



RAPID



RESPONSE



FUND



for the Protection of Digital
Rights in Latin America

**MILESTONES
2022** →

A response to attacks to human rights in digital environments

In 2022, the Rapid Response Fund for the Protection of Digital Rights in Latin America (RRF) celebrated three years of work. Managed by Derechos Digitales, the RRF was conceived as a contextualized, agile, flexible and less bureaucratic response to the needs of

organizations and activists working in Latin America when facing urgent situations that cannot be addressed by regular funding cycles. During these first three years, the Fund has supported more than 85 projects in 16 Latin American countries.



YEARS



PROJECTS



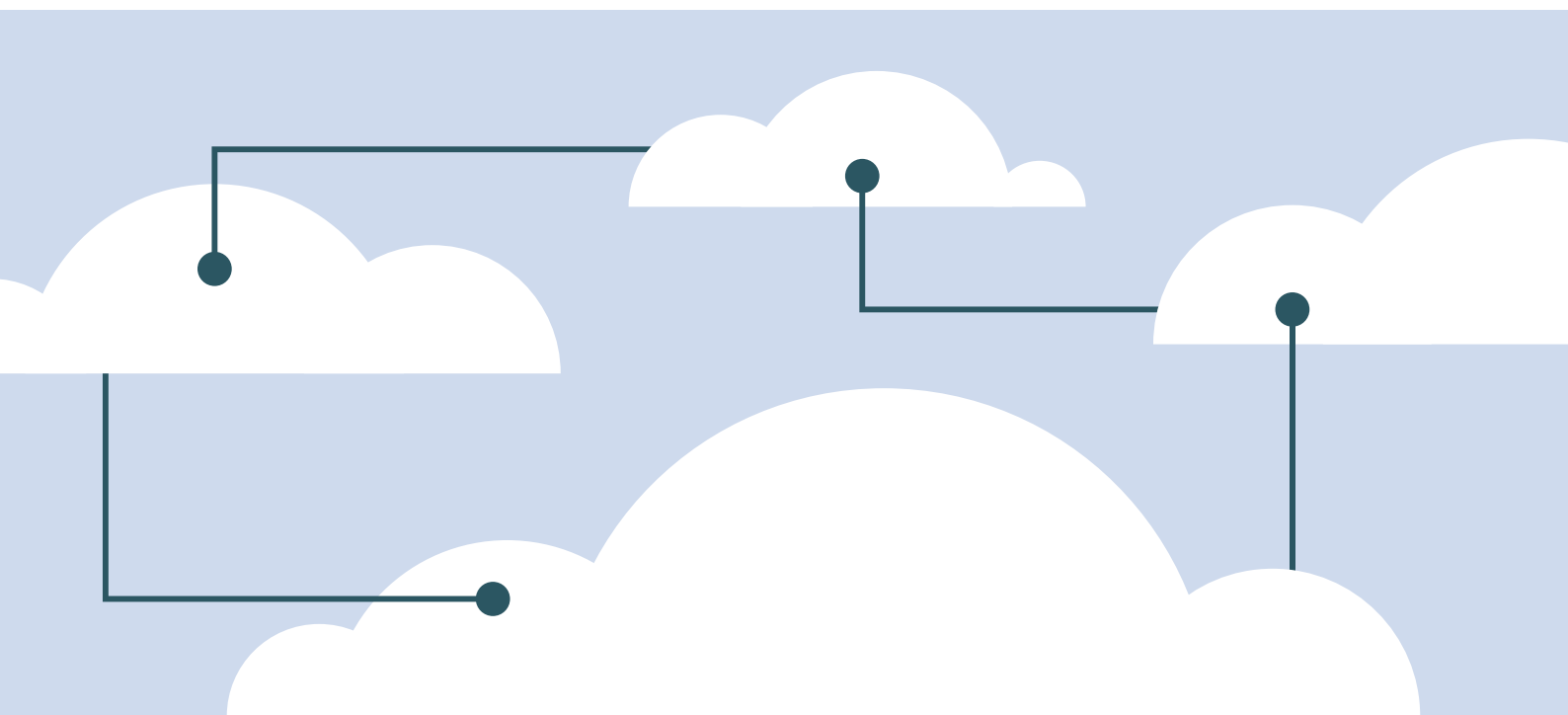
LATIN
AMERICAN
COUNTRIES

It has also established itself as an action tool for facing complex and variable contexts.

