



Stories of transformation:
Experiences from the Digital Action Lab 2024

DIGITAL ACTION LAB
MAGAZINE 2024 – 2025



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WELCOME NOTE

From the Digital Action Lab Team

Welcome to the first edition of the *Digital Action Lab Magazine* — a space to celebrate the creativity, courage, and innovation of civil society actors advancing inclusive democracy through digital tools.

The Digital Action Lab was launched in 2024, under the **Digital Democracy Initiative** (DDI), to support organisations working in restricted civic spaces, providing them with the skills, resources, and confidence to strengthen their advocacy and organising. Over nine months, our inaugural cohort — eight organisations from across the Global South — designed and implemented pilot projects that explore digital solutions to local challenges.

This magazine captures their journeys: the tools they tested, the lessons they learned, and the impact they created. More than a record, it's a resource — full of ideas, strategies, and stories that show how digital innovation can fuel grassroots change.

We hope you find inspiration and insight in these pages, and that their work encourages new collaborations and possibilities.

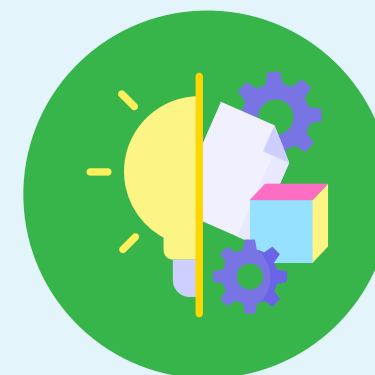
With gratitude,
The Digital Action Lab Team

ABOUT THE DIGITAL ACTION LAB

The Digital Action Lab (DAL) is a programme under the Digital Democracy Initiative (DDI). It was created to support civil society organisations in the Global South to develop, test, and scale digital solutions that strengthen advocacy, organising, and civic participation — particularly in contexts where civic space is restricted.

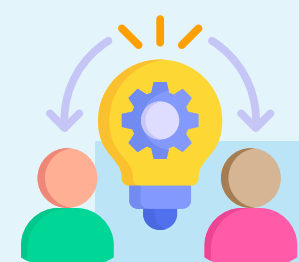
Through tailored support, peer learning, and direct funding, the DAL helps local actors experiment with technology, build resilience, and expand their impact in defending and advancing democracy.

How it works:



- 9-month programme
- Cohorts of up to 10 organisations
- Grants of \$10K–\$30K USD
- Mentorship, peer-learning, and coaching
- Online and in-person engagements

A Collaborative Ecosystem



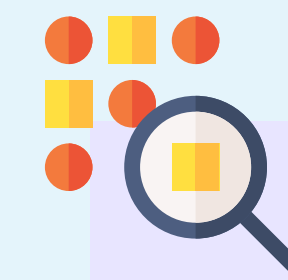
Knowledge Sharing

Partners document their innovations through infographics, videos, and case studies, and the DAL team complements this work by producing knowledge tools that amplify and share their solutions.



Co-Creation Workshop

Participants define joint priorities and project focus areas.



Digital Experimentation

Testing and applying digital tools in real-world projects.



Tailored Training

Capacity-building based on each organisation's needs.



Networking Opportunities

Access to global civil society networks and events.

“DAL is not just about tools —
it's about people, purpose, and power.”

STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION

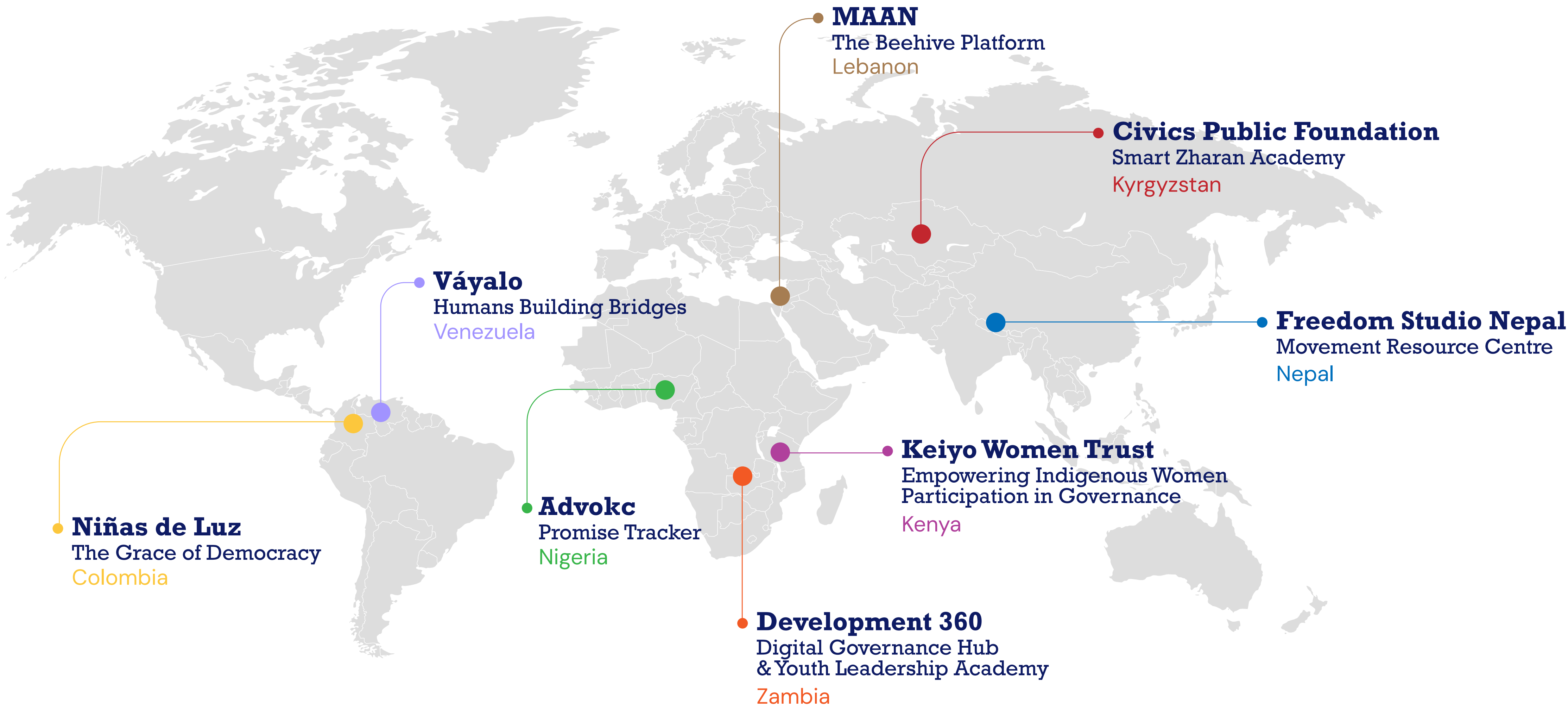
Eight organisations, one mission: to strengthen democracy through digital innovation.

From expanding civic participation to fostering transparency and inclusion, these changemakers are redefining activism in the digital age.

Explore their journeys, challenges, and impact.

2024 DAL PARTNERS

Meet the Partners 8 Organisations Driving Digital Democracy



Partner 1

FUNDACIÓN NIÑAS DE LUZ

Youth-led creative civic education in Bogotá

Project: The Grace of Democracy

 **Country:** Colombia

 **Thematic focus:** Political education, youth leadership, creative civic engagement



Fundación Niñas de Luz is a youth-led organisation based in Ciudad Bolívar, Bogotá. It empowers girls and adolescents through creative political education using theatre, storytelling, and digital tools.

