

EDITION DW AKADEMIE

#04/2016

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Advancing Freedom of Expression

Using digital innovation to foster Article 19
in the Global South

IV. Appendix

EDITION DW AKADEMIE #04/2016

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Advancing Freedom of Expression

Using digital innovation to foster Article 19 in the Global South

Ahmad Al-Bazz, Penhleak Chan, Shubhranshu Choudhary, Guy Degen, Wouter Dijkstra, Noora Flinkman, Alejandra Gutiérrez Valdizán, Kate Hairsine, Bektour Iskender, Toufique Imrose Khalidi, Fiona Macleod, Steffen Leidel, Nigel Mugamu, Dickens Olewe, Oscar Parra Castellanos, Angélica Peralta Ramos, Fabiola Torres López

IV. Apendix

Imprint

This publication is part of a series presenting individual chapters from the study
Advancing Freedom of Expression - Using digital innovation to foster Article 19 in the Global South

PUBLISHER

Deutsche Welle
53110 Bonn
Germany

RESPONSIBLE

Christian Gramsch

AUTHORS

Ahmad Al-Bazz
Penhleak Chan
Shubhranshu Choudhary
Guy Degen
Wouter Dijkstra
Noora Flinkman

Alejandra Gutiérrez Valdizán

Kate Hairsine
Bektour Iskender
Toufique Imrose Khalidi
Fiona Macleod
Steffen Leidel
Nigel Mugamu
Dickens Olewe
Oscar Parra Castellanos
Angélica Peralta Ramos
Fabiola Torres Lopéz

EDITOR

Jan Lublinski

DESIGN

Programming / Design

PUBLISHED

March 2016

© DW Akademie

With financial support from the

BMZ  Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Table of Contents

South2South Manifesto	4
Recommendations to initiatives using digital technologies	6
Strategy	6
Integration	7
Sustainability	7
Openness	8
Data for public interest	8
Participation	9
Skill sharing	10
Case studies – fact sheets	11

South2South Manifesto

Steffen Leidel, Guy Degen (editors)

How to use digital technologies to foster freedom of expression and information in the Global South | DW Akademie Media Dialogue | Cape Town | December 2014

About

The South2South Manifesto was developed during a four-day media dialogue that focused on how to best use digital technologies to foster freedom of expression and information in countries of the Global South.

The media dialogue was hosted by DW Akademie (Germany) and IAJ (South Africa) and brought together journalists, activists, and media development specialists from 14 countries to exchange knowledge and ideas.

Through a series of moderated discussions and idea generating workshops, the 14 delegates produced seven core principles for fostering freedom of expression and information. Each principle is accompanied by recommendations for individuals and organizations to consider when using digital technologies to foster freedom of expression and information.

The Manifesto - Introduction

We stand for using digital technologies to foster freedom of expression and information - a fundamental right enshrined in Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Freedom of expression in countries of the Global South is challenged by undemocratic regimes, human rights abuses, inequality, poverty, corruption, surveillance, lack of access to information, poor media literacy, and high costs of internet and communication services. However, we believe digital technologies can be used in innovative, ethical, democratic, inclusive, and collaborative ways to solve problems and improve people's lives.

We believe that in order to foster freedom of expression and information, individuals, government, media, and other organizations should observe the South2South principles when designing, developing, and implementing projects using digital technologies.

This is a living document and open for discussion.

The manifesto was produced during the South2South Media Dialogue in Cape Town, hosted by DW Akademie and IAJ, in November 2014.

The authors call upon those who use the South2South Manifesto to share this document and participate in its evolution.

Strategy - Develop long-term strategies to establish and protect freedom of expression

Recommendations

- Analyze the state of freedom of expression and how authorities enforce laws
- Build partnerships and networks dedicated to freedom of expression
- Use accurate and appropriate indicators to plan, develop, and evaluate projects
- Develop and adapt digital technologies to meet changing conditions and needs
- Be transparent with sources and conditions of funding

Integration - Combine digital technologies and traditional forms of communication to foster freedom of expression.

Recommendations

- Respect existing forms of community dialogue and media, and where possible, integrate them into digital projects
- Support communities using digital technology in a form they can use and afford
- Adhere to democratic principles and equal rights to expression
- Offer equal access to media: "Think of the last person first"
- Respect individual privacy and make digital security a priority

Sustainability - Develop innovative ways of making projects sustainable and independent

Recommendations

- Strive for shared and diversified ownership of projects
- Find partners and appropriate sources of funding that do not hinder independence
- Explore multiple models of financing to sustain projects beyond the duration of external funding
- Think about generating revenue from the beginning of a project
- Use freeware, open source tools and 'hacker communities' to be cost-effective

Openness - Facilitate our right to know

Recommendations

- Advocate for freedom of information and transparency laws
- Develop open standards
- Provide universal access to technology
- Raise civic awareness of data uses through online and offline campaigns and training
- Share digital information in accessible formats

Data for Public Interest - Request, collate, analyze, and share data in a way that everyone can use, and connect people with the information they need

Recommendations

- Simplify, explain, and visualize data to make it understandable
- Create, publish, distribute, and share stories from collected data
- Include metadata to make digital materials easier to search, use, and adapt
- Be creative and use transmedia formats to visualize, publish, and share data
- Develop best practices for sourcing, collating, and analyzing data

Participation - Use participatory methods to strengthen freedom of expression and information

Recommendations

- Include target communities and audiences in planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of projects
- Ensure the space for participation is safe and allows for open expression
- Make use of existing tools, methods, and platforms to encourage participation
- Provide digital literacy training to enable broader community participation
- Support the right to start your own digital platform
- Engage and sensitize politicians and public officials to acknowledge their obligations and accountability to their communities

Skills Sharing - Share knowledge and experiences between digital project practitioners

Recommendations

- Use multiple methods and platforms for sharing knowledge and skills
- Promote both online and offline activities for sharing knowledge and skills
- Explore platforms for sharing ebooks, research papers, and open source software
- Create a digital bank for storing and exchanging open data files
- Share directories of media organizations
- Mentor colleagues through online platforms
- Organize offline activities such as workshops and events at universities and schools and share results online
- Inform and educate people through existing media such as TV, radio, and newspapers

The undersigned authors pledge their commitment to adhere to the South2South Manifesto and to encourage others to observe its principles.