The direct contact with organizations and activists during the COVID-19 pandemic enabled the RRF to function as a primary support line, helping to respond to and anticipate potential structural problems involving digital rights in the region, and placing **Derechos Digitales** in a privileged position to understand the impact that threats to human rights in digital environments have on people's lives. The response of organizations and activists to the RRF demonstrates that digital rights are not a niche issue, but a concern of all

communities. During this period, the RRF had several achievements in the promotion and protection of human rights in digital environments. For example, the **Observatorio de Derecho Informático Argentino (ODIA)** received resources from the RRF that allowed the filing of the amparo action through which it was decided to interrupt the operation of the facial recognition

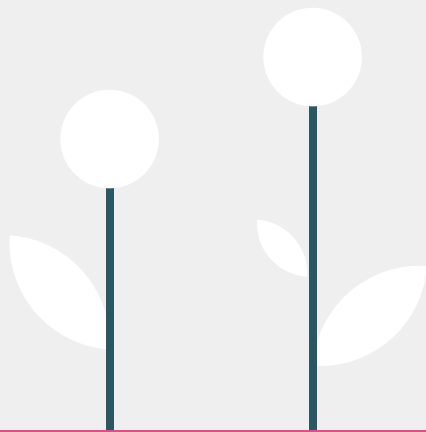
system implemented by the Government of the City of Buenos Aires. For its part, the organization **Cambio Sostenible** developed the project **Digitalmente Seguras**, with the aim of assisting the migrant population in Colombia and reducing their vulnerability, providing them with digital security tools to detect the risks of grooming and human trafficking on social networks.





Derechos Digitales makes available its tools to support the institutional strengthening of those who participate in the Fund, for example, sharing experiences in communication, offering workshops on digital security issues and exchanging perspectives on strategic litigation, in addition to proposing partnerships with potential relevant organizations in the countries where the projects are implemented.

Building alliances to strengthen rights



The Rapid Response Fund started receiving proposals in mid-2019, in order to respond to the growing threats and abuses related to the protection of human rights in digital environments.

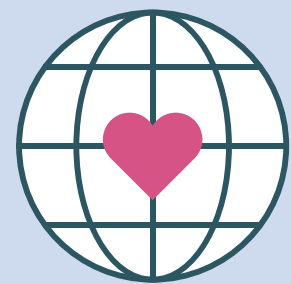
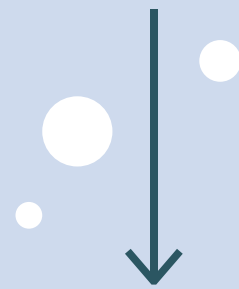
The RRF is administered by Derechos Digitales and has resources provided by the Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations and Derechos Digitales.

The decision on the allocation of funds is made by a Selection Committee, composed of recognized experts in the region on issues of human rights and technology.

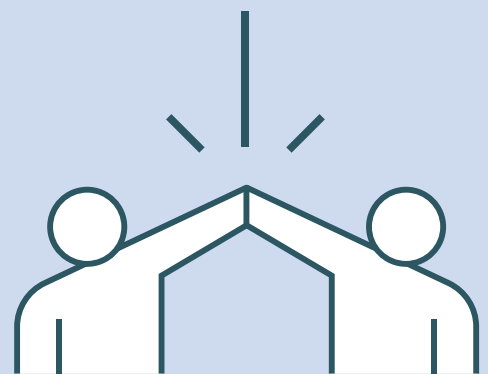
The Rapid Response Fund supports organizations and activists that are doing work in their communities and facing emergency situations in which digital rights are violated. By providing micro-grants - with maximum ceilings of USD 8,000 - the Fund has been able to create relevant social impact, empowering voices and actions that are consistently ignored by public and private authorities.

