OPEN INTERNET FOR DEMOCRACY

ADVOCACY PLAYBOOK

Strategies to Build Coalitions & Create Tactics

Advocacy Scenarios & Resources

OPEN
INTERNET for
DEMOCRACY

https://openinternet.global/

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Overview

DIGITAL RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY

Today, various forms of democratic and civic engagement such as political organizing, sharing news and information, expressing opinions, and, in some places, even aspects of the voting process are heavily reliant on various forms of digital tools and communications platforms. At the end of 2018, over half of the global population was online[1], and young people are at the forefront of the digital transformation as over 70% of the world's youth between the ages of 15 and 24 now use the internet.

The role of the internet in the social, political, and economic lives of people around the world will only increase as more people come online. When the internet is used to broaden access to information, support freedom of expression, and foster civic engagement, it can help fulfill the promise of democracy to empower citizens.

However, the internet's potential to advance democratic values is being subverted by powerful forces; authoritarian regimes and their allies have created new forms of censorship and surveillance, distorting the open nature of the internet to spread disinformation and limit democratic engagement. It's working. According to Freedom House's 2018 Freedom on the Net report, 67% of internet users live in places where the internet is considered either "partly free" or "not free." Preserving and advancing an open internet depends on the active engagement of those who value democracy and human rights.

However, the premise of a free and open internet is constantly being challenged - particularly the role that it plays in advancing democratic values. State and non-state actors have introduced new forms of censorship, surveillance, and disinformation tactics which are contributing towards distorting the open nature of the internet and limiting democratic engagement. Worst of all: it's working. According to Freedom House's 2018 Freedom on the Net report, 67% of internet users live in places where the internet is considered either "partly free" or "not free."

Democracy online is at stake. Given the gravity of the threat, it is vital to build broad and diverse coalitions to advocate for an internet that fosters democracy rather than being a force for repression, division, hatred, and manipulation.

The growth in global connectivity presents both opportunities and challenges to democracy. With more freedom of expression online often comes the rise of disinformation and harassment. With more reliance on the internet to conduct business, comes the magnified losses caused by internet disruptions. With increased political engagement online comes the heightened risk of surveillance and censorship. How do we

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[1] https://news.itu.int/itu-statistics-leaving-no-one-offline/

keep the internet open and democratic while balancing the risks? How do we bring diverse stakeholders to the table and make their voices heard? Although there is no single answer, constructive solutions emerge when global best practices intersect with local knowledge.

ABOUT THIS PLAYBOOK

This Playbook serves as a companion piece to the [Democratic Principles for an Open Internet](), which is a framework for understanding what principles must be upheld in order for the internet to foster democracy. Developed by the [Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE)](), the [National Democratic Institute (NDI)](), and the [Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA)](), the Principles were adapted from the Internet Rights and Principles Coalition's (IRPC) [Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet](), and created to help citizens and reformers navigate the challenges of advancing democracy and open markets in the digital age.

This Playbook provides practical strategies on how to advocate for these principles using best practices. It also provides tips on developing global peer networks of reformers.

The initial draft of this Playbook was developed by the 2018 Open Internet for Democracy Leaders – digital rights advocates from six countries. Their experiences demonstrate the efforts made and the determination it takes to preserve a free and open internet which supports inclusivity, civic participation and economic opportunity despite repressive laws and regulations, poor or lacking internet infrastructure, as well as limited political will to more proactively address these shortcomings in line with global best practices.

The Playbook includes ideas and recommendations for the advocates of digital freedoms, focusing on tailored approaches to advocacy that apply across diverse local contexts. These priorities include the need for inclusivity and multi-stakeholder strategies in advocacy efforts, preserving freedom of expression, and linking the human rights and economic impact of internet disruptions and restrictions. These experiences and practical advice come straight from global peers to you - a digital rights advocate - wherever you are in your journey.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

This Playbook is divided into two parts. **Part 1** focuses on the general advocacy process and how to get started. This section outlines key processes and provides guidance on how to conduct a situational analysis and a stakeholder mapping exercise, as well as how to understand the local context and identify the major stakeholders that can serve as allies for your advocacy strategy. Conducting a situational analysis and stakeholder map will help you ensure your plan of action is both appropriate and effective for the local environment.

Part 2 of the Playbook provides a variety of advocacy scenarios, which outline a variety of approaches and actions you can take to advance the particular issue you are working on.

This guide is not meant to provide an exhaustive list of various advocacy approaches for protecting an inclusive, democratic, and open internet; however, it has been designed to serve both as a starting point for activists who may not know how to start the advocacy process, as well as a reference manual for experienced advocates seeking best practices, resources, or suggestions regarding a particular approach.

PART 1

GETTING STARTED

Understanding the Context

DETERMINE WHAT YOU STAND FOR

Before you can begin looking at the context in which you are operating, it is important to first take a step back and outline what your goals are, why they matter in the larger context, and how you will communicate them. This will help you to better assess how to plug into specific policy issues and to create a more effective coalition.

