



INTERNET GOVERNANCE & INTERNET FREEDOM



LOCATION: GLOBAL

DURATION: 2016-2020

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CHALLENGE

In many countries throughout the developing world and those in political transition, the internet is often the only space where civic activism, independent journalism, and the free flow of ideas can occur within and across borders. From citizens living in democratic societies to those living under authoritarian regimes, the internet is a pathway toward free expression and opportunity. However, this space is shrinking, particularly where governments seek to censor the internet, curtail freedom of expression, or cite national security laws to target human rights advocates. As the global trend of intentional disruptions to the web and mobile services continue to rise at an alarming rate, weaponization of the internet as a tool to threaten human rights has become the norm rather than the exception.

OUR WORK

Counterpart International's Internet Governance & Internet Freedom project (IGIF) works to address policies that restrict space for the exercise of fundamental rights online. Since 2016, Counterpart has focused on strengthening the technical capacity of local leaders and organizations to create local solutions that will advance an open internet, strengthen governance, and protect online rights. To this end, Counterpart is working closely with partners in the African, Latin American, Eastern European, South East Asian, and the former Soviet Union regions to:

BUILD	CONDUCT	CONVENE	SUPPORT
capacity of civil society actors to mobilize in support of a rights-based approach to internet governance.	and disseminate research on international human rights as they apply to national internet governance policies.	a consensus-driven multi-stakeholder group of actors that includes government officials, the tech community and rights activists to establish best practices for an open internet and universal rights.	emerging leaders to participate in key global fora and strengthen the international coalition of voices advocating for fundamental rights online.

IMPACT

Counterpart's network of local, regional and international stakeholders in the IGIF community will provide our partners access to the best international expertise, tools and resources. The program will strengthen local organizations, build citizen networks, train emerging leaders and provide evidence based research to inform and influence national policy discussions around a rights based approach to internet governance. Additional program objectives include:

- Program partners in Sri Lanka, Ukraine, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, Georgia, and Armenia will identify the most pressing needs facing their communities and develop specific program goals and outcomes to address these challenges.
- Partners will have increased institutional and professional capacity to lead advocacy and research initiatives at the national level.
- National dialogues between government and civil society will build consensus around internet policies that allow for freedom of expression and protect basic human rights.
- Partners will be recognized regionally and internationally at multi-stakeholder forums for their leadership in advancing internet freedom and governance in their countries.

SRI LANKA

Working with human rights activists, journalists, and researchers to address online harassment and violence against women and girls.

ZIMBABWE

Supporting local advocacy efforts in country for policy research and public awareness advocacy around privacy and surveillance online.

UKRAINE

Working with local stakeholders to ensure internet governance policies respect access to information and freedom of expression online as the country moves toward greater integration with the European Union.

VENEZUELA

Supporting local and regional actors to monitor and measure internet shutdowns and to maintain space for independent journalism online.

ARMENIA & GEORGIA

Supporting local policy and advocacy environments to increase understanding of a human rights-based approach to internet governance and ICT.

STRENGTHEN

the technical capacity of local leaders and organizations.

DISSEMINATE

international human rights standards that frame effective internet policies and build the capacity of civil society to advocate for these policies.

CONVENE

grants and project assistance to civil society organizations working to address social inclusion in the digital rights space.

