



**Resisting  
Disinfodemic:**

**Media &  
Information  
Literacy**

**for Everyone  
& by Everyone**

**24-31 October 2020**

**GLOBAL  
MEDIA & INFORMATION  
LITERACY WEEK 2020**

**Concept Note**

## Rationale

All countries and the international development community recognize the threat of disinformation. The world has come face-to-face with another wave of disinformation in connection with the COVID-19 crisis. Disinformation fuels risks to public health. It also reinforces related challenges such as gender biases, inequalities, and socio-economic divisions of all forms. Disinformation feeds socio-political polarization, providing grounds for racist and anti-migrant division, “Us against Them” – further complicating global response to crises like COVID-19. In sum, disinformation, coupled with information and knowledge divides, threatens the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and fundamental human rights for all.

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) can help to address these challenges. MIL works to empower the receivers of information, which is everyone. It is a vital competence if people are to differentiate between information and disinformation and to know how and where they can locate trustworthy sources of facts and informed opinion, and why it is crucial not to circulate unverified content.

This is a life-and-death issue, notably when viewed in light of the Coronavirus crisis. Considered more broadly, MIL enhances people’s participation in governance and sustainable development in general by improving their competencies in information, communication, and technology. Developing MIL also offers a long-term and systemic policy response to disinformation. It calls for public policies at the national and institutional levels, thus responding to UNESCO’s reflection on the “Futures of Education.” MIL provides an essential dimension of how education might be re-thought in a complex world. MIL forms part of new visions and strategies for both education policy and education practices in light of the disruption of disinformation.

This has become a critical imperative in the digital age. Technological advances, data-driven business models, the development of media, and the explosion of information have shifted the relations between the production and use of information and media content. New technologies have opened up an opportunity for everyone to have a voice. At the same time, they are used to magnify disinformation as well as enable privacy and data abuse, contributing to the manipulation of people and the polarization of societies. MIL not only responds to the reality of young men and women engaging in alternative modes of civil and social advocacy via social media and new technologies – it is a critical means through which the media, technological intermediaries, and the international development community can act to address the scourge of disinformation.

Of significant note is that new stakeholders in MIL have emerged, and historically distinct roles are merging. Technological intermediaries and media regulators are beginning to support MIL development, joining with traditional players such as NGOs, educational institutions,

and libraries.

Increasingly, we are all – whether individuals, collectives, or institutions – part of the intertwined information, media, and technological ecology, with our messages, values, and possibilities to create. It is through our combined agency and our potential to become active creators of digital solutions that we can tackle disinformation and advance a development which is enabling and inclusive.

The theme for Global MIL Week 2020, Resisting the Disinfodemic: Media and Information Literacy for and by everyone, highlights how we can look to addressing disinformation and divides by recognizing our shared interest in improving everyone’s competencies to engage with the opportunities and risks in today’s landscape of communication, technology, and information.

In this way, MIL – along with Global Citizenship Education - can help progress towards the SDGs by equipping citizens with the knowledge, skills, values, and practices to be engaged as critical-thinking citizens in societies. These competencies can empower citizens for involvement in media development, access to information and knowledge for all, and freedom of expression, which all have implications on how the war against disinformation can be won.

Target 10 of SDG 16, “public access to information and fundamental freedoms,” which aims to contribute to building societies that are democratic, peaceful, inclusive, and just – relates directly to MIL. MIL also contributes to Target 4.7 of SDG 4 by ensuring all learners acquire the knowledge as well as the information and technological skills needed to promote sustainable development. These are all being upended by the scale of disinformation that is a driver of the COVID-19 pandemic and its disastrous impacts: i.e., the current “disinfodemic”.

Against this backdrop, Global MIL Week 2020 draws attention to how stakeholders can foster - through MIL - the free flow of information and ideas while addressing disinformation and the knowledge needed to resist divisions and build rights-respecting society unity and cohesion.

## Online Celebrations Around the Globe

MIL stakeholders around the world will be mobilized to organize and register online events or activities related to MIL in their community, city, or region, taking place around the period of Global MIL Week in September/October/November 2020.

Registered events will be showcased on the Global MIL Week official website. Notable events will be highlighted and promoted through UNESCO's press releases and newsletters.

## In-Focus Online Sessions (Multiple Language Interpretation)

26-30 October 2020

**Virtual Panels Spread over the Week** (host platform TBC; some options are Zoom, Google Hangouts, MS Teams, Facebook Live, etc. The choice of medium will depend on its compatibility with streaming videos live on social media.)