CONDUCT A SITUATIONAL & POWER ANALYSIS

A situational analysis should be the first step in any advocacy process, and is particularly important when you are operating in a new context that you are not as familiar with. When initiating digital rights advocacy, the strategies and intended outcomes will vary depending on the local context. In order to identify what is appropriate for your own context, you must analyze the political, social, cultural, and economic landscape, and recognize both opportunities and constraints. Without taking the time to assess the current local environment, your advocacy campaign will not be successful. It is also important to note that before undertaking any advocacy campaign, you must understand both your own personal safety and security when advocating for digital rights, as well as the risks and threats to those with or for whom you may be working.

To conduct a **situational analysis**, first assess the resources you have available in order to conduct the analysis, including personnel, budget, research capacity, and community support. In addition, in order to avoid potential duplication of efforts, find out who else is conducting work in your target area to determine whether they might have recently conducted a similar analysis that you can use in your own research. Once you've assessed your capacities and available resources, determine your data collection methods, which might include desk research, roundtable meetings, anonymous questionnaires, and interviews with various stakeholders.

The analysis itself will include an evaluation of the social, political, economic, and cultural context for the specific issue area you are focusing on, taking into account both gender and language demographics. While circumstances may not allow for completing the entire analysis before you begin your advocacy initiative, keep in mind that this research is designed to ensure your planned action accurately reflects circumstances on the ground. Incorrect assumptions or assertions may impact the credibility of your campaign, or slow down its progress. Regardless, circumstances are constantly changing, so if your advocacy campaign lasts more than two to three months, be sure to update your analysis in order ensure your campaign continues to remain practical and relevant **(see Annex 1 for a Sample Situational Analysis Checklist)**.

A **power analysis** is an important exercise to map out the various players that you will look towards for support and who is in opposition to you. By mapping out the layers of influence and the various connections between everyone, you can create an influence strategy as part of your broader campaign to exert pressure on the particular individuals who have the power to make the changes to get the outcome that you are seeking. A wonderful resource and step-by-step guide on how to map out a power analysis can be found on the [Beautiful Rising toolkit website](#).

MAP THE STAKEHOLDERS

After completing a situational analysis, it is important to create a stakeholder map by outlining the network of in-country and regional groups and individuals in the open internet community. This map will be useful in building valuable relationships to engage relevant stakeholders in your advocacy effort to develop joint efforts when possible, as well to identify those who will be working against you. In the mapping of the ecosystem players, it is also important to consider what resources are available, what communication channels should be used, the timeline, and how to measure success **(see Annex 2 for an example of a Stakeholder Map).**[2]

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[2] For other examples, please see: http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/stakeholder-analysis-matrix-template/ and https://tmt.newtactics.org/

Build Your Coalition

After you have a clearer picture of what the goals of your efforts are, as well as the landscape that you will be operating in, you can start to reach out to individuals and organizations to start building your coalition. A strong coalition built on clarity of purpose and roles is essential, so think carefully when engaging.

DETERMINE WHO SHOULD BE IN YOUR COALITION

- **Have a diversity of groups but with a unity of purpose.** Past internet related advocacy actions in the United States, like SOPA-PIPA, included an assortment of groups who had not worked together before and some who had, like general advocacy organizations, libertarian groups, online gamers, media organizations, and tech companies.

- **What skill-sets will you need to succeed?** What skills do the coalition members bring (e.g. advocacy, technical expertise, legal knowledge)? What skills are you missing and how can you get those?
  - Consider who has experience in advocacy versus who needs training?
  - Think about including more vanguard groups that have large email lists, that can get people in the streets, and that don't mind playing the role of the thorn in the side of policy makers or adversarial groups.
  - Also be sure to have groups that are policy experts with political connections, to ensure that you have access to the people who make the decisions.
  - What networks do your coalition members bring?

- **Include marginalized or vulnerable groups in the discussions** and ensure that relevant information is accessible to them, especially when the issue directly impacts these groups.
  - When working to gain the support of the majority, be sure to take steps to ensure you are not excluding vulnerable communities and minority voices. An open internet is about building a democracy and no democracy can be built while excluding minority or vulnerable communities from the picture.
  - Reach out to the association leaders of groups that may be disproportionately impacted by the new policy, such as those for persons with disabilities, senior citizens, women, indigenous communities, etc. Collaborate with these communities, as well as with other local, regional, and/or international groups working on these issues, to create content that specifically addresses their needs. For example, a video with subtitles or translations can be more helpful than just plain text materials. So the content and the medium should depend on your target audience. You can engage

the local artists and the tech community to help you develop a variety of content for various audiences.

- **Coordinate with legal experts, when applicable**
  - Identify lawyers and advocates who can provide pro-bono advice about the legality of the policy in question, and whether it violates any existing national laws.

- **Coordinate with technical experts**
  - Reach out to the civic tech community. They may be willing to provide you with technical expertise, amplify your message, and offer protection online. However, you may first need to help community members understand why their involvement is important. You can mobilize them in different ways, such as: assisting you to protect your online accounts and content, setting up online platforms for outreach or forums, and tracking analytics for your campaign. They could also be best placed to provide support in case there is an internet disruption.

