Evaluation of OpenNet Africa: assessing its success in documenting, capacity building and advocating for Digital Security and Internet Freedom across Nine African Countries.

DBG Consultant: David Jodrell.

Evaluation: February 2021

Evaluation period: January 2018 – December 2019.

Contents:

Acronyms

BAKE	Bloggers Association of Kenya
CIPESA	Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ED	Executive Director
FIFAfrica	Forum on Internet Freedom for Africa
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation - European Union
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
IEC	Information, Education and Communication Materials
ISPs	Internet Service Providers
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LBGTQ	Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transgender and Queer/Questioning.
ToC	Theory of Change

Executive summary

Program overview: OpenNet Africa aims to promote Internet Freedom and uphold Digital Rights across Africa. The initiative advocates for digital rights and online freedom; alongside providing support to others' advocacy work; through training, development of resources, awareness-raising and facilitating networking between advocates. The project's activities are guided by three clear objectives: i) to monitor and assess threats to digital security and freedom in nine African countries; ii) Build the capacity of traditional human rights organisations; iii) Raise awareness on Internet Freedom in Africa.

To meet these, OpenNet targeted; CSOs including human right defenders, at-risk individuals (e.g. journalists and LBGTQ), policymakers, regulators, and private sector stakeholders (e.g. ISPs). The initiative leverages its monitoring of internet rights violations, research policy analysis of legislation affecting digital rights; to develop communication materials (e.g. reports, news articles and blog posts) training curriculums and inform the initiatives communication campaigns. Project outputs were disseminated via a dedicated website (www.opennetafrica.org), partners' websites, and social media.

About this evaluation: The evaluation sought to establish the achievements, outcomes and challenges registered by OpenNet Africa between January 2018 to December 2019. In doing so, programme performance was assessed against OCDE/DAC evaluation criteria[1]; i) relevance ii) validity iii) efficiency iv) effectiveness, and v) sustainability). The specific objectives of the evaluation included:

- Examine OpenNet's success concerning programme delivery, the achievement of outputs and outcomes.
- Assessing the main factors for achievement or non-achievement of project outcomes and objectives.
- Make recommendations on OpenNet Africa's design, priorities and sustainability based on needs of beneficiaries.

This evaluation was mixed methods, making use of both quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative methods used KII and document review; and primarily focused on assessing performance against evaluation criteria. Whereas, quantitative data tracked performance against output targets and collated beneficiaries' views around performance on project outcomes. For each performance criteria assessed by the evaluation an overall score is provided to summarise findings and collate feedback:

- A. **Very Strong –** OpenNet performed well against the criterion, and no changes were required
- B. **Strong –** OpenNet performed well against the criterion, but some changes could be considered
- C. **Satisfactory –** adequate performance against the criterion; however, changes should be prioritised to ensure good performance
- D. **Weak –** OpenNet did not perform adequately; significant changes are required to ensure OpenNet Africa can perform as expected.

---

[1], OECD, and the DAC Network on Development Evaluation. (2020) The DAC Evaluation Criteria. [Accessed https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm, 30/03/2021]

Findings:

Relevance: Against the assessment criteria of relevance OpenNet Africa scored "A – *Very Strong*". The highest performance classification was awarded because; i) the project showed good alignment to National contexts and needs; ii) design was informed by an assessment of previous work and research; iii) the project was described by implementing partners as mainstream to their work; iv) these partners also reported actively adapting activities to local context, and v) beneficiaries perceived training and other outputs as highly relevant to their needs; and finally vi) the project concept was seen as adding unique value by both groups.

Validity: Against the criteria of '*Validity*' OpenNet Africa scores "*C – Satisfactory*". Overall, this classification reflects mixed performance, with some areas in which the project achieved strongly and others where changes should be prioritised. The evaluation identified the following areas where the project performed well; i) the project had clear objectives and activities, and output indicators; ii) some output indicators had targets that were set according to a baseline; iii) the project had clear target groups, whose selection was coherent and well justified; iv) the network activities undertaken by OpenNet improved collaboration and were seen as supporting the development of partners and beneficiaries. However, the project's validity and M&E systems should be reviewed as a matter of priority in order to; i) have a more coherent logic, and indicator framework at the outcome and impact level, ii) make use of SMART outcome indicators, and iii) undertake comprehensive collection of output data and collection of outcome data. Enabling CIPESA and partners to more effectively learn and adapt the programme.