The flexible nature of the RRF allows activists and small organizations

PROVIDING MICRO-GRANTS



SOCIAL IMPACT



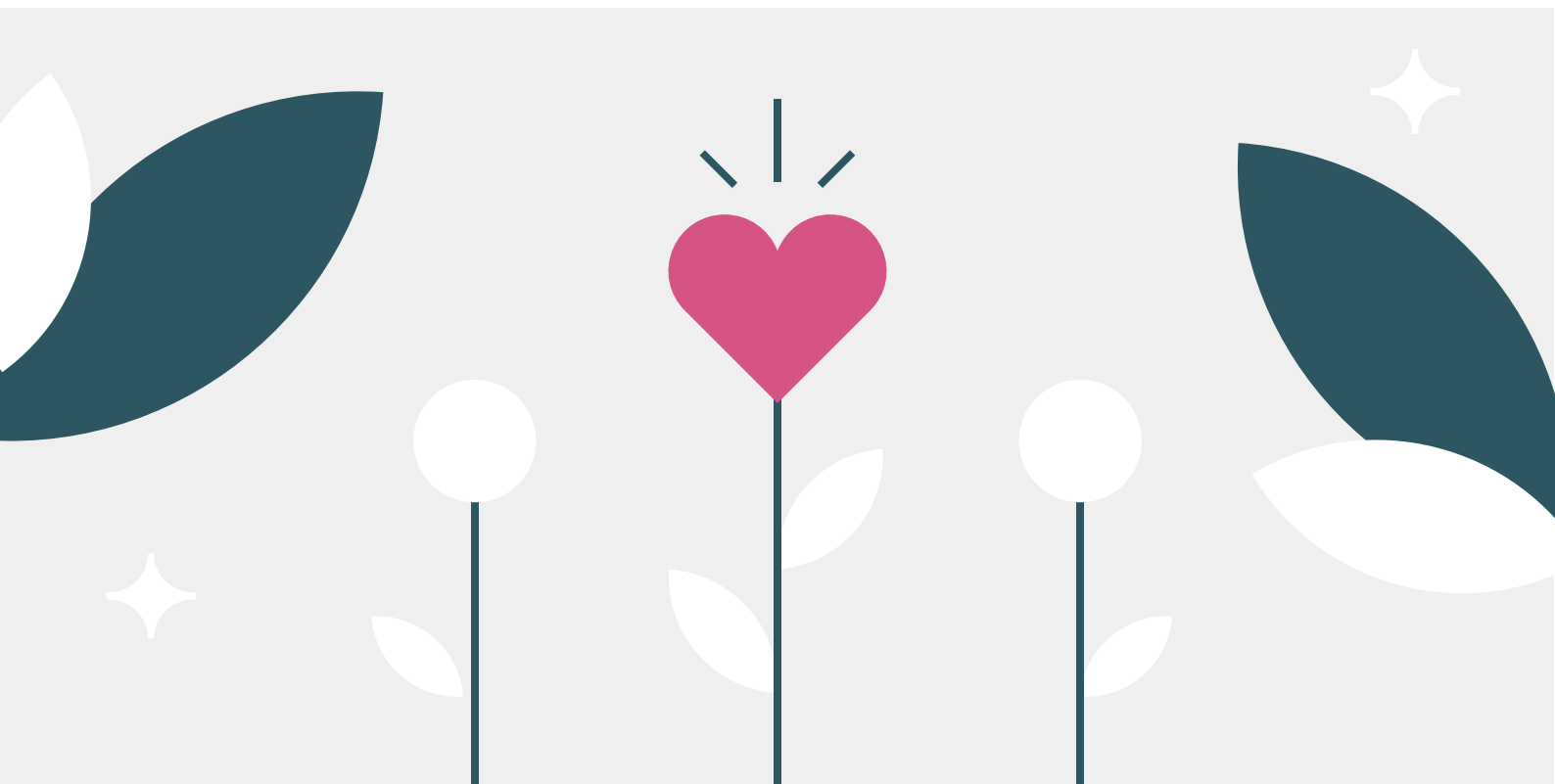
EMPOWERING VOICES AND ACTIONS

to have access to financial resources and comprehensive support, which are aimed beyond the implementation of a specific intervention, but rather at strengthening the work they carry out for their communities.

The RRF prioritizes actions led by groups that have had few opportunities to participate in technology policy debates in Latin America or that are negatively impacted by

actions of control, surveillance and exclusion, such as women, LGBTQIA+ people, indigenous and Afro-American communities, rural populations and people with disabilities.

