



DIGITAL DEMOCRACY AMPLIFIED

HACKATHONS: DRIVING INNOVATION
Discover how our 2025 hackathons, in partnership with Magamba Network and I4C-LATAM, will foster civic engagement through cutting-edge solutions.

REGIONAL PROTOTYPES BEGIN
Phased implementation of our co-designed prototypes kicks off in five regions, addressing local challenges with tailored solutions.

ENABLING RESILIENCE
Digital Resiliency Grants continue to enable marginalised CSOs, bolstering digital security and countering civic space restrictions.

WELCOME TO DIGITAL DEMOCRACY AMPLIFIED!

Happy New Year! We're excited to bring you the first issue of 2025, showcasing how the Digital Democracy Initiative (DDI) continues to enable civil society in the Global South to strengthen civic space and promote inclusive democracy through digital transformation.

This edition highlights exciting hackathons in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, the implementation of regional prototypes, election-related work, updates on the Digital Action Lab (DAL), and the progress of the Digital Resiliency Grants.



HACKATHONS: IGNITING DIGITAL INNOVATION

We're thrilled to announce two virtual hackathons launching this year in partnership with **Magamba Network** in Sub-Saharan Africa and **Innovation for Change** in Latin America and the Caribbean. These events will bring together innovators to develop digital tools that promote democracy and tackle civic space challenges.

Why These Hackathons Matter:

These hackathons will address urgent digital challenges faced by civil society organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, fostering resilience in regions with shrinking civic space.

They will provide a platform for grassroots innovators to design practical, tech-based solutions tailored to their communities' unique socio-political contexts.

By fostering regional and cross-regional collaboration, these hackathons will encourage the exchange of ideas and scalable innovations that enhance democratic participation.

The events will catalyse impactful technological advancements, enabling civil society to counter digital repression and safeguard civic engagement in increasingly digital ecosystems.

Scaling Solutions

The tools and solutions developed during these hackathons will be integrated into broader digital strategies, ensuring their impact is sustainable and far-reaching. By leveraging regional collaborations and technical expertise, these innovations will amplify civic participation and protect democratic values.

REGIONAL PROTOTYPES: LAUNCHING IN 2025

Phased Rollout

This year, DDI's regional prototypes will roll out to address key challenges across five regions.

The rollout begins with Latin America and the Caribbean (LATAM) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions in the first quarter, followed by East Asia, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in the second quarter of 2025.

Tailored Solutions

DDI's regional prototypes will benefit around 500 civil society organisations (CSOs).

Key impacts include:

- **Strengthened Capacity:** Improved resilience, governance, and advocacy skills for participating CSOs.
- **Flexible Funding Access:** Increased access to resources aligned with local needs, enabling community-driven outcomes.
- **Policy Influence:** Contributions to policy changes and systemic improvements at the regional level.
- **Community Impact:** Greater inclusivity and local participation, fostering meaningful change in communities.

ELECTION-RELATED INITIATIVES

Building on the lessons of 2024, DDI will intensify its election-related work in targeted countries in 2025. This year's focus includes:

- Countering misinformation.
- Supporting electoral integrity with innovative digital tools.
- Fostering civic participation.

We will share updates on our initiatives to support free and fair elections worldwide.

DIGITAL ACTION LAB: A NEW COHORT

With DAL 2024 concluding successfully, we're gearing up for the next cohort.

What's New for 2025?

- 20 organisations will be selected from 928 applications.
- Training and one-on-one mentorship on
- digital transformation.
- Grants of \$20,000 awarded to 10 organisations for project implementation.

Plans for 2026 include expanding accessibility by supporting Spanish- and French-speaking organisations. We're also enhancing collaboration by connecting alumni for ongoing mutual support and innovation.

DIGITAL RESILIENCY GRANTS: 2025 FOCUS

In 2025, Digital Resiliency Grants will continue to support civil society actors facing civic space restrictions, providing rapid solutions to critical challenges. The program will prioritise marginalised groups, including women's organisations, youth groups, and grassroots collectives, offering resources to strengthen digital security, counter misinformation, and navigate restrictive laws. With 16 organisations funded in 2024, a similar number of grants is planned for 2025, ensuring accessible applications in multiple languages and hands-on support throughout the process.

Civil society actors can apply for our digital resiliency grants year-round.

More information and application details are available at web.civicus.org/crf-ddi

RESEARCH PRODUCTS: COLLABORATIVE INSIGHTS

In 2025, DDI is set to launch a series of new research initiatives co-created with civil society actors. These projects will delve into pressing civic space challenges, fostering collaboration and ensuring the insights are grounded in local contexts.

The research aims to:

- Provide actionable recommendations to guide DDI's strategies and priorities.
- Highlight and amplify the perspectives of local actors, ensuring their voices are integral to addressing regional and global challenges.
- Build a robust evidence base to support inclusive democracy, offering data-driven solutions for strengthening civic engagement and freedoms.

Be on the lookout for three upcoming case studies exploring support ecosystems for civil society in Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, and Uganda.

GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE HUB: A SAFE SPACE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

After multiple community meetings, the Global Knowledge Hub is closer to completion.

This platform will:

- Serve as a repository of essential tools and resources.
- Foster safe collaboration and networking for civil society actors.
- Provide a space to share experiences and co-create solutions for a healthier global civic ecosystem.
- Stay connected and join us in shaping the future of inclusive democracy.

For more updates and resources related to DDI, visit web.civicus.org/DDI