

Submission # 100

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Country/Region:USA

How would you define the stakeholder community or communities to which you belong?

Academic

Are there any suggestions that you wish to make in respect of the proposed themes, questions and indicators which are included in the framework as it stands?

Category R

Theme B

Question B7

- Add an indicator on number of documented cases of intimidation, and nature of intimidation, as well as number and nature of arbitrary legal punishments. Reasoning: In countries like Cuba, internet activists are often arbitrarily punished for their internet use by being removed from their job or university, and also by being fined under dubious and vague legal statutes. Often these fines are exorbitant, and activists are unable to pay them. All this to say that countries have many creative ways of intimidating or legally punishing citizens for online activity, and the current indicators don't quite get at that.
- The same suggestion can be applied to Category R, Theme C, Question C3 indicators.

Question B8

- "Evidence of self-censorship" seems a bit too subjective to capture the question entirely. We suggest adding an indicator that reads "perceptions of self-censorship" in order to quantify results in a survey or poll

Theme E

Question E1

- To the indicator, we suggest adding "and evidence of commitment to, enforcement, or application of this definition."

Question E3

- Add an indicator that addresses/quantifies instances of extra-legal or de-facto surveillance

Category A

Theme E

Question E2

- In addition to the indicator of Wikipedia articles, add an indicator that analyzes google searches concerning the country. This could yield results either complement or challenge the first indicator.

Cross-Cutting Indicators

- To achieve appropriate inclusivity, marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities (PWDs) and indigenous groups should either have their own group or be addressed by a question or an indicator in another group.

Are there any suggestions that you wish to make in respect of the proposed themes, questions and indicators which are included in the framework as it stands?

Category R

Theme A

Question A1

- Include “respected in practice” in the question.

Question A4

- Some questions, including this one, seem like they are designed more for developed countries than developing countries. The bar or starting point is high and will most likely be non-applicable for a majority of countries. Another example is Category O, theme B, Question B1, indicator 2, which details the number and survival rate of internet related start ups

Theme B

Question B1

- Evidence that freedom of expression is respected by government should stand as its own indicator, separate from whether a constitutional or legal guarantee of FOE exists

Category A

Theme B

Question B2

- Under the second indicator, it's important to disaggregate internet in the household by mobile device versus fixed broadband.

Cross-Cutting Indicators

Group A

Question A6

- Disaggregate the indicator by each gender's perception of presence/absence of restrictions on online information about reproductive health, ease of access and extent of use.

What sources and means of verification would you recommend, from your experience, in relation to any of the questions and indicators that have been proposed?

Several of these indicators will need to rely on survey and interview data for collection. I would contact nonprofits implementing overseas programs to improve democracy and governance. Many of their programs run regular polls and surveys in countries that include some of the data reflected in these indicators that can be of use. Some examples include IRI, NDI, CIPE (the sister organizations to the National Endowment for Democracy), Internews, and others.