

The Internet governance community should consider digital media literacy a cornerstone of connecting the next billion individuals to the Internet. Digital media literacy, along with critical infrastructure, effective policy and regulation, affordable services and devices, as well as local, relevant, and multilingual content will [shape](#) how the next billion users of the Internet participate in the information society.

Digital media literacy is [paramount](#) because without the skills needed to critically analyze, evaluate, and create media, the unconnected – a vulnerable group of individuals – will likely be relegated to consuming media when they begin accessing the Internet for the first time. Moreover, such individuals may not understand how the media they are exposed to was made, the narratives or messages being conveyed, or what interests are behind it. In addition, digital media literacy is also imperative to [civic engagement and democratic participation](#).

When considering how and why the next billion people should be connected to the Internet, the Internet governance community must [ensure](#) such individuals are not solely empowered with access but also with the skills needed so they can participate effectively, access the information they want, and help make our digital spaces more vibrant.