Session 245
Lessons learned from new developments in information and library policy at national level
National Information and Library Policy (NILP) SIG

National information and library policy: reflections on experiences from MENA region

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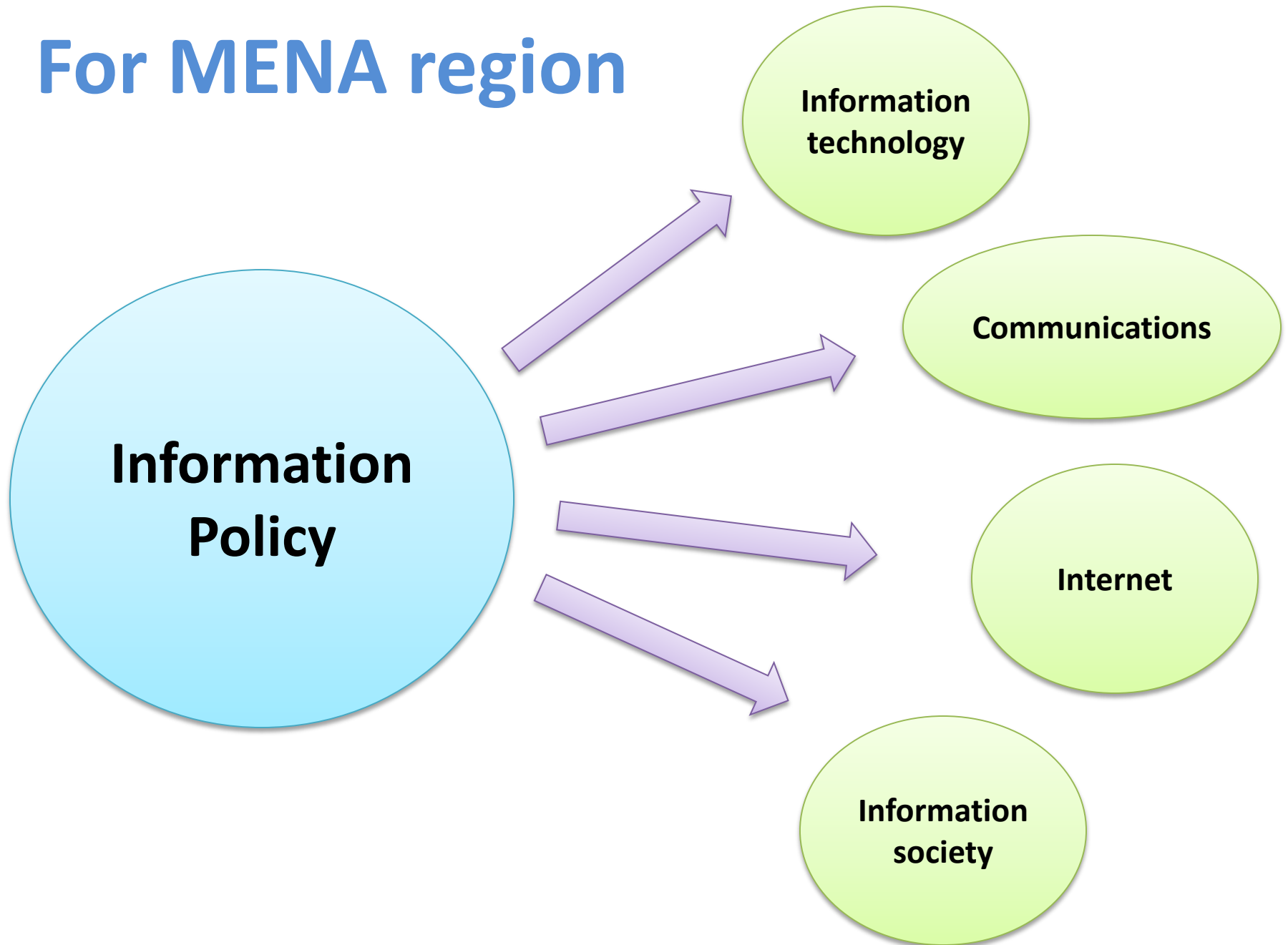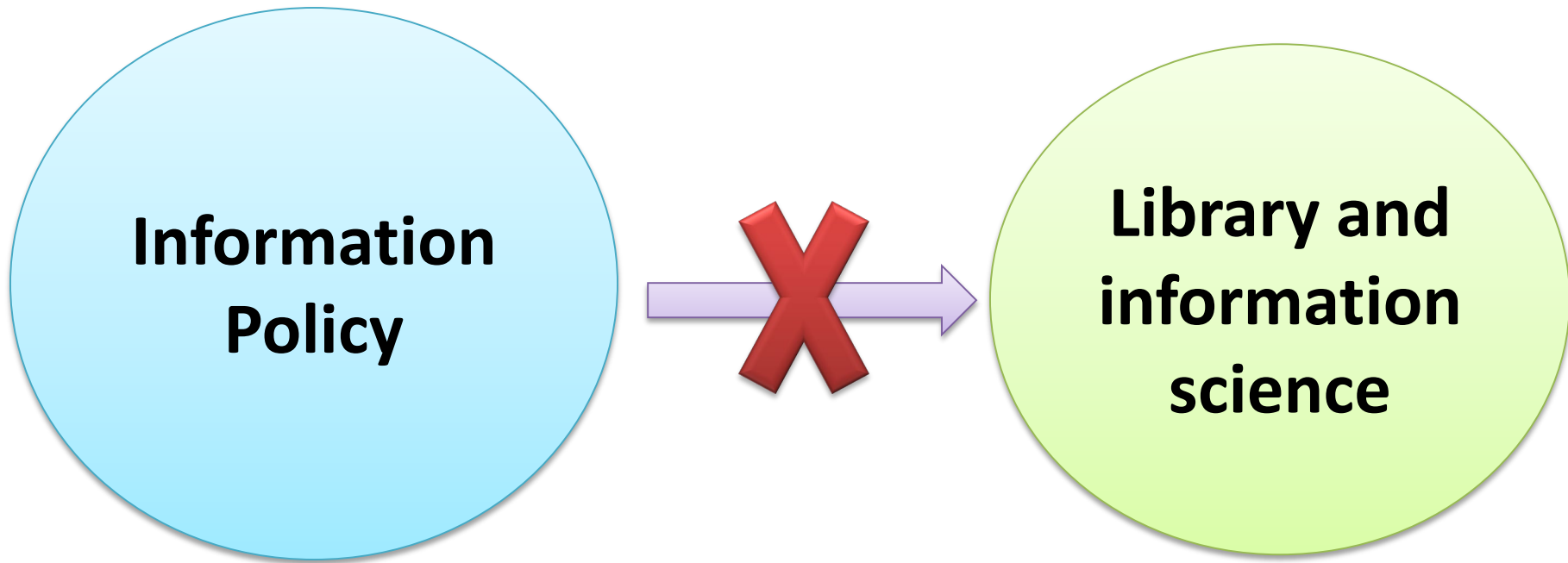mahmoud.khalifa@cybrarians.org