“ We want girls to know so they can change and even lead their communities. ”

— Andrés Laguna

THE GRACE OF DEMOCRACY

The project aims to strengthen democratic participation among children and adolescents in Bogotá through creative educational methods that build leadership and civic skills among 70 core participants, while engaging over 1,000 additional students through theatre, digital media, and community partnerships.

Context:

Girls in rural Colombia face barriers to leadership and participation. Fundación Niñas de Luz integrates tech with emotional and civic education to help them grow with confidence.

Theatre of the Oppressed



- Created and adapted the participatory theatre activity La Gracia de la Democracia for use in five schools.
- Engaged students through games, role-play, and puppetry to explore voting, collective decision-making, and non-violent communication. Offered a safe and creative space for children to express their views and practice democratic participation.

Digital Media Campaign



- Produced short videos, interviews, and podcasts on youth participation, justice, and artistic expression.
- The campaign reached over 41,000 accounts and generated more than 111,000 views across social media platforms.

Audiovisual Projects



- Produced the short film Gotas Paralelas, addressing water inequality and social justice in Colombia.
- The film was selected as a finalist and named the official short film of the Smart Films Festival 2024.

Political Education Workshops



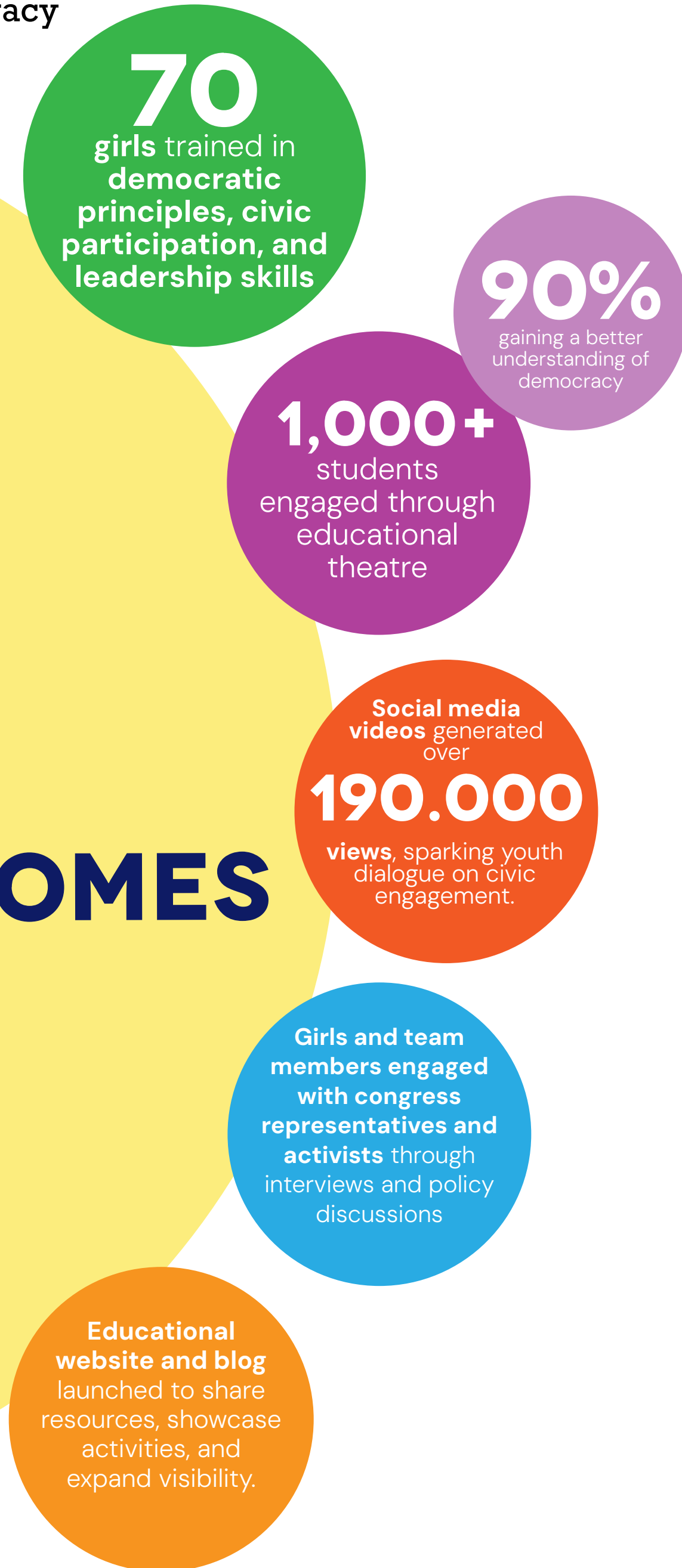
- Weekly hybrid Training sessions since July 2024 on the Colombian political system, citizen rights, and democratic participation.
- Surveys showed a 12–17% improvement in participants' understanding of key democratic concepts.

Inclusive Participation in High-Level Events



- Girls from the project took active roles in international forums, including the Global Ministerial Conference to End Violence Against Children.
- They also joined youth-led discussions around COP16, sharing their views on democracy, justice, and inclusive participation at the global level.

KEY OUTCOMES



IMPACT

What they achieved:

- Scaled civic education from a local programme to a citywide movement
- Gained visibility and credibility with policymakers and international networks
- Created a safe space for girls' civic participation

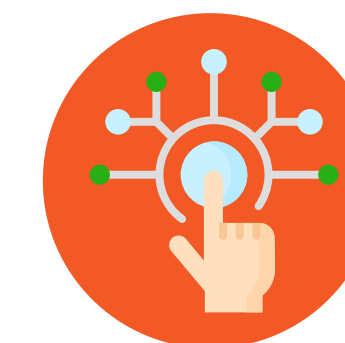
What's next:

- Expand theatre programme "La Gracia de la Democracia" across more schools
- Support Youth Council candidates
- Strengthen digital platforms

LESSONS LEARNED



Dialogue = power



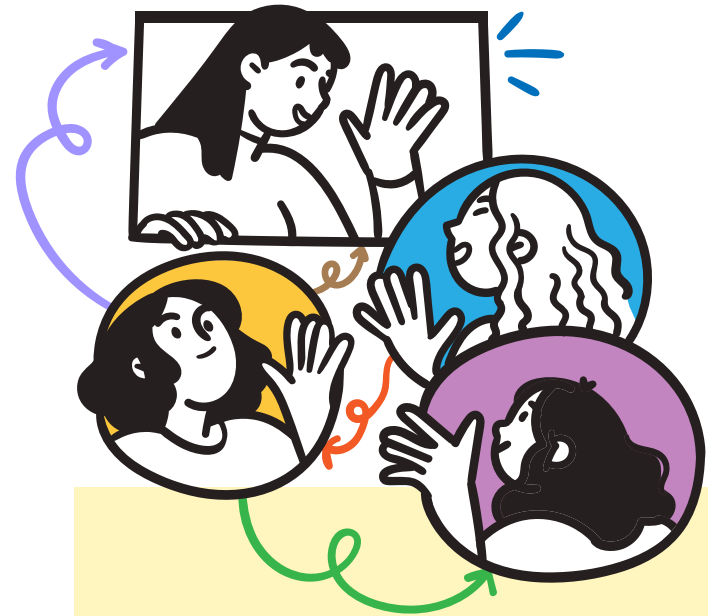
Digital tools = wider reach



Creativity fosters confidence



Clear language matters



STORY HIGHLIGHT

The Classroom and the Congress

A favourite among participants, the digital civics sessions encouraged girls to debate real policies and support their opinions with evidence. One interview recorded at *Rock al Parque* with activist-musician Doctor Krápula was viewed over 190,000 times, significantly increasing the foundation's visibility. As a result, they were invited to Colombia's Congress and to international conferences, where girls led discussions on democracy and violence prevention.

