Reference was also made to the high cost of monitoring and the risks posed by coordinated digital campaigns.

The legal framework for protecting information integrity: between text and implementation:

Ghassan Moukheiber noted that the core problem lies in weak enforcement of existing laws rather than in their absence, criticizing the shortcomings of regulatory and judicial bodies. He also pointed out that the proposed new media law addresses disinformation through civil remedies, abolishes custodial sentences, and proposes the establishment of an independent national media authority.

Emerging issues: electronic voting and artificial intelligence:

Concerns were raised regarding electronic voting, particularly in relation to data protection, the potential for manipulation, and the absence of a clear legislative framework, as well as the impact of artificial intelligence on voters' choices.



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## Recommendations:

1. Protecting information integrity, particularly in the 2026 parliamentary elections, requires a comprehensive approach that intersects media, legal, technical, and educational dimensions. The challenges are not merely theoretical, given the rapid evolution of technological tools that facilitate the production and spread of disinformation.
2. Strengthening media and digital literacy in schools and integrating media and information literacy into educational curricula to counter disinformation.
3. Reinforcing the role of public media and ensuring its full independence, given its importance in guaranteeing fair representation and equality among candidates, and in providing free airtime away from paid electoral advertising.
4. Activating the role of the Supervisory Commission for Elections by providing it with the necessary resources, powers, and political will to carry out its oversight mandate, and enabling it to draw on expertise in digital governance and the protection of information integrity during elections.
5. Enforcing existing laws, in particular the electoral law, with regard to regulating the electoral process—especially election-related media—and combating disinformation.
6. Adopting the new media law as a structural reform, including the establishment of an independent national media authority.
7. Expanding fact-checking initiatives through partnerships between public and private media, universities, and civil society.
8. Preparing early for the risks posed by artificial intelligence and deepfakes by developing technical tools, fostering cooperation among all stakeholders, and adopting proactive approaches to strengthen critical thinking in information consumption.



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## 2. Workshops

### A. Workshop 1: Artificial Intelligence to Reshape Educational Leadership

#### Session Overview

Through a workshop held as part of the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum 2025 (LIGF 2025), it became clear that artificial intelligence is not merely a tool for increasing efficiency, but a driver of institutional transformation. To lead effectively in this era, educational leaders must move beyond operational automation toward strategic vision.

**LEBANON INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM**

**AI FOR RESHAPING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

WS Organizer: Lebanese Cyberspace Association

Wednesday 10 December 2025. 11:40 am -12:40 pm BDD 1280 - Beirut

**Amine Hacha**  
President, Lebanese Cyberspace Association

**Rana Sabbidine Osta**  
Advisor to the President and Executive Director of Education Association for Charity and Culture (ACC)

**Rania Gholam**  
HR Director at MCN  
Strategic People Development Expert



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## Discussion Themes

The Human Dimension and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):

- 1.AI as a human choice: AI can either humanize education or strip it of its human essence, depending on how it is integrated. SEL should serve as the compass for every AI-supported decision.
- 2.Protecting the human core: Traits such as fallibility and learning from mistakes, creativity, empathy, and genuine connection—qualities that AI cannot replace.
- 3.Particular relevance in Lebanon: SEL is a critical skill for resilience and adaptability amid local challenges.
- 4.AI–SEL integration framework: Assessing the impact of any tool on SEL before adoption, safeguarding human elements, and leading the conversation rather than leaving it to technology companies.

Strategic Leadership vs. Operational Leadership:

- 5.From “execution” to “vision”: Shifting from operational uses (such as grading and scheduling) to strategic applications that support institutional vision and transformation.
- 6.The three strategic pillars:
  - a.Vision setting: Trend analysis and scenario planning to identify future skills.
  - b.Resource allocation: Predictive modeling for recruitment, enrollment, and budgeting.
  - c.Stakeholder collaboration: Enhancing engagement through sentiment analysis and personalized communication at scale.

Ethics and Governance:

- 7.Non-negotiable ethics: Fairness, transparency, and data protection.
- 8.Human oversight: AI should be guided by humans, not replace human decision-making, with full accountability remaining with leadership.

Implementation and Cognitive Well-being:

- 9.Strengthening cognitive resilience: Overreliance on AI may weaken neural engagement and memory; therefore, AI should be integrated only after strong cognitive foundations are established among students.
- 10.A practical four-step roadmap: Assessment, prioritization, piloting, and scaling.