Ahmad Al-Bazz, Editor, Dooz, Palestinian Territories

Penhleak (Pinkie) Chan, Managing Editor, Open Development Cambodia, Cambodia

Shubhranshu Choudhary, Founder, CGNet Swara, India

Guy Degen, DW Akademie

Wouter Dijkstra, Founder and Director, TRAC FM, Uganda

Noora Flinkman, Head of Marketing and Communications Unit, HarassMap, Egypt

Alejandra Gutiérrez Valdizán, Editor-in-Chief, Plaza Pública, Guatemala

Kate Hairsine, DW Akademie

Bektour Iskender, Founder, Kloop, Kyrgyz Republic

Toufique Imrose Khalidi, Editor-in-Chief and Managing Director, bdnews24.com, Bangladesh

Fiona Macleod, Founder and Editor, Oxpeckers Center for Investigative Environmental Journalism, South Africa

Steffen Leidel, DW Akademie

Nigel Mugamu, Founder and CEO, 263Chat, Zimbabwe

Dickens Olewe, Founder of AfricanSkyCAM and Knight Journalism Fellow at Stanford University, Kenya & USA

Oscar Parra Castellanos, Founder and Editor, Rutas del Conflicto, Colombia

Angelica (Momi) Peralta Ramos, Multimedia Development Manager and Project Manager of La Nación Data, La Nación, Argentina

Fabiola Torres López, Co-Founder and Reporter, Ojo Público, Peru

Recommendations for initiatives using digital technologies

Kate Hairsine and Steffen Leidel

The following recommendations are foreseen as a framework to help focus and clarify the steps needed to implement projects using digital technology to foster freedom of expression. As living guidelines, we envisage their further development and adaptation as digital technologies, and the circumstances in which they are being used, continue to shift.

The recommendations share the structure of the South2South manifesto, a document which was created during a four-day focus group held with 14 digital technology innovators running projects in the Global South. These recommendations have been augmented by the experiences shared during the interviews with initiative founders.

Faced with the bewildering options of using digital technologies to support diverse facets of freedom of expression, those implementing and funding such projects sometimes lose sight of the basic fundamentals of implementing and running such projects. Because of this, we have deliberately included in these recommendations some components that apply to projects in general rather than focusing only on aspects specific to digital technology projects.

Strategy

Projects using digital technologies to support development and human rights are often overambitious when developing their goals and try to achieve too much within the confines of a specific project. Furthermore, many of these projects are not sustainable beyond the pilot stage (often as a result of being spread too widely) – making strategies for long-term viability essential.

Identify an existing need. It is crucial that any new initiative or project arise from the notion of fulfilling a specific, recognized need, rather than focusing on using technology for technology's sake. The organizations talked to all had hands-on experience working within particular communities that enabled them to identify day-to-day problems or gaps that their project then sought to counter. *Rutas del Conflicto*, for example, emerged from the founder's own experience of searching for scattered information, while *Mera Swasthya* was looking for a way to collect information about illegal fees.

Develop an organizational strategy. Once these needs or gaps have been identified, it is important for an initiative to develop strategies of how an organization can seek to meet these needs, react to changing circumstances and sustain itself long enough to create change. As such, long-term sustainability re-

quires an organizational strategy. While there are many facets to an organizational strategy, they need to contain a clear mission statement and a detailed assessment of what needs to be done to meet goals.

Include a financial plan. Given that one of the biggest challenges facing initiatives is financial stability, priority needs to be given to developing a business plan that, among other aspects, outlines potential revenue from diverse sources and also makes allowances for the future maintenance and development of technology.

Include a technical strategy. Many of those talked to experienced, or are still experiencing, issues with technology – either within the organization, or on the part of the users. A technology strategy needs to set out how the planned technology will advance the organization's goals and also incorporate an assessment of the capacity of the organization to run such a project, the ability of local developers to develop such a project and support it in the long term, an assessment of the local infrastructure and determine how targeted users actually access and use the particular technology. It also needs to make an assessment of potential maintenance and development. It should also make provisions (financial, capacity training) for the need to develop and adapt digital technologies to meet changing conditions and needs.

Include a digital security risk and data protection plan. Most of the initiatives talked to did not think of assessing digital security risks or protecting their users' data. However, given the commitment and sophisticated abilities of governments to monitor users' activities, and at times to punish users, it is absolutely necessary for rights initiatives to know what risks the general public faces when using or accessing their service or information. It is also important to develop a privacy policy for dealing with user's information.

Build in regular evaluation and monitoring. Without evaluation and monitoring, it is difficult to know whether your project is meeting its goals, and whether the technology is still supporting you in these goals.

Build partnerships and networks with others. Several organizations mentioned regional networks, such as 'Hacks/Hackers,' or open-data networks as good for sharing knowledge and collaboration.

Analyze the state of freedom of expression and how authorities enforce laws. Any freedom of expression initiative needs to have an understanding of locally prevailing circumstances restricting freedom of expression.

Integration

Technology does not stand alone. Rather digital technology initiatives need to be integrated into, and work in combination with, the targeted users' current practices of receiving and imparting information.

Integrate existing forms of communication. The experiences of the interviewees show that it is more effective to use ICTs in conjunction with existing forms of communication channels in order to widen reach. Examples include Follow the Money, which uses both social media and radio to campaign for the release of funds, and Africa Check, which allows media to copy its content for free.

Make use of existing tools, methods, and platforms rather creating a new one. Rather than developing a new website or app that requires development and promotion (and a good reason for users to adopt a new technology), see if you can adapt an existing technology or tool to support your idea.

Know your user. Conduct an assessment of what ICTs your targeted group use to send and receive information, how exactly they use this technology, and what some of the barriers of use are. Initiatives that lack knowledge of the specific context of technology use are more likely to fail.

Promote your service using methods suited to your likely users. People cannot use a service if they do not know about it, hence the importance of initiatives to actively promote their services. However, as above, it is important to do so using existing channels. CGNet Swara, for example, operates in a region with virtually no traditional media; therefore it promotes its service with a traveling puppet theater.

Offer equal access. It is important to consider factors which may unfairly disadvantage certain demographics, and devise strategies to overcome this. For example, providing toll-free calls may make it easier for socioeconomically disadvantaged groups to access the service.

Offer support and training in using the technology. When working with digital technology projects, it is often not enough to provide information or a service. Targeted users need to be supported or trained in using the technology. Users of CGNet Swara whose reports are not suitable for publication are contacted and asked if they would like to resubmit their report with additional information. When Mera Swasthya Meri Aawaz discovered that women found it difficult to dial the ten-digit number to report an illegal fee, they developed a system of women in villages who could support others in making calls.

Sustainability

Many projects, especially those explored here, are initiated by one or two passionate individuals who recognize a gap and seek to fill it. They attract funding to realize their idea and once the project is up and running scramble to seek funds to continue. However, long-term sustainability often requires ongoing concerted effort and planning, and should be factored in at the very beginning of a project.

Strengthen the capacity of staff to perform core functions. While many of the organizations turn to external contractors to develop and implement the technology, quite a few interviewees said that staff were not able to judge the suitability of certain technology and whether technical providers could deliver what they promised. In order to increase the long-term viability of an initiative, it follows that staff need to be trained in managing technology projects.

Explore multiple models of financing from a variety of sources. Most of the initiatives interviewed here talked of how they were exploring various forms of revenue generation (including grants, donations from corporations and individuals, crowdfunding, sale of services, events) in order to decrease dependence on single donors.

Plan revenue generation from the beginning of the project. Several of the initiatives were started by individuals who had an idea, and who then worked tirelessly to develop this idea. After securing the first-round of funding to put this idea into practice, they then realized they lacked a plan for continuing beyond this initial funding. Financial planning contributes significantly to the success.

