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Participant organization: Dutch Embassy

CSSM

Notes

NL December last year elections. NL did an online campaign on mis/dis. Reasons for doing this is the regional context and security impacts of such influence on the integrity of the elections and results. EU delegation directed it and it was a pilot. Upgraded it to a large scale, social media. Strategy is:

* Radio stations and online publicity.
* We did not want it to be everywhere.
* When you received info, the things you should look out for.
* Fact checking skills.
* What platforms on social media has risks
* Flashcards on how a specific message can be double checked quickly

We have yet to get results, but we did reach to young people. It was about raising awareness. Big words were broken down, AI should be taken with a grain of salt.

Several platforms and campaigns at the same time. Pockets of doing stuff but not digital campaigns at the same scale.

One of our key partners is MFWA. Sierra Leone Ghana: Journalists training and digital rights for women. Support is fact check programs, like Fact check Ghana. We support fact checkers that feel intimidated by their work.

Misinformation is not really interesting for folks where it comes from. Hard to attribute where it’s coming from often. Far right groups have also spread LGBTQ+ hatred in the region, via WA platforms. Political dynamics: MFWA made an institute where they listed France as a key spreader of disinformation. Concerns over recruitment of young people. J-CERF does the counter recruitment cyber activism. We follow these discussions. China, Russia, UAE. We don’t know much for UAE, Russia wants to pose itself as an alternative to democracy. And a possible partner for anti-democratic militaries that want to take power. China does mining that is controversial. Lots of information spreading that China is a good presence. China always comes up as a comparison with other things people don’t prioritize. The volume of their investments is overwhelming. Enabling domestic factors, since the mining brings economic development: mixed feelings with the population. Reevaluate the economic situation.

U.S. Far right Evangelical influence is spreading misinformation about sexual and reproductive health. UAE and China is coming up as an actor that could fill the gap in funding for these programs. Russia doesn’t comment on these issues. UAE doesn’t comment either but can still pose itself as a family valued country. Domestic factors enable influence.

China AID is now a huge building. It is not really doing aid but infrastructure development. They are becoming a necessary alternative. US trade balance is not comparable with China’s trade balance. President and VP is not entirely happy about the USAID freeze. But procured, the US Citizens win. Systems and supply chains are now also disrupted by the US removed.

Covid: China did not play a big role. Maybe shows that health aid does not have a Chinese future.

Education programs: show generated photos and asked people to know which one was real.

MFWA program will continue until 2026. The government change is now prioritizing migration and security, so we will see if the funding will continue. Border communities. CSSM is a regional effort. Security coordination meeting, but in terms of security meetings, it’s about bringing non-kinetic services to water, including disinfo. JCERF funded by star ghana. And NORSARC. CRS provided funding for civilians at risk.

Joint agency intervention. Borders have military, police, immigration: a joint force for counterterrorism for Ghana. Still been effective but to an extent. There has been clashes.

In terms of distrust it is still high in Boro, where police are very seen. “We don’t trust security forces” is very rampant. Present in Boko. Violent extremism. Coordination is not working for partners in the north, though some coordination between donors.

Coordination comes up for security council meetings, very prevalent in security community. But local partners there is. Interagency and training is different for counterterrorism between forces. Streamlining the skill gaps is important because diversity of roles and skills is important, and that coordination can help reveal these gaps.

Border rural and rural environments are even different. When we launched the campaign, the local language translation can be tricky and sensitive for messaging. Sensationalism is also more different in radio stations, which is different. In border areas, foreigners are integrated so it is complicated to reach the audience you need. So you need to tailor the messaging for the right public. Donors have received requests from them in the border. National commission on civic education is actively involved in the border towns, and they are very important institution in this work, but they are struggling with funding and skills. Local government should enable it, and help with 200 languages (most spoken Khan).

2018 institution of Accra initiative that was supposed to be coordinating. But it is very limited. English and French. Regional security coordinator is here, and gathers information. Benin and CI have embassies, coordinates with colleagues. CSSM was supported.

Moved away from aid cooperation to trade. Preferred partner of choice, and now society organizations. Private sector is a funding source alternative, but countries-based funding is still a priority.

New government has connections with Russia. Non-alignment has always been a priority, but the previous government has been more pro-western. Example of the abstention vote on Ukraine at the UN. Enemy to none.