Conclusion:

Leaders define the direction of their institutions as a whole. Through strategic engagement with artificial intelligence, technology can be steered to serve human flourishing rather than redefine education itself.



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## b. Workshop 2: Building Digital Trust and Inclusion in Fragile Environments: Governance, Regulation, and Financial Resilience

### Session Overview

The session included live polling and active interaction through a Q&A format. Participants' interventions focused on:

1. The practical application of regulatory sandboxes in fragile and resource-constrained contexts.
2. The role of regulators in balancing innovation, consumer protection, and systemic stability.
3. This level of engagement reflected a clear interest in moving from theoretical frameworks to practical, implementable solutions.

The banner features the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum logo at the top center. Below it, the title "Building Digital Trust and Inclusion in Fragile Ecosystems: Governance, Regulation, and Financial Resilience" is displayed in white text. The date and time "Wednesday, 10 December 2025 at 15:00 - Beirut Digital District" and the organizer "Organiser: Dr. Elias Maalouf" are listed below the title. Three circular portraits of the participants are shown: Mrs. Sarah Nemer (Moderator), Dr. Rana El Khoury (Speaker), and Dr. Elias Maalouf (Speaker). At the bottom, a row of logos for sponsors and partners is displayed, including American University of Beirut, oqero, RETHINKING LEBANON, PCA, RIPE NCC, and DXTALKS.



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## Discussion Themes

Digital trust as a governance challenge:

Trust was presented as the outcome of transparent, predictable, and inclusive governance, rather than merely a technical feature. In fragile environments, trust must be intentionally designed and built.

Regulatory sandboxes:

These were highlighted as a practical tool to enable innovation while preserving stability, by providing controlled spaces to test new models, learn from real-world use cases, and co-create adaptive regulatory frameworks.

Blockchain and decentralization:

Decentralization and blockchain were discussed as enablers of “trust by design”, offering transparency, immutability, and shared accountability—particularly in contexts where institutional trust is weak.

Cooperation models:

Collaboration between banks and fintech companies was emphasized as a key mechanism to strengthen resilience, financial inclusion, and sustainable digital transformation.

## Key Messages

Digital trust is built through governance, not assumed through technology.

Regulatory sandboxes enable responsible experimentation and policy learning.

Decentralization strengthens trust when aligned with regulation.

Coopetition is essential for building resilient and inclusive digital ecosystems.

## Conclusion

The session concluded by reaffirming that restoring digital trust in fragile systems requires alignment between technology, governance, and collaboration. When regulators, financial institutions, and innovators work together, digital systems become more credible, inclusive, and resilient.



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## c. Workshop 3: Protecting Lebanon's Data in a Globalized Digital Environment

The session highlighted the importance of protecting national data and its close link to digital sovereignty.



The banner features the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum logo at the top left. The main title is "SAFEGUARDING LEBANON'S DATA IN A GLOBALIZED DIGITAL LANDSCAPE". Below the title, it lists the WS Organizer: Gistelle Semaan, Researcher in Governance International Affairs and Diplomacy, and the date and time: Wednesday 10 December 2025, 16:00 -17:00 BDD 1280 - Beirut. The banner also displays four circular portraits of the participants: Moderator Shella M. Douaihy (Political Researcher), Gistelle Semaan (Researcher in Governance International Affairs and Diplomacy), Jihad Farah (Engineer, Political activist), and Rudy Shoushany (Digital Transformation & ICT Governance expert).



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## d. Workshop 4: Digital Inequality

### Session Overview

The “Digital Inequality” workshop aimed to explore the structural, social, and technological gaps that continue to drive unequal access to digital opportunities in Lebanon and beyond. The session brought together experts from public policy, academia, technology, and digital transformation to discuss challenges, responsibilities, and future solutions.



The poster features the Lebanon Internet Governance Forum logo at the top center. Below it, the title "DIGITAL INEQUALITIES" is displayed. To the left, a circular portrait of the moderator, Jessy Tannous, is shown. The text identifies her as the WS organizer and provides her title and contact information. The date and time of the workshop are listed as Thursday 11 December 2025, 11:00 - 12:00 AM, at BDD 1280 - Beirut. Below the date, four circular portraits of the speakers are shown: Mr. Nicolas Sehnaoui, Dr. Viola Makhzoum, Dr. Samar Aad, and Mr. Christophe El Khoury. Each speaker's name and title are listed below their respective portrait. The poster also includes logos for the American University of Beirut, ogero, RETHINKING LEBANON, PCA, RIPE NCC, and DCTALKS at the bottom.