Ensure funding and income sources do not hinder independence. Although none of the interviewees cited cases where funders sought to influence their objectives and strategies, initiatives working in the field of freedom of expression need to remember the importance of remaining objective and credible.

Use freeware and open source tools to be cost-effective. Open source software might not cost money to purchase, but it still requires maintenance, configuration, and ongoing support that needs to be financed. And the Global South's smaller pool of developers means that this support may have to come from overseas, which can engender higher support costs or language and time-zone issues. However, open source software carries many benefits which are often seen to outweigh their disadvantages. Thanks to the peer review process, it is usually secure and thanks to the ability to modify the source code, it can be adapted to specific circumstances.

Prepare for changes in technology and technology use. Sustainability is not just about financial resources, but also about having the technical resources to continue to serve your goal or mission. Be aware of shifting patterns of what technology is available to your users and how they use this technology.

Building lasting partnerships. Partnerships and collaborations can help an initiative advance its long-term aims. These can either be formal, such as Plaza Publica's partnership with the University of Rafael Landívar, or informal, such as VozData's collaboration with university departments and transparency organizations for volunteers to digitalize data.

Openness

Initiatives promoting freedom of expression and access to information have a responsibility to lead by example, aligning their own policies of disclosure and information dissemination with transparency, open data, and open source standards.

Advocate for freedom of information and transparency laws.

Support the principle of net neutrality. Net neutrality is fundamental to freedom of expression. It is about ensuring equal access to content, apps, and websites without discriminating against, favoring, or blocking content. If net neutrality is overturned, Internet service providers may be able to restrict content on commercial grounds. As such, rights organizations have a stake in keeping the Internet open for all.

Make software code available for others to use, change, and share when economically feasible. Numerous initiatives are producing software or adapting digital technologies to create new tools. By sharing the software code or the system setup, an initiative can enable others to benefit from their solutions. In fact, the Knight Mozilla Fellowship stipulates that software during the fellowships must be shared. It is also essential to share this software on platforms where others can find it and benefit from adaptations, such as GitHub or WordPress.

Share data you collect. Many initiatives involved in information creation amass data which informs stories, but some are reluctant to share data they might have worked hard to collect, clean, and analyze. However, important for funders and initiatives themselves, to increase the use of such data and promote data sharing, is to circulate data in formats accessible by others.

Freely share your own data. Rights organizations need to stop being conservative about publishing their own data, such as funding sources, conditions of funding, and amounts received. This data could be useful information to others want-

ing to build on existing knowledge. It can help build trust with stakeholders and funders. In addition, it is easier to promote transparency and establish credibility in general when your initiative is opening its own information.

Raise civic awareness of data uses and share data skills. In many developing and emerging countries, data movements are just starting to emerge. Sharing knowledge and skills is one way to nurture these nascent movements. Sensitizing the public to the importance of open data is another.

Data for public interest

Governments and other institutions are being increasingly pressured to open up access to their data. At the same time, more data is now available than ever before. However, many individuals and groups are unable to exploit this data for themselves. As such, initiatives supporting access to information have several roles to play in supporting communities and groups in using and understanding this data. They should also advocate the opening up of data.

Freely share data using open formats and open standards. The analysis of larger data sets requires the use of a computer to search, sort, and find relationships within the data. But some popular methods for publishing data, such as PDFs or scanned documents, are a hindrance to data analysis because the data cannot be machine read. Publishing data in an open (machine-readable) format means people can make better use of the data. Another hindrance to data use is when it is published in a proprietary format, this is a format that can only be opened by certain software. This places restrictions on the use of the data to those who have the particular software. Publication in open standards, on the other hand, allows for greater use of the data. As well as being in an open format and open standard, the data should also be free for all to use, reuse, and redistribute.

Share data across diverse mediums. Within the discussion of open data, opening this data often refers to archiving this data online. While this makes sense, in that data can then be accessed regardless of location, it effectively cuts off those who are offline. One way to bridge this divide is to disseminate data, or an analysis of the data, across a variety of mediums. These might range from publishing data in traditional media such as radio and print to using diverse sources of digital media, such as sending users SMSs with the data they require.

Simplify, explain, and visualize data. Raw data is only comprehensible to a small, exclusive group of skilled data analysts. Data initiatives can help to make data understandable to a broader public by turning data into narrative stories based on the data. They can also use graphs, charts, infographics, and maps to visualize the data.

Include metadata. Metadata is often described as data about data. It is data about the dataset that can include information such as what exactly has been collected, how it was collected, where and when it was collected, and which sources were used. While metadata has several uses within organizations, above all, it makes it easier to share data with others.

Advocate for open data practices within the wider community. Having open data in the future means advocating now for governments and public institutions to make their data freely available in open, standard formats. In the absence of strong open data communities in many parts of the Global South, it also means initiatives should consider carrying the message to future officials and become involved in university programs, hold workshops, and engage with open data networks.

Participation

Participation is about receiving input from members of the public. As several of the initiatives examined here demonstrate, there are many barriers to citizen engagement and simply inviting participation does not automatically ensure people will be proactive and take part. Rather, participation needs to be actively fostered and supported, and people need a strong motivation or incentive to participate. In addition, initiatives need to seek strategies for making this participation representative of demographic diversity.

Identify the purpose of participation. Participation is a catchcry at the moment, and many funders push for some type of participation without identifying what citizen participation will bring to the initiative and most importantly, why people will choose to participate. Given that making participation work well takes considerable resources and effort, there needs to be a clear advantage for participation to justify the investment of resources.

Identify target users and conduct user tests. You need to determine who the exact group is who will potentially participate in your project. Conduct user-testing with this target group to identify barriers to use and areas that cause these users difficulties or confusion in operating it. Modify, and test again. User-testing should be carried out as early as possible in the process.

Consider how to support socio-economically diverse participation. Initiatives often understand participation as input from the general public; however, in ICT initiatives, this general public often turns out to be young, educated, urban males. Even projects deliberately targeting marginalized communities often end up with participation skewed towards more educated males in those communities. Consequently, projects need to explore ways of increasing participation from under-represented groups, such as women and the elderly.

Provide training to enable broader community participation. Whether a citizen journalism project, or a monitoring initiative, where individuals send reports, training is a critical component of any initiative relying on participation.

Develop strategies and partnerships to encourage ongoing participation. Organizations need to make it clear what they do with the information they receive, and what the individual or community benefits of participation are, that is, what connection exists between input and improvement of the situation. Part of this strategy should involve feedback (either individual or community-based) about the project's ongoing impact.

Ensure the space for participation is safe and allows for open expression. Initiatives need to provide a space where people are able to participate safely and freely and express opposing views, without fear of reprisal or abuse – either online or offline. This may mean the development of a code of conduct, with the initiative reserving the right to remove abusive, threatening, or discriminatory comment. It also means that initiatives might need to consider introducing a vetting system to protect identities, or remove information that might reveal identities, from reports before they are published. Having a secure system is especially pertinent in crowdsourcing projects that rely on the public to report sensitive information, such as police violence or human rights abuses, which can result in retaliatory measures.