Is it …..

Information Policy

Library Policy

?

For MENA region

For MENA region

- Libraries are not considered by high level decision makers.

- The term "Information" may have various meanings, but it never includes libraries"!!

- The situation of archives is worst.

- Museums not grouped with libraries and archives.

Why NILP important for MENA?

- Dispersion of libraries subordination.
- Absence of laws and legislations related to libraries and information. Ex.: establishing libraries, libraries syndicates, library jobs, and legal deposit (in some countries).
- Underestimation of the role and value of libraries.
- The role of library associations has no impact on the national level.

Situation of NILP in MENA region

Situation of NILP in MENA region

Theoretical efforts

By analysis of Arabic documents on information policy:

- 42 documents were listed.
- The documents published between 1989-2014
- 35% of documents presented theoretical thoughts.
- 65% discussed theoretical thoughts in particular countries.

Situation of NILP in MENA region

Theoretical efforts

Topics covered:

- 60% of documents discussed the concept, basics and importance of IP
- 25% discussed the role of national and public libraries in NILP formulation
- 15% discussed the role of IP in sustainable and economic development

Situation of NILP in MENA region

Theoretical efforts

Country cases:

- Egypt: 6 documents

- Jordan, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia: 4 documents

- Yemen, Libya, Algeria: 2 documents

- Morocco, Iraq, Qatar, Sudan: 1 document

Situation of NILP in MENA region

Jordan

• UNESCO with cooperation with the Royal Scientific Society and Center of Scientific and Technical Information organized in 1989 the National Symposium on Information Policy in Jordan.

Initiatives

Situation of NILP in MENA region

Egypt

• A round table on National Information Policy in Egypt was organized in 2001 by the "Book and Publishing Committee" in the Supreme Council of Culture.

• In 2017, a call for revival through a lecture on "National Information Policy in Egypt" by the National Library director professor Hesham Azmi.

Initiatives

Situation of NILP in MENA region

Actions

Yemen

- A project adopted by the National Center for Information in Yemen to formulate a national information policy.

Yemen

- The National Center for Information in Yemen issued a document of the project entitled "National Policy of Information"

- The document issued in 2011 by the National Center for Information which follows the president of Yemen.

Yemen

Actions

Policy elements

- Importance and role of information in development plans

- Methodology of information field development

- Organization of information

- Information development and human resources development

- Information and science and technology

Yemen

Actions

- Information and national plans
- Information and culture
- Information security
- Legislative framework related to information

Jordan

- The National Symposium on Information Policy in Jordan was organized in 1989 with support of UNESCO.

- The symposium organized by The Royal Scientific Society and Center of Scientific and Technical Information

Jordan

Results

Elements of the information policy:

- Defining the users of information.

- Distinguishing between data and information.

- Defining methods of information circulation and exchange

Egypt

Round Table on National Information Policy in Egypt, December 2001

- Five main topics discussed:
  - General framework and legislations
  - Integration and coordination
  - Information institutions
  - Human resources
  - Information systems and communications

Egypt

Recommendations:

Only two recommendations out of 18 related to information policy:

- Establishing national committee for information.

- Preparing a proposal for project on national information system in Egypt.

Egypt

- Many other recommendations were about different topics other than information policies: bibliographic control, copyright policy, public libraries networks, legal deposit, etc.

MENA region needs

- To build a strong library and information field through strong institutions.

- To advocate for libraries in the society and decision makers circles.

- To understand the historical background and the global initiatives related to national policies of libraries and information.

- To adopt a national programme to promote the need for NILP.

- Associations and institutions also need good leadership, and a strong legal status.

thank you!

شكرا لكم