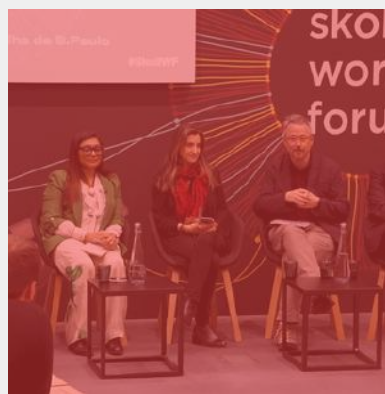
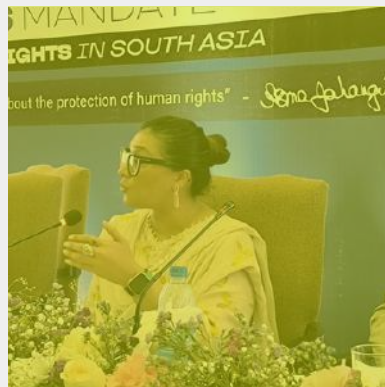
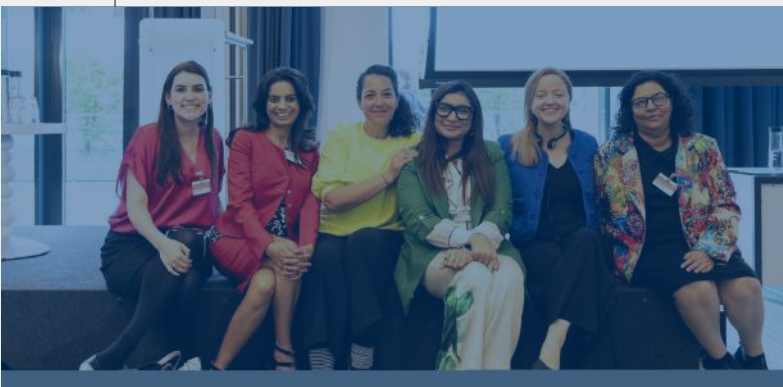


Digital Rights Foundation

Annual Report 2024



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About DRF

Digital Rights Foundation (DRF) is a women-led, not-for-profit organization working since 2013 to advance digital rights and online freedoms across South Asia and the broader Global Majority. We advocate for inclusive, rights-respecting digital spaces by driving policy change through strategic engagement with relevant stakeholders. Our work focuses on making digital platforms and emerging technologies more equitable, accessible, and accountable. At the grassroots level, we empower individuals particularly women, marginalized communities, and human rights defenders with the tools and knowledge to navigate the Internet safely and assert their rights online.

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Introduction

In 2024, DRF continued its mission to advance digital rights, online freedoms, and digital literacy across South Asia and the Global Majority. This Annual Report captures a year of progress, resilience, and impact in our ongoing mission to create a safer, more inclusive digital landscape.

From addressing pressing digital rights challenges to amplifying critical conversations on AI governance, data privacy, and online freedoms, our work has remained at the forefront of change. We worked to amplify voices historically excluded from global digital policy discussions through research-based advocacy and cross-border collaborations. Our initiatives also empowered individuals—especially women, journalists, and human rights defenders—with the knowledge and tools to safely navigate digital spaces and assert their rights online.

As we move forward, DRF remains committed to building an equitable digital future that prioritizes accessibility, safety, and justice for all.

Note from Executive Director

While 2024 ushered in rapid change, both in terms of socio-political developments and the digital rights landscape, our tech policies and legislation have been slow to catch up. Comprehensive data protection and AI policies are still missing on the national front, while new bills were ushered in under the guise of digital progress that, in reality, curb our intrinsic fundamental rights. DRF documented these developments and more in its civil society submission report for the UN's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) review in October. However, in light of changing tech-political dynamics at home and across the region, DRF's goals naturally evolved to advocate for justice and equity in online spaces, prioritizing people over profits and critically approaching governance dialogues on emerging technologies from an intersectional, inclusive lens. Our annual report is a reflection of our cumulative work in the past year, and this new direction going forward.



Nighat Dad

Executive Director
Digital Rights Foundation

Information integrity and tech accountability lies at the heart of DRF's mission. DRF's Election Desk monitored the Pakistan 2024 General Elections actively for data misuse, online gendered disinformation, and platform responsiveness to harmful speech. This extensive exercise fed into our research-based advocacy in the form of tangible in-depth studies, namely Platforms at the Polls, Gendered Online Hate in Pakistan, and Gendered Disinformation in South Asia Case Study - Pakistan (see chapter: "Policy Research & Analyses").

Our Digital Security Helpline, a rapid-response lifeline for those who experience tech-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) and gendered disinformation, completed eight years of its operations during which it received 20,020 complaints from across Pakistan. In 2024 alone, the helpline dealt with 3,171 cases from 25 countries, working tirelessly to bring relief to affected women, girls and marginalized communities. In addition to providing direct support, the helpline shared anonymized, evidence-based insights that informed our policy engagements with governments and platforms, backing our recommendations with stories of real-world harms and lived experiences of vulnerable communities across the Global Majority. It is no small feat, and DRF would not be what it is without our helpline's brave and immensely resourceful team.

DRF also successfully held its annual Emotional Resilience and Well-being Retreat for Women Journalists, a flagship event that brings together women in the industry from across Pakistan for a well-deserved respite from their demanding (and frequently traumatizing) work. From self-care practices to building solidarity and care networks, the retreat is a true hallmark of the principles DRF stands for, and we're thrilled that our participants had such a rejuvenating experience.

We also continued to advance digital literacy to students, women and underserved communities as part of our mission to amplify marginalized voices and promote equitable digital participation. Our *Humara Internet*, *Mahfooz Internet Programme and Digital Literacy* and *Citizenship Bootcamps* taught scores of students essential skills such as digital etiquettes, identifying misinformation and disinformation, responsible AI use and key laws for online protection.

As a former member of the UN Secretary General's High-Level Advisory Board on AI, I am proud to announce that the Board's recommendations were adopted in the Global Digital Compact at the UN General Assembly's Summit of the Future session in 2024. It is surreal to see months of active engagement translate into groundbreaking, real-world action. With the Board's input and widespread acceptance from member states, the Global Digital Compact represents a significant commitment to AI and data governance that is grounded in a rights-based, inclusive framework. This is no less than a historic achievement that will now shape AI governance policy initiatives around the world.

Another groundbreaking achievement is the establishment of the Global Majority House in Brussels, a pioneering initiative that DRF is proud to be a part of. This initiative is in line with our goal to hold tech platforms accountable and prevent the accumulation of influence in the hands of a few. It is furthermore a testament to cross-border knowledge-sharing and regional solidarity building, prioritizing a multi-stakeholder approach with voices from the Global Majority at the helm. I am also happy to share that DRF participated in the Beijing+30 review in December, a platform for critically appraising member parties' progress in implementing the Beijing Platform of Action's gender equality goals. As part of the Beijing+30's Asia-Pacific Civil Society Steering Committee, we joined hands with regional partners to call for gender justice, increased digital literacy and an end to TFGBV.

While the challenges in the digital rights space may be more daunting now than ever before—especially with the rapid development of AI technologies posing new and unforeseen threats to civic freedoms—I remain optimistic for the year ahead. The presence of South Asia, and the Global Majority at large, has become stronger with the launch of the Global Majority House (and now *DACSA—Digital Accountability Collective South Asia*). DRF is also approaching 2025 with renewed energy and focus, building our in-house capacities to address the proliferation of AI-generated disinformation and drive global digital policy conversations towards more equitable outcomes.

Finally, I would be remiss not to mention our most important partner in this journey—you, our friends and followers. It is your continued support that keeps us going another day, reminding us why we do what we do, and why our work will always matter, come what may. We remain unwavering in our commitment to advance progress and ensure our digital world becomes a safe, inclusive, and empowering space for all!