“When girls see themselves reflected in leaders, they begin to believe they can lead too.”

REFLECTIONS FROM DAL

The Digital Action Lab strengthened the foundation's **organisational systems, communication strategy, and digital visibility**. With new tools, improved workflows, and deeper international connections, the team feels better **equipped** to scale their impact and advocate for creative political education globally.



“DAL helped us believe that doing things differently is not only valid, but powerful”

— Andrés Laguna

Partner 2

FUNDACIÓN VÁYALO

Building Bridges for Peace in Venezuela

Project: Humans Building Bridges



Country: Venezuela



Thematic focus: Community resilience, civic engagement, digital participation



Fundación Váyalo is a youth-led, intergenerational organisation created in response to Venezuela's humanitarian crisis. It works to promote sustainable development, inclusive civic space, and peace by supporting communities affected by violence and trauma.

“ We don't come with promises.
We come with commitment ”

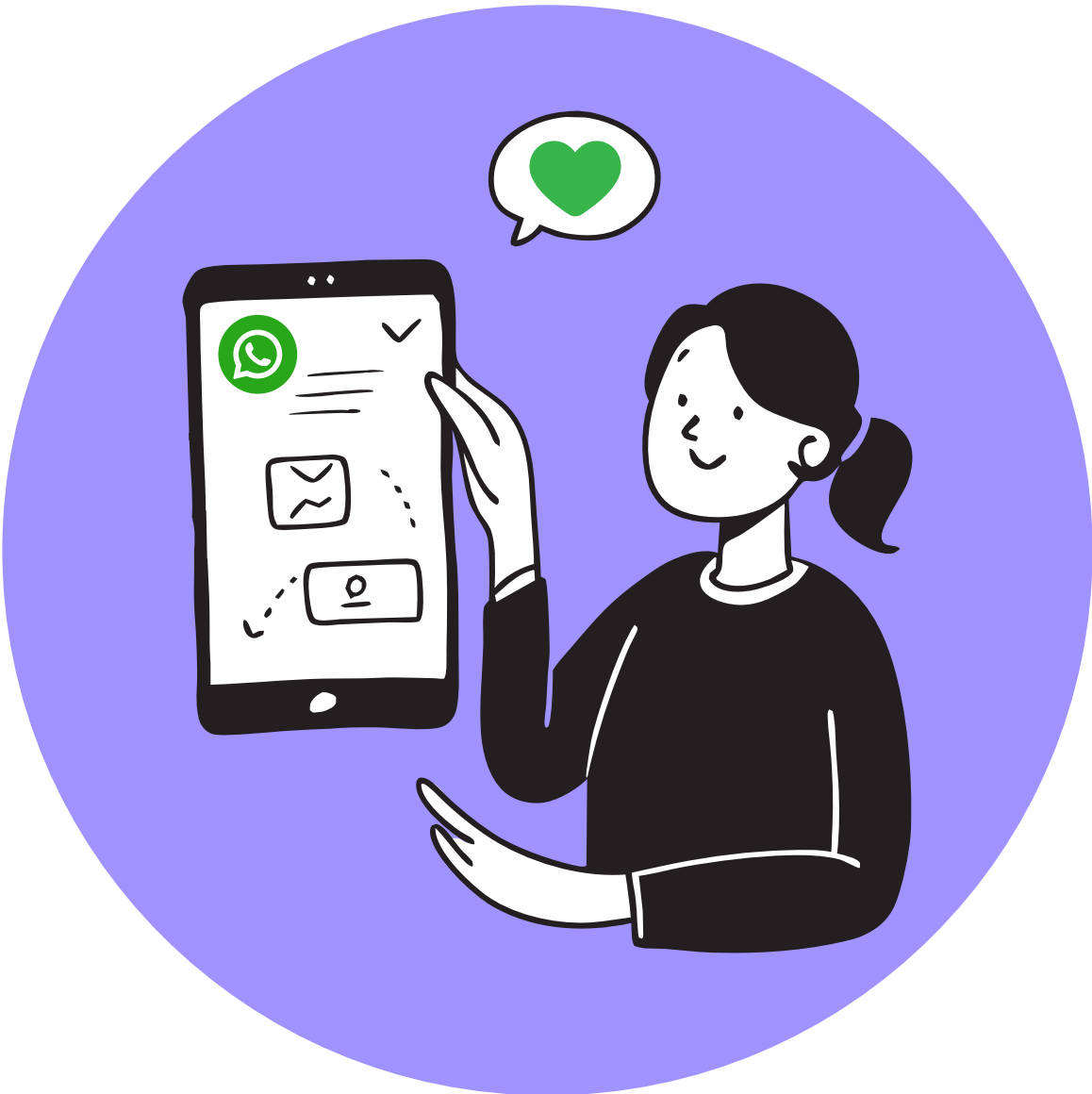
— Luis Alvarado

HUMANS BUILDING BRIDGES

Humans Building Bridges project works to rebuild trust between communities and decision-makers in Venezuela using simple digital tools and community dialogue. The team created Esperanza, a WhatsApp bot that collects information on violence, exclusion, and local needs through a 24-question survey, offering residents a safe way to express concerns. Through conversations with community leaders and international stakeholders, the project strengthened cooperation, improved social cohesion, and helped communities see technology as a tool for solutions, even as civic space in Venezuela continues to shrink.

Context:
In a repressive civic climate, Váyalo developed simple and secure digital strategies to engage excluded communities and reconnect them with civic life.

Esperanza (Hope) Bot



WhatsApp based tool



24-question survey on violence, exclusion, demographics



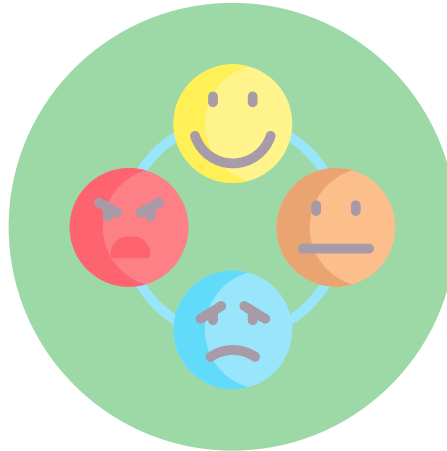
Geolocation feature



Local info library with AI



Designed for Low-connectivity regions



Emotion recognition

KEY OUTCOMES

20
community dialogues

240
participants

80%
reported increased trust

from 3 to
8
communities

in
6
regions

Stronger internal digital systems

IMPACT

What they achieved:

- Build support from community leaders early in the process
- Developed a replicable digital tool
- Changed mindsets around tech

What's next:

- Launch full *Esperanza* version with AI & public info
- Scale model to other regions/countries
- Allocate 5% of annual budget to digital growth

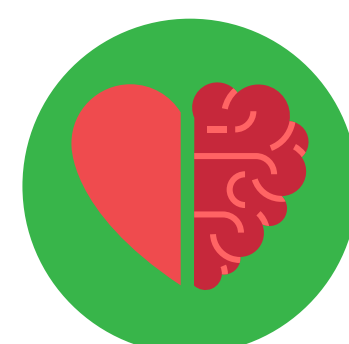
LESSONS LEARNED



Secure community leader buy-in early



Communicate clearly on data privacy



Include mental health/safety in budgets



Prioritise simplicity and accessibility



Co-creation, even virtual, builds stronger, more relevant digital tools



STORY HIGHLIGHT

Fermina

Fermina Monterol, 85, a lifelong community leader and granddaughter of her village's founders, was initially skeptical of the new bot developed by the foundation to help people engage in community issues. Now, she champions it as a powerful tool to advocate for fairer public budgeting and stronger community oversight.

“What we share is not just for them — it comes back to us as action.”

