



HM Government



Wilton Park

Provisional programme

Tackling online gendered harms

Tuesday 9 November 2021 | WP1984V

1330-1630 UK Time

To be held online

Over the past decade the world has become increasingly interconnected, with access to digital technologies like mobile phones and the Internet an integral part of daily life and our default way of communicating, learning, and doing business. In this context the disproportionate abuse of women online is being recognised as a growing concern across the international community. A high proportion of this abuse includes misogynistic narratives, sexist and sexually explicit language, and threats of violence. As well as the fear and harm women and girls face, security is also a key barrier to closing the gender digital divide. It means women and girls lose out on digital access to economic opportunities, health and education services and participating in public life online.

The threats and abuse targeting women in public life are a clear example of how online abuse is carried out, and the wider impact it has on society. The findings of the Wilson Center's January 2021 report [Malign Creativity: How Gender, Sex, and Lies are Weaponized Against Women Online](#) indicate that the resultant fear of abuse and harassment may deter women from active involvement in public life and greatly impact the right to equal participation in democratic processes. The report also highlights that: 'Online gendered abuse and disinformation is often intersectional in nature, with abusers often engaging with both sex- and race-based narratives, compounding the threat for women of color'.

Furthermore, the [G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting Communiqué May 2021](#) recognises the importance of diverse voices in shaping public debate, promoting transparency and ensuring accountability and, in particular, condemns intimidation, harassment and violence against journalists, noting that women, and those in marginalised and vulnerable situations, are disproportionately targeted, both online and offline.

Purpose of meeting

This invitation only event will bring together a cross section of up to 30 stakeholders including industry, policy makers and subject experts from selected countries, alongside

international and regional bodies, to explore the issue of online gendered abuse. The meeting will draw on expert insights, best practice and lessons learned in order to:

- promote a greater understanding of how women are disproportionately abused online globally
- consider how this impacts upon gender equality including political empowerment, particularly in developing countries context, and the range of factors involved
- develop greater international consensus on ways in which we can work together to prevent and tackle online abuse against women and girls
- explore prospects for an in person residential meeting to be held at Wilton Park in 2022.

The meeting will be conducted in English and all discussion will be off the record under the [Wilton Park Protocol](#).

In association with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and the Home Office

1315

Join meeting

1330-1340

Welcome and introduction

Julia Purcell

Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

1340-1350

1. Opening remarks

Sarah Connolly

Director, Security and Online Harms, Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), London

1350-1420

2. Scope of current challenges and opportunities to mitigate

An overview of the scale of the issues and what could be done to tackle them. This introductory session will consider intersectionality, networked misogyny, inequitable gender beliefs, permissive attitudes about violence against women and girls, and the impact on women's empowerment both online and offline.

Sandra Pepera

Senior Associate and Director for Gender, Women and Democracy, National Democratic Institute (NDI), Washington DC

Chenai Chair

Special Advisor, Africa Innovation, Mozilla Foundation, Johannesburg

Niamh McDade

Deputy Head, Public Policy, Twitter, London

1420-1450

3. Spotlight on the impact on democracy

Insights into the way in which online gendered abuse limits or deters women from engaging in political processes. The session will highlight potential strategies in response

Rosie Hildago

Special Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor, Gender-Based Violence, The White House Gender Policy Council, Washington DC

Nighat Dad

Executive Director, Digital Rights Foundation, Lahore

1450-1500

Break

1500-1515

4. Prospects for increased international action

Introduction to break out groups, building on the [G7 Online VAWG principles](#)

Brief introductory remarks to set the scene for subsequent break out discussion, each leading on one of these themes to set out existing best practice and vision and prospects for the future:

Legal and judicial (standards and frameworks, domestically and internationally, to ensure accountability)

Julie Posetti

Global Director of Research, International Center for Journalists, Washington DC

Platforms and services (addressing or reducing harms)

Elizabeth Kanter

Director Government Relations, TikTok, London

Public and political profile (education and awareness campaigns, capacity building)

Seyi Akiwowo

Founder and Chief Executive, Glitch, London

1515-1555

5. Prospects for increased international action: turning policy into practice (breakout groups)

Based on a range of expertise and experience, groups to come up with 3-4 practical proposals/recommendations, structured around 2-3 questions:

- What should be the priority areas for intervention and what are the examples of what works?
- What's missing? (knowledge base, research and data, policy gaps?)
- How best to improve collaboration and share resources?

All groups will have the opportunity to discuss the range of themes introduced in Session

4. Group Chairs will lead off on different themes to ensure all aspects are covered.

- 1 Legal and judicial
- 2 Platforms and services
- 3 Public and political profile

Louise Harvey

Non-Executive Chair, FTI Consulting, Brussels

Diana Arango

Senior Gender Based Violence and Development Specialist, The World Bank Group, Washington DC

Shannon O'Connell

Director of Programmes, Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), London

1555-1615

6. Key points from breakout discussion

Practical proposals and recommendations -key points reported back by Chairs.

1615-1630

7. Concluding remarks and next steps

Christian Rogg

Director (Development, Parliament, Coordination and Capability), Foreign,
Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), London

Paul Williams

Director (Open Societies and Human Rights), Foreign, Commonwealth and Development
Office (FCDO), London

Final announcements

Julia Purcell

Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

1630

Close of meeting

This is a preview programme and as such may be subject to change.

This is an invitation only event.

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