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1

Our Impact and Outreach

TOTAL SESSIONS ORGANIZED 32

TRAINING WORKSHOPS

21

PANELS AND DISCUSSIONS

6

BOOTCAMPS

5

TOTAL PEOPLE REACHED 3,179

STUDENTS AND THE YOUTH

289

WOMEN AND GENDER MINORITIES

115

JOURNALISTS AND ACTIVISTS

34

DRF ON SOCIAL MEDIA

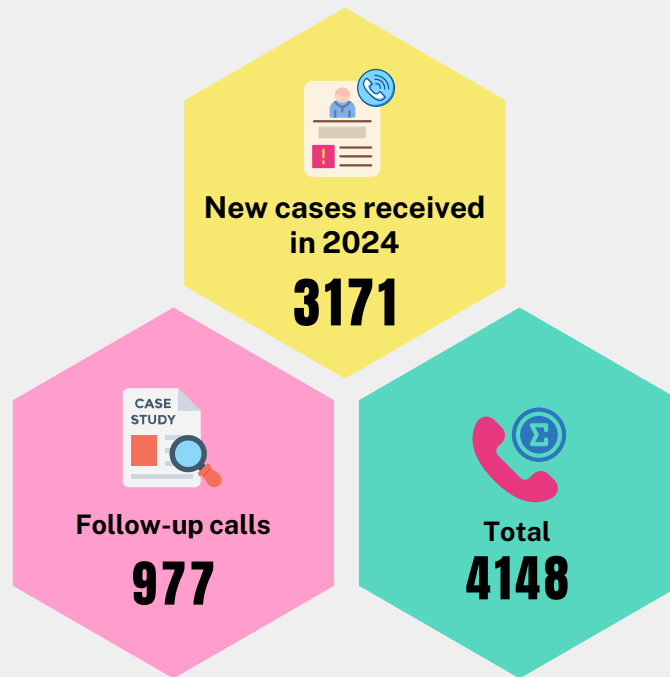


DRF IN PRESS

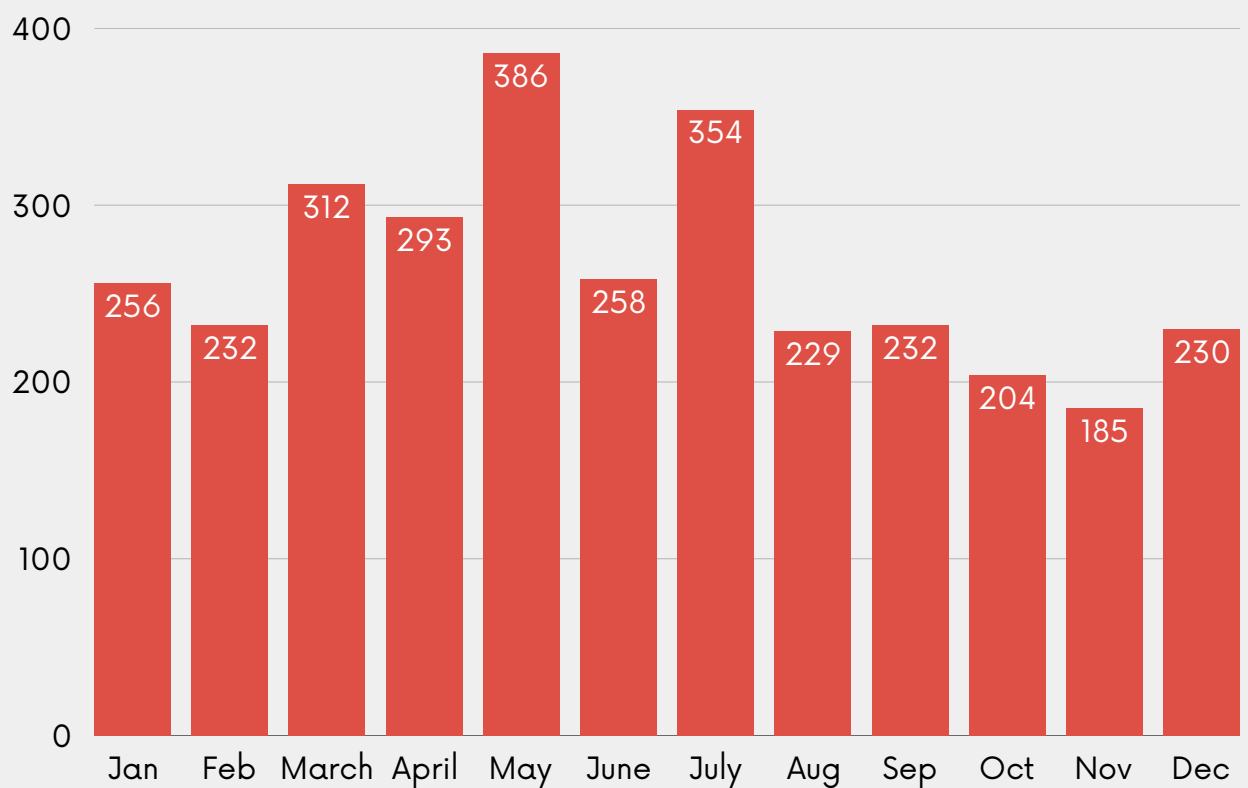


177 mentions
over the
course of
the year

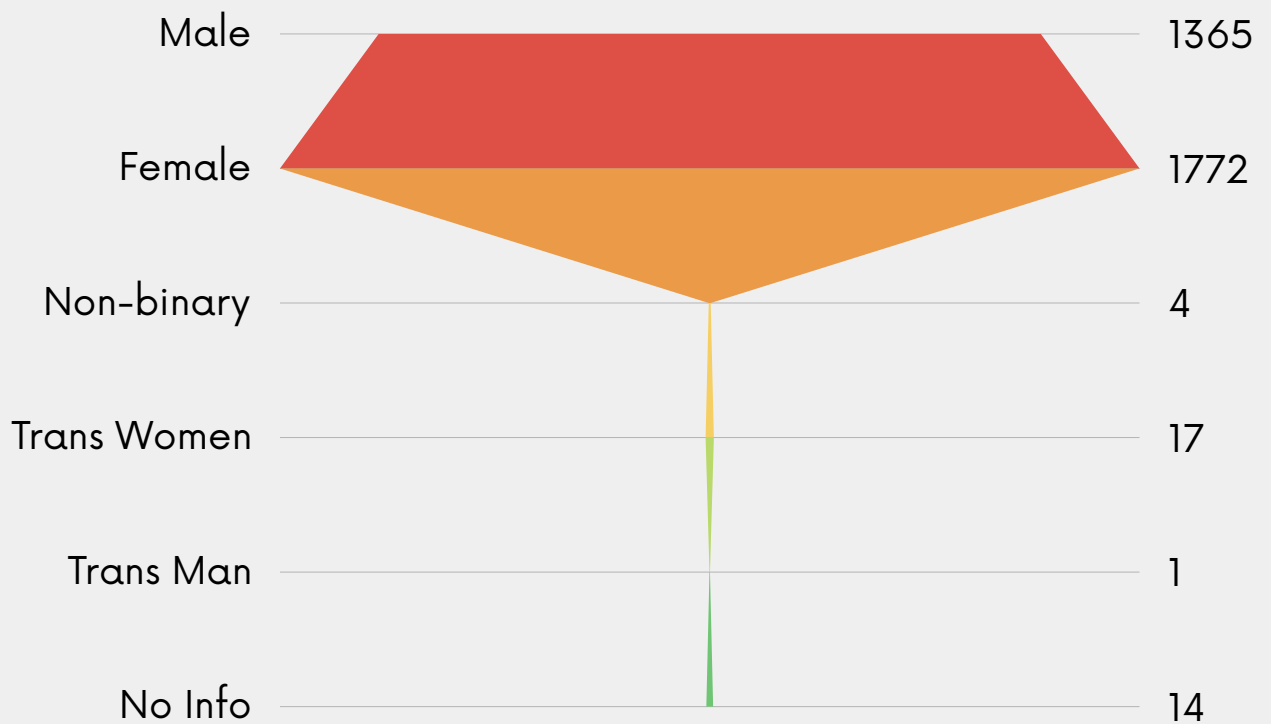
The Digital Security Helpline



Monthly Calls



Gender Breakdown



Types of Cases Reported

2741 CYBER HARASSMENT

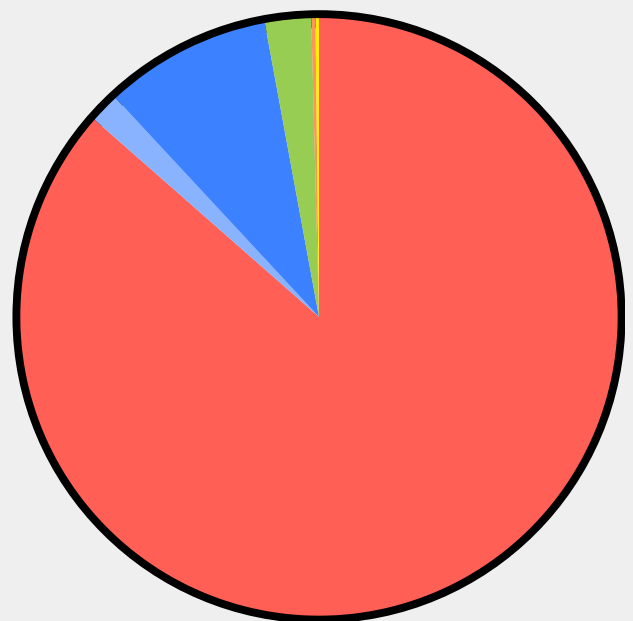
51 DOMESTIC ISSUE

286 GENERAL INQUIRY

79 OTHER DIGITAL ISSUE

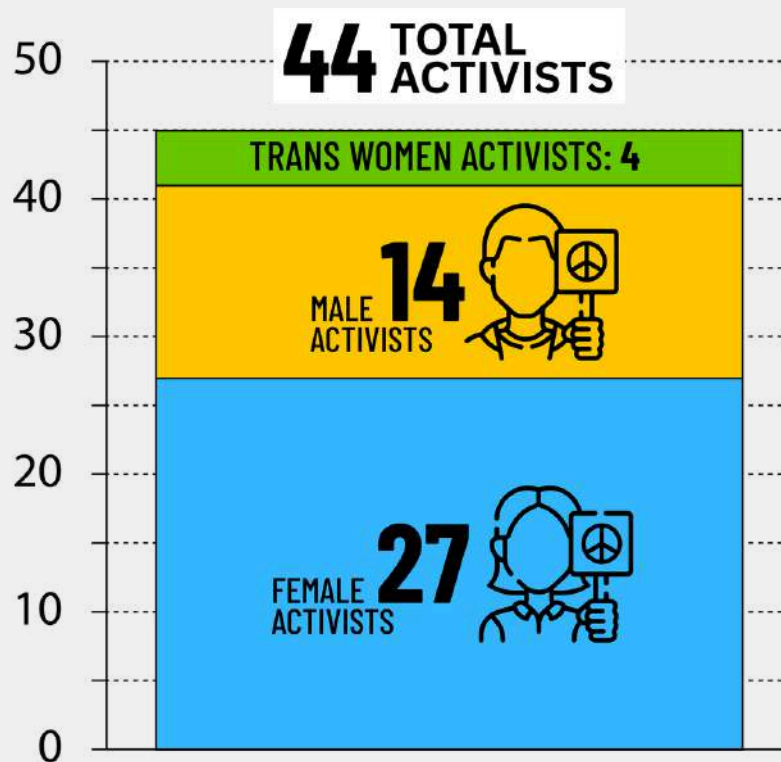
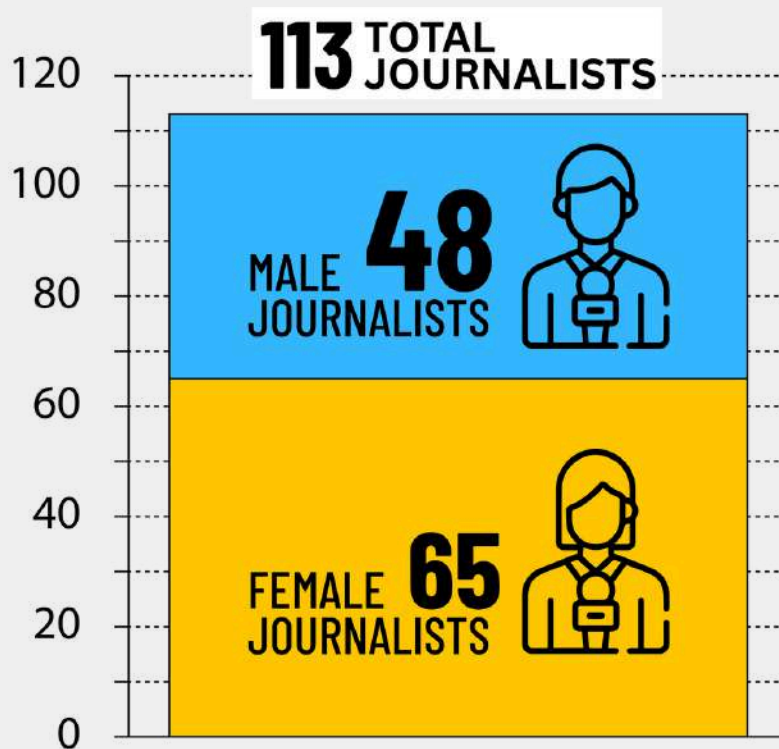
07 PHYSICAL HARASSMENT

06 WORKPLACE HARASSMENT





Vulnerable Groups Helped



2

2024 in Pakistan: The Digital Rights Landscape

February

February 8

Mobile internet, phone services **suspended** on Election Day.