FOSTER ENGAGEMENT AND CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES

- Conduct roundtable discussions, hold focus groups, and/or workshops to raise awareness and engage different types of stakeholders in your coalition. The results of these roundtable discussions and workshops can help you build inclusive and participatory support for this policy.
- This is another way to create awareness, particularly among those who are not always online. Providing them with printed materials to raise awareness make them understand about the issue and why they should care is also helpful. Remember to include a call to action and provide information on how they can get involved, such as calling a hotline, joining online platforms or groups, signing up for a mailing list, or participating in public town hall meetings.
  - Create clear asks for the coalition, tying into your core messages.

ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION STANDARDS WITH COALITION MEMBERS

- Once you have assessed and then met with various coalition members, be sure to **create clear channels for communication** between all of the members. Create standards of communication, e.g. weekly updates on the state of play of the movement as a whole or a policy-focused group providing the latest intel on a piece of legislation.
- Also consider if providing sub-channels of communication would be useful for the group to discuss more focused tasks based on the specializations of various members of the group.

Tactics

Any successful advocacy campaign uses a variety of tactics to achieve its aim. Assess what you think would work best in your particular socio-political context. If people are afraid to gather in the streets due to past crackdowns, structure your tactics to more on-line actions. If you are dealing with internet shutdowns, focus your tactics towards offline measures that will gain the attention of traditional media, like newspapers, radio, and TV. However, be sure to always have a mixture of both offline and online tactics so that you can engage as many people as you can with your advocacy efforts.

TYPES OF TACTICS

A good place to start is by looking through this list of 198 non-violent action tactics.[3] These include tactics of protest and persuasion, social noncooperation, economic boycotts, political noncooperation, and nonviolent intervention. Use more tested methods, but also don't be afraid to get creative with your tactics, as those will surely draw more attention. Also be sure to check out the resources available on the movement toolkit website Beautiful Rising, where they provide rich materials including ones relating to tactics, as well as principles and methodologies for building action-oriented campaigns.

Work closely with your coalition and their networks in regards to tactics. See what they may have done before and what worked or didn't. Try to determine if they have any unique connections that would be useful for a specific tactic, e.g. one of their network partners has an office building right next to the headquarters of the government office that determines internet policy, making it a great protest location.

TIMING YOUR TACTICS

Be sure to tie your tactics into specific moments and decision points that will surely gain more attention in the media and with policymakers. Map out when certain leaders will meet, or when specific policies will be discussed, or other moments that are key to your main goals. Then plan specific tactics for each moment. Work with your coalition to assign specific roles for each organization that aligns with their strengths. But also have tactics at the ready to respond to unplanned events that would otherwise catch you off guard.

Communications

One of the most effective tactics that an advocacy campaign can use to garner support is having a well thought out communications strategy.

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[3] The full description of these tactics can be found in Gene Sharp's *Dictionary of Power and Struggle*, Oxford University Press, 2011..

ISSUE FRAMING

Before you can start talking about your issue, you need to think about the most impactful part or parts of the issue that will resonate with your target audience. This is often called framing. If, for example, you are focusing on protecting the digital rights of eco-activists in Brazil, you will want your messages to contain information about the vital nature of their environmental work, since you will most likely be targeting civil society groups and governmental agencies who work on environmental issues.

Some key things to keep in mind as you work on issue framing:
- Clearly identify the problem and keep it simple
- Identify what/who is contributing to the problem, and what/who can contribute to the solution
- Give the audience a clear plan of action to overcome the problem
  Tap into the emotions and values that the problem raises to engage with your audience

For a more comprehensive guide to issue framing, check out the guidance from the Community Toolbox.

CREATING A CENTRAL CAMPAIGN WEBSITE

As part of the campaign process, you may need to provide resources for the public to learn more about what you are advocating for and why, but also what specific actions they can take to help you in your goal. Rather than each and every member of your coalition putting information about the campaign on their websites or out to their mailing lists, it is a much more useful method to create a central campaign website in partnership with your coalition. This will serve to drive traffic towards a singular website where you can better track engagement, emails, and also better control the information that is presented. Be sure that all of your coalition members link to the central campaign website on their individual pages to further drive traffic. Some examples to draw from are thedaywefightback.org or battleforthenet.com from the various US campaigns on internet freedom and digital rights issues.

CONDUCTING A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

- **Build an audience**
  - Identify the most common social media platforms in your country (e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp). Create a group for people to continuously discuss the topic. You can make it private or public.
  - Create a hashtag for your advocacy initiative so that people can easily use it when they share or talk about the issue.

- **Monitor and uphold the quality of the content**

- Be consistent on posting content, updates, and news on your online platform to continue engaging your audience.
- Remember that technical terms are difficult for many people to understand. If the policy is complex, try to provide real-life examples that readers may be able to more easily relate to. Show them how the policy would affect their daily lives.
- Verify your sources before you post or repost content. Ensure that your information comes from legitimate sources to avoid perpetuating misleading or false content.

ENGAGING OFFLINE MEDIA

For all the aforementioned forms of interventions, it is fundamental to have active media involvement, with newspapers, TV stations, and radio.