**LEBANON INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM**

**DIGITAL INEQUALITIES**

WS organizer: Mrs. Jessy Tannous - Media Specialist in Digital Communication & Personal branding

**Moderator**  
Jessy Tannous  
CEO TEDCOM - Trainer & Media Specialist

Thursday 11 December 2025 11:00 - 12:00 AM BDD 1280 - Beirut

**Mr. Nicolas Sehnaoui**  
Member of Parliament for Beirut 1 - Former Minister of Telecommunications

**Dr. Viola Makhzoum**  
Expert in Digital Transformation

**Dr. Samar Aad**  
Assistant professor - LAU

**Mr. Christophe El Khoury**  
Chief Technology Officer - Advisor - University Lecturer

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT**  
Office of Innovation & Transformation

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Lebanon Internet Governance Forum

**RIPE NCC**  
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Internet Governance Forum -  
Lebanon

# Lebanon Internet Governance Forum Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting

## Discussion Themes

### Infrastructure and digital policies:

Gaps in connectivity, affordability, and equitable access—particularly between urban and rural areas—highlighting the need for policy alignment and public–private collaboration.

### Education and digital equity:

The pivotal role of educational institutions in narrowing the digital divide, amid the ongoing impact of limited access to devices, connectivity, and digital skills on learning opportunities.

### Artificial intelligence and emerging technologies:

These technologies can either widen gaps or enable inclusive empowerment when applied ethically, with emphasis on capacity building, ethical frameworks, and responsible innovation.

### Institutional and strategic leadership:

Long-term leadership that prioritizes people, accessibility, and sustainability.

### Multisector collaboration:

Effective partnerships among government, academia, the private sector, and civil society.

## Key Messages

1. Digital inequality is as much a social and educational issue as it is a technological one.
2. Access, affordability, and digital skills must be addressed in an integrated manner.
3. Education plays a decisive role in building an inclusive digital future.
4. Ethical governance of technology and AI is essential to avoid deepening divides.
5. Cross-sector collaboration is the foundation of sustainable digital transformation.

## Conclusion

The session concluded that addressing digital inequality requires coordinated efforts across policy, education, and technology. Through dialogue, collaboration, and inclusive strategies, Lebanon can move toward a more equitable and inclusive digital future.



# Lebanon Internet Governance Forum Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting

## C. Outputs and Recommendations

1. Establishing clear ethical standards, accountability measures, and regulatory oversight, supported by human-in-the-loop systems to ensure transparency and reliability.
2. Adopting a National AI Governance Framework/Policy – grounded in six core principles: privacy, accountability, transparency, fairness, human rights, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – that informs and guides the development of sector-specific AI regulations (e.g., in health, education, and finance) with tailored safeguards.
3. Launching national pilot projects (in healthcare, public services, and education) supported by regulatory sandboxes to enable responsible, evidence-based innovation.
4. Establishing a national AI Governance Taskforce bringing together government, academia, the private sector, and civil society to steer implementation and provide expert oversight.
5. Establishing a clear AI liability regime: no-fault liability, joint responsibility, short complaint windows, and bans on liability waivers.
6. Modernizing digital infrastructure to support secure AI deployment nationwide.
7. Invest in Lebanon’s digital backbone: cloud infrastructure, secure data environments, and enhanced cybersecurity.
8. Deploying AI-powered threat detection and response systems in organizations to counter evolving cyber risks
9. Building local expertise through training to strengthen national cyber defenses and ensure effective use of AI-driven defense tools.
10. Enacting a comprehensive data protection law and update existing legislation (IP Law, Competition Law, Consumer Protection Law, etc..) for AI compatibility.
11. Investing in locally hosted AI platforms to maintain control over sensitive data, support regulatory compliance, and enhance digital independence.
12. Expanding AI literacy and public awareness programs through comprehensive workforce trainings to promote informed, responsible adoption across all sectors while addressing both benefits and risks.
13. Launching AI education and upskilling initiatives, starting in secondary schools and involving public-private partnerships.
14. Stimulating AI research and development by offering targeted financial incentives (e.g. grants, public investments) and streamlining administrative support (e.g. dedicated innovation hubs, research centers).
15. Fostering an open, inclusive, and innovative AI ecosystem by strengthening collaboration between public and private sectors (Public-Private Partnerships) and deepening international partnerships to share knowledge, align standards, and co-develop responsible AI solutions that benefit society globally.