February 17

X/Twitter **banned** post-Election, with no government explanations

March

March 2

Pakistani Senator **submits** resolution to completely ban social media, retracts resolution.

April

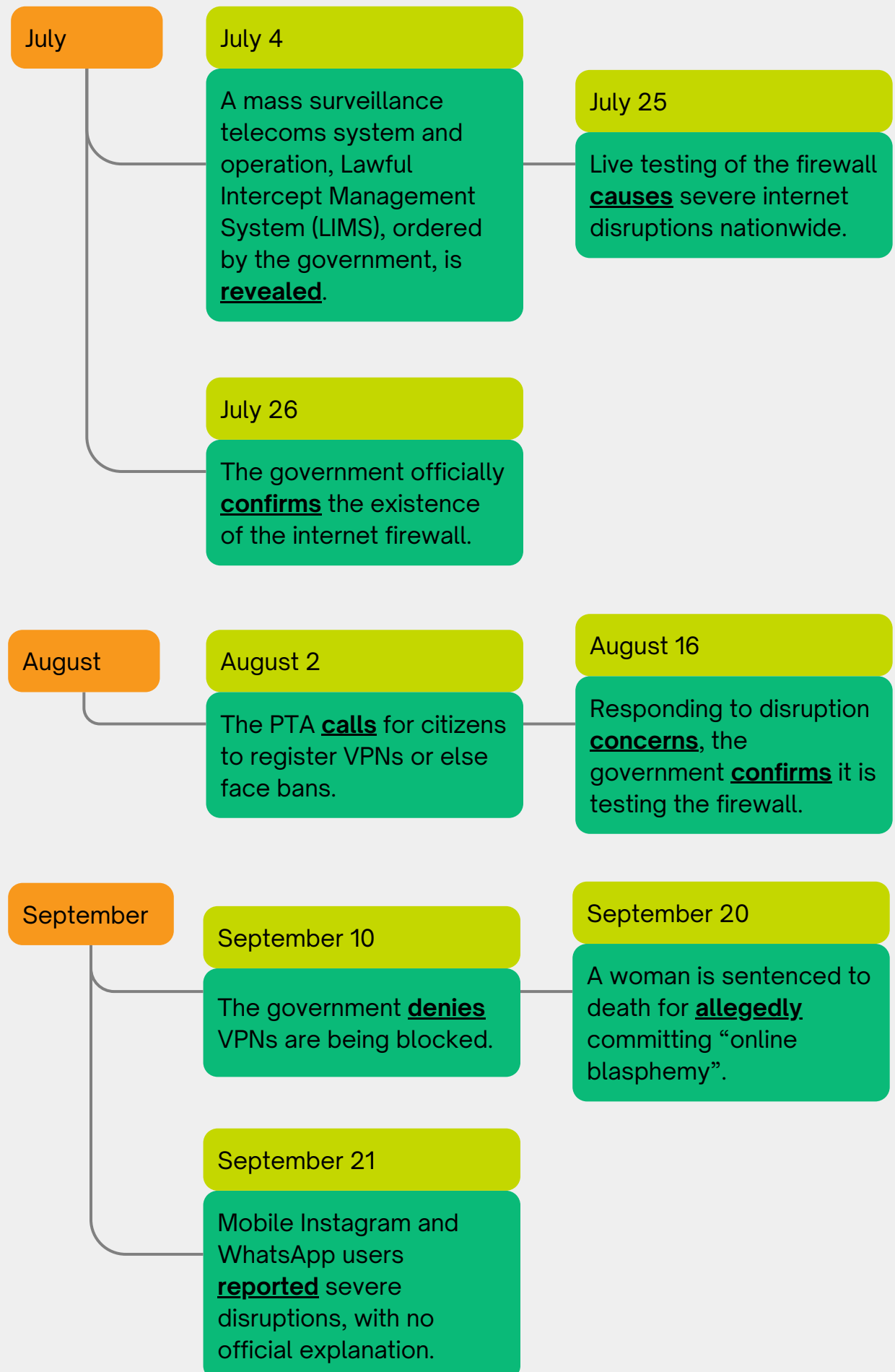
April 17

Government **concedes** banning X/Twitter on “national security” grounds.

June

June 7

Anonymous sources **reveal** the existence of an internet firewall to monitor the internet.



October

October 4

Mobile phone, internet services **suspended** ahead of a planned protest.

October 11

Firewall **installation** causes telecom customers to experience nationwide disruptions.

October 11

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa **reports** mobile internet, phone suspensions.

November

November 10

Pakistanis **report** severe internet disruptions and the blocking of VPNs.

November 14

2.7 million Pakistanis have had their data leaked been **over a 5 year period**.

November 15

Mobile internet users in Balochistan **reported** the suspension of services.

November 16

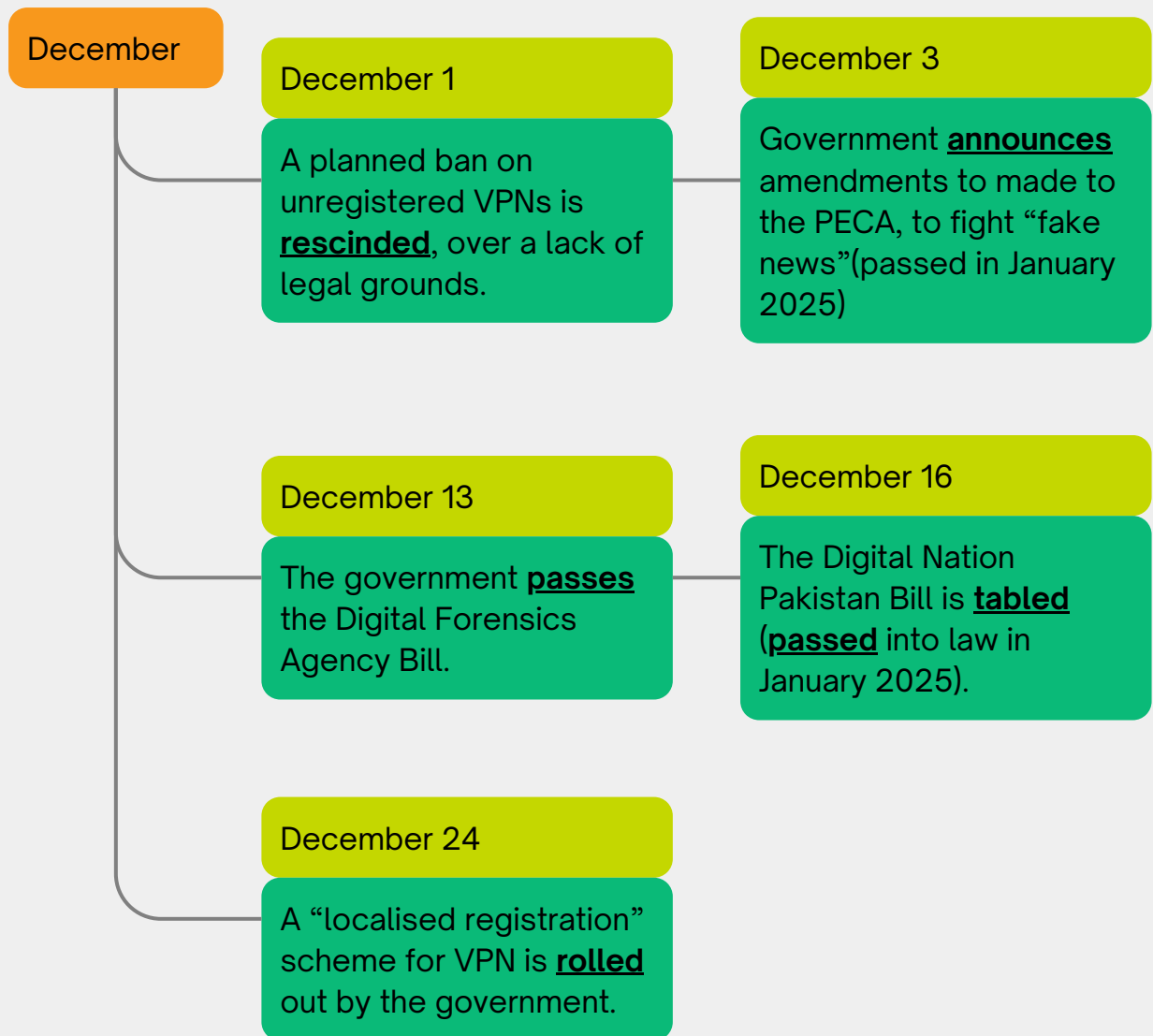
Pakistan's Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) **claimed** that the use of VPNs was "unislamic".

November 21

BlueSky is temporarily **blocked** by the government of Pakistan.

November 21

Government **blocks** mobile services in Islamabad in response to opposition protests



2nd globally for longest duration of shutdowns
([Top10VPN](#) - Dec. 2024)

198th globally for poor Internet speed
([World Population Review](#) - Dec. 2024)

\$1.62 billion in economic losses from Internet shutdowns
([Top10VPN](#) - Jan. 2025)

27 out of 100 for freedom of expression online
([Freedom On The Net](#) - Oct. 2024)



Landmark Achievements

Global Digital Compact at UNGA

In March 2024, Nighat Dad spoke on a panel ‘Human Rights - A Guiding Compass for the Global Digital Compact’ at the 55th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, highlighting how human rights should be addressed in the framework of the Global Digital Compact. The Global Digital Compact is an initiative proposed in the UN Secretary-



General António Guterres's Common Agenda (read more [here](#)). The UN Secretary General’s High-Level Advisory Body on AI, of which Nighat Dad was a member, then presented their final report at the UN General Assembly in September 2024 (available [here](#)).

This report is the culmination of the body's efforts to establish a global AI governance framework that prioritizes human rights, particularly with the meaningful inclusion of the Global South. Its recommendations are now integrated in a groundbreaking pact among 193 member states called the Global Digital Compact, representing a significant commitment to rights-based AI and data governance. Ms. Dad provided further insights on the body's work during the Freedom Online Coalition's side event, emphasizing the importance of empowering civil society organizations to actively shape the future, and of holding social media platforms accountable to uphold fundamental rights.

Global Majority House in Brussels

DRF—in collaboration with the Center for Studies in Freedom of Expression and Access to Information (CELE), 7amleh, WHAT TO FIX, The London Story Foundation, Citizens’ Association (CA) “Zašto ne (Why not)”, and Myanmar Internet Project—set up the Global Majority House in November to drive critical dialogue and collaboration between the Global South and Europe on digital governance. According to Ms. Dad, “We hope to contribute to



conversations on systemic risks and crisis protocols while engaging with the broader ‘Brussels effect’ to shape global standards that resonate with the values and realities of the Global Majority.” Read more [here](#).

