RAPID RESPONSE FUND

for the Protection of Digital Rights in Latin America

PRESENTATION

Latin America has seen a new wave of authoritarianism accompanied by an increase in violence against social movements and the implementation of surveillance technologies during the past decade. At the same time, the internet has been overrun with messages promoting an agenda of hate and violence against vulnerable communities.

Facing this scenario, the **Rapid Response Fund for the Protection of Digital Rights in Latin America (RRF)** was launched to support activists, social movements, and civil society organizations to respond to threats to the exercise of human rights in technological environments, especially in urgent situations that cannot be effectively addressed by traditional fundraising cycles.

By allocating small amounts of money – ranging from US$ 5,000 to US$ 8,000 – RRF supports the execution of a wide range of activities that contribute to the development of a free and open digital ecosystem in the region, including public campaigns, applied research, urgent digital security actions, and strategic litigation.

Since its presentation in July 2019, the RRF has supported 36 projects that seek to respond to threats related to surveillance, electoral processes, social protest, gender violence, online hate speech, among others. During 2020, the Fund was able to address several of the needs arising from the state of pandemic and confinement that characterized most of the year. It has also supported the creation of capacities in digital security for populations at risk and vulnerable groups in countries such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Nicaragua.

In 2020, RRF beneficiaries and former beneficiaries could participated in a series of online mini-workshops focused on developing secure communications (messaging, calls and video conferences), protection of computers and mobile devices. Another series of virtual workshops will be offered by Derechos Digitales in the first months of 2021, seeking to promote better digital security practices among organizations and activists in the region.

The RRF is permanently open to applications from civil society organizations and activists working on digital rights issues in countries located from Mexico to the South.

FRR has been built with support from Ford Foundation, Open Society Fundations and Derechos Digitales. It has a Selection Committee, responsible for the development of criteria and the evaluation of proposals. The Committee is currently composed by:

- **Alberto Cerda Silva,** program officer in Technology and Society in Ford Foundation
- **Florencia Goldsman,** member of the International Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision (RIPVG) and Ciberfeministas Guatemala;
- **Jamila Venturini,** regional coordinator of Derechos Digitales;
- **Loreto Bravo,** Hivos Digital Defenders Partnership fellow;
- **Valeria Betancourt,** director of the Information and Communication Policies program of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC).

DERECHOS DIGITALES
América Latina

The Fund strategic direction and coordination is under the responsibility of Derechos Digitales, which in addition to the administration and financial management, accompanies the projects and seeks to promote spaces for exchange and collaboration among beneficiaries and different organizations engaged in the protection of human rights in digital environments in Latin America.

Rapid Response Fund

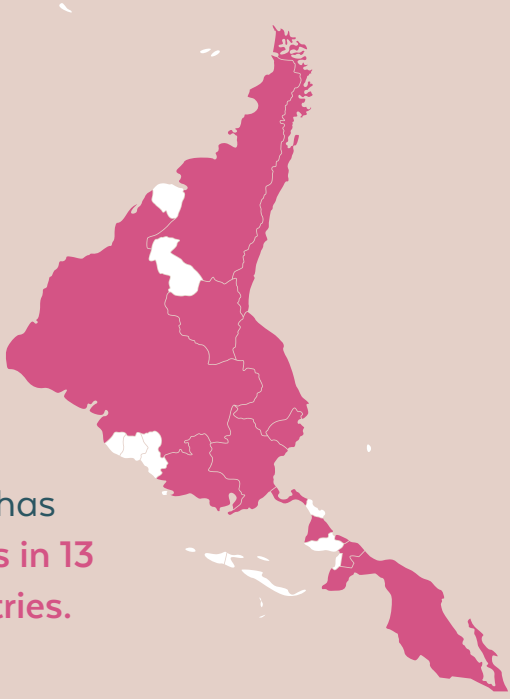
SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA

In a context that is progressively getting more complex and hostile for human rights defenders, the Rapid Response Fund for the Protection of Digital Rights in Latin America (RRF) emerges as an alternative to answer the needs of activists in the region in an agile way. The fund began receiving proposals in July 2019, **and as of December 2020**, it had already supported the development of **36 projects in 13 countries in the region.**

IS THERE ANY CURRENT EMERGENCY RELATED TO DIGITAL RIGHTS THAT NEEDS AN AGILE RESPONSE IN YOUR COUNTRY?
Click **here** and learn how the RRF can support you. ¿Want to know more about what are digital rights? You will find information **here**.