The proposals also evidence what are the most pressing needs in the region, allowing Derechos Digitales to map the main trends and maintain a constant and direct link with what is happening in the territories.



DURING 2022, THE COMMITTEE WAS COMPOSED OF:

Alberto Cerda Silva

Ford Foundation Technology and Society Program Officer.

Paola Ricaurte

Co-founder of Tierra Común; professor at Tecnológico de Monterrey and research associate at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society.

Debora Calderón

Regional Advocacy Coordinator at Derechos Digitales.

Loreto Bravo Muñoz

Consultant with feminist psychosocial in the defense of human rights, technological sovereignty and digital protection.

Valeria Betancourt

Director of the Information and Communication Policy Program of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC).

Florencia Goldsman

Member of the Red Internacional de Periodistas con Visión de Género (RIPVG) and Ciberfeministas Guatemala.

Fernanda Bruno

Member and founder of the Latin American Network of Surveillance, Technology and Society Studies, coordinator of MediaLab. UFRJ and professor of the Graduate Program in Communication and Culture of the Institute of Psychology at UFRJ.

Claudio Ruiz

Co-founder of the experimental consultant Crítica. He is one of the founders of Derechos Digitales.

Haydeé Quijano

Communications coordinator at SocialTIC and member of Ciberseguras.

Veridiana Alimonti

Associate director for Latin America policy at the Electronic Frontier Foundation.



The RRF is permanently open to new opportunities for collaboration. If your organization would like to support this important initiative for the protection of digital rights in Latin America, please write to frr@derechosdigitales.org

Trends in Latin America: the main threats and the RRF's response over three years



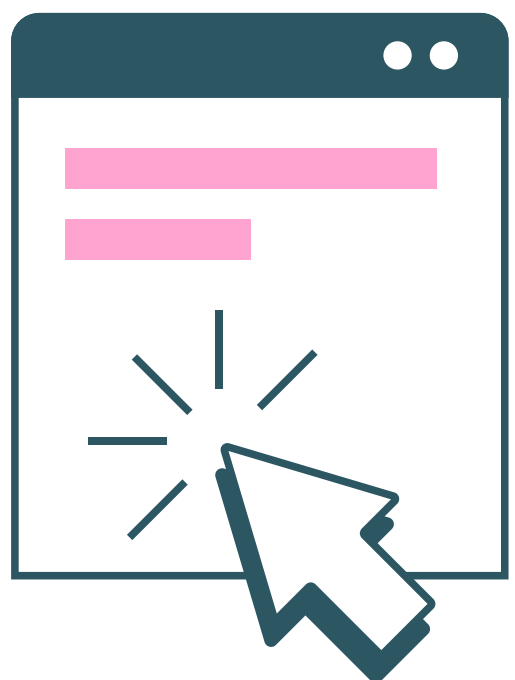
Due to the way the fund works, **the RRF is in a privileged position to understand the impact that threats to human rights have in digital environments**, not as something that occurs on a purely theoretical level, reserved for specialized discussions, but **as a real**