Efficiency: For the criteria of '*Efficiency*' OpenNet Africa scored "*B – Strong*". Overall the project performed well in this assessment, but CIPESA should further consider strategies and tactics to increase usage of the website. Despite this the project demonstrated the following achievements; i) measures put in place by OpenNet assured effective planning and use of financial resources; ii) few significant delays were reported, iii) and identified delays were actively managed; iv) the project met almost all delivery targets; v) capacity built many more CSOs than planned; alongside vii) significantly more project Reports where accessed then planned; and vii) finally, key informants reported cost-efficiencies in the projects' design, funding, alongside in the recruitment of local partners. Notwithstanding the strengths; the projects website OpenNetAfrica.org was an area of underperformance, with monitoring data suggesting low engagement and the portal being a relatively insignificant platform for distributing project outputs. Considering these findings; CIPESA should review the Websites' functionality; alongside its distinction from their organisational website. Further limiting performance in this category, was the insufficient output data collected for the reach of Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns; limiting their assessment against this criterion.

Effectiveness: Across the project outcomes and the assessment of impacts the project scored an average of "*B – Strong*". Good performance reflected convincing evidence that OpenNet Africa achieved its outcomes; particularly for awareness-raising, promotion of dialogue and understanding, skills acquisition; and digital security practices. Evidence for advocacy arising from OpenNet was less robust, but beneficiaries overwhelmingly perceived the project and its outputs as still supporting their efforts. Informants also reported several programme features that aided in achievement of outcomes namely; i) the uniqueness and quality of reports and other publications; ii) the use of additional social media and advocacy touch-points to build experience; iii) the practical and applied nature of the training iv) the use of multiple channels, targeted towards different groups to raise awareness; and v) network and collaboration promoted by the project was important in achieving all project outcomes. Physical interactions were critical in engaging with policy and practice target groups and achieving impacts through these stakeholders. Considering their importance in realising project effects the project should devote increased focus on offline engagement with these groups. This or other unverified assumptions over how project outcomes deliver impacts could be acting as a barrier to effects. However, because examples of policy and practice impacts were not systematically documented the evaluation could not assess pathways between outcomes and policy and practice change; preventing OpenNet Africa achieving the highest score against this assessment criterion.

Sustainability: Against the final assessment criteria of "*Sustainability*", the evaluation awarded OpenNet Africa "*B – Strong*". Reflecting the project performing well against; i) demonstrating several mechanisms to promote sustainability including the establishment of local expertise in project countries; ii) beneficiaries perceiving some project benefits as sustainable, iii) beneficiaries reporting serval sustainable actions as a result of OpenNet, e.g. establishment of advocacy groups iv) relationships established through OpenNet events being viewed as highly sustainable; and v) the project's longevity, and previous success attracting recurrent funders means the project was, and will likely continue to be sustainable. Withstanding these achievements, the evaluation identified a few areas to increase sustainability including; use of booster training and longer-term engagement of those capacity built; and the need for collaboration in joint funding opportunities to further build local expertise, and strengthen the project's advocate network.

Conclusion:

Overall across the evaluation criteria OpenNet Africa performed well but could have achieved even more with some adjustments. The project performed very well against the assessment of Relevance and exceeded expectations for Efficiency, Effectiveness and Sustainability. Results for the project's validity were less encouraging, due to weak coherence in project outcomes and impacts, and a dearth of evaluation and outcomes data collected during project implementation.

This evaluation identified three key themes that cut across the assessment criteria; to consider in the future design and implementation of OpenNet. The first is to improve the focus of OpenNet activities. This reflects the general observation many of OpenNet Africa's limitations resulted from a lack of a detail in the design and forward planning of specific activities. Whereas, many achievements resulted from core or underlying strengths in the initiatives approach. The second theme is the development of M&E to support learning, reflecting the finding that OpenNet has a significant number of blind spots in M&E that is making prioritisation of activities and learning difficult. The final theme, expanding network activities echoes the success OpenNet Africa has had in promoting networking, and the critical role relationships play in achieving outcomes and impacts. These cross-cutting themes form the bases for three sets of recommendations:

