

THE
ENGINE
ROOM



Impact Report

2025



2025 in numbers



67 countries across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia where partners engaged with TER through research, accompaniment, or co-creation.



intensive partnerships across the Majority World

- 4 Matchbox partnerships
- 13 additional intensive collaborations, including data governance accompaniment, UX partnerships, and long-term security support



flagship co-created platforms launched:

- **KURAM** (TechHer Nigeria) documents technology-facilitated Gender-Based Violence
- **Deenal** (JDWS) connects GBV survivors to support services across the Sahel
- **Uwazi** (TYI-Uganda) documents rights violations against trans and gender-diverse people
- **RAMO** (YIF Ghana) maps LGBTQIA+ community resources and safe spaces



community calls, open learning sessions, and global convenings hosted or co-facilitated by TER



organizations supported globally through Light Touch Support (LiTS)



in-person workshops and panels, including these presentations (which we are happy to share):

- Exploring alternatives: A discussion on social media platform for human rights advocacy (ILGA World)
- Collective actions for common horizons for the digital rights movement (RightsCon)
- Centering Majority World experiences to design privacy-forward technologies and protection support (RightsCon)
- How organizational culture can rewire the digital workplace (MozFest)
- Unlearning AI hype: making context-aware choices (MozFest)
- **Digital Rights x climate justice** (Global Gathering)
- Forensics for all: Democratizing digital forensics for accountability in the Global Majority (Global Gathering)
- Democracias Bajo Ataque: De la crisis a la estrategia (Global Exchange)
- Building capacity to disrupt digital colonialism (Digital Democracy Initiative)

What we are most proud of



+ Expanding co-creation over extraction

We set goals for impact and change collaboratively with our partners and jointly committed to achieving them. Our community-focussed research was taken up beyond TER, cited in movement spaces, translated into multiple languages, and reused in webinars and partner learning.

+ Digital safety rooted in care

We actively built hope as a muscle across CAT, LiTS and Matchbox partnerships. We supported organizations to navigate digital harm through approaches that center care and connect physical, psychosocial and digital wellbeing, not just technical fixes. We also took the time to do this internally with our own digital architecture and approach to security - particularly for our Majority World team.

+ Language activism as a key part of social activism

We exponentially increased our commitment to spaces where people could engage, think and collaborate in their languages of comfort. This included establishing a cadre of Majority World partners for language support services.

+ Economic resilience

In the midst of the spring 2025 massive US cuts to funding, we were able to regroup and weather the financial challenges, nurture our relationships with funders in meaningful ways and continue to carry out our work and our vision.

+ We stretched and learned a lot in new areas

We created space for reflection, experimentation and unlearning. We strengthened our capacity, understanding and expertise in critically relevant areas such as online gender-based violence, platform design, responsible AI and cybersecurity; and strengthened tools outside the Big Tech suites to make them more viable and habitable for partners.



Regional impact: strengthening digital infrastructure across contexts

Across Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, our work focused on strengthening locally led digital systems and supporting organizations to build secure, context-responsive tools while deepening long-term digital resilience.



Africa

Youth Initiative Foundation Ghana

Our Matchbox partnership with Youth Initiative Foundation (YIF), supported the development of a community mapping platform to identify youth-friendly services and safe spaces. The project ensured that sensitive location and community information could be managed responsibly. Beyond platform development, the partnership strengthened YIF’s approach to data protection, risk assessment, and platform sustainability.

Justice & Dignity for the Women of the Sahel (JDWS)

In partnership with Justice & Dignity for the Women of Sahel (JDWS), we co-developed Deenal (“protection” in Fulani), a multilingual alert system connecting survivors of gender-based violence to case managers and verified support services across Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, and Chad.

Designed for low connectivity and multiple languages, Deenal includes voice-note reporting, urgent alerts, and secure data practices. The partnership also strengthened JDWS’ capacity to manage sensitive survivor data safely and independently.

Latin America & the Caribbean

Information ecosystems platform launch

In Latin America and the Caribbean, our focus shifted toward ecosystem-level infrastructure and narrative change. We launched the regional [Information Ecosystems platform](#), a digital hub connecting research, practitioner insight, and movement knowledge across the region.

The platform brings together insights from participatory research and regional convenings with journalists, technologists, and civil society organizations working to address challenges such as information deserts, gendered online harms, and the sustainability of independent media. It serves as a shared space for collaboration, reflection, and collective strategy around information disorder, grounded in lived experience rather than externally imposed narratives.

Through engagement with initiatives such as Puentes and Oír Más, this work contributed to shifting how information challenges are framed in the region, centering community voices and contextual realities.

The platform represents a step toward sustained regional knowledge infrastructure, strengthening cross-country collaboration and long-term ecosystem learning across Latin America and the Caribbean.



Digital resilience in the face of new threats

In 2025, we saw a growing demand for support around digital security, safer data practices, and organizational risk mitigation as civic space shrank and technology-facilitated harm intensified.

Stewardship of the Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (CAT):

We took on stewardship of the Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (CAT), ensuring it remains accessible and adaptable for grassroots organizations navigating complex threat environments, and supporting its use as an ongoing organizational resilience practice.

