

Introducing Computer and Internet to Syrian refugees in Canada.

Venue: DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society, Surrey BC, Canada.

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John Steinbeck once quoted, “All war is a symptom of man's failure as a thinking animal.” War is a state of armed conflict between states, governments, societies and paramilitary groups. The earliest recorded evidence of war belongs to the Mesolithic cemetery site 117, which is determined to be approximately 14,000 years old. Unfortunately, man has still not been able to overcome the need for aggressive and destructive conflicts. This has had many lasting effects like economic decline, social decline, destruction of the natural habitat, endemic poverty, physical harm, psychological harm, psychosocial illness and many more.

Syria is one of the countries in the world heavily suffering due to the civil war which began in 2011. This war has left a staggering 5,00,000+ dead, 3,00,000+ people wounded and nearly 68.5million people as refugees. These refugees have sought asylum in other countries of the world like Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Germany, France, Italy, Jordan, UAE, Canada and others. These recipient countries are taking a lot of efforts to ensure that the refugees develop resilience to survive in a new world. Introducing them to Computer and Internet related technologies is an important step in this regard.

Nupur Vijh, one of the ISOC India Mumbai volunteers, got an opportunity to work closely with the veteran Syrian refugees who had been provided asylum in Canada. The audience comprised of mostly 60+ females. All of them had limited access to educational opportunities and almost no exposure to the world outside Syria. They had never heard about the computer and the Internet.

Nupur conducted a series of sessions spanning across 3 days for them. The session covered the basics of using the computer and the Internet. The main objective of these sessions was to make the audience feel comfortable with the technology so that they would be able to use the Internet for their benefit.

The initial sessions introduced them to computers, gradually making them aware of the internet. The final sessions ensured that the audience was able to realize the worth of internet in their lives. Nupur covered the following four topics :-

- a. How to switch on a computer?
- b. How to use basic computer applications?
- c. How to access Internet via a search engine?
- d. How to use Internet for Internet banking and availing of subsidies from Canadian Government?

The audience was extremely pleased to know about the Internet. They strongly felt that diversity of perspectives offered over the Internet would enable them to become better global citizens. On behalf of ISOC India Mumbai, Nupur thanked the DIVERSEcity Community Resources for this wonderful opportunity.

A photo of the building. Photography was prohibited in the training session due to privacy purposes.