Recommendations:

Recommendation 1 Improve Focus of OpenNet Activities:	Recommendation 2: Build M&E Systems to Facilitate Learning:	Recommendation 3: Expand Network Activities
• Review the role of the project portal	• Revise the logic model to include a clear results chain	• Increase physical engagements for policy and practice target groups
• Develop a strategic focus for some Advocacy Campaigns	• Consider contribution and attribution in the results chain	• Increase contact between network advocates
• Increase training services offered	• Focus M&E on key outputs and outcomes in the results chain	• Establish a network identity
	• Formally test OpenNet pathways to impact through contribution analysis	• Consider fundraising activities for the network

Introduction

Project Description:

OpenNet Africa aims to promote Internet Freedom and uphold Digital Rights across Africa. The initiative implements advocacy campaigns and provides support to other stakeholders advocating for Internet Freedom. Support includes reports, monitoring and analysis, training, networking, convening and awareness-raising for digital rights actors in the region. The project had nine focal countries (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Botswana, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Malawi), on which training and capacity building, research and reporting focused. Though; OpenNet also produced Regional Reports and convened events in other African countries.

The programme leverages its monitoring and research, to develop communication materials (e.g. Reports, News Articles and Blog posts) training curriculums and inform the initiative's advocacy work. OpenNet Africa's advocacy is further supported through a network to increase impact. The network comprises of digital rights actors who have engaged with the project over its eight-year duration.

These activities are ordered around three clear objectives.

- **Objective 1:** Assess the nature of threats to access, privacy and freedom of expression online in the focus countries and their effect on citizens, journalists and HRDs.

- **Objective 2:** Build the capacity of traditional human rights organisations, social media commentators, media and other at-risk groups in digital security and internet freedom advocacy.

- **Objective 3:** Raise awareness among regulators, policymakers, private sector players (telecom companies and ISPs), service providers, law enforcement and internet users in Africa on the existing challenges and opportunities in upholding online rights and freedoms.

To disseminate reports and provide information, the initiative has a dedicated website (www.opennetafrica.org), which was launched in 2012 when the project started. The initiative also maintains a social media presence. Since its inception, OpenNet Africa has had numerous funders and has to-date been supported by over 10 donors. However, this evaluation focuses on activities funded by the US Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour, between January 2018 and December 2019. The total project budget was $400,000, dispersed in 8 quarterly payments to CIPESA. CIPESA was responsible for delivery, finance control and project coordination, whereas implementing partners were subcontracted as suppliers to support local implementation for training, country reports and the convening of events. CIPESA collaborated with nine local partners over seven countries, see Appendix 1 for list of Project Partners.

Description of activities:

To address the objectives, three distinct groups of activities are outlined within the project documentation. Each activity group primarily addressed each objective, giving OpenNet Africa's logic strong coherence at this level. The specific activities within each group are overviewed here;

Activity 1: Monitoring of online violations, digital rights and security; assess internet freedom policy and legislation:

OpenNet Africa undertook monitoring to document rights violations, and research to assess policy and legislative developments on Internet freedom. Research made use of field visits, key informant interviews alongside desk research and policy analysis. The primary output was a series of Reports documenting trends in all focal countries, and the African region. Both the Country and Regional Reports targeted technical, advocacy, academic, media, and policy audiences. Reports had a yearly thematic focus, with 2018 investigating privacy and data protection and 2019 documenting trends in internet controls. In addition to reports, briefings that provided concise recommendations were produced. Monitoring research and policy analysis were also used to inform other communication, and IEC materials; such as News Articles, Commentaries and Blogs. These outputs were disseminated through various channels, including CIPESA and OpenNet and partners' websites, via hard reports

copies and through online news outlets. Reports were also used to inform the 2018 and 2019 FIFAfrica events.

These activities contributed to the project's first Objective; assess the nature of online threats for key target groups. OpenNet Africa's website also contributes to Objective 1. The portal aims to be a "*one-stop*" resource portal for Digital Rights and Internet Freedom in Africa. The website also contributes to monitoring violations and policy assessment through a "*news*" section, and "*violation monitoring*" pages, providing stories on incidents and relevant policy news for digital rights. The website also includes "focus countries" pages for specific information such as "*Internet Freedom Ranking*s". The site's resources section catalogues OpenNet publications, and links to external digital security tools.