Skill sharing

Using ICTs to foster freedom of expression is a relatively new field that is not only rapidly evolving, it is also awash with experiments and pilot projects. As such, it is vital for digital project practitioners to share knowledge and experiences of planning, implementing, and running digital projects.

Share knowledge with various audiences. Those working on digital technology projects often gain wide-spread experience, from managing technical projects to promoting diversity in participation and supporting community activism. This means there is potentially a wide variety of audiences that can benefit from knowledge sharing, such as media organizations, funding bodies, government institutions, technology companies, researchers, and university students. For example, you might choose to share your experiences of working with communities in a development publication and system details on a technology site.

Use both online and offline activities for sharing knowledge and skills. Do not assume that those involved in digital technology projects are all online. Sharing knowledge at conferences, workshops, seminars, and roundtable events are also important.

Share materials as well as knowledge. Others may benefit from seeing material such as your strategic plan, evaluation tools, training kits, and FAQ sheets. Make these available for others to learn from, use, and adapt. Produce both paper and digital formats so that you can distribute electronic and paper copies.

Case studies – fact sheets

Kate Hairsine

“We have been able to give people an avenue to express their views. It’s also a space where they can share information about what is happening and we can amplify their voices by sharing it with the rest of the world. I think that is huge.”

Nigel Mugamu, founder of 263Chat

Project	263Chat		
Country	Zimbabwe	Link	http://263chat.com/
Tags	Online forum, community dialogue, independent journalism		
Approach	Creating a public sphere, access to information		
What it does	263Chat originally started using Twitter as a forum to discuss issues related to Zimbabwe. It has now evolved to a media organization that produces its own online content.		
Technology	Social media (Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp), YouTube, SoundCloud, as well as an online website		
Added value of technology	Allows both Zimbabweans living in Zimbabwe and those living outside of the country to share information and opinions. Additionally, given that mainstream media in Zimbabwe is particularly polarized along party lines, social media and the internet are one of the spaces where Zimbabweans inside the country can express opinions and where independent information can be published.		
How it works	263Chat originally started as a structured discussion forum where people from anywhere in the world could use the 263Chat handle and hashtag to join an online conversation on a predetermined topic regarding Zimbabwe. Discussions were held every Tuesday at 6pm and lasted one or two hours. This structured forum has become less central to 263Chat activities, as people are now using the hashtag for daily conversations about a wide range of Zimbabwean issues. Finding that the mainstream media were failing to pick up topics discussed on 263Chat, as hoped for, the initiative has now developed into an online media company that produces its own content and distributes this content across diverse social media. It also organizes events, such as panel discussions on specific topics.		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used by Zimbabweans as a way of sharing their opinion (263Chat is often one of the top trending hashtags and handles for Zimbabwe) – Have 60,300 Twitter followers (June 2015) – Working in partnerships with embassies and NGOs for live events 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Being taken seriously by traditional media organizations within Zimbabwe – Finding a way of involving offline communities (Zimbabwean radio is not an appropriate space for an independent forum so this cannot be an alternative) – Generating revenue 		
Launched	2012	Status	For-profit
Revenue	Grants, live events, providing training and social media strategy.	Paid employees	Seven

“There are two sides to what Africa Check is trying to do. On the one hand, we want to give people good information. On the other hand, we want to make people skeptical and also give them tools so that they can check something for themselves if they want to.”

Peter Cunliffe-Jones, Africa Check founder

Project	Africa Check		
Country	South Africa	Link	http://africacheck.org/
Tags	Fact-checking		
Approach	Access to information		
What it does	Africa Check is an online fact-checking site which analyzes the truth of statements made by politicians and other influential public figures, as well as the media.		
Technology	Online website based on WordPress		
How it works	Once the Africa Check team decides on a statement to verify, they contact the person making the claim to ask for their data source. The team then look for other reliable data or information which might prove or disprove the claim, as well as get a range of expert opinion on how reliable the various sources actually are. Findings are published on the Africa Check site. Readers are also invited to submit claims for Africa Check to scrutinize. The site primarily checks claims made about South Africa, but also fact-checks in Nigeria as well as several southern African countries.		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – As of January 2015, the site had attracted more than a million visitors since its launch – Many examples of reports being picked up by other media – Articles now included in the feed of Yahoo.za and AllAfrica.com 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Data is often difficult and time-consuming to come by – Generating revenue 		
Launched	2012	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	Grants and donations, paid research consultancies \$250,000 estimated for 2015 for annual running costs	Paid employees	Five full-time: director, editor, deputy editor, two researchers. Two part-time: fundraising & business development, information & research services. Freelance reporters.
Funders	AFP Foundation, IPI/Google, African News Innovation Challenge, Open Society Foundation for South Africa, Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, Open Society Institute, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Omidyar Network, African Media Initiative, Shuttleworth Foundation, Wits University Johannesburg		
Open-source / creative commons	Africa Check content may be reproduced “for the purpose of reporting and/or discussing news and current events,” subject to providing to credit Africa Check.		

“When journalists hitch rides on police helicopters or military helicopters, it seems obvious that the helicopters are just going to fly journalists to where everything is under control. And that really raises the question of editorial independence.”

Dickens Onditi Olewe, African SkyCAM founder

Project	African SkyCAM		
Country	Kenya	Link	http://www.africanskycam.com
Tags	Drones, aerial imaging		
Approach	Access to information		
What it does	African SkyCAM is a drone journalism project testing the idea of using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) in Africa.		
Technology	Unmanned aerial vehicles, cameras		
Added value of technology	On a continent where only a handful of media organizations can afford to hire their own helicopter for reporting purposes and where the terrain is often difficult to negotiate, UAVs equipped with cameras are a low-cost option for journalists to independently report without risking their lives and equipment.		
How it works	<p>The goal of SkyCAM is to show how UAVs and camera-equipped balloons can be used in Africa to tell stories in new ways and add new perspectives. Their projects include the creation of a 3D virtual model of Nairobi’s Dandora dump site and aerial footage from Tanzania for a wildlife poaching story.</p> <p>AfricanSkyCAM founder, Dickens Olewe, noticed that Kenyan journalists covering floods in his country had only two ways to see the floods for themselves or capture footage; they could either get fishermen to take them out in small rickety fishing boots, or get a lift in military or police helicopters. The first option is risky, and second option doesn’t allow for an independent assessment of what is happening. He then had the idea of testing how well drones could be used for reporting in Africa. Olewe's drone journalism project was a winner in the African News Innovation Challenge in 2012.</p>		
Successes	Proved that UAVs are a viable alternative for journalism in Africa		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lack of experienced drone operators in Africa – Lack of regulations surrounding drone operations in Africa 		
Launched	2013	Status	No longer active due to the Kenyan government banning the use of drones
Revenue	One-off project grant (\$50,000) from African News Challenge	Paid employees	none

“Our success is that reporters – the citizens – are now reporting so we have them investigating from the remotest areas where otherwise no information is coming out.”