1. Tackling disinformation in democratic societies: Social network services and MIL communities
2. Lifelong learning: MIL education for everyone and by everyone
3. MIL for equality: Women, refugees, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples (including a perspective on intersectionality)
4. Implementation and evaluation of MIL policies and curricula: long-term defenses against disinformation
5. Korea in Focus (physical conference room with limited audiences and speakers abroad connect to a real-time dialogue)
6. Participation in society by media and information literate youth in the face of disinformation (Youth Agenda Forum session)
7. Remote Learning and Democratic Communications: MIL Implications
8. Regional Online Consultation of the Updating of the UNESCO model MIL Curriculum (Teacher involvement ensured) and Easy-to-use Tool for Assessing MIL Programmes and Projects
9. Launch of the UNESCO MIL Alliance 2.0 (GAPMIL and MILID Open Dialogue)
10. Youth Tackling the Disinfodemic: Outcome of the MIL and Games Youth Hackathon (Youth Agenda Forum session)

### **Extraordinary Online Partnership Meetings:**

1. UN Roundtable
2. Virtual Partners Forum

## Youth Agenda Forum

### **International Day for Universal Access to Information meets Global MIL Week: September 2020**

There will be a bridge between Global MIL Week and the International Day for Universal Access to Information (ATI) through connecting MIL and ATI sessions. One of these sessions will be focused on youth with one international webinar and several regional webinars. Co-branding graphics will be developed titled IDUAI meets Global MIL Week. The other two sessions to be organized in connection with IDUAI will be composed of MIL and ATI experts/practitioners discussing policy implications and connections to the sustainable development goals. The MIL and Games Youth Hackathon (see below) will also serve as basis for the connection with IDUAI.

### **MIL and Games Youth Hackathon: 1-29 October 2020**

A MIL and Games Youth Hackathon will be held online, in cooperation with digital gaming and MIL communities – including Korean technology companies. Building on experience with the 2018 MIL Youth Hackathon organized during Global MIL Week, and the 2020 Code the Curve Hackathon within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, youth around the world will be mobilized to participate in this four-week online hackathon, and design innovative and creative solutions to disinformation and related online challenges. The solutions could range from social media campaigns and audiovisual products, to games, online applications, and websites.

Part of the activity design includes a central live streaming of the hackathon throughout the process, to which developers can connect and through which they can showcase their solutions as these are being developed. The live stream will be connected to the dedicated platform.

The Hackathon will follow the themes of MIL against the disinfodemic. It complements the mainstreaming of young men and women in the In-Focus Online Sessions by enabling more significant youth leadership. It will be designed by youth and for youth. Youth from local schools, universities, and youth organizations, as well as youth leaders from around the world, are invited to participate. The outcome of the Hackathon will be showcased on UNESCO's website, and presented during a dedicated In-Focus Session on 29 October 2020.

## Other Online Engagement

In addition to mobilizing online celebratory events around the world, the In-Focus Online Sessions and the MIL and Games Youth Hackathon, the Global MIL Week 2020 online engagement will have other components including:

- 1) distribution of micro-learning content for online/digital learning,
- 2) MIL CLICKS webinars and questions/answers,
- 3) cooperation with social media platforms,
- 4) coordination with other UNESCO Sectors, UN agencies, and bilateral partners, and
- 5) engagement of influencers on social media as well as of entertainers.

The #GlobalMILWeek campaign and MIL CLICKS learning series (micro-learning content, webinars, etc.) connected to the theme of Global MIL Week 2020 will be launched throughout Global MIL Week. A series of short videos will be produced promoting the importance of MIL around the world and building an online platform linked to the Global MIL Week official website, where the participants from all over the world can watch video clips, interact with other participants, participate in a virtual MIL related game, leave comments and questions etc. The content published on this platform will be available in multiple languages.

UNESCO's ongoing partnership with Twitter will be sustained for Global MIL Week 2020. Cooperation with other major technology intermediaries, such as Facebook, Google, and TikTok, is being explored. These platforms will be invited to join UNESCO in developing related content as well as to bring their online tools (games, quizzes, video templates, blogs, educational resources, etc.) to bear on Global MIL Week. Cooperation will be explored with these social media platforms to gamify, and "incentivize MIL CLICKS.

To magnify social media reach and impact, efforts will be made to coordinate the promotion of Global MIL Week across CI as well as other Sectors of UNESCO, in headquarters and the field offices. Specific campaigns will be explored, developed, and launched with sister UN Agencies. Some of these will start before the actual MIL Week. The aim will be to reach non-traditional networks with MIL related content, and seek their engagement.

