



**OPEN KNOWLEDGE
DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**



PROJECT REPORT

PROJECT TITLE

Digital Rights
Defenders

LAB

**PILOT
COHORT
2025**



Location:
Northeastern Nigeria

Project Period:

**January 2025 –
September 2025**

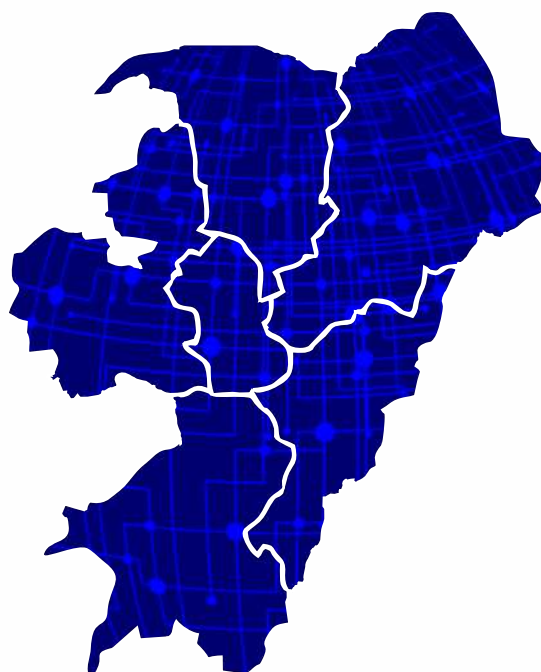
Executive Summary

The Digital Rights Defenders Lab was launched as a pilot initiative by the Open Knowledge Development Initiative (OKDI) to build the capacity of feminist organizations and young activists in Northern Nigeria on digital rights, online safety, and advocacy. Recognizing the widening digital divide and security vulnerabilities across the region, the Lab served as a platform for knowledge exchange, capacity building, and collaboration in the defense of human rights in the digital space.

The pilot cohort focused on 50 feminist leaders and organizations from Northern Nigeria by equipping them with digital advocacy skills, practical tools, and resources to strengthen online safety and amplify digital rights awareness in their respective communities. The initiative culminated in the unveiling of a digital toolkit and the official launch of the Digital Rights Defenders Network.

Background and Rationale

Northern Nigeria, particularly the northeastern region, faces growing challenges in digital safety and advocacy capacity. Many organizations and activists lack the tools, knowledge, and networks to defend themselves and their communities in the online space. The Digital Rights Defenders Lab was conceived as a strategic intervention to bridge this gap, promote safe digital practices, and empower feminist voices to lead in the defense of civic and digital rights.



Project Objectives

- Strengthen the capacity of feminist organizations and young activists on digital safety and advocacy.
- Create open-source tools to support digital rights defense and awareness.
- Establish a network of Digital Rights Defenders in Northern Nigeria.
- Promote cross-sector collaboration between civil society, government agencies, and digital advocates.

Implementation Overview

The project was implemented over a 9-month period, combining in-person workshops, virtual engagements, mentorship, and collaborative creation sessions. Participants were selected through an open call targeting feminist and youth-led organizations operating in Northern Nigeria.

Key Highlights:

50 participants trained in digital advocacy and safety.

Development of the Digital Rights Advocacy Toolkit.

Formation of the Digital Rights Defenders Network (DRDN).

Presentation of project outcomes at the Global Open Knowledge Gathering in Nairobi, Kenya.

Partnerships and Stakeholders

The project engaged a diverse group of partners, including local feminist organizations, digital rights advocates, and the National Orientation Agency (NOA). Collaboration with these stakeholders enhanced visibility, outreach, and sustainability of the initiative.



Activities Conducted



Training Sessions Summary:

A series of interactive training sessions were conducted, focusing on digital rights awareness, online safety, advocacy strategies, and practical tools for feminist organizations and activists in Northern Nigeria.

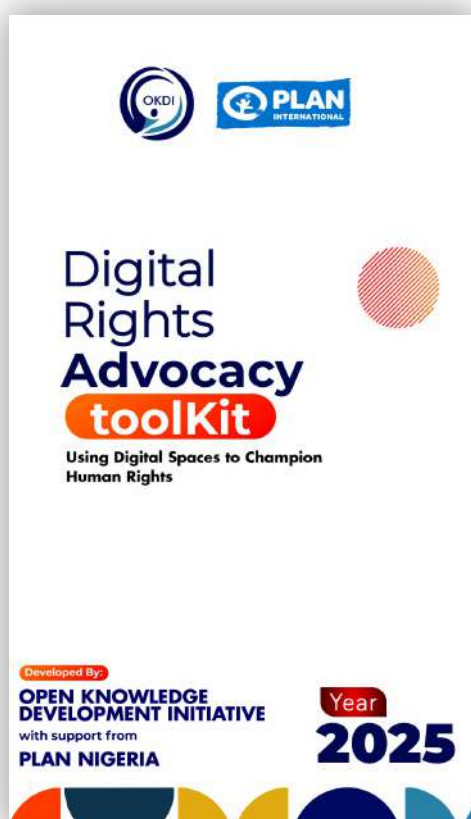


Activities Conducted



Tools Created:

Participants collaboratively developed key digital resources, including a Digital Rights Advocacy Toolkit, aimed at strengthening online security and amplifying digital rights advocacy across communities.



Activities Conducted



Launch of the Digital Rights Defenders Network:

The event also marked the official launch of the Digital Rights Defenders Network, a growing community of young advocates committed to advancing digital freedom and online security.



Award Ceremony:

Outstanding participants were recognized and celebrated during the Video Challenge Contest on Digital Defense, which encouraged creative storytelling on online safety and human rights protection.



Activities Conducted



Presentation and Spotlight at the Global Open Knowledge Gathering:

The Digital Rights Defenders Toolkit was presented and spotlighted at the Global Open Knowledge Gathering in Nairobi, Kenya, with the full funding support of the Wikimedia Foundation for one of our staff to attend and represent OKDI. This opportunity amplified the visibility of the Lab's impact and fostered new international partnerships for future cohorts.



Key Results and Impact

- 50 feminist leaders trained on digital safety and advocacy.
- Creation of an open-access digital tools for advocacy and online protection.
- Launch of a regional network of digital rights advocates.
- Strengthened partnerships with government and civil society actors.
- Increased public awareness through online campaigns and tool dissemination.

Gallery



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About OKDI

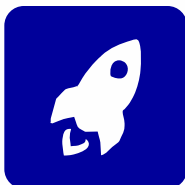
The Open Knowledge Development Initiative (OKDI) is a youth-led nonprofit organization committed to empowering individuals and communities through access to knowledge, open data, civic participation, and digital innovation. We work to promote transparency, social justice, digital rights, and inclusive development—particularly among underrepresented groups including women, persons with disabilities, and young people from marginalized communities.

Through our programs and advocacy efforts, OKDI fosters meaningful participation in democratic processes, champions human rights both online and offline, and builds the capacity of youth and grassroots actors to lead change in their communities.



OUR VISION

We envision a more informed, empowered, and accountable society that transcends boundaries.



OUR MISSION

We are dedicated to empowering communities with the tools, knowledge, and voice they need to drive positive change.

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