- Develop a media list (emails of individual journalists, news report emails, bloggers, independent writers, television and radio show producers, media rights organisations, etc.)
- Regularly engage with these individuals via Twitter, email, and in person and share summaries of developments with them (e.g. comments on a policy change, open letter, etc.)
- Find someone on your team to respond to media queries
- Try to get opinion pieces and interviews published in various media
- Keep updating the media with developments in your efforts.
- Always keep in mind - not all states or media will be open to the nature of content or issues you are advocating for. As such, ensure that you utilize some form of digital security practice especially when engaging with some sources who may be victimised for the content they share.

PART 2

ADVOCACY APPROACHES

HOW TO Respond to Government Policy

> **Relevant Democratic Principles for an Open Internet**
>
> All Principles

INTRODUCTION

From legislation affecting the use of social media, to data protection and privacy policies, there are many government policies and actions that have important consequences for users in the digital space. Even the most open governments can enact laws that create obstacles for an open and democratic internet. Engaged citizens and civil society have an important role in advocating for digital rights, informing, and educating policymakers, and shaping the implementation of these policies to ensure a democratic digital space. There are many effective strategies to respond to an overly restrictive government policy—proposed or implemented.

EXAMPLE SCENARIO

Imagine you are a communication specialist at a small non-governmental organization (NGO). Your government has recently enacted a law requiring all organizations to pay a fee for maintaining social media accounts. If the law goes into effect, your NGO will struggle to pay the required fees and will likely have to remove its social media accounts. The law was enacted without any political debate or consultations with civil society; however, some members of the government have privately expressed concern. You are worried about how this new law will impact your NGO's ability to effectively provide services and communicate with its supporters. What might you do?

APPROACH

The process of introducing or changing a policy might include coalition building, campaigning, and negotiating with the government to draft new legislation or amend the existing one. To effectively advocate in response to both established and proposed

government policies, it is necessary to set the foundation by identifying your strategic resources. As an advocate, you need to mobilize and organize your allies, conduct evidence-based research to develop a strong counter-argument, and implement a comprehensive outreach strategy to build public support and awareness for your effort.

POTENTIAL TACTICS

After analyzing all of your background information—situational analysis, power map, strengths of your coalition, and tactics—decide which of the actions below would have most impact based on your situation.

TACTIC 1: DEVELOP A POLICY POSITION

- **Produce a policy memo**, or conduct detailed research that evaluates how the policy conflicts with the global digital rights standards, and/or the national constitution
    - Before developing a policy memo, research existing government policies/strategies and/or national plans to ensure your agenda is in alignment.
    - Once you establish a position on certain policy issues, start writing a document, either a petition or a proposal, whatever form is acceptable to the policy-making or implementing bodies (e.g. a parliament or supreme court). This document can be signed as a consortium of various organizations that you have consulted and allied with. You can share this document online or submit it directly to the intended parties.
    - Consider adverse effects of the policy in question. Conduct research and prepare a case study to show how the policy may have a negative impact on different sectors in society if implemented. This may include economic loss, or further marginalization of certain groups.

TACTIC 2: ADVOCATE WITH GOVERNMENT ACTORS

- **Identify your strongest allies within the government**
    - Conduct research or use your network to identify which government agencies, or individuals within those agencies, are working on issues related to the proposed policy, or are generally engaged with digital rights issues. Once you identify those allies, try to work together to reach a common understanding of your objectives, and the role they can play to advance your objectives. Demonstrating your coalition has broad political support can make it appear more credible to the public.

- ○ Solicit public promises from elected officials and put them online. Be sure to check in with them regularly to help them meet those goals, and try to understand what actually goes in to the process of meeting those goals. Then be sure to hold them accountable during the next campaign season.

- **Write open letters to the relevant government agencies**
  - ○ As an organization, individual, or an institution, writing an open letter (one that is addressed to an individual or an institution but made available publicly) will let the government - as well as the general public - know your stand. Make the document public and distribute it to relevant groups, media, digital influencers, or bloggers. **TIP: Add a call to action to the open letter for various groups to join you in your advocacy efforts**.
  - ○ Wondering what an open letter looks like? Here's a few examples, [one from Article 19](#), an international organization working on freedom of expression issues, and [the other](#) from a coalition of digital rights organizations sent to leaders during the G20 summit

- **Submit recommendations to the government on a policy either online or offline.**
  - ○ Help policymakers develop expertise around the issue you are concerned with. Provide a detailed analysis of the impact of the issue, particularly if there is a social or economic impact on the person's constituents.

- **Identify and join forums that can support you in the policy drafting and policy making process.**

- **Form a public interest litigation in the High Court in cases where the law is in conflict with the constitution.**
  - ○ Strategic collaboration could also be pursued. See [Catalysts For Collaboration](#) for ideas.

- **Develop a personal story**
  - ○ A personal story can move a politician to take action beyond the data and reports associated with a proposed policy.

Case Study: Biometric ID Cards in Tunisia

Outcome
A law was introduced for consideration in 2016 that would have updated national identity cards with an electronic chip storing, but not effectively protecting, private citizen data was withdrawn in 2018 after an advocacy campaign.