July 2019-December 2020:

RAPID RESPONSE FUND IN NUMBERS



To the date, the RRF has supported **36 projects in 13 Latin American countries.**

Currently, **118** organizations and independent activists have pre-registered to apply for the fund.

The total number of projects submitted is **108,** with a project approval rate of approximately **33%.**

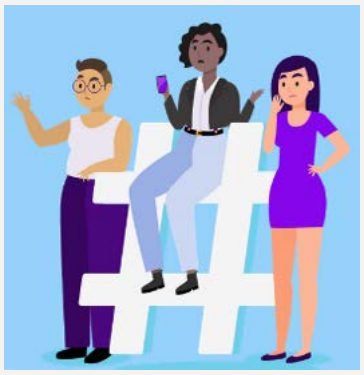
Of all projects presented, **92** were nominated by civil society organizations, while 16 applications were made by independent activists.

Of all approved projects, **16** have already been successfully completed, and **20** are currently under development.

In 18 months, the RRF has offered nearly *US$ 250,000* to the development of projects that contribute to a free and open digital ecosystem in Latin America.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FREE AND OPEN DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM IN LATIN AMERICA

These are some of the projects supported by the Rapid Response Fund during its first 18 months in operation.



VIOLENCE AND HATE SPEECH ONLINE

The Lesbian Association Rompiendo el Silencio carried out an analysis of the social conversation on Twitter about the lesbo-hate attack against Carolina Torres, to make visible the growing problem of intersectional online and offline violence in Chile. Check it out here.

WARNING ABOUT THE RESTRICTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS IN BRAZIL

Because activism is an essential part of democracy, the Não E Proibido project seeks to alert about initiatives that obstruct and criminalize rights protected by the Brazilian Federal Constitution. You can find more information at https://naoeproibido.org/.

THE MEGA-DATABASE THAT THREATENS PRIVACY IN BRAZIL

In October 2019, the government of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil decreed the creation of a "mega-database" with personal information from citizens provided by different public institutions. One year after its creation, Coding Rights carried out an investigation to understand how this registry has been implemented, its impact on privacy, and inconsistencies with the General Data Protection Law, recently implemented in the country. More information about the project here.

EDUCAÇÃO VIGIADA

Educação Vigiada calls attention to the advance of surveillance capitalism in the Brazilian educational system. It maps the agreements between companies with business models based on the massive collection of personal data and educational institutions. You can get to know more about the project at https://educacaovigiada.org.br/.

A COMMUNITY NETWORK TO EXERCISE THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

The suspension of face-to-face classes in Ecuador during the COVID-19 pandemic left the children from the rural community of Guayara without the possibility of continuing their studies. Faced with this situation, the professor and free software activist Luis Fernando Arias developed the project "Conexion Educativa" and created a community network that allows them to develop their studies online. More details of the project here.

DIGITAL FUTURE

Thinking about the future of the country, Internet Bolivia developed a series of papers and events, framed in the context of COVID-19 and the elections, to discuss policy proposals for the economy, technological sovereignty and digital rights. Check out the project at https://internetbolivia.org/futuro-digital/.

INFRASTRUCTURE MIGRATION GUIDE

As part of its closing cycle, the transfeminist cooperative of free technologies *Kéfir* shared this guide to help the migration of infrastructures on the internet and reflect on its ephemeral nature. Check it out here.

RECORDING DIGITAL SECURITY INCIDENTS

In a context of mobilizations for justice in different parts of Latin America, Sursiendo developed a guide and a model to register digital security incidents, as a practice that can mitigate part of the risks faced by human rights defenders in the region. You can access them here.

¿ARE YOU FACING AN EMERGENCY AND HAVE A PROJECT YOU WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE TO THE RRF?

Do not hesitate and fill in the pre-registration form here.
Once you have completed it, you can submit your application here. If you still have questions you can check our FAQ here or send an email to *frr@derechosdigitales.org.*

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DERECHOS
DIGITALES
América Latina