Paris Peace Forum: Meeting with President Macron

Ms. Dad participated in the Paris Peace Forum as part of the tech leaders cohort in November. The Paris Peace Forum is a platform that puts global governance, rule of law and peace on the international agenda. Ms Dad met with President Emmanuel Macron and other industry leaders to discuss the human rights implications of emerging technologies like AI, and challenges to digital governance.



DRF at this year's Beijing+30 review



DRF participated in the final review of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), of which Pakistan is signatory, known as the Beijing+30 review. As a member of the Beijing+30 Asia-Pacific Civil Society Steering Committee, DRF was honoured to work together with civil society groups around the region to advance Beijing+30 gender equality goals.



In November, the Steering Committee, released a report titled *Forging Gender-Just Futures* ahead of the Beijing+30 proceedings in November. This report highlights priority areas of action to advance women's human rights and gender equality based on the lived experiences of civil society members in the region. Read the report [here](#).

DRF representative Irum Shujah, participated in the Young Feminist Forum on 16 November, where over 135 young feminist leaders from the Asia-Pacific shaped key demands for the Beijing+30 review. Their collective statement

highlighted systemic oppressions rooted in colonialism, patriarchy, and racism, calling for transformative, intersectional, and inclusive feminist actions to reclaim rights and address the lived realities of youth in diverse contexts. Ms Shujah also attended the preparatory CSO Forum held on 17-18 November,



which brought together diverse voices from across the region to drive civil society engagement in the process, as well as the Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review, held on 19-21 November. This high-level forum, organized by the Asia Pacific Forum on Women in collaboration with UN Women, convened ministers, officials, and key stakeholders to evaluate the region's progress under the BPfA, address legal and policy challenges, and strengthen commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment.

In the Spotlight

WIRED Interview: Nighat Dad

In December, Nighat Dad was interviewed by WIRED magazine. The feature traced her journey from escaping an abusive marriage to becoming a vocal advocate for women's social and digital rights, and founding DRF. The feature was also covered in WIRED's weekly [wrap!](#)

Read the interview [here](#).



“Haibatnaak Surat-e-Haal” by SOC films

In July, Nighat Dad was featured in SOC films’ docuseries episode “Haibatnaak Surat-e-Haal”, which delves into the stark reality of cyber harassment victims in Pakistan. Naila Rind’s tragic story underscores the intense societal pressure and victim-blaming that silences women, sometimes leading to heartbreaking outcomes. Featuring insights from our founder, Nighat Dad, this documentary sheds light on these critical issues. Our Cyber Harassment Helpline stats, quoted here, reveal a troubling trend: women face relentless online abuse with few avenues for justice due to societal mistrust and legal shortcomings. Watch the entire documentary [here](#).



4

Knowledge-Sharing Across Borders

Roadmapping Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance

Synthetic Elections: are we prepared for generative AI in 2024?

In March 2024, Nighat Dad participated in an online discussion organized by Demos and the UCL Digital Speech Lab. The event provided valuable perspectives on safeguarding democratic integrity amidst technological advancements, and centered around the impact of Generative



AI, which has rapidly become a global concern. Notable examples, such as AI-generated political audio and chatbot misinformation during elections, highlighted the urgency of the issue. Nighat Dad cautioned against overreacting to AI developments, emphasizing the need for balanced responses. Watch the entire discussion [here](#).

Nighat Dad at UNSG AI Advisory Board Meeting in Singapore

In May 2024, Nighat Dad attended the UN Secretary-General's AI Advisory Board meeting in Singapore. She emphasized the importance of AI governance, ethics, and human rights, advocating for inclusive development and protection of privacy and freedom of expression. She also called for



robust regulatory frameworks to prevent misuse and discrimination, particularly against marginalized communities, highlighting her commitment to global digital rights advocacy and her role in shaping policies that balance technological advancement with human rights.

Nighat Dad at the Munich Security Conference

In February 2024, Nighat Dad shared her insights at the Munich Security Conference alongside Google CEO Sundar Pichai and former President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid, in a panel that delved into the crucial intersection of geopolitics, AI, and electoral integrity. She highlighted AI's broader societal impact, including inclusivity and human rights, beyond mere technology. She further urged platforms to increase resources for human rights and transparency, as empowering researchers and reassessing governance are essential for fair AI use. Finally, she called for civil society involvement and anchored regulations in human rights for effective AI ethics.



Nighat Dad at the Global AI Summit (GAIN) 2024



In September at the 2024_GAIN summit, Nighat Dad underscored the importance of consulting all stakeholders for any AI governance initiative, especially civil society. AI policies must also be grounded in a rights-based framework, she said.

Nighat Dad at Palestine Digital Activism Forum (PDAF) 2024

In June 2024 at the PDAF, Meedan held a workshop on fine-tuning large language models (LLMs) for the Larger World, Meedan's preferred term for the Global South. This workshop featured Nighat Dad, Dr. Dima Saber and Dr. Scott A. Hale as panelists, with Zamleh's Taysir Mathlouthi as moderator. PDAF 2024 was centered on the theme "Artificial Intelligence: Revolutionary Promises and Discriminatory Realities."



Nighat Dad at the International Forum for Democratic Studies Report Launch Event

In June, Nighat Dad joined a virtual discussion on how generative AI supercharges information manipulation. This event also marked the launch of the new Forum report, “Manufacturing Deceit” by Beatriz Saab.



Addressing Tech-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV)

Global Symposium on TFGBV



DRF actively participated in the virtual Global Symposium, hosted by the UNFPA, in February 2024. On Day 1, Nighat Dad set the scene during Panel 1.1 ‘Now and the Future’, where she spoke about the regulatory gaps and challenges in addressing the intersection of artificial intelligence and online abuse, the lack of effective legal responses to the rise in the TFGBV, and the role that social media and tech platforms need to play in combating TFGBV. On Day 2, Hyra Basit was on the panel ‘Responding to TFGBV’ where she highlighted the journey of DRF’s helpline, as well as its successes and challenges. Watch the entire panel [here](#).

DRF at the International Conference on Addressing Technology Facilitated Violence Against Women (TFVAW)

Held in Seoul on 1-2 July 2024, the event aimed to foster dialogue on the challenges and best practices in implementing policy measures to address TFVAW. The DRF team showcased its helpline: how it operates, advocates for survivors, and collects and analyzes data for TFVAW research.



Asia Regional Symposium on Tech-Facilitated Gender Based Violence by UNFPA and Australia e-Commission

Hosted by UNFPA on 15 October 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, the event highlighted the impact of AI and TFGBV, particularly in the Global South. Nighat Dad provided an overview of DRF's work in addressing TFGBV and highlighted the rise in AI-generated image abuse and gendered disinformation campaigns. DRF Legal Manager Irum Shujah discussed DRF's commitment to closely monitor processes at the High-Level Advisory Board, and elaborated on the pros and cons of AI from a South Asian perspective, emphasizing the need for equitable digital spaces in light of international legislation.



META APAC AI Literacy & Safety Summit

DRF was invited to attend the Meta APAC AI Literacy and Safety Summit in Singapore on 29-30 October. DRF shared its insights on how generative AI contributes to TFGBV, with data analytics from the DRF's helpline.

South and Southeast Asia Regional Stakeholders Forum on Cyber Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

DRF participated in the conference held by the Caught in the Web titled “South and Southeast Asia Regional Stakeholders Forum on Cyber Sexual and Gender-Based Violence” held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. DRF’s Legal Manager, Irum Shujah, spoke at a session titled “Understanding the Perspective and Prospects of the Legal

Sector”, and sharing her experience with the participants from a Global South perspective, as well as the challenges generally faced by South Asian civil society organizations in addressing cyber gender-based violence.



DRF at Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse’s Conference in Kenya

DRF participated in a conference held by the Global Partnership titled “Preventing and disrupting the spread of gendered disinformation in the context of electoral processes and democratic rollback” held in Nairobi, Kenya, in March 2024. The DRF team

shared their perspective on gendered disinformation used to target vulnerable identities, the misuse of AI which was especially rampant during Pakistan’s general elections, and what DRF is doing to counter such threats to safe online spaces and democratic processes.



Data Privacy and Information Integrity

Nighat Dad at Skoll World Forum

Nighat Dad was part of the panel at Skoll World Forum titled “Reclaiming Truth in the Age of Information Disorder”. She discussed the crucial role of credible and truthful information in sustaining democracy, highlighting the challenges posed by emerging technologies such as deepfakes which complicate the identification of truth. She emphasized the growing crisis of distrust in institutions and information, which is particularly critical during elections, and highlighted the role of DRF’s helpline in mitigating such a crisis. The session also explored potential solutions to counter misinformation and restore trust in democratic processes. Watch the entire panel [here](#).



DRF at the PI Partner Convening

DRF attended the Privacy International (PI) Partner Convening on 17-20 June 2024. The Partner Convening is a meeting of organizations and individuals focused on defending the universal right to privacy through research, advocacy and providing community support. The event saw a host of privacy defenders and advocates from Columbia, Brazil, Mexico, India, Kenya, Portugal and other countries join in to discuss, strategize and congregate on key developments in the privacy sphere across the globe.



DRF at DRAPAC'24 and APriGF 2024

DRF's team attended the 2024 Digital Rights in the Asia-Pacific (DRAPAC) and Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APriGF) in Taiwan from 18-23 August. At a DRAPAC session titled "Gendered disinformation: Deepening perspectives and designing responses", DRF launched its research in collaboration with Meedan, Chambal Media, and The Quint. This session offered varying perspectives on gendered disinformation through the unique lens of different regions in South Asia, and presented experiences through specific case studies.



Asia Pacific Feminist Forum (APFF) 2024

DRF participated in the APFF held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in September 2024, where we presented our research on gendered disinformation in South Asia along with our partner organizations Meedan, Chambal Media, and The Quint. The presentation was based on the case study developed as part of the research that captured the realities of local communities for a more inclusive perspective.



Gendered Disinformation in South Asia: Findings and Policy Recommendations



On 29 October, DRF participated in an online seminar focused on gendered disinformation in South Asia. DRF Program Lead Seerat Khan and Manager of DRF's Helpline Hyra Basit presented insights from DRF's in-depth research on gendered disinformation in Pakistan, based on two years of data collection and annotation. Nighat Dad delivered the keynote address, emphasizing the critical need for platform accountability and transparency in addressing gendered disinformation across South Asia.

DRF at the Alan Turing Institute at London School of Economics

DRF spoke at a panel hosted by the Alan Turing Institute in collaboration with the London School of Economics' Media and Communications Department. Alan Turing's data justice documentary was also shown at the event as part of their Advancing Data Justice Research Project, which included DRF as one of 12 global policy partners. Watch the documentary [here](#).