Situational Analysis

- Article 24 of the Tunisian Constitution protects the fundamental right to privacy for citizens and their personal information

Stakeholder Mapping
- Access Now, a key international organization working on digital rights, has an office in Tunisia with civil society contacts both domestically and internationally
- Access Now and a coalition of Tunisian human rights organizations started working together in 2016, with two years of build up before the final decision was made
- A key government ally was Chawki Gaddes, the head of Tunisia's National Data Protection Authority (INPDP), who advocated for greater privacy protections in the law in front of the Commission on Rights and Liberties

Tactics
- Unique [video](#) explaining the dangers of the biometric card shared by coalition members
- [Multi-organizational sign on letter](#) back in 2016 when the legislation was first introduced

HOW TO Push Back Against Internet Disruptions

> **Relevant Democratic Principles for an Open Internet**
>
> Principle 1   Freedom of Expression
> Principle 2   Freedom of Assembly and Association
> Principle 3   Accessibility
> Principle 5   Personal Safety & Security
> Principle 7   Network Equality

INTRODUCTION

Tactics used by anti-democratic actors to restrict access to the internet through shutdowns or blackouts leads to loss of access to critical online services, shuttering of independent and alternative media sources, and the removal of dissenting voices from political commentary or participation. Additionally, according to the Global Network Initiative (GNI), "the economic impact of shutdowns has shown that conservatively, high-connectivity countries can lose 1.9% of their daily gross domestic product (GDP) when a shutdown is mandated."[4]

An internet shutdown is defined as "an intentional disruption of internet or electronic communications rendering them inaccessible or effectively unusable, for a specific population or within a location, often to exert control over the flow of information."[5] This definition includes full network shutdowns, bandwidth throttling, and service-based blocking of two-way communication platforms, such as social media (for example, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Viber) or email.

EXAMPLE SCENARIO

Imagine you are a local entrepreneur and your government has issued an internet blackout in your province. As weeks go by and you still do not have internet, you are starting to lose contracts and cannot conduct important transactions, leading to loss in revenue. In addition, the regional business association that you are a part of is having a difficult time

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[4] https://globalnetworkinitiative.org/%E2%80%8Bnew-report-reveals-the-economic-costs-of-internet-shutdowns/

[5]
https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2018/06/Read-Me_-How-to-view-the-Access-Now-Internet-Shutdown-Tracker-Jun-2018.pdf

raising awareness about this issue due to the inability to access and communicate on social media. What might you do?

APPROACH

When conducting advocacy in response to internet disruptions, you are likely to require a strong base of evidence to use for your campaign. Building coalitions with national, regional, and global networks work to raise awareness about internet disruptions. Identify alternative methods for getting online when disruptions occur, and identify your allies in the business and government sectors who may be able to apply the pressure required to end the disruption.

POTENTIAL TACTICS

TACTIC 1: DOCUMENT DISRUPTIONS

- **Track and monitor network outages, slowdowns, and social media platform restrictions**
    - Monitor internet outages and network uptime using the most efficient tools that provide real-time feedback on whether or not there has been a network disruption in your area. Use tools such as: OONI, NetBlocks, and IODA (mentioned in 'resources' below).
    - Send out a press release to media, especially to local and international media organizations tracking internet shutdowns, expressing concern around the shutdowns in the short term. In the long term, publish a quarterly, or bi-yearly report on the state of these disruptions, as this longitudinal data will strengthen your case.
    - Educate your community on how to measure network performance - are sites blocked intentionally or are they simply having an internal issue? What is the speed of one website versus the speed of another?
    - Write news stories, articles, and blog posts with as much evidence as possible (for example, interviews with locals affected, pictures, and videos, plus the data collected on network performance) to publish on relevant online multimedia platforms.
    - Establish mechanisms that citizens can use for reporting disruptions. Set up a phone hotline or a social media group where users can easily report issues and instances of site blocking, as well as share their personal experiences. Use all possible channels to raise awareness about your platform.

TACTIC 2: BUILD MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COALITIONS TO CONDUCT ADVOCACY

- **Meet with government stakeholders** who you identified in your power mapping exercise and hold discussions on following due processes of transparency and human rights. Use economic and social arguments - not just the human rights angle - to pressure parties to keep the internet open. Include personal stories when possible, especially if the affected individual is a constituent of the government officials you are meeting with.

- **Refer to national plans and policies which are in line with your advocacy position** such as national broadband policies, social inclusion frameworks, universal access policies, and even education and environmental policies.

- **Shape multi-stakeholder advocacy approaches** to continuously call on governments to uphold online rights and desist from internet access censorship, which should be carried out often and not just when there is a shutdown.

- **Engage with development and financial investment agencies** who may consider conducting country-specific shutdown assessments before giving more grants and aid packages to your country if your government does not comply with digital rights laws (if they are in place).

- **Engage with private businesses and business associations** where possible who may consider adding shutdowns into their risk assessment reports and therefore be more likely to lend their voices and influence to your advocacy campaigns.

- **Organize and invite these organisations to round-table discussions**, meetings, or capacity-building sessions in order to crowdsource the effective strategies and approaches for pushing back against a shutdown. Frame these sessions in such a way so that positions can be easily shared via the media and so that you are building upon previous documentation. See an example of a joint public statement from CIPESA and the Internet Society of Uganda in response to the introduction of the social media and mobile money taxes.