Activity 2: Training and capacity building in digital rights, security and internet freedom advocacy:

The training aimed to build the capacity of CSOs and individual actors in digital rights, internet freedom policy and advocacy, and digital security. Local partners within five of the project's focus countries delivered the training[2]; with participants from Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia travelling internationally. The focus and quality of training were maintained through a master curriculum, which was adapted to the country context by partners with feedback and oversight from CIPESA. Local partners identified beneficiaries for training, undertook outreach, some CSO needs assessments and produced training reports. OpenNet also leveraged its advocacy campaigns to capacity build CSOs, and made use of social media to further engage those trained.

Activity 3: Awareness and Advocacy Campaigns for digital rights, security and internet freedom:

The initiative also implemented several different awareness and advocacy campaigns, including; i) Advocacy campaigns in collaboration with key stakeholders ii) social media campaigns hosted on Twitter and Facebook, targeting national and international commemorative days. iii) Physical engagements including round table discussions, and the annual Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa (FIFAfrica). These different campaigns contributed to Objective 3; awareness-raising on the existing challenges and opportunities in upholding online rights and freedoms in Africa. However, the websites, reports and communication output described for Activity 1; also contributed to Objective 3 via awareness-raising.

In addition to the three activities listed in the project documentation, the evaluation consultant also considered "**network building**" as a distinct group of activities. Comprising of maintaining a directory of those engaged with OpenNet, and at-risk individuals or organisations, direct distribution of resources, and promotion of collaboration and learning exchange.

---

[2]Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Uganda and Kenya.

About the Evaluation:

Introduction: Following programme completion in September 2019, in February 2020 CIPESA commissioned DBG Consulting to undertake an independent evaluation of OpenNet Africa. The project evaluation was to identify performance levels, achievements, and lessons learned, alongside assessing progress towards OpenNet outcomes. To support evidence generation the study was guided by the following three objectives:

- Examine OpenNet success with programme delivery, and achievements against outputs and outcomes.
- Assessing factors for achievement or non-achievement of project outcomes and objectives.
- Make recommendations on OpenNet Africa's design, priorities and sustainability based on the needs of beneficiaries

This evaluation undertook a desk review, and collected qualitative and quantitative data against the five DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, validity, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability[3], alongside performance on outcomes redefined within a simplified programme logic (Figure 3). The evaluation's five assessment criteria are defined below.

- **Relevance:** assessment against this criterion examines how well the project concept and design align with the focal country context, and the needs of OpenNet beneficiaries.
- **Validity:** this criterion examines the validity of program design. Namely the coherence of the intervention logic; selection of target groups; the appropriateness of indicator and targets; and the credibility of the project's M&E.
- **Efficiency:** the evaluation examines the extent to which inputs convert into results. Including if outputs were delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- **Effectiveness:** assesses the programme's achievements against outcomes. Presenting an analysis of OpenNet's challenges and strengths and identifying how these feed into results.
- **Sustainability:** this criterion reviews the project's plans for sustainability and efforts to maintain its relationship with its partners and beneficiaries.

A Results Matrix developed during study inception acted as the evaluation's analysis framework (Appendix 2) guiding what was assessed for each criterion.

Criteria Scoring: In the evaluation's results section, each DAC criterion is provided with a specific rating score. Scores using a 4-point rating scale from A to D, numerically ranging from 4 to 1. Reflecting the consultant's classification of OpenNet Africa's performance against each criterion:

- **Very Strong –** OpenNet performed well against the criterion, and no changes were required.
- **Strong –** OpenNet performed well against the criterion, but some changes could be considered.
- **Satisfactory** – adequate performance against the criterion; however, changes should be prioritised to ensure good performance.
- **Weak** – OpenNet did not perform adequately; significant changes are required to ensure OpenNet Africa can perform as expected.

For effectiveness, performance is rated across individual project outcomes and assessment of its impacts. In this case, the scoring framework represents an average across these individual scores. Thus, for this criterion a '+' or '–' may be appended to the classification to demonstrate an average performance that was above or below the main classification because of rounding.

---

[3] Glossary of Evaluation and Results-Based Management (RBM) Terms, OECD (2000).