REFLECTIONS FROM DAL

Through the Digital Action Lab, Fundación Váyalo gained more than tools. They joined a global community of civil society leaders, improved their internal systems, and recognised technology as central to their strategic growth. The experience reaffirmed the need to pause, reflect, and adapt in an ever-changing civic landscape.



“DAL gave us the space to rise above the daily urgency and see the bigger picture”

— Luis Alvarado

Partner 3

ADVOKC

Tracking Promises, Empowering Citizens

Project: Promise Tracker

 **Country:** Nigeria

 **Thematic focus:** Government accountability, civic tech, youth-led advocacy



AdvoKC is a youth-led organisation in Nigeria using technology and entertainment to advance government transparency and civic participation.

“Technology is not just a tool,
it’s a responsibility”

— Habib Sheidu

PROMISE TRACKER

AdvoKC's Promise Tracker project strengthens political accountability in Nigeria by providing citizens with simple digital tools to monitor government commitments and advocate for transparency. The initiative focuses on refining two political promise-tracking platforms, developing proactive reminder systems for leaders, and building an online community of citizens engaged in governance monitoring. Through civic-tech tools, digital advocacy, and community training, the project empowers Nigerians to follow political promises, communicate with decision-makers, and participate more actively in democratic processes. Promise Tracker is helping transform how citizens access information, engage leaders, and hold public officials accountable.

Context:

Low fulfillment of political campaign promises in Nigeria has led to public distrust and voter apathy. AdvoKC created a real-time monitoring platform to keep officials accountable and citizens engaged, especially the youth.



Promise Tracker Platform

- www.promisetracker.ng
- Tracks 127 promises (national and state level)
- Interactive dashboards: **BAT-O-Meter** (President Tinubu), **Soludometer** (Governor Soludo)
- Real-time updates with status labels: Kept, In Progress, Broken, Stalled



Reminder & Advocacy System

- Automated alerts
 - Letters + social media follow-ups
- Example: Alagbole-Ayawoele Road repair*



Civic Network & Engagement

- 250+ trained youth & journalists
- Digital town halls
- Webinars and community tracking



Digital Storytelling & Coordination

- Infographics, short videos
- Hashtags: #FixIfoRoad, #FixOurHealth
- Tools: Zoho Suite, Trello

KEY OUTCOMES

127
promises tracked

Platform expanded to
16
states

Health budget increase:
4.81%
5.18%

Infrastructure projects started post-advocacy

Government began responding publicly

IMPACT

What they achieved:

- One of Nigeria's strongest civic tech tools
- Decentralised youth advocacy network
- Influence on government transparency

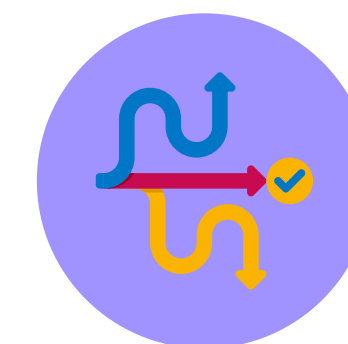
What's next:

- Expand to all 36 states
- Partner with CSOs & media
- Scale the platform internationally

LESSONS LEARNED



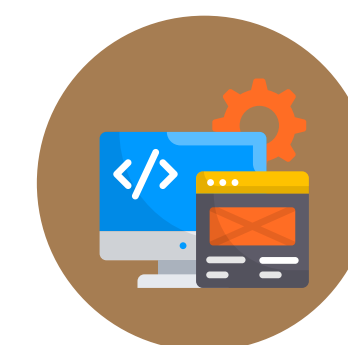
Stay agile, refine with feedback



Simplicity makes data powerful



Ethical, accessible tech matters



Sync with developers regularly



Art + advocacy boosts impact



STORY HIGHLIGHT

#FixIfRoads

After months of inaction on a promised road repair in Ogun State, AdvoKC launched a targeted campaign using Promise Tracker, letters, and social media. Two weeks later, construction began. The road is now complete, showing the power of coordinated digital advocacy.

“When data speaks, governments listen.”

REFLECTIONS FROM DAL

The DAL experience helped AdvoKC shift from manual processes to **strategic digital advocacy**. Coaching and peer learning enabled the team to **scale their impact** and **connect technical tools with real community needs**.



“DAL showed us that doing advocacy with purpose, tech and community is the way forward”

— Habib Sheidu

Partner 4

DEVELOPMENT 360

Digital Democracy for Zambia's Youth

Project: Digital Governance Hub & Youth Leadership Academy



Country: Zambia



Thematic focus: Youth participation, civic engagement, digital literacy



Development 360 is a dynamic civil society organisation, with five branches across four provinces, it works to advance social and economic justice by empowering marginalised groups to engage meaningfully in democratic processes.

“ Good is not enough. We need to
strive for excellence ”

— Christopher Lubasi

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE HUB & YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Strengthens youth participation in Zambia's democratic processes by building digital skills, leadership competencies, and pathways for meaningful civic engagement. The initiative supports young people preparing for ward development committee elections by offering structured leadership training, digital literacy sessions, mentorship, and practical learning pathways. A dedicated Digital Governance Hub was established as a safe space for youth to access digital tools, strengthen advocacy skills, and collaborate with civil society organisations and local authorities. Through multi-stakeholder engagement, community mobilization, and adaptive implementation, the project empowers young people to participate confidently in governance structures and contributes to a more inclusive and youth-driven democratic culture.

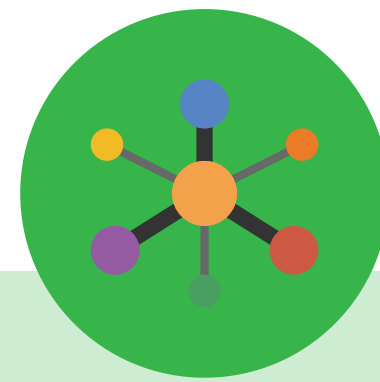
Context:

Youth in Zambia face economic, cultural, and infrastructural barriers to civic participation. Development 360 blended digital tools and inclusive organising to dismantle those barriers and create new opportunities for engagement.



Leadership Academy

- 450 youth trained (target: 300)
- Digital rights, entrepreneurship, civic skills
- Junior Rangers + Duke of Edinburgh Pathways



Digital Governance Hub

- Laptops, projectors, learning tent (100 participants per event)
- Hub hosts 66 youth weekly



Youth Mobilisation & Stakeholder Dialogue

- 4 youth development clusters Junior councillors and mayors
- WhatsApp groups + CSO partnerships (41 CSOs and local government)



Implementation Strategy

- Rapid expansion due to high demand
- Navigated political resistance through dialogue

KEY OUTCOMES

450
youth trained

145
completed full leadership modules

16
digital training sessions

Increased national visibility

New funding from ActionAid

Expanded digital infrastructure

IMPACT

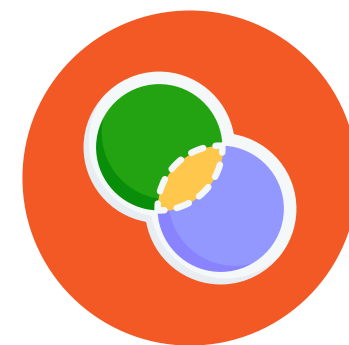
What they achieved:

- Zambia's first Digital Governance Hub
- National discourse on youth + transparency
- Scalable civic engagement model

Next Steps:

- Train 600 more youth (2025)
- Create a training website Expand to more districts
- + boost economic empowerment

LESSONS LEARNED



Combine digital and in-person engagement



Safe spaces + supportive policies empower youth



Trust and partnerships overcome resistance



Equipment + skills = lasting change



STORY HIGHLIGHT

From Resistance to Recognition

At the start, many elected officials feared the project would threaten their reputation. Development 360 addressed this by inviting councillors to private dialogues, building trust gradually. Today, the City Council collaborates closely, even assigning staff to support trainings and events.