Shubhranshu Choudhary, CGNet Swara co-founder

Project	CGNet Swara		
Country	India	Link	http://www.cgnetswara.org
Tags	Citizen journalism, audio news, mobile phone		
Approach	Access to information, social and cultural inclusion, accountability		
What it does	CGNet Swara is an audio news portal that allows communities living in remote areas of India's Central Gondwana region to leave reports and listen to reports left by others for free over their mobile phones (CG stands for Central Gondwana while Swara means 'voice' in Hindi).		
Technology	Interactive voice-portal accessed by mobile phone and by web.		
Added value of technology	India's ban on news broadcasts on community radio, coupled with high illiteracy rates in the region, means news and information in Central Gondwana are rare. By using a voice activated system accessed over cell phones, enabling the creation and distribution of local news in local languages.		
How it works	Contributors can use their mobile phones to ring CGNet to record reports, community information, and songs in their tribal language. The service is mostly used to air grievances (the non-payment of wages, or to pass on local news). Submitted audio reports are verified by moderators before being broadcast to those who call to listen to reports. The audio is also published on the CGNet Swara website, along with a text summary in English. The cost of all calls is borne by CGNet Swara. An important element is the 'message of action' – reports often list the phone number of the specific person responsible for the problem and urge readers or listeners to ring them to exert pressure. A team of five to follow-up on any information.		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Around 1,000-1,500 listeners a day (October 2014) – Around 100 reports left per day – At least 200 documented examples of grievances being redressed after reporting the issue – People in the communities feel it has had a positive impact on corruption 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Costs are increasing as the service becomes popular because CGNet bears the costs of the calls – Only around 10 percent of the recorded messages are published because the other messages do not meet editorial requirements. – Only 12 percent of those leaving messages are women – Raising awareness about the service in a region with many remote communities – Initially costly and time consuming to find a workable software solution 		
Launched	2004	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	100 percent grant based \$100,000	Paid employees	25, includes trainers who teach the citizen journalists and promote the service; editors and translators; technical support.
Funders	Knight International Journalism Fellowship 2009-2011, UN Democracy Fund, Environics Trust, Sitara, MIT, Gates Foundation, Hivos, Macarthur Foundation Network, African Media Initiative, Shuttleworth Foundation, Wits University Johannesburg		
Open-source/creative commons	The software underlying CGNet Swara is open-source		

“The difference with WhatsApp is that it puts us on the same level as the people out on the streets. It's as if they have the personal telephone number of Extra so they are hyper-close to our newsroom”

Fábio Gusmão, creator of Extra's WhatsApp group

Project	Extra WhatsApp Group		
Country	Brazil	Link	http://extra.globo.com/
Tags	Crowdsourced news		
Approach	Access to information, social and cultural inclusion		
What it does	The Rio-based newspaper, Extra, uses the mobile messaging service, WhatsApp, to receive and request information from its readers.		
Technology	WhatsApp, mobile phones, desk-top emulator		
Added value of technology	Because of WhatsApp's ease of use, readers have few barriers to sending information to the newspaper; conversely, the paper can also use the messaging app to ask people for more information about certain events.		
How it works	<p>Users register for Extra's WhatsApp group, giving their name, date of birth, gender, and location. Then they can send messages, as well as videos and photos, via WhatsApp to Extra, which has dedicated five staff to man the channel from 6:30 a.m. to midnight. The information is verified and then used in various ways: sometimes journalists will start their own investigation and state in the resulting article that the tip came from a specific reader; the paper may also incorporate WhatsApp statements into articles as witness statements; or else the information can be posted to paper's online WhatsApp section. At times, Extra also requests information from users – for example, if there are reports of something happening in a certain area, they can message people in that location and ask for more information.</p> <p>Extra is the fifth largest circulation newspaper in Brazil and its online site attracts 18 million monthly visitors. WhatsApp being the preferred messaging app in the country, Extra has a large pool of readers who have the technical means to send contributions to the paper.</p>		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More than 1 million messages sent in the first year of operation, containing more than 50,000 photos, 2,000 videos and 1,800 audio recordings – Around 500 articles including WhatsApp information were published in the newspaper in the first year, and around 1,000 articles were published on the online site – Extra believes people feel more secure using WhatsApp to report instances of police violence or drug trafficking than other means, such as email or Facebook 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Finding a workable solution to Extra editors being able to use WhatsApp on a computer – Sorting out non-newsworthy information – many of the messages are hyper-local (about potholes, or trash not being collected) and are not relevant to a wider readership 		
Launched	2013	Status	Part of Extra (Globo media conglomerate)

“We always talk about these technologies and opening data, but I work in Nigeria where only 25 percent of people use the Internet. So we wanted to create a link between opening this data and the people in the communities.”

Oludotun Babayemi, Follow the Money co-founder

Project	Follow the Money		
Country	Nigeria	Link	http://followthemoneyng.org/
Tags	Data journalism, social media advocacy		
Approach	Access to information, accountability		
What it does	Follow the Money tracks aid funding promised by the Nigerian government and runs social media campaigns to pressure for the release of these funds to local communities.		
Technology	Social media		
Added value of technology	With more of Nigeria's politicians and officials on Facebook and Twitter, social media enables the public to directly exert pressure on a particular issue. In addition, technology allows campaigns to go global (by being picked up by international media, for example), further increasing pressure on officials.		
How it works	<p>The Follow the Money team uses data journalism to collate data from official sources about funds promised to specific communities. It also visits the communities to see if the aid money has arrived where it was promised and to inform the communities about their findings. They visualize their findings and conduct advocacy campaigns using traditional and social media to pressure officials to release funds.</p> <p>In 2010, thousands of children in northern Nigeria became sick from what has been called the worst case of lead poisoning in modern history. In 2012, the Nigerian government pledged more than US \$5 million to remove lead-contaminated soil but the money never arrived. In late 2012, the team visited the area and documented the situation on the ground. In January 2013, they launched a tweet-a-thon in conjunction with Human Rights Watch encouraging people to ask the Nigerian president via Facebook to release the money. Forty-eight hours later, the funds were released. Follow the Money is now tackling other issues such as promise of clean cooking stoves, flood compensation and new classrooms.</p>		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Getting funds released – Proving to the development community that local, homegrown solutions are possible – Helping communities to know about their rights 		
Challenges	Creating change at state or local level as local officials are less likely to respond to outside pressure		
Launched	2012	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	Grants as well as consultancy US\$80,000 in 2014	Paid employees	Three
Funders	Indigo Trust, Heinrich Boll Stiftung Nigeria, Open Society Initiative for West Africa, Partnership on Open Data		

“All the reports we receive provide evidence that we can use against the stereotypes, against the myths, and against the excuses that people make for sexual harassment.”