Entertainers and social media influencers of all ages will be invited to lend their voices and expertise to promote MIL as a way to tackle disinformation through music, dance, poetry, comedy, art, online games, etc.

## From the Hosts

**G**reetings! Welcome to UNESCO's first-ever online feature conference for the 2020 Global Media and Information Literacy Week. We are the co-hosts of the Week, a diverse group comprising 10 different organizations in the Republic of Korea, including central and local government bodies, and public media and education institutions, as well as the Korean National Commission for UNESCO.

**M**edia and information literacy is a human capacity that is becoming ever more important in our current times, when fake news and hate speech are spread online at an unprecedented rate, deepening divisions and affecting global politics. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated these trends, by stoking our fears and by increasing our reliance on online information as our physical encounters are transplanted to the virtual world. An ability to engage critically with the media and other sources of information is no longer an optional extra, whether we are educating ourselves or the next generation. It has become an indispensable skill that can dictate our well-being, both physical and intellectual.

**I**n such times, the Republic of Korea has been working actively to explore ways to promote MIL, and is eager to have the chance to talk to each and every one of you. We have organized two global MIL symposiums here in Korea over the past two years. Now in 2020, a particularly meaningful year for us as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of our accession to UNESCO, we are hosting the Global MIL Week Feature Conference. At this time, when both a physical pandemic and a global disinfodemic are raging, it is all the more important for all of us, in every country, to grasp the opportunity to share the lessons we have learned, and to learn from others. Going forward, the Republic of Korea will continue to work with UNESCO to promote MIL around the world, building on our past seven decades of strong partnership.

**L**et us use this year's MIL Week to talk action. Let us tell stories of our biggest successes and the painful failures. Let us learn from each other, and be bold in applying these lessons to our own environments. As hosts, we are happy and honored to offer the online space to do just that, and we sincerely hope that the feature events will be an eye-opening experience for all. Enjoy!



## MIL Alliance Awards 2020

The MIL Alliance Awards (GAPMIL Global MIL Awards) recognize information/library, media and technology specialists, educators, artists, activists, researchers, policy makers, NGOs, associations and other groups innovatively integrating MIL in their work and related activities. Specifically, the awards recognize excellence and leadership in five sectors: Education, Research, Policy, Advocacy, Media and the Communication/Information Sectors.

The MIL Alliance Awards are presented every year at the Global MIL Week Feature Conference. For 2020, the MIL Alliance Awards are spearheaded by the UNESCO-led MIL Alliance (Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy, or GAPMIL) and the MILID University Network, with the support of UNESCO, UNAOC, and the Republic of Korea.

Visit the Global MIL Week website for details about the award categories and selection criteria.

The awardees will be invited to the Global MIL Week 2020 online Feature Conference and will receive award trophies from the UNESCO-led MIL Alliance as well as other recognitions. Partners are invited to make financial or in-kind contributions to the MIL Alliance Awards and to propose new categories that they may have a particular interest to support.

Contact UNESCO if you would like to become a donor of the MIL Alliance Awards 2020. The donor(s) will be given credit on the award trophies and in all related communication materials.

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- **Alireza Salehi Nejad**  
Researcher, University of Tehran (Iran)
- **Alton Grizzle**  
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- **Amro Selim**  
Chair, Elmoustkbal Organization for Media, Policy and Strategic Studies (Egypt)
- **Beatrice Bonami**  
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- **Daniel Nwaeze**  
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- **Eva Reina**  
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- **Felipe Chibas**  
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- **Hana Achargui**  
UNESCO (Paris)
- **Jose Reuben Alagaran**  
President, Philippine Association for Media and Information Literacy (Philippines)
- **Lea Cengic**  
Head of Content and Media Literacy, Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

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## Local Organizing Committee

- Ministry of Education, Republic of Korea
- Korean National Commission for UNESCO
- Korea Press Foundation, in affiliation with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Republic of Korea
- Community Media Foundation, in affiliation with the Korea Communications Commission
- Korea Education and Research Information Service, in affiliation with the Ministry of Education, Republic of Korea
- National Information Society Agency, in affiliation with the Ministry of Science & ICT, Republic of Korea
- National Association of Community Media Centers
- Korea Broadcasting System
- Sogang University
- Gangnam-gu Office

## Main Partners

- UNESCO
- Ministry of Education, Republic of Korea
- Korean National Commission for UNESCO