“When young people see they are taken seriously, they step forward.”

REFLECTIONS FROM DAL

The Digital Action Lab was more than capacity building — it was a **community of learning**, emotional support, and inspiration. Development 360 credits the DAL experience with helping them secure new funding, strengthen internal systems, and create scalable strategies for digital civic engagement.



“DAL was not just about tools — it was about solidarity”

— Christopher Lubasi

Partner 5

KEIYO WOMEN TRUST

Civic education and cultural transformation for Indigenous women

Project: Empowering Indigenous
Women Participation in Governance



Country: Kenya



Thematic focus: Indigenous women's participation,
civic education, digital inclusion



Keiyo Women Trust (KWT) is an Indigenous women-led organisation based in Kerio Valley, Kenya. Since its founding, KWT has worked to advance the rights and agency of Indigenous women and girls through advocacy, capacity-building, and cultural transformation.

“When women see themselves reflected in
leadership, they realise they belong”

— Hellen Chebet

EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE

Strengthens the participation of Indigenous women in governance by building their civic knowledge, leadership skills, and confidence to engage in public decision-making. Through community bootcamps, mentorship networks, and culturally relevant civic education tools—including radio programs and the Jukumu Langu animated series—the project equips women with practical skills for voting, public participation, and digital engagement. A dedicated mentorship system and cluster-based committees support women as they enter governance spaces, while targeted mobilization and advocacy encourage communities to embrace women’s leadership. By combining digital tools with offline dialogues and culturally adapted learning, the project creates an enabling environment where Indigenous women can participate meaningfully in governance and pursue public office.

Context:

In Kerio Valley, civic participation among women was low due to cultural norms, limited information access, and lack of representation. KWT designed an approach combining media, mentorship, and community training to close these gaps.



Civic Education Bootcamps

- Trained 360 women on rights, governance, and advocacy
- Role plays and scenario-based learning



Jukumu Langu Radio Series

- Civic education episodes in local languages
- Over 1,000 rural listeners



Animated Storytelling

- Shared via WhatsApp and community screenings



Voice Messaging and SMS Campaigns

- Reached women without internet access



Mentorship Networks

- WhatsApp groups with mentors and local leaders

KEY OUTCOMES

360
women trained

1 participant became **first female Assistant Chief** in Metkei Ward

100%
participants now attend barazas (public forums)

Radio content spurred cross-gender dialogue

IMPACT

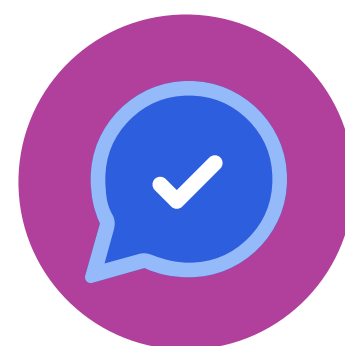
What they achieved:

- Cultural shift in women's leadership
- Sustainable civic participation model
- Replicable tools for Indigenous communities

What's next:

- Expand to new counties
- Create more local language media
- Support women running for office

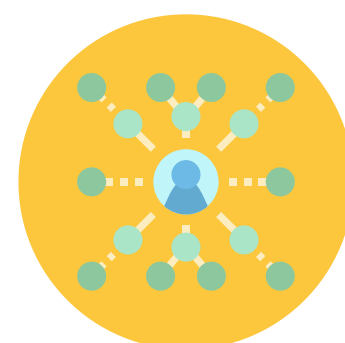
LESSONS LEARNED



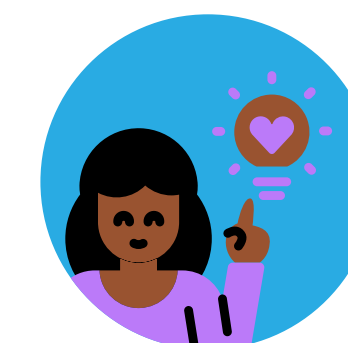
Local languages build trust and clarity



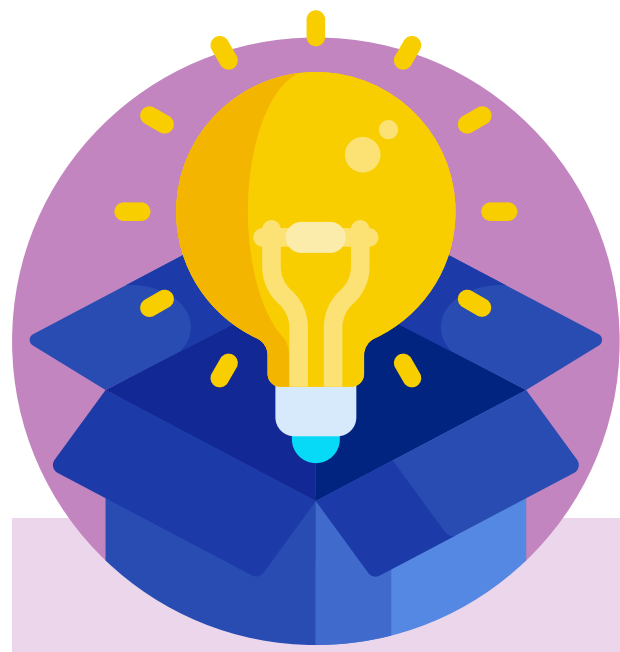
Male allyship is key



Mixed media expands access



Peer mentorship keeps engagement alive



STORY HIGHLIGHT

From Listener to Leader

After hearing Jukumu Langu, a young woman joined civic education sessions and later applied for local leadership. Her story inspired dozens more to step forward.

“Knowledge opens doors we didn’t know existed.”

REFLECTIONS FROM DAL

Through the Digital Action Lab, KWT refined its **media strategy**, gained **peer inspiration**, and **secured new tools to amplify women’s voices**.



“DAL reminded us that digital inclusion is a right, not a privilege”

— Hellen Chebet

Partner 6

MAAN

Secure Spaces for Activism in Lebanon

Project: The Beehive Platform

 **Country:** Lebanon

 **Thematic focus:** Civic education, digital security, policy advocacy



MAAN (The Socio-Economic Justice Initiative) is a collective of activists and researchers committed to building movements for policy change. They operate at the intersection of civic education, human rights, and digital security to strengthen democratic spaces in Lebanon.

“We promised an MVP. We delivered a full-stack app—despite war, relocation, and uncertainty”

— Nicole Bou Khalil

THE BEEHIVE: A Secure Digital Platform for Activists

Strengthens digital security and democratic participation for activists in Lebanon by creating a secure communication platform designed for high-risk environments. The initiative provides activists — especially those from marginalized communities — with a safe, encrypted space to organize, exchange information, and engage in social movements without fear of surveillance or harassment. Built with strong privacy features such as invitation-only access, two-factor authentication, disappearing messages, and customizable deletion settings, the platform protects anonymity while enabling meaningful civic engagement. By combining secure technology with a focus on inclusion and empowerment, the project helps activists participate more safely in advocacy, community organizing, and socio-economic justice efforts within a shrinking civic space.

Context:
Following years of shrinking civic space and rising digital threats, MAAN responded to activists' urgent need for privacy and security. The Beehive app was created amid political instability, war, and repression to protect and empower civil society actors.