Noora Flinkman, head of marketing and communications at HarassMap

Project	HarassMap		
Country	Egypt	Link	http://harassmap.org/en/
Tags	Crowdsourced data		
Approach	Access to information, public sphere		
What it does	Victims of sexual harassment can report the incident anonymously either using their mobile phones or online. The reports are mapped on HarassMap's website, which is based on the Ushahidi platform.		
Technology	Ushahidi-based platform and a SMS short code.		
Added value of technology	After being launched, the anonymous reporting system allowed the organization to collect information about the circumstances of incidents of sexual harassment in Egypt, where there is otherwise little research on the subject.		
How it works	Victims or witness of sexual harassment can send an SMS, email, tweet, or fill in an online form giving details of what happened, such as the type of sexual harassment, where it happened, and other details. After verification, the reports are mapped online. It is important to note that the map is only a small part of HarassMap's activities, which are primarily focused on community outreach with the aiming of stopping sexual harassment in Egypt. Harass Map was set up in response to the high rates of sexual assault in Egypt.		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides a safe space where people can talk about sexual assault – Provided data about sexual assault in Egypt, such as time of assault, who was assaulted, what people were wearing, that was not previously available 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It was originally difficult to use the Ushahidi platform, and at the time of launching (2010), there were few people able to help in Egypt. – The number of reports to the map has fallen considerably in the past year 		
Launched	2010	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	Grants and crowdfunding		
Funders	International Development Research Center, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit		

"The best impact for far has been generating an interest in this idea of mapping data as a format for mapping a story."

Gustavo Faleiros, InfoAmazonia founder

Project	InfoAmazonia		
Country	Brazil	Link	http://infoamazonia.org/
Tags	Data repository, open data, data visualization, mapping, story aggregation		
Approach	Access to information		
What it does	InfoAmazonia is an online platform aggregating data, maps, visualizations, and news about the Amazon basin.		
Technology	Mapping platform based on a WordPress theme which integrates with MapBox		
Added value of technology	Allows for the collation and distribution of data, and creation and distribution of maps and visualizations about the Amazon.		
How it works	InfoAmazonia collates publicly available data related to the Amazon Basin, such as NASA's forest fire data from its satellite images or the Brazilian government's deforestation data. Using the data, the team create visualizations and rich designed maps which can be used and shared by others. The site also aggregates news stories about the Amazon region, which are geolocated, and published as layers on the maps.		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Generated interest in the idea of mapping data as a story-telling format – Been replicated in several areas of the world – Used as a resource by journalists and scientists 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Goal of receiving crowd-sourced stories not working well – Difficulties in generating analysis by others of the provided data – Aggregating stories of the Amazon has proved of little value 		
Launched	2012	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	Donations, courses/trainings and paid services c. \$200,000	Paid employees	12 part time employees: 5 developers, 4 journalists, 1 data analyst, 1 manager, 1 social media manager
Funders	Knight International Journalism Fellow, Avina, Google, Code for Africa, CLUA/Ford Foundation		
Open-source/creative commons	InfoAmazonia aggregates data and news from external sources, which have their own terms of use. The maps and visualizations created by InfoAmazonia are free to embed on external websites. The InfoAmazonia WordPress theme, called JEO, is open source.		

“Women are dying in childbirth was because there is a big deficit of accountability in the system”

Yatirajula Kanaka Sandhya, Assistant Coordinator of Sahayog and Project Manager of Mera Swasthya Meri Aawaz

Project	Mera Swasthya Meri Aawaz (My Health, My Voice) run by the NGO, Sahayog		
Country	India	Link	http://meraswasthyameriaawaz.org/
Tags	Crowdsourced data, mapping, Ushahidi, monitoring		
Approach	Access to information, accountability		
What it does	Using their mobile phones, women can anonymously report illegal fees charged at maternal health clinics; these reports are instantaneously displayed on an online map.		
Technology	Ushahidi platform linked to an interactive voice response system.		
Added value of technology	The data collected using the mobile reporting system has more weight with officials than anecdotal reports from community meetings, plus visualization of the data on a map also helps convey the scope of the problem.		
How it works	<p>The project is set up so that women who are charged illegal fees for maternity services in certain districts of Uttar Pradesh can dial a toll-free number, and are then connected with a voice-activated system. This guides them through the process of reporting which hospital charged the fee, what the fee was charged for, and how high the fee was. Reports are automatically displayed on an online Ushahidi-powered map and are anonymous and untraceable.</p> <p>India has the highest rate of maternal deaths in the world (2013 figures), and Uttar Pradesh has the highest rate of any state in India – 285 deaths per 100,000 live births compared to 28 in the United States. Often health facilities ask for informal payments which can deter women accessing what are supposed to be free maternal health services. The Mera Swasthya project was launched as a way of systematically documenting these informal fees.</p>		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Despite operating in a region with high poverty and illiteracy, many women are making reports (1,300 reports in 2014) – Evidence of this crowdsourced data having an impact after being raised at meetings with government and hospital staff – Anonymity is important – in small communities with few alternative health-care centers, women need to feel they can return to the clinic if they complain 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Community-based organizations and community outreach are vitally important as more reports are received from regions with active, grassroots community groups – Important to educate women about their entitlements and the complaint service – Need to test the technology and get feedback from users about ease of use – Still difficult to force accountability 		
Launched	2011	Status	Project run by Sahayog, an Indian NGO working to promote gender equality and women's health.
Revenue	Grants - the first year (staff, training, and equipment purchases) was approx \$55,000. The cost of the software, hardware and technical assistance for the setup and maintenance of the hotline and Ushahidi platform was approx \$10,000.		

"Access to objective information is so important in the region where so much information has been hidden, or people perceive information as propaganda"

Terry Parnell, Open Development Cambodia founder

Project		Open Development Cambodia	
Country	Cambodia	Link	https://cambodia.opendevlopmentmekong.net/#/
Tags	Data repository, open data, data visualization		
Approach	Access to information		
What it does	Open Development Cambodia (ODC) is an independent open data website which compiles development-related information on Cambodia		
Technology	Online Database		
Added value of technology	The information provided by ODC is already freely available; however, this information is scattered and often not in a digital format. Having a 'one-stop shop' makes it easier for those with an Internet connection to access all sorts of information.		
How it works	ODC collects, digitalizes and publishes in open formats a wide-range of publicly available data, ranging from laws and regulations to company profiles and land concessions. ODC staff also create interactive maps from the data and prepare briefing papers on issues such as the energy sector and forest cover. It also aggregates news reports on development issues and has an online library of research publications. The website is available in English and Khmer and attracts around 35,000 monthly visitors mostly from within Cambodia, 40 percent of whom are returning visitors (as of January 2014).		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Being increasingly used as a resource by journalists and researchers – Increasingly quoted as a source in both local and international research publications and media reports – Expanding its database to include all five countries of the Mekong Basin (Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar) 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Much of the data, although publicly available, needs to be digitalized, slowing down the process of publishing timely information – Recruiting local staff with the necessary skills – Making data accessible to offline communities or specific communities (for example, rice prices to rice farmers) 		
Launched	2011	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	Grants and donations c. \$200,000	Paid employees	10 employees, including web developers, editors/researchers, and mapping/data specialists.
Funders	USAID, Spider Foundation, American Jewish World Service, Open Society Foundation, Norwegian People's Aid.		
Open-source / creative commons	ODC published its content under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.		