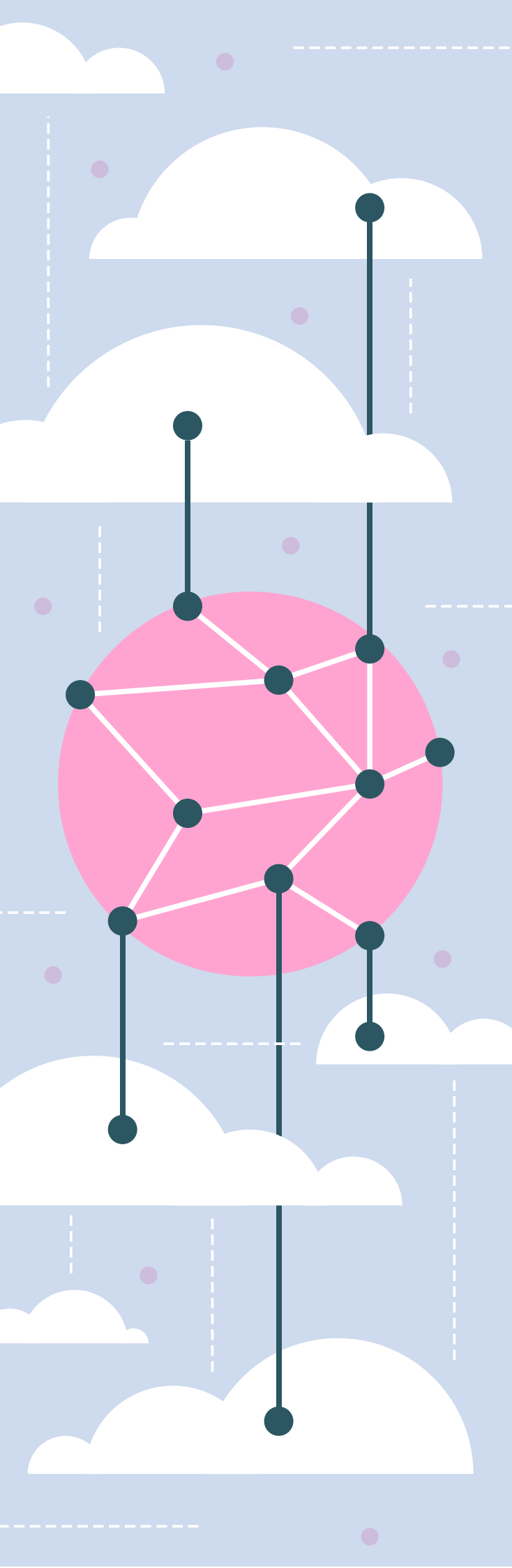
and concrete reality that place entire communities and groups at disadvantage and in vulnerability.

From this point of view, at least three layers of work with digital rights are seen as predominant in the region:

ACCESS AND ACCESSIBILITY

Meaningful access to the Internet goes far beyond infrastructure. In Latin America, an important part of the efforts to guarantee the effectiveness of digital rights involves promoting connectivity and coverage for all people, as well as capacities that enhance access to information, culture, knowledge and





education, among the many other rights potentially facilitated by the Internet. That includes, for example, initiatives that offer tools to guarantee access to the Internet and that promote social participation in public discussions, overcoming technological or language barriers. This was the case of the **Tierra Digna** initiative in **Colombia**, which sought to strengthen digital mechanisms for the participation of indigenous populations in discussions on energy transition during the pandemic, and **Surco's** efforts to promote digital inclusion that respects the culture of indigenous peoples in **Mexico**.



DIVERSITY

AND PLURALITY

A growing challenge in Latin America concerns online rights abuses and violations.

Documenting and denouncing such abuses has been a central part of the

efforts of various organizations and activists in the region. Initiatives such as **Datos Protegidos** give visibility to the severe impacts of gender-based violence online.

PUBLIC POLICIES AND ADVOCACY

Year after year, government initiatives that restrict the free and safe use of the Internet are multiplying. This concern has been at the core of the RRF's conception and is still

present as a trend in different countries, where surveillance and criminalization of legitimate speech threaten the exercise of rights in digital environments.



Rapid Response Fund in 2022: more projects, more thematic diversity and more funding



During 2022, the Rapid Response Fund granted funds for a total of USD 165,950.00 to 21 civil society organizations from 12 Latin American countries.

RRF 2022

HIGHLIGHTED INITIATIVES

LITIGATION ON POLICE USE OF AUTOMATED FACE RECOGNITION

Data Uruguay (Uruguay)
#FacialRecognition

Police use of facial recognition technologies has been quietly increasing in Latin American countries. This deployment is characterized by excessive opacity and lack of public debate. Uruguay is no exception.



INDIGITAL: PLATFORM SPECIALIZED IN DIGITAL RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS

Surco (Mexico)
#DerechosDigitales
#DigitalRights

Indigital is an initiative that seeks to enable the political participation of indigenous peoples in digital environments, through the promotion and appropriation of digital rights, in order to guarantee access to information in indigenous languages.



RETHINKING THE FUTURE OF CRYPTOCURRENCIES

TEDIC (Paraguay)
#Cryptocurrencies
#Environment

The research «Reflexiones sobre el impacto ambiental de la criptominería» [Reflections on the environmental impact of cryptomining] explores the main global discussions on cryptomining as an electro-intensive activity, the problem of the electronic waste it generates and its respective correlates in Paraguay.