Evaluation Methodology:

To address the evaluation criteria and objectives, the consultant carried out a mixed-methods evaluation to capture a subjective account of OpenNet Africa's performance and impact from the perspective of its beneficiaries and partners. The evaluation followed three phases:

- **Phase 1: Literature review –** Review of key documents and reports, and internally collected results for OpenNet Activities between January 2018 and December 2019 to inform data collection methods and document results.

- **Phase 2: Data collection –** The evaluation sought feedback from target beneficiaries through an online survey and KIIs. In doing so, perspectives and experience with being part of the initiative; challenges faced and OpenNet Africa's performance against outcomes was captured.

- **Phase 3: Analysis and Scoring –** In this phase research findings arising from the literature review and data collection, and conversations with CIPESA Staff were triangulated and grouped into overarching themes to address the above research objectives and criteria.

Phase 1: Literature Review: The consultant reviewed OpenNet Africa's documentation to determine evaluative approaches. The review mapped evidence to DAC criteria, documented results and identified evidence gaps. This informed data collection tools and sample selection. During this phase, a total of 25 documents and other resources (e.g. webpages) were reviewed (Appendix 3). The primary purposes of the literature review were:

- **Activities delivered as planned** – Document progress against outputs and targets to understand OpenNet Africa's efficiency in delivery.

- **Appropriateness of the program logic –** Assess the project's relevance through alignment to National contexts and use of evidence and best practice to inform activities. Documentation also supported the assessment of coherence and validity of the project's logic, indicators and M&E.

- **Performance and outcome data**– the assessment of results collected within OpenNet Africa's M&E plan was also used to understand the project's effectiveness against outcomes.

Phase 2: Data collection: An online survey, and KII were used to gain beneficiary feedback. Each method is detailed below, followed by the studies sampling approach.

- **Key Informant Interviews (KII) –** four semi-structured interviews, with key OpenNet stakeholders[4] were undertaken. Interviews were conducted over Skype in English and recorded. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. They explored the participants' experience with OpenNet, use of its resources, and capacity building work. Interviews also described barriers and facilitators to the project objectives, sustainability of the initiative and its effects. The discussion guides used are provided in Appendix 4.
- **Online survey –** All those who received training and capacity building from OpenNet were emailed and asked to complete a short 10-minute online survey. Participants responded to close ended questions on various aspects of project resources and training, alongside their perceived usefulness and impact. The survey questions are provided in Appendix 5 of this report, and it was hosted online via SurveyMonkey

Key informants were proposed by CIPESA staff, with those selected covering local partners, users of project outputs and members of OpenNet's network. A total of six key informants were contacted for an interview, and only four responded to the request. For the online survey, OpenNet collected contact details of all beneficiaries trained through the initiative; which formed the survey's sampling frame. All 94 beneficiaries were emailed requesting they complete the survey; fifteen emails returned an error message, and 28 beneficiaries completed the survey giving an effective response rate of 35%.

---

[4] Key informants comprised of CIPESA staff, local implementing partners, users of project reports and attendees of events hosted by OpenNet.

Phase 3 Analysis and Scoring: Analysis took a deductive approach, whereby literature and project results and reports were integrated to contribute towards each DAC criteria and develop initial hypothesis and findings. Data was then collected and reviewed to validate the research hypothesis. All the data was entered into an analysis framework and analysed against the evaluation criteria. A thematic analysis was then carried out to identify the key themes emerging within each of the data sets (i.e. KII, literature review, and survey). Results were then triangulated to validate the findings across the different data sources. Results against each evaluation criteria were summarised, and overall scores were produced rating OpenNet Africa's performance from A to D.

Limitations of the research:
Limitations of this evaluation were considered when carrying out the analysis and reporting results. The budget for this evaluation resulted in only a limited number of key information interviews and data collection was scheduled 16-months following programming. Because of this respondents for KII were proposed by CIPESA, and may not represent the views of all stakeholders who participated in OpenNet Africa. In a similar vein while all beneficiaries trained were requested to take part in the survey, those who agreed to take part in the online survey were self-selecting, and likely felt a stronger affiliation to OpenNet Africa then beneficiaries who chose not to participate. Because of this both samples may provide an excessively positive view of the initiative. The sample size used in the survey is small, meaning results should only be interpreted as indicative. The significant time delay between activities which ended in December 2019 and data collection in January 2021 would have also limited the accuracy of respondents' feedback collected during the evaluation. Finally, all of the research carried out for this evaluation was in English and excluded data from project beneficiaries who only used local languages.

