Tech for Moms

Background

Older women, in particular, have been systematically marginalized from actively participating in digital spaces because of their comparatively lower prowess in the English language, lack of decision-making powers, lack of financial independence, lower education levels, and so on. Their identity lies in the intersection of systemic misogyny and ageism thereby making it harder for them to ask for and receive the required support. This lack of support in gaining digital literacy means that older women are left bereft of financial independence, civic participation, and so on.

Mothers in urban Nepal consist of literate middle-aged women with access to all kinds of mobile devices and technology, yet they lack the proper knowledge to use them effectively to make their daily life and family concerns easier. They are also prone to online fraud and misinformation through malicious news sources. Since mothers are responsible for running the house, a technologically literate mother could mean that the whole family will perform more efficiently in the digital landscape paving the path for growth and prosperity. With proper hands-on teaching, we can empower them to be independent and self-reliant. Having more digitally literate moms also means fewer chances of falling into internet scams and fake news, for which they are incredibly vulnerable.

Introduction

Keeping this in mind, we at Safer-I, started the 'Tech for Moms' program. 'Tech for Moms' is a program designed to educate and aware women from older demographics regarding the basics of creating digital IDs, safely using different social media platforms, and using digital wallets like Esewa. The first 'Tech for Moms' workshop was conducted on the 10th & 11th of September of 2023 in Ilam Bazaar, Ilam for 24 participants. The second 'Tech for Moms' workshop was conducted on the 4th & 5th of June 2023 in Amarahat, Dharan for 29 participants.

Objective

To educate adult women on areas of digital literacy, misinformation, and ethical use of digital media for them to be self-sufficient while using technology and making sound decisions on social platforms.

Workshop Contents

1. Passwords security and password managers
2. Signing up and signing in in Google accounts and using them to sign in on other social media platforms.
3. Role of the Internet in accessing content online
4. Difference between wifi and mobile data
5. Mobile hotspots
6. Data risks while using public wifi
7. Misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation
8. Filtering content according to need on FB and youtube
9. Source tracking for news
10. Verified pages, the difference between self-proclaimed youtube reporters and certified media personnel
11. Visibility of one's own data and its reach on the internet
12. Managing app permissions
13. Consent and laws around it
14. Reporting culture as a social responsibility
15. Introduction to digital finance
16. Using eSewa and other digital financial devices to perform basic online transactions

Monitoring and Evaluation

1) Baseline and Endline surveys for the participants
2) Individual experience sharing

Tech for Moms Ilam

Our pilot workshop was conducted on 10th-11th September 2022 for the women of Mahila Jagran Sangh in Ilam Bazar, Ilam. A total of twenty-four participants representing different professions,

ethnicities, and backgrounds were introduced to the basics of digital literacy and security. Divided over two days, the workshop centered on introducing basic digital knowledge, understanding information on the internet, and aspects of financial digital literacy.

Tech for Moms Dharan

The second iteration of the workshop was organized on 4th-5th June 2023 for women of Dharan-13 at Ward Office Dharan-13, Amarahat, Dharan. A total of twenty-nine participants representing different professions, ethnicities, and backgrounds were introduced to the basics of digital literacy and security. Divided over two days, the workshops centered on introducing basic digital knowledge, processing information on the internet, and social media etiquette.

Challenges during Previous Workshops

1. The workshop timings had to be reduced because many participants couldn't allow the timing of more than 2-3 hours a day.
2. Ensuring that all contents were available in Nepali was a challenge.
3. Various participants were at different levels of comfort when it came to using digital devices.
4. It was difficult to quantify the learnings from the programs.

Lessons

1. Prior research could be conducted to understand the abilities, needs, and expectations of the program.
2. Partnering up with digital financial technologies like Esewa could be helpful.
3. Partnering up with local government can make conducting the workshops easier.

Reflection & Future Goals

Reflecting on the sessions, the Safer-I team has realized the need to continue and expand our program. We are looking to conduct the sessions in more remote areas in the future and we plan to partner with agencies that can help us with the continuation and expansion of the program. This workshop highlights the grim reality of the motto of digital inclusion but the success of the workshop also inspires us to continue with our goal with our 'Tech for Moms' project.

Appendix

Event Coverage

a. https://www.instagram.com/p/CiwbVCnuXRF/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
b. https://www.instagram.com/p/CizAGrtBY6W/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
c. https://www.instagram.com/p/Ci4_g31M9Uo/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
d. https://safer-i.org/tech-for-moms-ilam-2022/
e. https://www.facebook.com/ilamgreen/posts/510780147714668
f. ▶ धरानका आमाहरुलाई सफर नेपालले समाजिक संजाल प्रयोग गर्ने तरिका सिकाउदै ।
g. ▶ धरानमा आमाहरुलाई प्रविधी मैत्री बनाईदै
h. https://safer-i.org/tech-for-moms-dharan-2023/
i. https://www.instagram.com/p/CtwQVlNy3BY/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==
j. https://www.instagram.com/p/Ctx9I6-rLeR/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==
k. https://www.instagram.com/p/CtyocywyZMC/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

Photo Coverage

Caption: Campaign Lead, Nirisha Manandhar, explains the basics of the Internet (Tech for Moms Ilam).

Caption: Program and Communications Officer, Sushobhan Chimoriya, assists a participant during the hands-on practice (Tech for Moms Ilam).

Caption: Project Lead, Sonika Baniya, explains what digital finance tools are (Tech for Moms Ilam).

Caption: Technology Lead, Aayesha Shrestha, explains basic fact-checking (Tech for Moms Ilam).

Caption: Strategy Lead, Suvu Shrestha, explaining digital hygiene practices (Tech for Moms Ilam).

Caption: The Safer-I team receives a certificate of appreciation (Tech for Moms Ilam).

Caption: The participants pose for a photo after the workshop (Tech for Moms Ilam).

Caption: The participants take part in an energizer mid-workshop (Tech for Moms Dharan).

Caption: Two participants share a device to practice the learnings during the workshop (Tech for Moms Dharan).

Caption: The participants pose for a photo after the workshop (Tech for Moms Dharan).