Media Literacy in the Age of Disinformation

As part of the UN's Global Media and Information Literacy Week, DRF Programs Lead Seerat Khan spoke at an online panel titled "Media Literacy in the Age of Disinformation: Impact of Misinformation on Society & the Importance of Media Literacy" to explore the dangers of disinformation, its impact on society, and how we can empower ourselves with media literacy. Watch the discussion [here](#).

Upholding Democracy

Striking the Right Balance: Moderating Online Content During 2024 Elections

This LinkedIn Live explored misinformation, foreign interference, targeted advertising, and the role of algorithms in shaping user attitudes and behaviors. Nighat Dad shared her insights about how, with social media's influence on public opinion and elections worldwide, it is crucial to understand how to effectively manage these platforms for fairness and transparency in electoral processes.



The 3rd Summit for Democracy in Seoul (S4D3)

DRF participated in the 3rd Summit For Democracy in March 2024 to bring Pakistan's perspective from the recent elections. Held in Seoul, the summit's primary focus was on fostering democracy for future generations. In S4D3's session 'Upholding Information Integrity Online to Reinforce Democracy and Human Rights' in Seoul, DRF's Senior Project Manager Hyra Basit, spoke about

how Pakistan's 2024 General Elections highlighted the dark side of online discourse. DRF's social media monitoring and intensive research during the election period were also highlighted.



APAC regional conversation and consultation

DRF briefed the Global Coalition for Tech Justice partners regarding the elections held on 8th February and around the findings of DRF's Election Desk on the 21st of February. The consultation was DRF's attempt to share best practices with partners around monitoring content on platforms in this election year of 2024.

Building Regional Solidarity

Nighat Dad at the IFEX Convening

Nighat Dad attended the first in-person IFEX network convening, since the COVID-19 pandemic, in April 2024. Held in Berlin, this event provided a rare and invaluable opportunity for over 100 member organizations from more than 70 countries to come



together and deepen their collaborative efforts in defending freedom of expression and information. The gathering prioritized authentic, unstructured interactions over formal presentations, fostering vibrant corridor conversations and genuine engagement. This approach was aimed at strengthening connections and collective power, underlined by a set of newly adopted principles of collaboration.

Research as Resistance: Convening on People's Research for Movement Building in Asia Pacific

DRF attended a three-day convening on 21-23 May 2024, and participated in a panel titled "Research, AI, and Digital Rights and Justice." The discussion explored research in the context of rising digitalization and Artificial Intelligence as both a tool and a site of research, and what this means for people's research in our region. The convening was arranged by the Asia Pacific Forum for Women, Law and Development (APWLD) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and intended to build a shared understanding of how to conduct research for movement-building in our region, identifying areas for support, improvement, and regional collaboration.



DRF at Global Gathering 2024

DRF attended a three-day convening on 21-23 May 2024, and participated in a panel titled "Research, AI, and Digital Rights and Justice." The discussion explored research in the context of rising digitalization and Artificial Intelligence as both a tool and a site of research, and what this means for people's research in our region. The convening was arranged by the APWLD in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and intended to build a shared understanding of how to conduct research for movement-building in our region, identifying areas for support, improvement, and regional collaboration.



Landscapes of Hope Annual Meeting on the Margins of Requiem for Justice



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5

National Engagements

Nighat Dad at Asma Jahangir Conference 2024

Nighat Dad was a panelist for the panel titled “Online Hate Speech & Disinformation” at the 5th Asma Jahangir Conference held on 28 April in Lahore. The panelists called for capacity-building training for government and law enforcement personnel to improve investigation methods and evidence handling, and also an appeal to decriminalize speech in social media governance. The discussion also highlighted the need to maintain a check on the adverse effects of platforms blocking free speech, financial independence, and foreign investments in Pakistan. Listen to the full panel [here](#).



Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands’ “Panel Discussion Voices for Change” and UN Women Pakistan’s “Theater on Wheels”

DRF attended and participated in these events held to mark the global 16 Days of Activism campaign in December. UN Women Pakistan’s “Theatre on Wheels” took place in Islamabad on 10-11 December, and aimed to strengthen civil society engagement to promote gender equality vis-a-vis the Beijing+30 goals. Representing civil society, DRF team member Irum Shujah shared her learnings and experiences from attending Beijing+30.



DRF also attended the panel discussion “Voices for Change: Youth Perspectives on Challenges and Opportunities” hosted by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The discussion explored the challenges faced by Pakistani youth, particularly women and girls, and highlighted opportunities for their empowerment.

Nighat Dad speaking at MobilinkHer Event

Nighat Dad talked about the importance of creating a work environment that enables women to foster holistic economic development and bolster Pakistan's economy at Mobilink Bank's flagship women returnship program launch, MobilinkHer, in February.



MoITT Consultation on May 2023 draft of Pakistan's Personal Data Protection Bill

Irum Shujah, representing DRF, attended a consultation on the May 2023 draft of Pakistan's Personal Data Protection Bill, organized by the Ministry of Information and Technology (MoITT) in Islamabad on 26 June. Nighat Dad participated remotely, highlighting how certain legal provisions infringe upon privacy concerns and create difficulties for stakeholders. DRF also submitted comprehensive written recommendations aimed at further refining the bill, which can be accessed [here](#).

Consultations on Data Localisation

On 1 August, DRF attended a consultation on data localisation in Islamabad which was jointly organized by Asia Internet Coalition and the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecom. Representatives from the government, industry and civil society discussed how to approach the issue of data localisation with minimal impact on Pakistan's thriving digital economy.

Roundtable on “In Search of a Roadmap for Police Reform”

On 1 August, DRF attended a consultation on data localisation in Islamabad which was jointly organized by Asia Internet Coalition and the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecom. Representatives from the government, industry and civil society discussed how to approach the issue of data localisation with minimal impact on Pakistan's thriving digital economy.



Digital Rights Emergency in Pakistan

On 24 September, the DRF legal team attended the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)'s mobilization meeting on the digital rights emergency in Pakistan. Policy experts, human rights activists, journalists and civil society members came together to tackle pressing issues such as internet disruptions, VPN registration, and the installation of firewalls. Key discussions included the ongoing ban on X (formerly Twitter) and a critical analysis of the Punjab Defamation Act.



Meta Roundtable on Online Youth Safety

DRF, the Ministry of Human Rights, Meta, the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), and the National Commission on the Rights of the Child jointly hosted a roundtable on online youth safety in Islamabad, launching a comprehensive Youth Safety Policy Document. DRF's Seerat Khan shared findings from focus group discussions and surveys with parents and youth across the country. Meta showcased its safety tools. The discussion underscored the importance of collaboration to create inclusive and secure digital environments for young users.



Meeting with Rana Mashood on Collaboration with PM Youth Programme

DRF representatives met with Rana Mashood and his team in December to explore potential collaboration opportunities under the PM Youth Programme, particularly in addressing issues like personal data protection, digital scams and enhancing youth-focused digital literacy. Future plans include joint awareness initiatives, sharing educational content, and participation in conferences.



Meta Community Summits

The DRF team attended the Meta Community Summit 2024 in Islamabad in July and December. The events consisted of various briefings on Meta's community standards, deep diving into their safety policies, understanding the functioning of National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, social media best practices, online safety, trusted partner impact, and freedom of expression, underscoring Meta's commitment to cultivating a safe and open online environment in Pakistan.



DRF's other national engagements during 2024 include:

- DRF's Legal Team attended a policy dialogue organized by the Punjab Directorate General Social Welfare & Bait ul Maal at LUMS in January. They actively shaped the discourse around the forthcoming policy document to the Social Welfare and Bait ul Maal Department, Punjab.
- DRF conducted a session at LUMS in February with the Saida Waheed Gender Initiative on "Navigating Online Harms and Gendered Disinformation in Pakistan". The team went over the proliferation of gendered disinformation and how it contributes to the exacerbation of gender-based violence.
- On July 27, our legal team actively participated in a consultative workshop focused on the Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016. The workshop provided a valuable platform for in-depth discussions on the upcoming rules and regulations, allowing our team to contribute to the development of more practical and effective implementation of the law.
- On 16 August, DRF participated in HRCP's mobilization meeting on the Punjab Defamation Act. The meeting brought together policy experts, lawyers, human rights activists, journalists and civil society members to discuss the potential misuse of the new law. Participants recommended repealing the Act and added that fundamental rights should be recognized and respected by the state.

6

Psychosocial Support: DRF's Retreat for Women Journalists

In September 2024, DRF held its annual (and highly coveted) four-day Emotional Resilience and Well-being Retreat for Women Journalists at Nathia Gali, a mountain resort town well-known for its tranquility and stunning views.



Women journalists in Pakistan are frequently subjected to online harassment, particularly gendered hate speech, which can quickly escalate into danger offline. In 2020, 73% of women journalists globally were **reportedly** subjected to online violence, and during Pakistan's 2024 General Elections, DRF **found** that journalists covering the elections were also targeted with online threats of physical assaults, organized trolling campaigns, and gendered insults. Journalists who face such prolonged online abuse reportedly experience anxiety, depression and even PTSD.

The retreat offers women journalists the space and freedom to explore what self-care means for them, especially given the precarious nature of their line of work. Developing effective stress management, a variety of coping techniques and the ability to digitally detox are key to sustaining oneself through such a demanding career as journalism in Pakistan. Moreover, DRF encourages the retreat participants to foster deep and meaningful relationships among themselves, and build community to support each other.

Building on the success of our previous retreats, this year's retreat was extremely sought after, making our application process highly competitive. In total, DRF received 178 applications from women journalists and media practitioners across the country, of which 15% were shortlisted to attend. In the end, 27 women journalists and media practitioners were granted the opportunity to attend the retreat, unwind and reflect.



The retreat involved two days of intensive sessions in areas such as digital and legal safety, team-building activities, therapeutic healing sessions, and yoga; we even engaged an on-site masseuse to ensure a truly restful and rejuvenating self-care experience! This was followed by one day of sightseeing to allow the participants a chance to unwind and step away from the daily challenges of their profession.

In culmination, our retreat for women journalists and media practitioners received glowing reviews from our participants. From self-care practices to building solidarity and care networks, the event was a true hallmark of the principles DRF stands for, and we're thrilled to learn that our participants felt recharged enough to return to their professions with renewed energy and vigour. See what they had to say below!



7

DRF's Election Desk

DRF's Election Desk

DRF launched its Election Desk in January 2024, along with a WhatsApp Disinformation Tipline, in order to uphold democratic values and counter misleading narratives during the Pakistan General Elections in 2024.

As outlined in our **gendered disinformation study**, there was rampant misinformation and gendered online harassment in the leadup to and during the elections. The Desk also documented instances of network shutdowns and infringements on free speech, particularly through the targeted closure of specific social media platforms and internet access. Additionally, it advised voters to contact Mithu, the WhatsApp Disinformation Tipline bot, for reporting gendered disinformation on social media.