Core Features of The Beehive App



End-to-end encryption



Icon disguise options



Emergency self-deletion



Secure group messaging

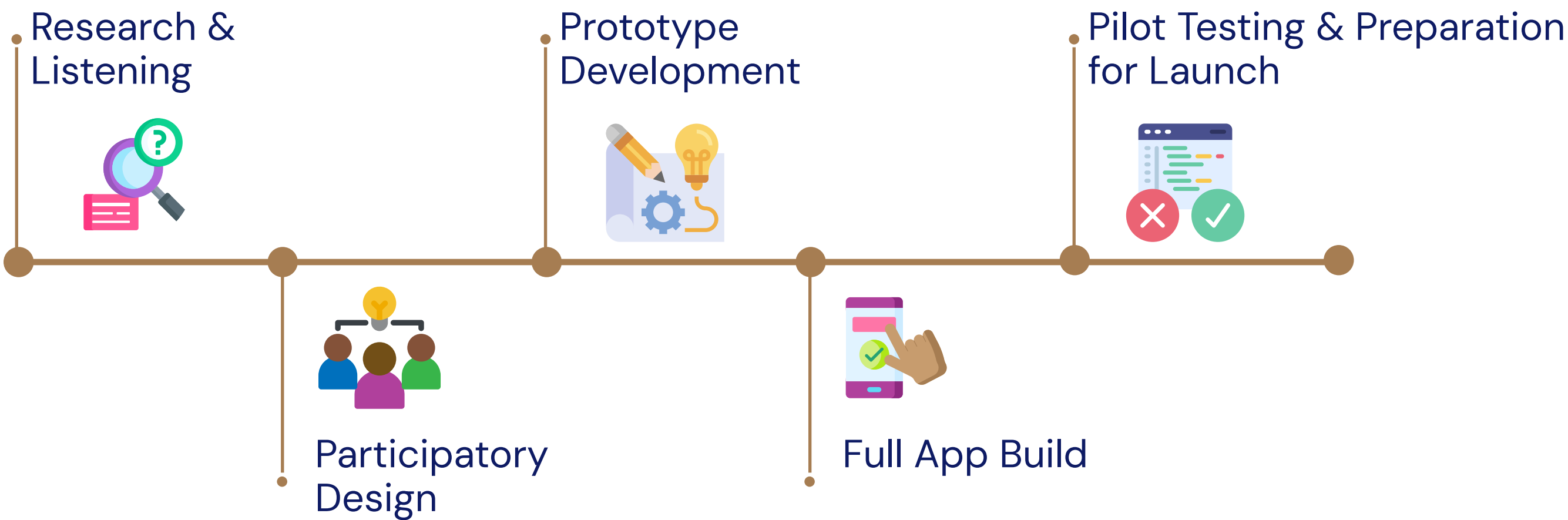


No data retention



Anonymous reporting

The Beehive Development Journey



KEY OUTCOMES

The Beehive
1 secure platform developed

50
surveys conducted with activists

Full-stack app ready for iOS and Android

Activists contributed to feature design and testing

IMPACT

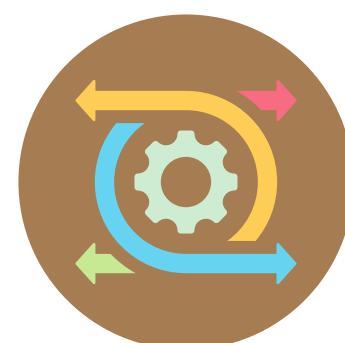
What they achieved:

- Tool for safe protest coordination and strategy
- Agile methodology applied in unstable contexts
- Strengthened internal digital strategy and workflows

What's next:

- User testing and regional launch in MENA
- Fundraising for app maintenance
- Ongoing digital capacity building

LESSONS LEARNED



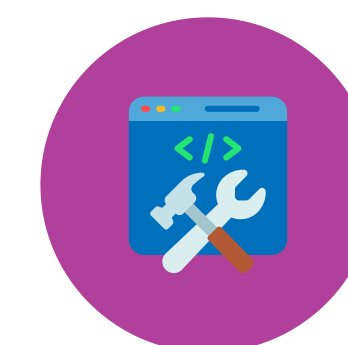
Flexibility is vital in conflict zones



App store verification requires transparency



Clear UX-Dev coordination prevents rework



Continuous support ensures sustainability



STORY HIGHLIGHT

Building Hope in a War Zone

Despite threats of bombings and displacement, MAAN's team and developers continued building The Beehive. The app became a symbol of resilience and hope—activists creating digital safe spaces in the middle of conflict.

“We kept going—because having a digital space to connect, even under threat, is a form of resistance.”

REFLECTIONS FROM DAL

The Digital Action Lab strengthened MAAN's digital **infrastructure** and **strategic planning**. It offered exposure to global civic tech practices and connected them to a **network** of organizations facing similar struggles.



“We realized we're not alone—and we all share a commitment to protecting civic space”

— Nicole Bou Khalil

Partner 7

CIVICS PUBLIC FOUNDATION

Smart Zharan Academy: Human Rights in Kyrgyz Language

Project: Smart Zharan Academy

 **Country:** Kyrgystan

 **Thematic focus:** Human rights education, information access, civic participation



Civics Public Foundation has worked for over 20 years to expand civic space in Kyrgyzstan. They've developed 50+ projects promoting civic education, human rights, and community mobilisation.

“ We want more people to know
their rights. That's our main goal ”

— Aidem Baketaeva

SMART ZHARAN ACADEMY

Tackles the lack of accessible human rights and democracy education for Kyrgyz-speaking communities, who often rely on biased state media and have limited resources in their own language. To address this gap, the initiative is creating an accessible online platform that offers structured courses on civil rights, human rights, and democratic values in Kyrgyz. By providing accurate information in a culturally and linguistically relevant format, the project aims to increase public awareness, strengthen civic knowledge, and promote greater participation in democratic processes across Kyrgyzstan.

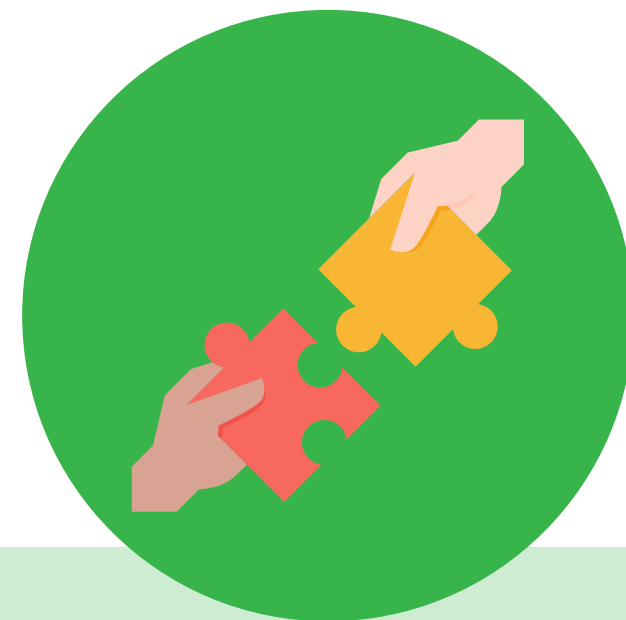
Context:

Most human rights materials in Kyrgyzstan are available only in Russian or English, leaving Kyrgyz-only speakers behind. This language barrier limits their access to essential civic and legal knowledge.



Content Co-creation

Four core modules on democracy, human rights, civil rights, and women's rights.