“There are so many stories in the community and we need people in the communities to tell these stories”

Sibongile Nkosi, Our Health project manager

Project	Our Health, Health-e News Service		
Country	South Africa	Link	http://www.health-e.org.za/ourhealth/
Tags	Citizen journalism, monitoring		
Approach	Access to information, social and cultural inclusion		
What it does	Citizen journalists use tablets to file monthly articles on health-related topics, and monitor medication availability, for the Health-e news service.		
Technology	Tablets, Internet		
Added value of technology	Possible to file the stories from rural areas and also to create data on medication stocks.		
How it works	<p>Health-e news agency has a network of 21 citizen journalist in 14 districts (as of late 2014). The journalists, recruited from community activists and given basic journalism training, each produce two to six stories a month, using their Samsung Galaxy tablets to take photos and videos, write, and file stories. The journalists are paid a monthly retainer for two stories and can increase their payment if they submit more articles. The author of the 'story of the month' also receives an additional payment. The stories are edited and published on the Health-e site. More newsworthy stories are forwarded to mainstream and community newspapers for publication. Once a month, the citizen journalists also monitor the supply of a set list of medicines at local clinics.</p> <p>In 2012, the government started to pilot its National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme. Health-e news agency wanted community information about the scheme's implementation and decided to train activists in four of these pilot districts. The project was then expanded to include more regions, nearly all of which are NHI pilot districts.</p>		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Citizen journalists generate around 50 stories a month – Many stories published in community newspapers – Around two stories a month picked up by mainstream newspapers – Several documented examples of issues being redressed after publication of a story 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More difficulties sending photos and videos from the tablets than initially thought because of Internet issues – The prescription medicine monitoring app does not work very well – Access to the clinics, and if the journalist writes a critical story, it can be even more difficult to gain access to that clinic again – Lack of basic journalistic skills (accuracy, fact-checking, ethics still an issue) – Placing stories in mainstream media 		
Launched	2011	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	100 percent grant funded	Paid employees	21 citizen journalists, one project manager, one part-time administrator
Funders	DG Murray Trust, Atlantic Philanthropies, Making All Voices Count		
Open-source/creative commons	Nonprofits can use content for free, others need to buy a subscription package		

"We believe it is so necessary to tell what is going on in Guatemala. We want to tell the other side of the story than told by traditional media"

Alejandra Gutiérrez Valdizán, editor-in-chief, Plaza Pública

Project	Plaza Pública		
Country	Guatemala	Link	http://www.plazapublica.com.gt/
Tags	Independent journalism		
Approach	Access to information, public sphere		
What it does	Plaza Pública is an independent online news site with a focus on in-depth investigative reporting.		
Technology	online website based on Drupal		
Added value of technology	Distributing this kind of journalism would be difficult otherwise: print is too expensive and radio and television in Guatemala are firmly in the hands of a few media owners. Being online also allows Plaza Pública to be innovative in opening data and providing data on their site.		
How it works	Backed by a Guatemalan Jesuit university, Plaza Pública conducts in-depth reporting on many topics not otherwise covered by traditional media, such as investigations into political figures or long-reads on the fate of migrating minors. The site also hosts dozens of bloggers. In order to expand their reach beyond the young educated professionals who primarily visit their site, Plaza Pública is developing partnerships with traditional media to publish summaries of their investigations.		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Being used as a trusted source by academics and researchers – Recognized internationally for quality of work (won several prizes) – Started collaborations with other media who publish/broadcast summarized versions of investigations 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Traditional challenges of investigative journalism such as difficulty in accessing data and information – Getting mainstream media to pickup stories 		
Launched	2010	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	Grants, donations, fund-raising \$300,000	Paid employees	15-17
Funders	Seventy percent from Guatemala's Rafael Landívar university; plus Open Society Foundation, Hivos, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung		
Open-source / creative commons	Content is published under a Creative Commons 3.0 license.		

"The idea is to structure information so that you can see the people involved, the power structures involved, and the entities involved, which is very important especially in countries such as Chile where some families come up again and again."

Miguel Paz, Poderopedia founder

Project	Poderopedia		
Country	Chile	Link	http://www.poderopedia.org/
Tags	Database, influence mapping, visualization tool		
Approach	Access to information		
What it does	Poderopedia is an online database containing information on influential people and organizations. It also maps and visualizes the connections between these people and entities.		
Technology	Customizable data management system that allows for the creation, management, mapping and visualization of large datasets.		
Added value of technology	Enables the structuring of information in a different way so that this information can not only be found but connections can be revealed.		
How it works	<p>The Poderopedia database for Chile contains thousands of entries about influential people, businesses, and other organizations ('poder' means 'power' in Spanish). Each entry shows biographical information, such as where a person went to school, who they are related to, and what businesses they are involved in. Users can then click to view a network map of that person, which shows other people and entities related to them. The idea is to expose conflicts of interest and networks of power. Users can also submit their own tips, which are verified before being added to the database.</p> <p>In Chile, business and politics are closely connected. Founder Miguel Paz wanted to build a journalism research tool that structured information in such a way so that these connections were easier to find and to see, thereby exposing potential conflicts of interest. Since its launch, the platform has expanded to include chapters in Venezuela and Colombia.</p>		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Been replicated in two other Latin American countries – Being used as a research tool by journalists – Released open-sourced code for others to use 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Took longer than anticipated to launch – Finding funding 		
Launched	2012	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	A mixture of project grants and payment for consulting, services, training and teaching	Paid employees	Four full-time, several on contract basis as required
Funders	Knight News Challenge Winner 2011, Start-Up Chile 2012, Knight International Journalism Fellow, Hivos, Open Society Foundations.		
Open-source/creative commons	Software is open-source. Content is available under a Creative Commons 3.0 license.		

"I wanted to show information about Colombia's massacres in a better way – to inform people about the context, the history and the geography – because most Colombians don't have a good idea why we have been killing each other for the past twenty years"

Oscar Parra Castellanos, Rutas del Conflicto founder

Project	Rutas del Conflicto (Route of Conflict)		
Country	Colombia	Link	http://rutasdelconflicto.com/
Tags	Database, Visualization		
Approach	Access to information, social and cultural inclusion		
What it does	Rutas del Conflicto is an online database and mobile app that allows users to search, filter, and visualize information on 700 of the 2,000 massacres carried out during Colombia's civil war.		
Technology	Online database developed using PHP, design tools built with Java Script and HTML 5, and Google Fusion Tables and Google maps.		
Added value of technology	Makes information more accessible by standardizing the information, collating it into a central online repository, and providing search and visualization tools.		
How it works	<p>The tools allow users, for example, to see massacres carried out in a certain location or to search for massacres carried out by a specific paramilitary group over a period of time. Researchers and victims can also submit any additional information they might have about a specific event; these submissions are proofed before being added to the database. The mobile app uses GPS to show massacres that took place around the user's current location.</p> <p>The database's creator, Oscar Parra Castellanos, was working for the organization, Verdad Abierta, which investigates Colombia's armed conflict. A computer scientist before he became a journalist, Parra thought there must be a better way to present data about Colombia's war, which was scattered among various organizations and institutions and was not available online.</p>		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Attracting many visitors – Informal feedback that is being used by journalists as a research tool – The visualizations provides context to the crimes (for example, can see that many massacres take place along transport routes and were probably to do with the drug trade) 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Getting victims to know about the site and contribute their version of events – Finding funding to add further information to the site, such as additional massacres or other crimes such as kidnapping 		
Launched	2014	Status	
Revenue	\$50,000 funding for the initial project	Paid employees	One junior journalist, two students, two engineers, one designer
Funders	Verdad Abierta - Colombia, Centro Nacional de Memoria Historica - Colombia		
Open-source/creative commons	Website content is freely available for full or partial use		

"People often start debating based on their political colors and that is not very objective. We wanted to create data and use this to spark a public debate based on this data rather than one driven by opinions."