- **Meet with lawyers and legal advocacy groups** to find ways of making a case in the courts against a shutdown or disruption with the aim of getting the government to remove internet restrictions.

TACTIC 3: BUILD RESILIENCE AGAINST DISRUPTIONS

- **Use circumvention tools, proxies, and by-passes when necessary in order to evade censorship and to stay connected.**
  - If you have the funds, consider using an interactive voice response (IVR) tool such as Viamo or Twilio if you need to get messages out to a wider audience. This allows you to use the mobile network to distribute pre-recorded

messages that citizens can access if the the internet is off. IVR tools often allow you to record messages in multiple languages if needed.
  ○ In many network disruption instances, the popularity of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) has grown, allowing people to connect to the internet via other access points. However, users should understand the pros and cons of using VPNs (particularly those that are free of charge). The EFF provides a guide to choosing the right VPN for your situation.

- **Conduct trainings on the use of circumvention tools.** Many of these tools are difficult for first-time users to navigate. Consider engaging with a member of the technical community to help deliver short trainings, or be available to provide technical support to those who wish to use these tools.

- **Translate circumvention guides into local languages** and distribute them within affected communities.

- **Consult with members of the technical community (both nationally and globally).**
  ○ Solicit recommendations for possible tools or infrastructure solutions that can help mitigate the impact of shutdowns.
  ○ Provide a venue for this tech community to interact with the digital rights advocates and activist, either through meetings, online groups, or a regular meetups.

TACTIC 4: DEVELOP AN OUTREACH STRATEGY

- **Engage in proactive campaigns for internet restoration**
  ○ Write an open letter urging government leaders to restore network connectivity. In your letter or document, explain in detail the rationale and the impact on the economy, emergency services and social welfare. Highlight the impact not only on the government, but also related sectors. For example: national banks rely heavily on the internet for financial transactions. However, in the case of an internet shutdown, financial services can come to a grinding halt, with a widespread detrimental impact - especially for government.

- **Create social media groups, platforms, or email lists** where your coalition can continuously discuss, share updates, and exchange information. But don't reinvent the wheel if you don't have to: use the existing networks of your coalition members, with their approval. Remember to share updates with your media contacts too.

- **Create awareness campaigns and provide timely facts on the socio-economic impact of a government-ordered internet shutdown**. Use social media and

mobile apps to drive your campaign messages to wider audiences. Create a visual campaign kit which can amplify the message and appeal to different demographics, as exemplified by AcessNow's visual [#KeepItOn Campaign kit](#).

ADDITIONAL TOOLS & RESOURCES

- **Detecting and Tracking Disruptions**
  - [Open Observatory of Network Interference (OONI)](#): A free software, global observation network for detecting censorship, surveillance, and traffic manipulation on the internet (ooni.torproject.org)
  - [Netblocks](#)
  - [Internet Outage Detection and Analysis (IODA)](#): An operational prototype system that monitors the internet in near-real time, developed by Center for Applied Internet Data Analysis (CAIDA)

- **Shutdown resources**
  - [AccessNow's #KeepItOn Framework](#)
  - AccessNow's [Digital Security Helpline](#)
  - [QZ internet shutdown guide](#)
  - Crowdmap shutdowns using [Ushahidi](#)

- **Partner and Research Support**
  - [Freedom Online Coalition](#): a partnership of 30 governments working to advance internet freedom with the aid of civil society organizations and the private sector, which could potentially provide resources or connections to individuals in your power map, or in assisting you in getting your message out to broader audiences.

- **Shutdown Cost Calculators**
  - [Framework for calculating the Economic Impact of Internet Shutdowns in Sub-Saharan Africa](#).
  - The [Cost of Shutdown Tool (COST)](#): NetBlocks' data-driven online tool that enables users to quickly and easily estimate the cost of internet disruptions in real-time.

HOW TO Build Digital Resilience of Marginalized Communities

> **Relevant Democratic Principles for an Open Internet**
>
> Principle 1   Freedom of Expression
> Principle 2   Freedom of Assembly and Association
> Principle 3   Accessibility
> Principle 5   Personal Safety & Security
> Principle 6   Inclusion

INTRODUCTION

Marginalized and vulnerable communities often include those who are socially excluded for reasons such as ethnicity, race, sex, physical or mental disabilities, economic status, sexual orientation, religious affinity, etc. In many cases, members of these communities are subject to violence because they are not recognized by the state or societies, and do not benefit from specific protections. Their voices are a reminder of inequality and justice. The online world can be a real opportunity for marginalized communities to exercise their rights and must be protected.

However, in the online world, there is still a general lack of understanding and knowledge of vulnerable communities in relation to how their rights are being hindered and how to ensure corresponding protections. Addressing this lack of understanding is vital to mitigating attacks against marginalized populations. Building digital resilience is made possible through persistent awareness raising of existing inequalities and risks, and then pursuing the potential paths for organization and resistance.