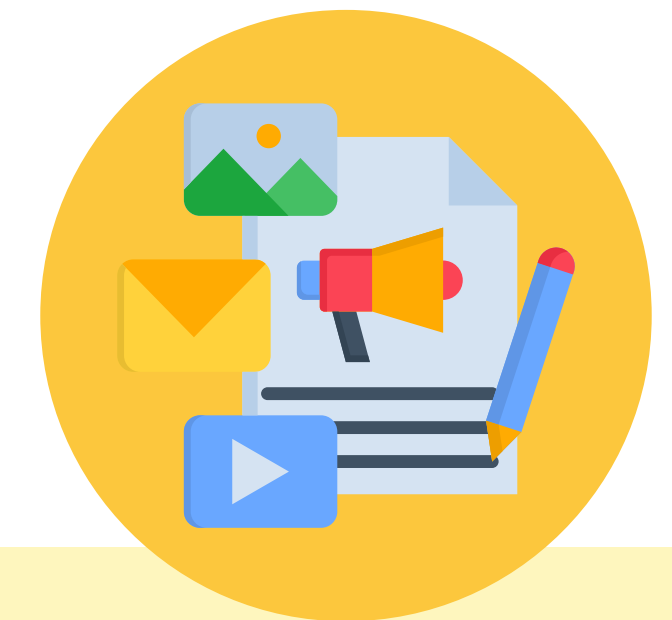
Strategic Partnerships

Collaboration with Klub Media, a trusted national education platform.



Video Production

Modules filmed in Kyrgyz with engaging, accessible formats.



Educational Integration

Pilot rollout through university partnerships and course agreements.

KEY OUTCOMES

Full video course recorded in Kyrgyz

Partnerships with Klub Media and university lecturers

Potential reach: **500+** individuals

Integration of AI and digital tools in internal workflows

IMPACT

What they achieved:

- First free Kyrgyz-language human rights course
- Strengthened collaboration with independent media
- Digital transformation within the organisation

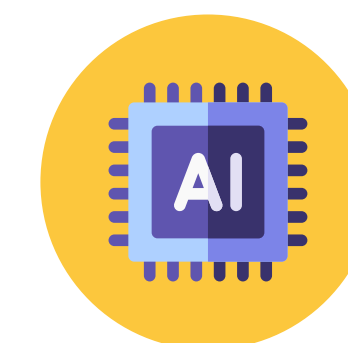
What's next:

- Full-scale course launch
- Outreach strategy to rural universities and communities
- Expanding digital education access in new regions

LESSONS LEARNED



Local languages empower civic access



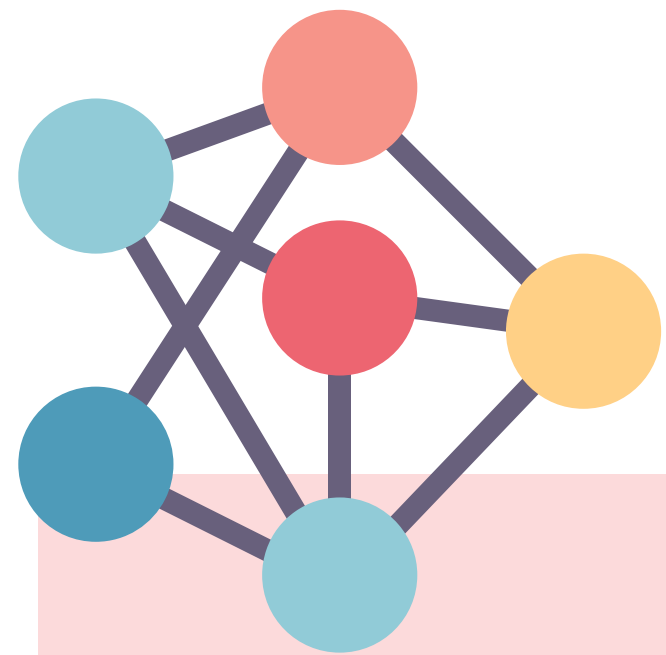
AI improves content and efficiency



Media partnerships enhance sustainability



Mental wellbeing matters during complex times



STORY HIGHLIGHT

From Visibility to Scale

With DAL's support, Aidem broadened the course's scope beyond communications, forging strategic partnerships with universities—and planning future outreach to correctional institutions.

“When people understand their rights, they start to claim them”

REFLECTIONS FROM DAL

The Digital Action Lab offered not just tools but **solidarity**. Peer exchanges inspired new outreach strategies, and the team learned how to build resilience in uncertain times.



“DAL was so much deeper than I expected — it reminded us we are not alone”
— Aidem Baketaeva

Partner 8

FREEDOM STUDIO NEPAL

Mapping movements, amplifying voices

Project: Movement Resource Centre



Country: Nepal



Thematic focus: Civic activism, creative resistance,
digital mobilisation



Freedom Studio Nepal is an activist collective supporting grassroots and marginalised communities through digital innovation, storytelling, and strategic activism. Their work spans environmental justice, queer rights, and civic education.

“We need to document and connect our struggles — only then can we build power”

— Nishchhal Kharal

MOVEMENT RESOURCE CENTRE

strengthens grassroots activism in Nepal by creating an interactive digital platform that maps social movements and provides activists with accessible learning resources. Designed to counter media bias and the invisibility of rural struggles, the platform documents 15 diverse social movements and offers an online learning corner to support strategic, creative, and nonviolent organizing. Alongside the digital tool, the project builds the skills of grassroots activists through activism workshops, field visits, and community dialogues, helping them shift from reactive protest to long-term, rights-based advocacy. By fostering cross-movement collaboration and amplifying marginalized voices, the initiative empowers activists to mobilize more effectively and connect their struggles under a shared, strategic vision for social justice.

Context:

Grassroots movements in Nepal often go undocumented and unsupported. Freedom Studio designed a digital hub to spotlight these movements and build bridges among diverse causes.



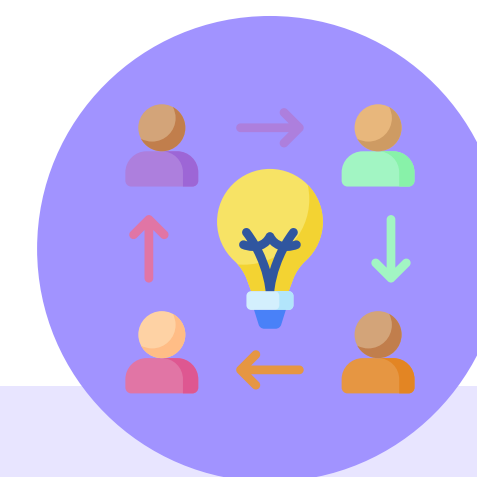
Interactive Map

- Features 15+ social movements
- Filters by issue, region, and tactics



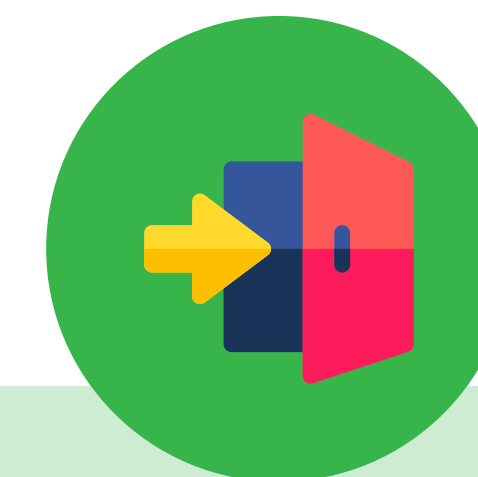
Learning Corner

- Video courses on nonviolent strategies
- Resources for new activists



Co-design Process

- Built with input from movement leaders
- Iterative testing and localisation



Translation and Accessibility

- Materials in local languages
- Emphasis on visual-first communication

KEY OUTCOMES

16+
movements documented and mapped

250+
activists trained through workshops and exchanges

22 day
nonviolent protest amplified by Freedom Studio tools

Government initiated policy response on environmental issues

IMPACT

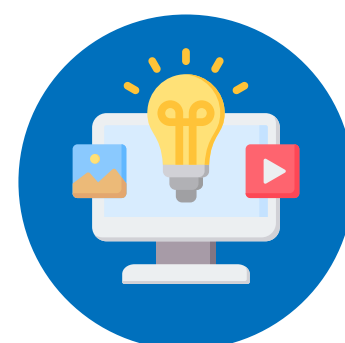
What they achieved:

- Created Nepal's first digital archive of civic movements
- Fostered cross-movement solidarity
- Made civic learning accessible to rural and marginalised communities

What's next:

- Expand the map to include movements from South Asia
- Scale the learning hub
- Foster ongoing collaboration between young activists

LESSONS LEARNED



Creative media increases reach



Storytelling is a form of power



Inclusion requires localisation



Protests need strategy and follow-up



STORY HIGHLIGHT

A March for the Hills

Freedom Studio supported the 22-day Chure Hills protest, a youth-led environmental march that mobilised attention across Nepal. The visibility tools and documentation helped pressure government officials to respond.