Partnering with funders for long-term security accompaniment:

Through a partnership with the Nebula Foundation, we supported grantees facing heightened digital threats with sustained guidance on digital hygiene, safety policies, and responding to emerging risks.

Understanding risk in gender-justice movements:

With Numun Fund, we explored how organizations responding to technology-facilitated intimate partner violence (TFIPV) navigate digital risk, funding constraints, and infrastructure gaps, highlighting structural challenges movements face in hostile digital environments.

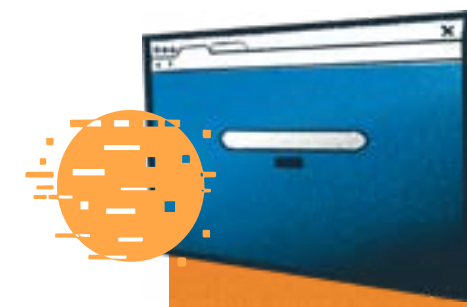
Feminist technology, safety, and care

Across our work, we advanced feminist approaches to technology and safety that recognize harm as social, political, and emotional - not only technical - and that respond through care, accountability, and collective action.



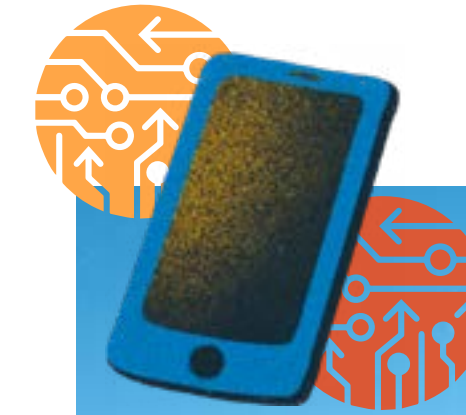
Feminist evidence on technology-facilitated harm:

Through research with [Numun Fund](#), we mapped how organizations across the Majority World are responding to technology-facilitated intimate partner violence (TFIPV), identifying gaps in tools, funding, and survivor-centered support.



Co-creating survivor-centered infrastructure:

In partnership with TechHer Nigeria, we co-developed KURAM, a national platform for reporting and responding to online gender-based violence. The platform combines secure incident reporting, advocacy-ready data, and safeguards aligned with Nigeria's data protection law, informing other [projects](#), while improving platform access and usability and strengthening local capacity to sustain and expand it.



Care beyond tools:

We supported partners with training and accompaniment on responsible data practices, platform governance, and organizational safety, strengthening long-term sustainability rather than short-term technical fixes.



Psychosocial safety as digital safety:

Through community calls and collaborations, including [work with Fundación Acceso](#), we centered psychosocial support as a critical component of digital resilience—recognizing burnout, fear, and isolation as real dimensions of technological harm.



Tech that strengthens digital autonomy and freedom

Our work with internet freedom tool developers continued to center usability and accessibility as critical components of digital safety particularly Global Majority users working in high-risk and low-connectivity contexts.