# Lebanon Internet Governance Forum Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting

## C. Outputs and Recommendations

16. Updating the digital governance framework by reviewing and enforcing relevant laws and regulations, strengthening the independence of the regulatory authority, and improving institutional coordination, in line with the requirements of the digital economy and digital transformation.
17. Elevating digital resilience and trust as national priorities by encouraging the widespread adoption of international best practices and standards in infrastructure, and linking them to clear national indicators to measure performance and progress.
18. Repositioning the digital sector as a driver of economic growth, shifting from a short-term revenue-based approach toward stable and predictable policies that encourage investment and public-private partnerships.
19. Strengthening trust through transparency and accountability by publishing clear policies, performance indicators, and regular sectoral data that enable results measurement and impact assessment.
20. Institutionalizing multistakeholder cooperation as a pillar for building digital trust, through structured dialogue mechanisms and regular public reporting that reduce uncertainty and support long-term investment.
21. There's need for a clear coordination and oversight body, alongside the development and/or updating relevant legislation and agencies, harmonization of terminology, and mandatory compliance to ensure the effective implementation of digital accessibility.
22. Adopting the principle of accessibility by design in the development of websites and digital services; establishing clear technical accessibility standards; integrating requirements into procurement processes and contracts; and emphasizing that the cost of accessibility is limited compared to its significant impact.
23. Expanding "internet for all" initiatives; digitizing the unified registry to ensure transparent support; directing assistance for persons with disabilities toward essential services (electricity/internet); and developing support tools such as chatbots to improve accessibility and build trust in services.
24. Adopting a national digital inclusion policy that ensures the integration of digital access across all sectors, while encouraging small-scale individual and institutional initiatives to ensure tangible, practical, and sustainable steps.



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25. Empowering society and the economy through skills, education, employment, and financial inclusion: developing digital skills, training, and awareness in universities; integrating accessibility into curricula; promoting inclusive employment in the public and private sectors; supporting digital financial inclusion and electronic payment methods; and expanding partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society (including memoranda of understanding) to ensure broad economic and social impact.
26. Protecting information integrity—particularly in the 2026 parliamentary elections—requires a comprehensive approach that intersects media, legal, technical, and educational dimensions. The challenges are not merely theoretical, given the rapid evolution of technological tools that facilitate the production and spread of disinformation.
27. Strengthening media and digital literacy in schools and integrating media and information literacy into educational curricula to counter disinformation.
28. Reinforcing the role of public media and ensuring its full independence, given its importance in guaranteeing fair representation and equality among candidates, and in providing free airtime away from paid electoral advertising.
29. Activating the role of the Supervisory Commission for Elections by providing it with the necessary resources, powers, and political will to fulfill its oversight role, and enabling it to draw on expertise in digital governance and the protection of information integrity during elections.
30. Enforcing existing laws, particularly the electoral law, with regard to regulating the electoral process especially election-related media—and combating disinformation.
31. Adopting the new media law as a structural reform, including the establishment of an independent national media authority
32. Expanding fact-checking initiatives through partnerships between public and private media, universities, and civil society.
33. Preparing early for the risks posed by artificial intelligence and deepfakes by developing technical tools, fostering cooperation among all stakeholders, and adopting proactive approaches to strengthen critical thinking in information consumption.



# Lebanon Internet Governance Forum Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting

## List of LMAG Members 2025

Name	Organization
Mr Marc Ibrahim (Chair)	USJ
Mr Fawzi Baroud	NDU
Ms Suzanne El Horr	AUB
Ms Roula Mkhael	Maharat
Mr Abed Kataya	SMEX
Mr Charbel Chbeir	Beirut Bar
Ms Jessica Zakhour	Tripoli Bar
Mr Amin Hacha	LCA
Ms Manal Shihab	TRA
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Mr Rudy Shoushany	DTGN Network
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Mr Chafic Chaya	Ripe NCC
Mr Talal Assaf	Alfa
Ms Jessy Tannous	Tedcoms

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