EXAMPLE SCENARIO

A first-time female candidate for parliament frequently uses social media for political participation and dissemination of information. Her online presence is particularly important as she uses her website and different social media channels and her primary methods for engaging potential voters. The race is very close. Just days before the general election, someone hacks her account and posts inappropriate content that threatens to

damage her reputation. How can she protect her voice online and ensure she is prepared if such a scenario happens again?

APPROACH

Addressing attacks against marginalized communities necessitates working for groups that are constantly facing threats in the digital sphere due to their culture, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, identity or profession. When undertaking this work, it is important to determine if your audience is a target of online smear/disinformation campaigns? Do they face the threats of their device/s being forcefully confiscated? Have they been victims of online censorship? Do they face challenges while interacting with technology because of their disabilities? This section touches upon some of the activities that you can do with any marginalized group in your community.

POTENTIAL TACTICS

TACTIC 1: IMPROVE DIGITAL SECURITY SKILLS OF VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

- **Organize digital security training sessions for community leaders**. Make sure to understand local context, and what digital risk strategy is appropriate for target community. Reach out to local hacker communities or international organizations that deliver trainings, like the Electronic Frontier Foundation or Access Now. Beyond digital skills, consider integration of physical self-defense strategies and psychosocial support mechanisms by specialists to provide a more comprehensive and holistic training. Tactical Tech has an excellent guide on holistic security for well-being, as well as a holistic, feminist digital security training guide.
  - Organize the sessions for a small group (up to 10-12 people). Sessions for a small group not only allow each participant to feel a sense of belonging and empathy with others, but also to learn from best practices of their peers.
  - Before the session, conduct an assessment on what devices the participants use, the types of data they access and store, and their skills level.
  - In these trainings, make sure that the language is understood by the trainees. If you are seeking a professional trainer, make sure they are tolerant of all these minorities and will not speak an "elite" language.
  - Look out for digital security tools that have been translated into local languages. The Localisation Lab is a great resource for this.

- **Develop individual risk assessments and mitigation plans.** This is suited towards individuals who are not comfortable talking about their threats in front of the larger audience, or their needs are such that they are more likely to benefit from the one-on-one attention of the experts.

TACTIC 2: GATHER EVIDENCE

- **Document online abuse.** Be sure to record instances of abuse you see across different platforms. This type of evidence may be important if you decide to take legal action. Glitch has developed a template to guide you in the collection of this information.

- **Build an app or online platform** that allows groups to report acts of intimidation or violence directed at them. This could also be an online form embedded on your organizations website or social media page.
    - Consider whether a smartphone app or technology tool is appropriate for the community that you work with. Many people do not have access to the internet.
    - Research existing apps/technology that may be appropriate, i.e. no need to reinvent the wheel.
    - If you build an app, consult with the your intended users' community through the entire process
    - Make sure to explain how you will keep sensitive personal data safe, and protect identities as needed. This is very important when working with marginalized communities, as they may not want to participate unless you can assure them that their data will be safe.

- **Disseminate findings** on the threats faced by these groups in online communities and platforms among the wider community, including media, local, national and regional civil society, academics, technology groups, and government.
    - Start **monitoring news websites**. One tool you can use for categorizing, organizing, and saving stories is Zotero, a free, open source program that also allows you to save snapshots of webpages in case they are later deleted.
    - Contact experts in the field and hold interviews with them

- **Monitor the websites and social media accounts of marginalized groups.** It's easier to notice when Facebook or WhatsApp sites go down, but often it goes unnoticed when sites run by or about minority groups (e.g. LGBTQ, religious, ethnic groups) are blocked. Find the leaders of the technical community and work with the group to adopt standards/measures to make the internet easily accessible to marginalized groups.

TACTIC 3: BUILD A DIGITAL RESILIENCE COMMUNITY

- **Work with the technical community** to push the government to undertake policy measures that would make the internet more inclusive for marginalized groups.

- Conversely, **work with the government** to encourage the technical community to make their platforms more accessible for all users.
- **Conduct focus group discussions, key informant interviews or surveys to share information and best practices** - especially as new threats emerge.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS & RESOURCES

- **Training Materials**
  - The Engine Room provides a set of instructions, considerations, and tools for organizational security, as well as a short guide for leading training sessions.
  - Staying Safe Online and Using Social Media (Advocacy Assembly)
  - Cyber Harassment: Concepts and Prevention (Advocacy Assembly)

- **General Resources**
  - Cybersecurity for Journalists and News Media (We Live Security)
  - Security in a Box (Tactical Tech and Front Line Defenders)
  - Cyborgfeminist Security Toolkit (TEDIC)
  - Surveillance Self-Defense (EFF)
  - Security Planner (Citizen Lab)

HOW TO Build Digital Rights Literacy

INTRODUCTION

Digital rights literacy is vital for a citizen to effectively participate in discussions and debates for policy development and policy change, understand how human rights apply online, and be aware when they are violated.

SCENARIO

Imagine that you work for a civil society organization in a rural community where access to internet has been realized only in the last few months. As more households come online, the community is abuzz with conversations on who should be using the internet and what they should be using it for. Many community members do not realize what happens to the information they share online and who can see it. How do you help educate the community about what they should be looking for?