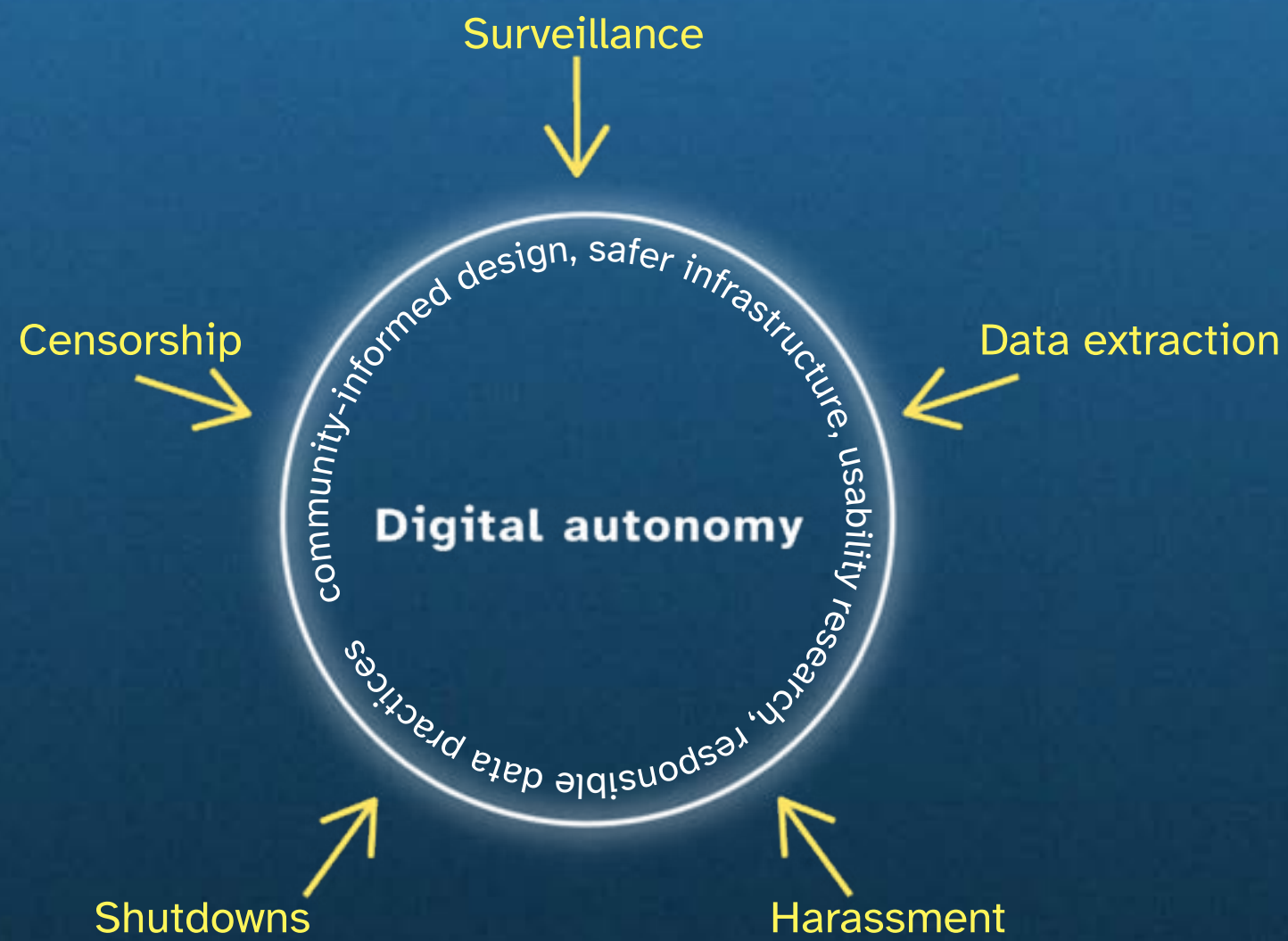
We supported the development and adaptation of tools for organizations facing censorship, surveillance, and restricted access to information. With **Tella**, we helped refine features such as **Nearby Sharing**, enabling secure offline file sharing during shutdowns and outages. We adapted our Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (CAT) for the Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN)'s to increase digital resilience during periods of heightened risk and organizational stress.

Through UX research and collaborations with partners such as **CalyxOS**, we also supported efforts to make privacy-preserving technologies more practical and usable for human rights defenders.

What we're focused on in 2026



At The Engine Room we are building resilience for a justice-oriented-centered-forward world with care, energy, healthy transformation and communities at the center.



Our 2026-2028 strategy deepens our commitment to community-centered research, responsible data governance, security and decision-making, and reimagining healthy digital ecosystems.

Resilience

Resilience remains at our core, but we are stretching its meaning. In 2026, resilience is not only about mitigating harm or responding to digital threats, it is about strengthening the capacity of organizations and ecosystems to imagine, build, and sustain healthier digital futures.

The arc of engagement, partnership and support

We accompany partners across an arc of engagement, from urgent security needs to long-term infrastructure and reimagining. Partners can plug in depending on where their “now” is and adapt as their context changes. We are focussed on moving beyond short cycles toward sustained, relationship-centered accompaniment.

Building energy and propositional futures

We are committed not only to responding to harm, but to building possibilities. In 2026, we will amplify stories of agency and resilience emerging from our partnerships, contribute to communities of practice around digital resilience, and create new spaces where practitioners can engage with technology through curiosity, experimentation, and shared learning.

Centering communities and long-term accompaniment

We are working toward a resilient and sustained presence in both Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2026, this means strengthening partnerships and ensuring that our support remains adaptive as partner needs evolve. We will continue developing accessible, community-centered research, tools, and guides, supporting grassroots storytellers and strengthening the broader digital rights ecosystem.

Partners and funders



We sincerely thank all the partners and funders we have worked with in 2025. Your support and collaboration make our work possible.

Core funders

Ford Foundation
Sigrid Rausing Trust
Luminate
Open Society Foundations
Open Technology Fund

Key partners

Numun Fund
Fundación Acceso
Enabel
Nebula Fund
Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN)
Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (CAT)

Matchbox partners:

TechHer
Trans Youth Initiative
Youth Initiative Foundation (YIF)
Justice and Dignity for the Women of Sahel (JDWS)

UX Lab partners:

PiRogue Tool Suite
CalyxOS
Tella
Center for Digital Resilience (CDR)



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TECH.SOLIDARITY.CARE

The Engine Room is a globally distributed organization of advocates, researchers, technologists, and activists embedded in diverse local human rights movements.

We support human rights defenders and social justice activists to use data and technology in safe, strategic, and responsible ways, while promoting an online information ecosystem that is fair, just and sustainable. Our work combines research, tool design, UX support, and community collaboration to address complex technological challenges and strengthen digital resilience.

Over the past decade and a half, we have partnered with hundreds of organizations around the world, producing practical evidence, designing tools, and co-creating solutions across areas including transparency, humanitarian response, human rights, and digital safety.