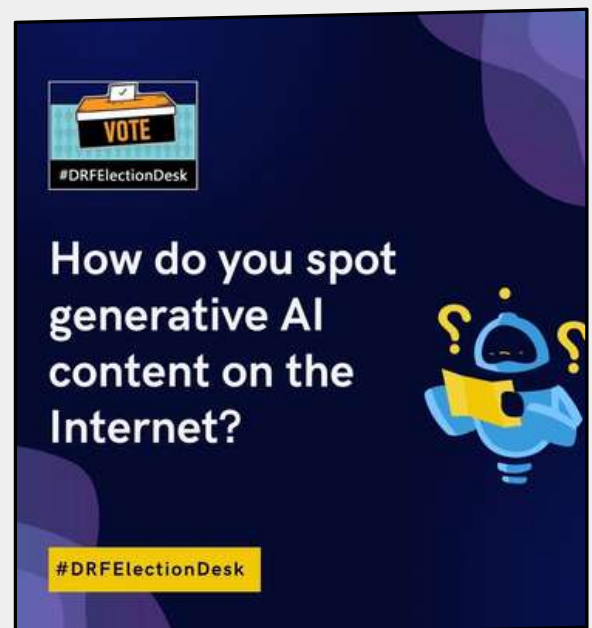
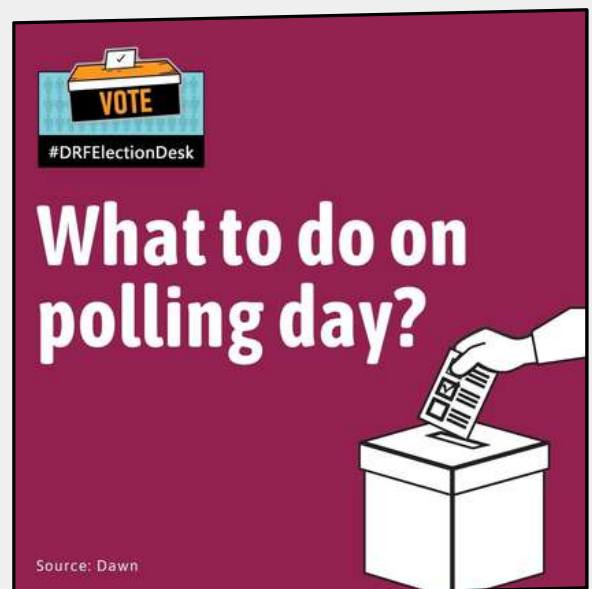


From the submissions made to the Tipline, DRF found gendered language in 105 posts (46.9%), broad disinformation in 71 posts (31.7%), board misinformation in 24 posts (10.7%), political violence in 6 posts (2.7%), hate speech in 28 posts (12.5%), gendered online harassment in 46 posts (20.5%), gendered misinformation in 44 posts (19.6%) and online threats/abuse in 4 posts (1.8%).

Among these posts, false content was classified in 49 posts, manipulated media and Gen-AI content in 25 posts, and misleading/missing context in 124 posts. The primary target of gendered disinformation was also found to be women with 84 posts, and broadly political leaders.

Key social media campaigns launched by #DRFElectionDesk:

DRF's Election Desk also conducted significant awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns, with explainers on social media on what to do on polling day, how to spot generative AI content online, accountability around political ads on social media, and the legal framework for financing election campaigns. Moreover, the Desk identified **six key digital rights issues** and **six key media rights issues** to present to political parties for their manifestos, emphasizing the connection between online and offline spaces.

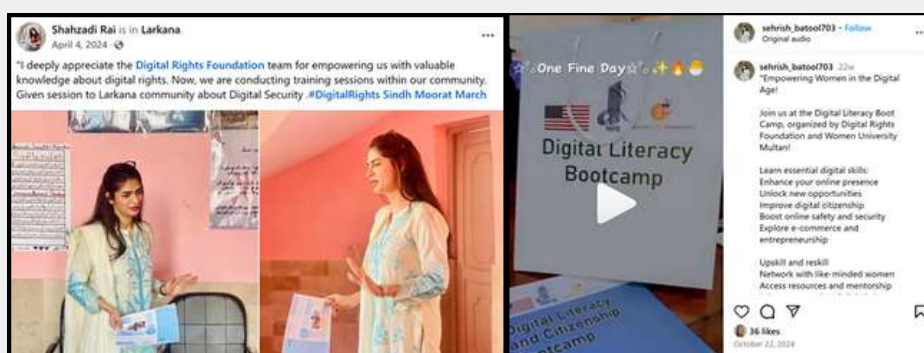


8

Advancing Digital Literacy & Empowerment

DRF's digital literacy and skills advancement workshops are crucial for empowering girls, students and underserved communities with knowledge about their rights in online spaces. This includes raising awareness about state and platform reporting mechanisms for online harms, training in useful safety and privacy tools to protect against cyberbullying and harassment, as well as sharing fact-checking best practices to curb the spread of misinformation or disinformation.

Building digital literacy skills also has a significant ripple effect, empowering students and community members to become digital literacy advocates in their own right and share what they've learnt with their peers, and thereby encouraging a culture of collective responsibility to uplift each other.



It is also important to acknowledge that there is a glaring gender digital divide in Pakistan, which means that, compared to their male counterparts, women and girls do not have equal access to online spaces and technology, and thus lag behind in terms of awareness, support and opportunities for developing digital skills. For example, according to UNICEF's 2023 report *Bridging the Gender Digital Divide*, digital skills among young girls and young women aged 15-24 in Balochistan are "almost non-existent (i.e., below 3 percent)". It also pinpoints how, in Sindh, "females are at a disadvantage in both foundational skills among 7-14-year-olds and digital skills among 15-24-year-olds", and that in Punjab there is a "substantial disadvantage of 11 to 20 percentage". Without adequate support, girls in Pakistan are at risk of being left behind in their early years, a disadvantage that persists in the acquisition of digital skills later in life. DRF's digital literacy initiatives aim to address these gaps, and empower girls and women with the ability to navigate online spaces with confidence.

Humara Internet Mahfooz Internet

DRF's 'Hamara Internet Mehfooz Internet' project continued this year, bringing a wave of digital literacy and safety to Lahore's public schools by educating students, especially minors, about digital spaces and reporting online harms.

- **Hamara Internet Mahfooz Internet Digital Citizenship Program (January-May)**
 - Held 2 sessions in Lahore's government high schools in January, attended by 355 students and 33 teachers, and 4 sessions in February, attended by 735 students and 44 teachers. Participants were informed about ways of staying safe in online spaces and reporting mechanisms in case of harassment or bullying.
 - Held 2 sessions in Lahore's government high schools in April, attended by 357 students and 9 teachers.
 - Held a session in the GGHS Model APS Model Town Lahore public school to emphasize the importance of developing leadership skills among young women for Girls in ICT Day 2024, as well as the importance of online safety and digital literacy
 - Held the last Digital Citizen session in a Lahore government school in May, attended by 120 female students and 5 teachers.
- **Anti-Cyberbullying and Digital Awareness Session (June-July)**
 - Held sessions with 50-55 O-Level and A-Level students at Fatima Memorial's NUR Foundation in Lahore, and informed them about countering cyberbullying, online safety, and legal avenues for harassment.



Digital Literacy and Citizenship Bootcamps

Over 40 modules were developed for the bootcamp curriculum, aimed at fostering knowledge of online safety and inculcating a civic sense of responsible digital engagement. These modules covered digital rights issues—including the gender digital divide, the online information landscape, and cyberbullying—electronic crimes legislation, digital etiquette, misinformation and disinformation, as well as the emergence of AI and LLMs.

- **Inaugural Bootcamp at the University of Karachi (April-May)**
 - Attendees: 63 students from the Department of Public Administration
- **Second Bootcamp at Karakoram International University in Gilgit (June)**
 - Attendees: 61 students from various departments
- **Third Bootcamp at Forman Christian College (FCCU) in Lahore (September)**
 - Attendees: 49 students
- **Fourth Bootcamp at The Women University, Multan (October)**
 - Attendees: 52 students
- **Fifth Bootcamp at The Women University in Bagh, Azad Kashmir (November)**
 - Attendees: 58 students



Sessions on Online Safety

- **Cyberbullying and Online Safety Session (January)**
 - Conducted a session on ‘Cyberbullying and online safety’ at the LGS International school, attended by 80 students.
- **Safeguarding Women Against Online Abuse & Cybercrime in Peshawar (May)**
 - Conducted a workshop at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Peshawar, in collaboration with the US Consulate Peshawar.
 - Discussed the importance of digital rights and online safety, covering legal topics and offering digital training.
- **Online Safety Workshop in Hunza (June)**
 - Conducted an Online Safety Workshop in collaboration with IEI Pakistan in Hunza.
 - Engaged more than 50 participants in discussions on consent, digital safety, and communication between parents and children.
- **Online Safety and Cyber Harassment Session (July)**
 - Delivered a session on “Online Safety and Cyber Harassment” at the Learning Hub College, Gujranwala.
 - Raised awareness about digital safety and provided an overview of laws related to cyber harassment and online violence, attended by over 500 students.



Capacity-Building Workshops

Capacity-Building Workshops in Islamabad and Karachi (January)

- **Focus:** Navigating technology-facilitated online harms during upcoming elections.
- **Aim:** Equip social media users with knowledge about online harms and best practices.
- **Participant Engagement:** Sharing experiences of online spaces and their real-life impact.



• Source Verification and Fact-Checking Workshops (January-February)

- **Locations:** Peshawar and Islamabad.
- **Support:** Conducted in partnership with Meta.
- **Focus:** Addressing disinformation and misinformation during elections.



- **Attendance:** 30 journalists in Peshawar and 31 in Islamabad and adjacent areas.

• Digital Skills Training Workshops (September-December)

- *Islamabad (September):* Empowering at-risk community members; focus on digital safety and open-source tools.
- *Lahore (October):* Two-day workshop on digital safety practices and open-source tools.
- *Peshawar (December):* Final two-day workshop; included training on digital safety, legal challenges, and reporting online hateful content.

- **Sahafi Summit (11 December)**

- **Event:** Navigating online safety in journalism.
- **Hosted by:** Media Matters for Democracy (MMfD) in partnership with the Association of Media & Communication Academic Professionals (AMCAP).
- **Location:** Beaconhouse National University, Lahore

Other Awareness-Raising Sessions

- **Three Radio Sessions with Suno FM 89.4-96**

- **First Session (25 June):** Consequences for minors and vulnerable communities; solutions for mitigating risks.
- **Second Session (6 March):** Focus on legal aspects of online harassment.
- **Third Session (20 December):** Online safety best practices; received nearly 30 caller questions.