“We don’t just create art. We move people”

REFLECTIONS FROM DAL

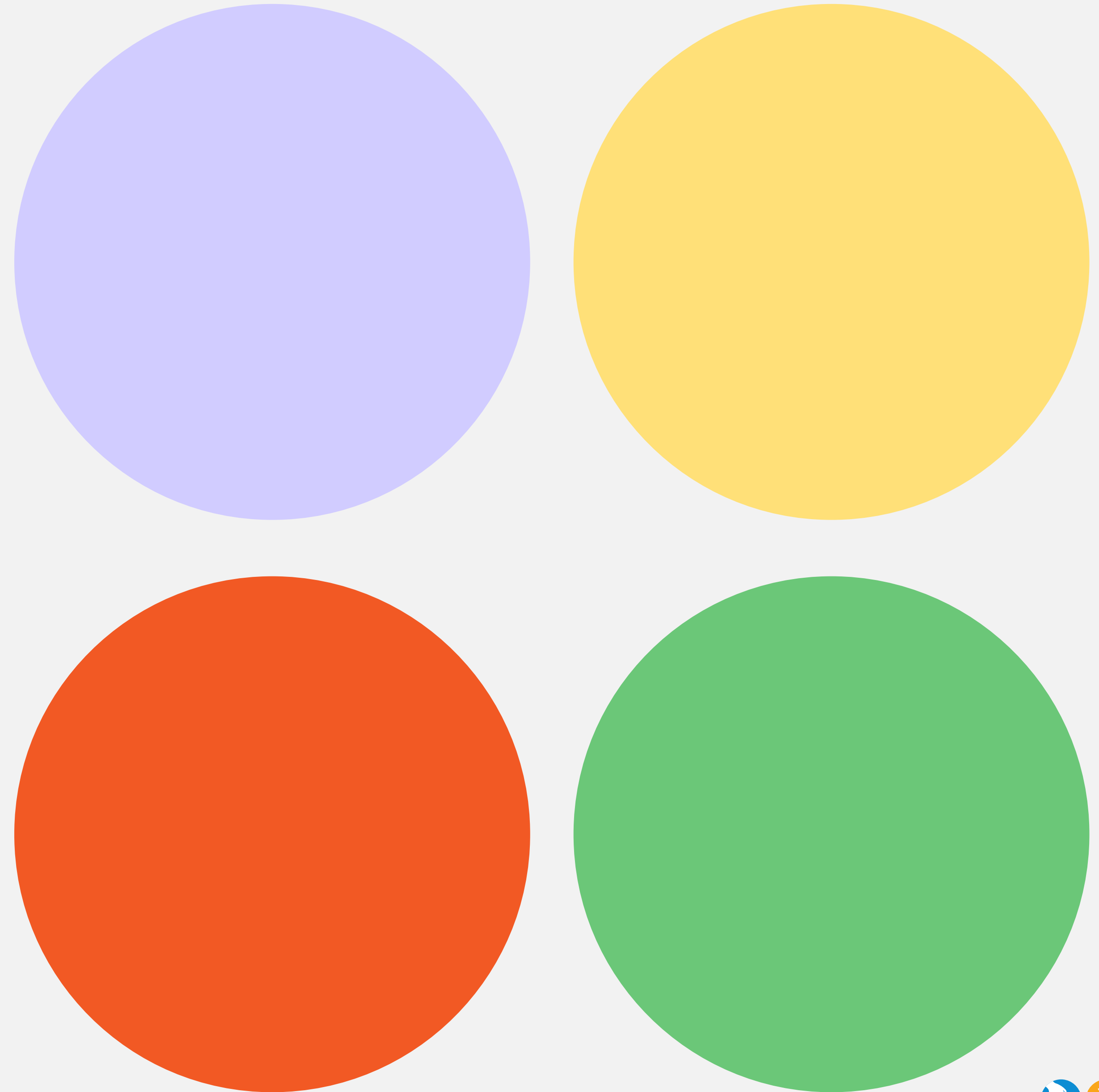
Through DAL, the team explored institutional strategy, digital ecosystems, and cross-border collaboration. The biggest takeaway was that **digital tools can root activism in care, creativity, and community.**



“DAL helped us believe that another future is possible — and we’re building it together”
— Nishchal Kharal

LOOKING AHEAD: THE FUTURE OF DAL

The Digital Action Lab is a growing ecosystem of courageous, creative, and committed civil society actors who are reimagining civic space through digital tools and inclusive strategies.

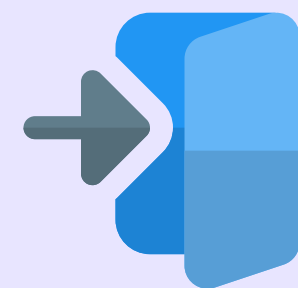


WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

From Colombia to Nepal, this cohort has shown us that:



Local knowledge
drives global
impact



Digital inclusion
starts with
accessibility



Creativity is a
powerful tool for
advocacy



Collaboration
makes movements
stronger

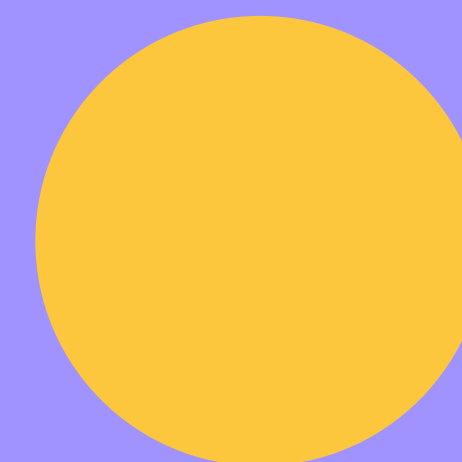
WHAT COMES NEXT

DAL will welcome new cohorts in the coming years, continuing to support organisations through:

- Open calls for applications and nominations
- Increased access to mentorship and funding
- Expanded knowledge-sharing tools and networks

Inclusive democracy is not a distant aspiration
— it is already being built by communities
across the Global South.

Powered by the passion and leadership of its
participants, the Digital Action Lab continues
to move forward — together.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RESEARCH TEAM

Digital Action Lab

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Mónica Molano

We would like to acknowledge and thank all the representatives from civil society organisations and Human Rights Defenders who participated in the surveys and interviews for this research.



The Digital Action Lab is a space for experimentation, collective learning, and digital innovation. If you are a civil society organisation interested in exploring new approaches to digital democracy, stay connected with us. Follow our updates, explore resources on the DDI platforms, and learn how to join future cohorts of the Lab. For more information visit civicus.org/index.php/what-we-do/enabling-and-resourcing/digital-democracy-initiative/digital-action-lab



The Digital Democracy Initiative (DDI) is a programme to safeguard inclusive democracy and human rights in the digital age. It focuses on supporting local civil society in the Global South, particularly in countries undergoing democratic regression and where civic space is under pressure. For more information visit digitaldemocracyinitiative.net



CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists working to strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world. For more information visit civicus.org