APPROACH

Building digital rights literacy in a community requires a multi-pronged and ongoing approach. It involves more than just learning computer skills and how to navigate the online space, but also to recognize when the human rights standards in place offline are not being equally applied online. Inability to recognize violations of these rights can lead to governments putting restrictions on the online space with little to no resistance - simply because citizens aren't aware of what is being done.

POTENTIAL TACTICS

TACTIC 1: CONDUCT TRAININGS & AWARENESS RAISING

- **Train school or university teachers**

- By building the capacity of those who already work with youth (often digital natives), you are improving the chances of reaching users as they begin to participate in online communities. Capacity-building for community leaders and teachers also helps amplify your long-term advocacy efforts, as you would have a larger network of advocates and trainers.

- **Hold meet-ups with your target audience or community**
  - This could involve a lecture on digital rights and an open forum where the audience can ask questions and/or share their ideas on how digital rights are or are not being applied in the online space.
  - Consider non-traditional venues, such as holding tea or coffee events with members of your community.

- **Build an online course or learning platform**
  - For the awareness effort to scale up, it's good to optimize the use of digital technology. Online courses are helpful for your audience to review the content you shared with them, and they also allow participants to share courses with their peers and to spread the word. Putting your training course or informational material online will also save you some resources like venue, travel costs, and the like. You can record the face-to-face trainings you have conducted and include it on the online platform.
  - Consider making the course multilingual, especially if you are working in a location with multiple language groups.

TACTIC 2: KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- **Create accessible and understandable content** that takes into account your target audience. Consider different forms of content like videos, podcasts, images, art, audio or text.

- **Create a method for continuous engagement**, such as a Facebook, Whatsapp, email group, etc. This will enable participants to continue to discuss, report and exchange relevant information on digital rights issues.

- **Post relevant and engaging content on digital rights on your online community** - optimize your social media profile by posting information relevant for the target audience on a regular basis. This could increase your visibility and engagement, allowing your audience to share your content and spread the word.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS & RESOURCES

- **Training Materials:**
  - [Multimedia training kit on human rights and the internet](#).
  - The Democratic Principles for an Open Internet ([document](#)) ([videos](#))
  - International Frameworks and Conventions on human rights in the digital space
    - [African Declaration on Internet Rights and Freedoms](#)
  - [Shaping the Internet - History and Futures](#) (Internet Society) examines what has led to the current state of the internet, and where that might lead.

- **Training Platforms:**
  - [Open edX](#) offers the option to customize their online learning platform either through a service provider, or through a self-service deployment (requires more technical knowledge and resources)

ANNEX 1: Sample Situational Analysis Checklist

Note: the following questions are intended to provide a starting point for conducting a situational analysis, which can help guide how you direct your resources for your advocacy effort. Not all questions will be applicable for every situation, nor will every relevant question for each type of initiative be included below. Be sure to conduct a power and stakeholder analysis to help guide the questions you need to answer for your situational analysis.

1. **Country Context**
   a. How open or closed is the internet in your local context? Is it partially open? Is it closed? *(see Freedom House's [Freedom on the Net](#) reports)*
   b. Are there any warning signs that the internet in your country is closing? *(see the [Democratic Principles for an Open Internet](#) for a guide to warning signs)*

2. **Accessibility**
   a. How many people in your country have access to the internet? How does this compare to similar sized countries?
   b. Which groups (e.g. minority groups, rural communities, students) have access to the internet? Which do not? Why?

3. **Affordability**
   a. How affordable is the internet? Does the cost of the internet prevent certain groups from gaining access to the internet? Is there a price difference between mobile internet or computer/landline based internet? *(see the [Alliance for Affordable Internet's 2018 report](#))*
   b. Does the affordability of the internet vary by groups or individuals?

4. **Freedom of Expression**
   a. Is freedom of expression and access to information online being upheld? *(see the [Democratic Principles for an Open Internet](#))*
   b. How many journalists or civil society members have been attacked, arrested, or killed as a response to what they posted online? *(see the [Committee to Protect Journalists](#) or [Reporters without Borders barometer](#) for more details)*
   c. Do the telecommunications companies in your country implement policies that infringe upon freedom of expression and privacy? (*see the [Ranking Digital Rights Corporate Accountability Index](#), which ranks the world's largest internet, mobile, and telecommunications companies based on that criteria*)

5. **Availability**
   a. How many internet shutdowns or network disruptions has the country had? What about specific cities or regions of the country?
   b. Are specific websites blocked within the country?

c. Are specific groups targeted with internet disruptions/shutdowns? If yes, who and why?

6. **Legal Frameworks**
   a. What are the current national legal frameworks in place that govern the internet?
      i. Current policies, regulations, or potential bills in place, or lack thereof?
   b. What are the current International/regional frameworks in place that support digital rights that you can draw upon? *(ex: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR), etc.)*
   c. What treaties have been ratified by your country in relation to digital rights, human rights conventions, and international or regional agreements and/or affiliations

Annex 2: Stakeholder Map Template

Group (Allies, Neutral, or Opponents)	Stakeholder (Name & Location)	Interest in the issue	Resources	Capacity to mobilize resources	Position on the issue