- **Virtual Session with Inspiring Women Pakistan (31 March)**

- **Participants:** 30 total (15 from Pakistan, 15 from South America).
- **Focus:** Online harassment, its psychological and social impact, and prevention measures.



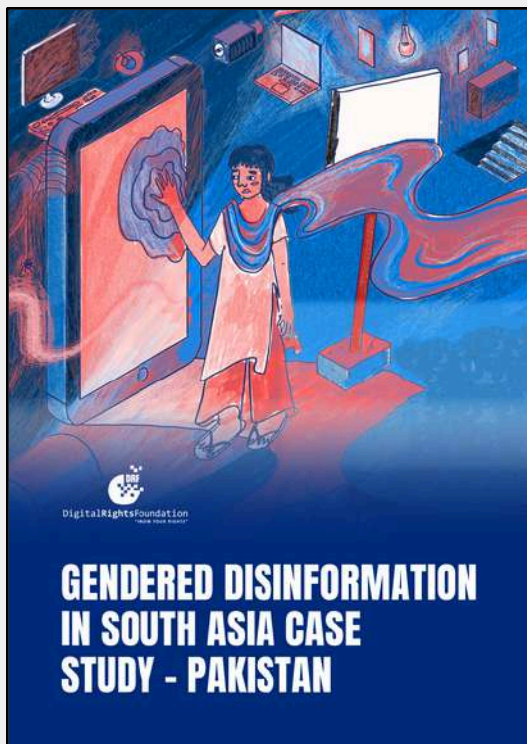
9

Policy Research & Analyses

Research Studies & Blog Posts

Platforms at the Polls

DRF released a report in December analyzing platform accountability during Pakistan's 2024 general elections, focusing on how social media platforms have increasingly become critical tools for political parties in order to influence and win over voters. After evaluating 225 social media posts depicting TFGBV and gendered disinformation against electoral candidates, activists and journalists, it became evident that platforms failed to actively remove harmful content or regulate political spending by parties. Our complete report is available [here](#).

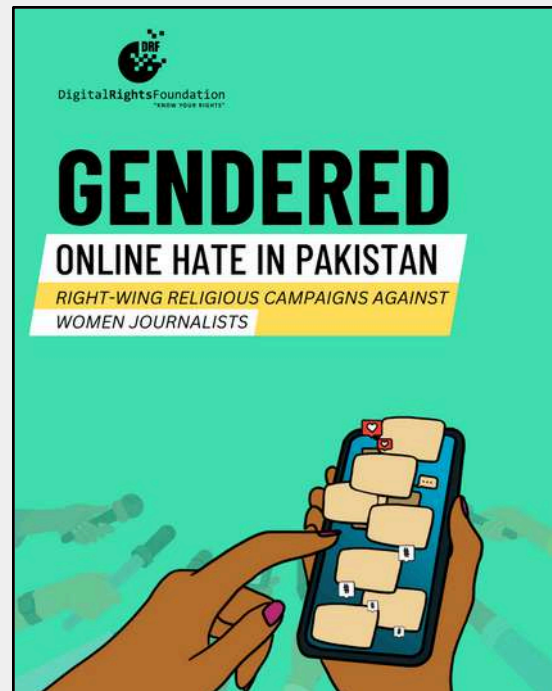


Gendered Disinformation in South Asia Case Study – Pakistan

In collaboration with Meedan and other civil society organizations, DRF released a case study on gendered disinformation online. Focusing on recent attacks on transgender and LGBTQI communities, it found online hate campaigns often led to offline violence. Additionally, lack of context-specific regulations left Urdu-language posts unmoderated. Our complete report is available [here](#).

Gendered Online Hate in Pakistan

In May 2024, following attacks on a Pakistani journalist, DRF examined gendered online hate against women journalists in Pakistan, particularly by right-wing religious groups. It found women face more hate speech, with offline and online threats linked to political and religious biases, necessitating improved moderation on social media platforms. Our complete report, released in December 2024, is available [here](#).



Platform Accountability Blog Posts

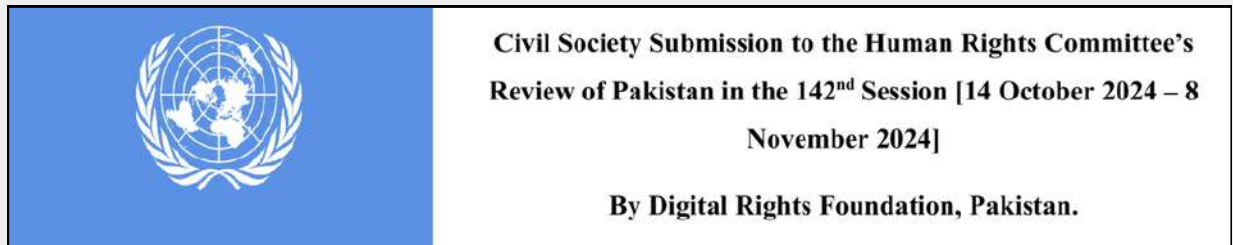
As part of DRF's new series on Platform Accountability, DRF analyzed a case of online gendered violence against trans community member Dolphin Ayan Khan, in which a video containing sensitive images of her was posted non-consensually on Facebook, X and YouTube. Did these platforms act to take the video down, or suspend accounts posting malicious web links that claimed to offer full access to the video? Read DRF's analysis [here](#).



In December, DRF team member Sara Imran wrote a blog post analyzing the recent crackdown on data scraping by X and other platforms. The piece highlighted the impact of such restrictions on academic research that relies on publicly available data, and concluded that “blanket bans on data scraping are not a one-size-fits-all solution”. Read the blog post [here](#).

Legal Analyses

Civil Society Report Submission for the ICCPR



In October 2024, DRF made a civil society submission report to the UN Human Rights Committee for its second state review of Pakistan's progress under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) obligations. The ICCPR commits nations to respect civil and political rights, including the right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of peaceful assembly, electoral rights and rights to due process. DRF raised serious concerns about Pakistan's growing censorship and restrictive laws that endanger free speech, privacy, and press freedom, especially for journalists. Read more [here](#).

Legal Analysis of the Punjab Defamation Bill



In May 2024, DRF analyzed the Punjab Defamation Bill 2024 by comparing it to the Defamation Ordinance 2002. This quick analysis highlights certain key differences in the laws, such as shifting jurisdiction to specialized tribunals, broadening defamation definition to include social media, imposing stricter penalties, and limiting defendants' rights. It also critiques the bill's broader scope and its potential impact on freedom of expression. Read the analysis [here](#).

Legal Analysis of the AI Regulation Bill

A bill on AI regulation titled the 'Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Act 2024' was introduced in the Senate in September. The bill proposes a five-member National Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NCAI). Its responsibilities will include ensuring equitable access to AI opportunities for all citizens; maintaining human oversight over AI matters, particularly in areas such as national security, health, and education; guaranteeing AI systems are safe, secure from "malicious use", and free from errors; developing a robust AI research and development infrastructure; and utilizing AI to enhance public service delivery, such as in healthcare, finance, trade, and science. Furthermore, the bill imposes fines up to PKR 2.5 billion for non-compliance with provisions of the bill without specifying what "non-compliance" would mean. In September 2024, DRF issued a quick analysis of the draft bill [here](#).

10 Online Campaigns & Advocacy

DRF marked 18 national and international days with social media campaigns to advocate for change:

Data Privacy Day (JAN'24)	International Women's Day (MARCH'24)	World Press Freedom Day (MAY'24)
 <p>DATA PRIVACY DAY TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR DATA</p> <p>Digital Rights Foundation conducted a research on Data Privacy in Pakistan's Healthcare Sector</p> <p>Here is what we found</p>	 	 <p>On World Press Freedom Day 2024, we shine a spotlight on the resilience of journalists, especially the brave women in our Network of Women Journalists for Digital Rights (NWJDR) in Pakistan!</p>
World Telecommunication And Information Society Day (MAY'24)	International Day for Countering Hate Speech (JUNE'24)	Stop Cyberbullying Day (JUNE'24)
	 <p>INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR COUNTERING HATE SPEECH</p>	

Campaign on Pakistan's Personal Data Protection Bill (JULY'24)



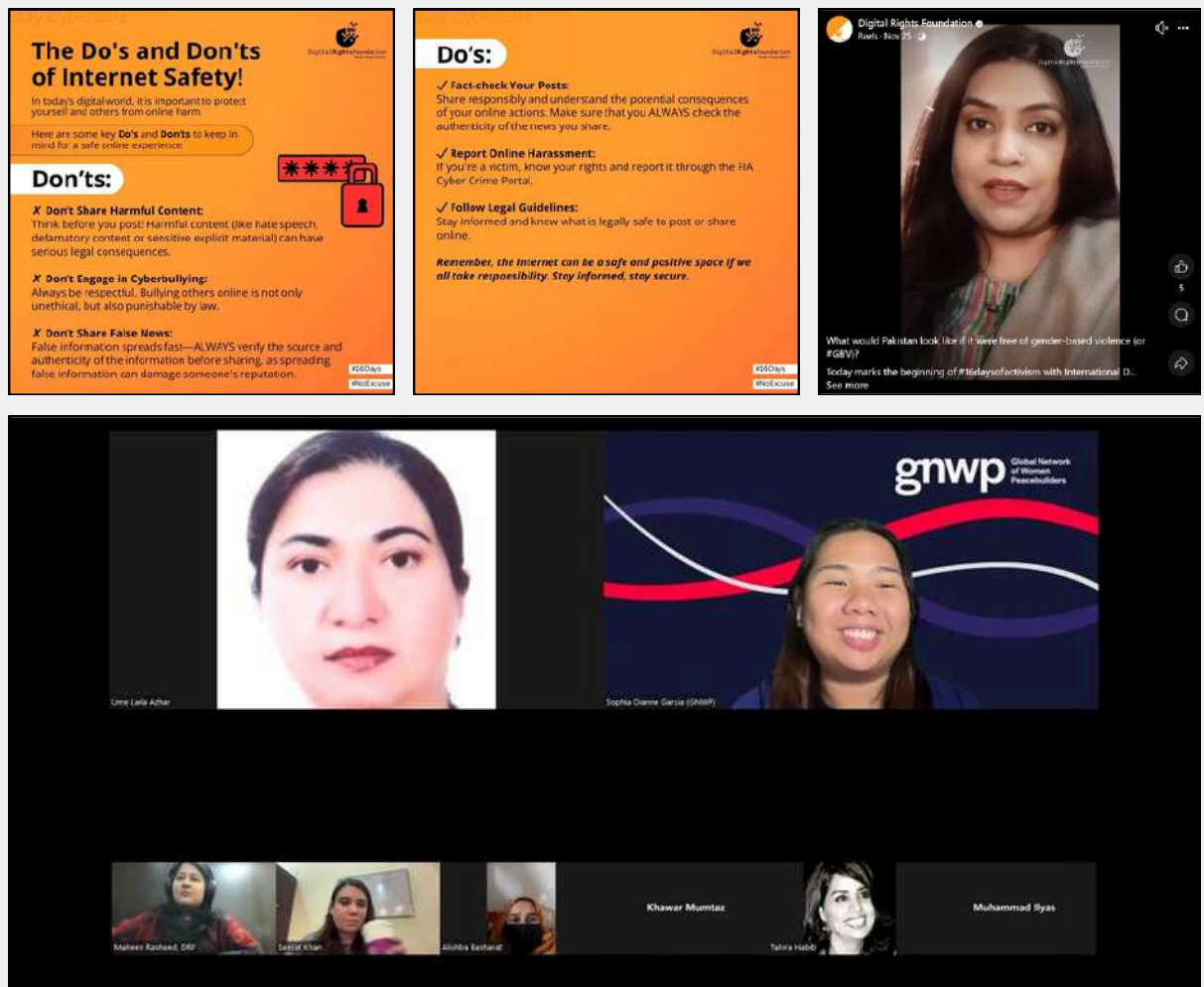
DRF launched a social media awareness campaign on data protection legislation that delved into the different aspects of the landscape of privacy in Pakistan and the Personal Data Protection Bill. DRF also held an Instagram Live titled 'Pakistan's Privacy Landscape: Data Protection and Article 14' with digital safety experts who discussed constitutional privacy and dignity in Pakistan, recent legal developments affecting privacy, data protection in the digital age, emerging online privacy threats, especially with Gen-AI, and best practices for safeguarding your data.