Wouter Dijkstra, Trac FM co-founder

Project	Trac FM		
Country	Uganda, Somalia	Link	http://tracfm.org/
Tags	Crowdsourced data, software tool		
Approach	Access to information, social and cultural integration		
What it does	Trac FM is a cloud-based software tool that collates, visualizes and analyzes SMS answers to poll questions broadcast by radio or TV stations.		
Technology	Custom-built online platform		
Added value of technology	The tool allows for the collection of statistics on a wide-variety of issues in regions where there is often a lack of independent data.		
How it works	<p>Listeners can respond to a question asked during a live radio talk-show by sending a free SMS with their answer and their district to the advertised shortcode. The Trac FM software automatically categorizes these answers and charts them into simple graphs and maps, which update in real time. The presenter can see the poll results instantly on the computer screen and share them with the radio audience or discuss the results with studio guests. Poll respondents are also able to become 'active users' and register with Trac FM. This gives Trac FM further information on respondents such as gender, age and, occupation. Active users are sent an SMS three days before the next poll, reminding them to listen in to the program. Interesting poll information is turned into infographics and shared via social media and print media partners. NGOs also use Trac FM to collect data on certain issues.</p> <p>It is common practice for radio hosts in Africa to ask listeners to send in text messages with their thoughts on a particular issue. Usually a variety of these answers are read out on air. Trac FM co-founder, Wouter Dijkstra, thought radio stations could make better use of this information and so launched a project to develop the software tool.</p>		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used by 17 radio stations in Uganda and five in Somalia – Regularly receive large number of responses to questions (out of 21 polls conducted in January 2015, four had more than a 1,000 responses) – Large numbers of people have signed up to be active users, giving Trac FM better demographic data for their polls 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Radio stations are not going beyond presenting superficial results to analyze the data more deeply – Finding the financial resources to further develop the software to make automated analysis even easier – Large majority of respondents are males – Long start-up time needed in a new country to organize short codes 		
Launched	2011	Status	Nonprofit
Revenue	70 percent of income comes provision of polling and research services to NGOs and other organizations; 30 percent from grants		

"We have to be really clear that people's efforts are important. Because we are only going to get this information if we all work together – it is like breaking rocks"

Florencia Coehlo, VozData project manager

Project	VozData, La Nación		
Country	Argentina	Link	http://vozdata.lanacion.com.ar/
Tags	Crowdsourced data, open data		
Approach	Access to information		
What it does	The VozData tool, called CrowData, is a collaborative online platform where members of the public help digitalize information contained in PDF documents that cannot be machine-read.		
Technology	Collaborative online platform and database		
Added value of technology	Any amount of people can work liberating data at any time and from wherever they want, meaning project stages can be completed in months rather than in years.		
How it works	<p>After logging onto the site (which they can do anonymously), users are presented with a page of a scanned document. They manually enter the data from this document into the tool's interface, thereby helping create a digital database, in this case, of senate expenses. Each page is entered by three different users, and the answers cross-checked, before the data is accepted. La Nación approached transparency NGOs and universities to win volunteers for the project. It also created incentives such as displaying the names of the top contributors on the website or having a physical Datathon event where users came together to open the data. The completed database is available on La Nación's website in an open data format.</p> <p>The 6,500 pages of Argentina's senate expenses from 2010-2012 were scanned documents that were difficult for automated tools to read. Inspired by the Guardian MP's Expenses and ProPublica's Free the Files, the team at La Nación Data decided to develop a platform to use crowdsourcing to help digitalize the expense documents. After opening the 2010-2012 documents, the team then worked on 2013 and 2014 expenses and expects to continue the project in 2015.</p>		
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Created verified databases of senate expenses in digital formats – Resulted in the publication of dozens of stories about the expenses in La Nación – Creation of the open-source tool, CrowData 		
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Recruiting users and keeping them motivated for the duration of the project – Developing a tool from scratch 		
Launched	2014	Status	Project run by La Nación newspaper's data team
Paid Employees	Seven people part-time		
Funders	Two Knight-Mozilla OpenNews fellows developed the software tool.		
Open-source / creative commons	Crowdata software tool is open source; the senate expenses data is free to download and available in an open format.		

Steffen Leidel

Steffen Leidel is acting manager of the Knowledge Management and Digital Innovation department at DW Akademie. He has been working as a project manager and trainer on digital journalism at DW Akademie since 2005. His region of expertise is Latin America. He is an editor of the DW Akademie #mediadev website and is currently working on DW Akademie's digital strategy. He has extensive experience in print, radio, television and online. He has won several awards for his work as a multimedia journalist. Leidel has a masters degree in translation and interpreting from the University of Granada. He also has a journalism degree from the University of Dortmund in Germany.



Steffen Leidel
Acting manager of Knowledge
Management and Digital
Innovation
DW Akademie
steffen.leidel@dw.com

Kate Hairsine

Kate Hairsine is freelance science and technology journalist with a special interest in digital technologies and their adoption in developing countries. She's also an editor of DW Akademie's media development pages, #mediadev. Kate often travels to Africa for media trainings and reporting trips and spends much of her spare time there talking to people about the kinds of digital technology they use and what they use it for. Before becoming a journalist, Kate worked as a researcher and consultant for Australian Aboriginal organizations, where she focused on land rights and criminal justice system abuses.



Kate Hairsine,
Freelance journalist
kate@katehairsine.com

Please contact us for further information

Dr Jan Lublinski
Head Research and
Evaluation
DW Akademie

T +49.228.429-2281
jan.lublinski@dw.com

Petra Berner
Head of Strategy and
Consulting Services
DW Akademie

T +49.228.429-2981
petra.berner@dw.com

Deutsche Welle
53110 Bonn, Germany

dw-akademie.com
info@dw-akademie.com
facebook.com/DWakademie

-  facebook.com/DWakademie
-  dw.com/newsletter-registration
-  [@dw_akademie](https://twitter.com/dw_akademie)
-  [#mediadev - dw.com/mediadev](https://dw.com/mediadev)

dw-akademie.de