CIVIL SOCIETY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROCESS OF AI REGULATION IN BRAZIL FROM A PERSPECTIVE ROOTED IN THE STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES OF THE COUNTRY AND THE REGION.

Data Privacy (Brazil)
#ArtificialIntelligence

The project focuses on enhancing contributions from civil society to the process of regulation of artificial intelligence (AI) in Brazil. The initiative sought to reinforce guarantees for the protection of digital rights and the establishment of clear rules on the duties, responsibilities and procedures to be respected for the development and use of these technologies.



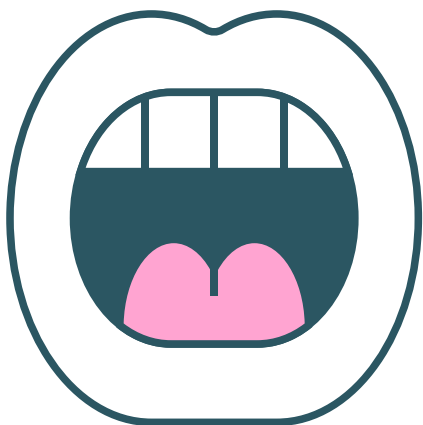
SOCIEDAD DIGITAL INCLUYENTE (INCLUSIVE DIGITAL SOCIETY)

Corporación Cambio Sostenible (Colombia)
#DigitalSkills

"Sociedad Digital Incluyente" (Inclusive Digital Society) seeks to contribute to the protection of human rights in digital environments of the migrant population in Colombia, through the creation of an effective and unified response to the events of digital violence and xenophobia on the Internet, working together with 30 organizations that promote human rights, the culture of peace and migrant inclusion in the city of Bogotá D.C. and other municipalities of Cundinamarca.



The RRF in words of the organizations that have received support



OBSERVATORIO DE DERECHO INFORMÁTICO ARGENTINO

Strategic litigation over the implementation of the facial recognition system for fugitives in the City of Buenos Aires.

“Winning an RRF was reaching a goal, and at the same time the beginning of a path towards the professionalization of the organization. It helped us a lot to improve in organic, internal and administrative issues. The support of the Derechos Digitales team was key in that sense. Regarding the project, I do not know if we would have been able to do it if we did not win the RRF. We were able, for example, to bring in an expert in machine learning who explained some of the processes involved in the capture of information and all this knowledge resulted, finally, in the injunction filed against the government of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires”.

"[The RRF] was important in being able to take the case to court. We didn't know of any other fund we could apply to in order to do this. The process is not over yet: we are drawing up the last recommendations, a report of the last meeting we held with the whole group, which we called "Meeting -or dialogue- of women" to be able to talk about the effects of all this, with the sentence in hand. We also had a focus group where we shared with a psychologist."

DATOS PROTEGIDOS

FOUNDATION

Support for victims of gender-based violence and digital extortion.

The Future

Thanks to the time we have dedicated to work on the RRF and the close contact we have established with organizations in the region, we were able to identify the need to continue strengthening education, capacity building and training in the use of the Internet, particularly in communities with little access to connectivity or knowledge.

In our region, there are structural situations that involve different types of urgency.

This is why Derechos Digitales has conceived the Fund

for the Promotion of Digital Rights in Latin America (DRF), which will support projects aimed at raising awareness among communities about the exercise of their digital rights and promote a free and safe digital environment in favor of the integral development of all people in Latin America.

Both the RRF and the DRF will be open all year on a permanent basis. However, unlike the RRF, which provides responses to proposals within five

working days, the DRF will consider annual evaluation cycles. Along with the new fund, **Derechos Digitales** will launch a new management system so that organizations and activists can apply for funds in an automated way. It will be possible to apply to the RRF and the DRF on this new platform, facilitating the communication with those who apply to the funds.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE VISIT** ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

<https://fondos.derechosdigitales.org/home>

We make the RRF **together**

Three years of successful experience operating the RRF demonstrate the pressing need of having instruments such as

the RRF and the DRF for the **advance of human rights in digital environments in Latin America.**

**WITH YOUR CONTRIBUTION
WE CAN DO MUCH MORE.**



Write us at

frr@derechosdigitales.org

and let us talk about
how we can collaborate.