This campaign continued into August with the following key infographics:

- Why data protection is so important in today's digital landscape
- How violence against gender minorities and privacy concerns clash with TFGBV
- Know your rights as data subjects under the Personal Data Protection Bill 2023

National Minorities' Day (AUG'24)	International Day of Democracy (SEP'24)	International Identity Day (ID Day) (SEP'24)
		
International Day for Universal Access to Information (SEP'24)	Cybersecurity Awareness Month (OCT'24)	International Day of the Girl Child (OCT'24)
		
Global Encryption Day (OCT'24)	International Day to End Impunity Against Journalists (NOV'24)	International Day for Tolerance (NOV'24)
		

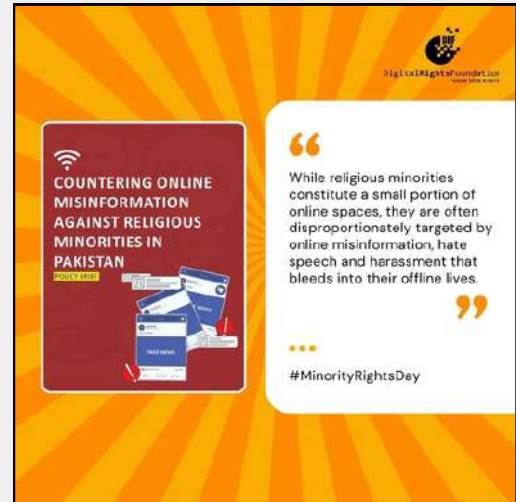
16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (NOV-DEC'24)



DRF kicked off its campaign on 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence with '**Stay Cybersafe**' daily tips. Women and girls also shared their **vision** of what Pakistan would look like free from gender-based violence, a fitting reminder on International Day to End Violence Against Women (25 November). On 29 November, DRF **marked** International Women Human Rights Defenders Day by saluting women activists who raise their voices to help others, and raising awareness about psychosocial support for their emotional wellbeing. The campaign finally culminated on 10 December with an online panel discussion titled 'Achieving Gender Justice & Digital Equity in Pakistan post Beijing+30', featuring National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) standing chair Ume Laila Azhar, former NCSW chair Khawar Mumtaz, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders senior programs officer Sophia Dianne Garcia, and DRF Programs Lead Seerat Khan. See the livestream **here**.

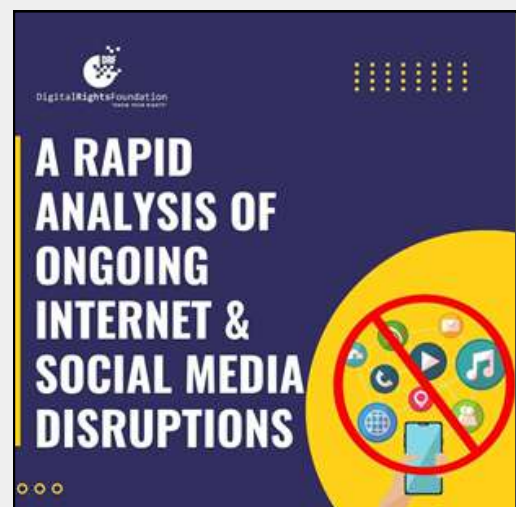
International Day for Minorities (DEC'24)

DRF reshared its policy brief titled *Countering Online Misinformation Against Religious Minorities in Pakistan*. DRF called for safer, inclusive digital spaces through collective effort from state authorities, platforms and civil society. Read the brief [here](#).



Campaign on Internet Disruptions and Shutdowns (DEC'24)

DRF diligently monitored the state of Internet disruptions and shutdowns in Pakistan, mapping the occurrence in 15 regions across the country and keeping an eye out on major incidents reported in the news. While government officials continued to sideline this issue, Internet users nationwide reported being severely impacted, especially in terms of work, education and access to information.



11

Our Stances

DRF's press statements throughout 2024 reflect our commitment to equal participation in digital spaces, democratic digital governance, online freedom of expression and safer online spaces for all citizens, especially those vulnerable to gendered hate, disinformation or other forms of tech-facilitated harm.

DRF Joins Global South Alliance in Issuing a Statement about their Position on the UN Global Digital Compact (GDC) and Summit of the Future

May 2024: The organizations would like the global body to address pressing issues for civil society in the digital rights sphere with a focus on several areas including Internet access, Research and Data access. They are also expressing concern over the global distribution of risks and opportunities offered by existing and emerging technologies. As much as they welcome the process of a GDC that would contribute towards bridging gaps brought about by inequalities created by technologies, it is their position that the Global South has unique needs and priorities, influenced by unique contexts, dependencies and technology infrastructure. Read the full statement [here](#), as well as the policy paper [here](#).



DRF Joined over 80 Civil Society Organizations and Journalists in Rejecting the Punjab Defamation Bill 2024

May 2024: DRF joined over 80 civil society organizations and journalists in rejecting the Punjab Defamation Bill. The Punjab Defamation Bill (2024) is a significant infringement on freedom of expression and press freedom, serving as a draconian tool to suppress dissent, particularly targeting journalists and the public. The bill's provisions, which allow defamation actions without proof of actual damage and impose harsh fines, amount to legal intimidation tactics. By replacing district

courts with tribunals, the bill enables undue interference and sets a dangerous precedent by broadly defining "journalists" and "newspapers" to include social media users. This legislation's disproportionate punishments, such as blocking social media accounts, are antithetical to democratic principles. In the statement, we urge the Punjab government to reverse this regressive effort and engage in inclusive consultations to effectively address disinformation and hate speech.



DRF Raises Alarm over Technology-Facilitated Gendered Surveillance on the Rise in Women's Spaces

June 2024: DRF is extremely alarmed and concerned about the ongoing surveillance of women and girls in private spaces through unregulated CCTV cameras in women's shelters, hostels, universities and salons, invading their right to privacy and dignity in private spaces. Women are already exceedingly subjected to gender based violence, harassment and social surveillance by society which in turn pushes them to seek refuge in gender segregated private spaces such as these. For more details, click [here](#).



DRF then accompanied a team from the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) on a visit to Dar-ul-Amaan, Rawalpindi, to inspect surveillance cameras within the premises and ensure the privacy and security of residents.

The visit was prompted by social media concerns about women's privacy in such facilities. The teams reviewed their findings and shared recommendations with stakeholders to safeguard residents' rights.



DRF's Report Records Rampant Harmful Content Spread on Platforms during the 2024 Pakistan General Elections

December 2024: DRF's report *Platforms At The Polls: Disinformation, Political Ads & Accountability During The 2024 Pakistan General Elections* found rampant disinformation and harmful content on major social media platforms in the run-up to the country's recent general elections in February 2024. Focusing on TikTok, Facebook/Instagram, Youtube, and X (formerly Twitter), the report noted a significant disparity in the platforms' approaches to content violations in Pakistan, compared to Global North territories. Read the entire statement [here](#).



The following statements are from DRF's initiative, the Network of Women Journalists for Digital Rights (NWJDR), that has been working since 2018 to provide peer and capacity-building support. The Network serves as a safe space and support network for women journalists across the country where they share professional and personal grievances, and provide support to each other.

Demanding Accountability, Transparency, and Support for Domestic Violence survivors/victims in the Media Industry

January 2024: 83 journalists, including male journalists, signed Network of Women Journalists for Digital Rights' statement raising their voices against domestic violence, condemning the alleged case of domestic violence committed by a TV anchor, and demanding the state take measures to address this menace. Read the full statement [here](#).



NWJDR condemns the use of TFGBV and Gen AI to attack and silence women journalists



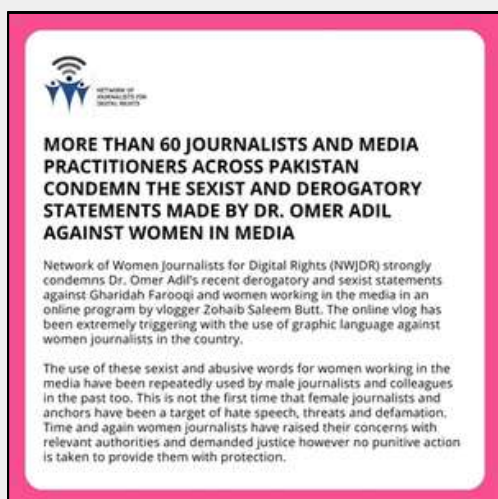
February 2024: More than 60 journalists signed NWJDR's statement condemning the use of TFGBV and Generative AI to attack and silence women journalists. Read the full statement [here](#).

NWJDR condemns the online abuse and threats against Absa Komal

May 2024: NWJDR released a statement expressing concern about the attacks and abuse against Absa Komal after she condemned the attack on the Christian community in Sargodha.



More than 60 Journalists and Media Practitioners Across Pakistan Condemn the Sexist and Derogatory Statements Made by Dr. Omer Adil Against Women in Media



July 2024: The NWJDR condemned Dr. Adil's derogatory and sexist statements against Gharidah Farooqi and women working in the media in an online program by vlogger Zohaib Saleem Butt. Read the entire statement [here](#).



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