Ethical Considerations:
During the data collection and analysis phase of the evaluation, the research team ensured they maintained high ethical standards when engaging with participants throughout the study. These consisted of:

- **Informed consent –** Ahead of all surveys and interviews with participants, an explanation of the research was provided, and their informed consent was collected.

- **Confidentiality –** All of the data collected was kept confidential and the name and title of individual informants were removed from transcripts. Reporting of quotes are given by stakeholder groups to ensure individuals cannot be identified.

- **Data protection –** Once the data was collected it was stored onto a shared drive that could only be accessed by the researchers in the study. Following the completion of the evaluation data was permanently deleted.

Research Findings

Relevance: Assessment under this criterion examines the project's alignment to the nine focal countries' national context; partners and beneficiary views on the project's relevance; and understands if any new needs have emerged over the project period that could have influenced achievements.

Alignment to the National Context: Selection of the nine focal countries was based on donor requirements, continuity with previous funding cycles, and local needs. Needs assessments for specific countries were not undertaken, but research generated through OpenNet and other CIPESA projects was used, with country needs and learning considerations clearly articulated in the OpenNet Africa Proposal Narrative[5]. This reported approach to selection has targeted some of the most restrictive and risky African nations for internet users. For example, most countries targeted by OpenNet demonstrate worse '*Internet Freedom Scores*,' compared to other African countries[6] ranked by Freedom House[7]. The only two African countries classified as "*Not Free*" in the region; Rwanda and Ethiopia were also OpenNet Africa focal countries. Even countries such as Kenya, Zimbabwe and Botswana with better records are classified as only partly free; suggesting the project is targeting restrictive digital environments.

Though the internet freedom needs in focal countries align with project objectives, target nations demonstrate significant contextual variation. For example, countries differ in the specific tactics used to curtail online freedoms. To restrict access, the Ugandan government blocked individual services, via disrupting mobile money, or limiting citizens access' to social media via tax. The Ethiopian government, on the other hand, has blocked the internet in its entirety. Other countries have implemented regressive legislation such as the Kenyan Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act, 2018. While most target nations implemented mass phone registration schemes using national identification over the duration of the project. Interviewed stakeholders were keenly aware of the differing advocacy and security needs between countries. Publishing annual country reports was deemed effective at ensuring analysis was sufficiently granular and contextualised. This focus of reports was also seen as something that was uniquely offered by OpenNet. Moreover, partners delivering training also described local adaption as a critical component of their work.

> "*The digital security issues for Kenya may not be the same as the ones for Uganda. We as local experts are responsible for identifying them, and adapting the training while still meeting CIPESA's objectives. We must, give those trained, what best reflects their needs*" – **OpenNet Africa partner.**

To support adaptation, maintain focus and ensure best practices, CIPESA developed a training curriculum. Partners who adapted the curriculum reported using formative research, thematic expertise and support from CIPESA. Local partners described the project as close to their mainstream work, with their local expertise proving critical in recruiting beneficiaries. In summary, OpenNet Africa has selected countries with high, but variable needs. To ensure the project concept was relevant, it made use of several approaches; such as formative research, partners to locally adapt a standard training curriculum, and author country reports.

---

[5] CIPESA (2017). OpenNet Proposal Narrative.
[6] OpenNet Africa focal countries have a mean ranking of 50, compared to 60 for African Countries not covered by the initiative.
[7] See Freedom House (2020). Internet Freedom Rankings. Assessed, 12/01/2020 [https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-net/scores?sort=desc&order=Country]

Perceived relevance of OpenNet: Key informants, and survey respondents both reported the initiative as relevant. OpenNet Africa's practice of using local partners to adapt training, and identify CSO or at-risk individuals appears successful; with Figure 1 showing all beneficiaries thought the training and capacity building was at least "*somewhat aligned*" to their personal and organisational needs.

Figure 1: % of survey respondents who thought OpenNet training and capacity building was aligned to their personal or organisational needs.
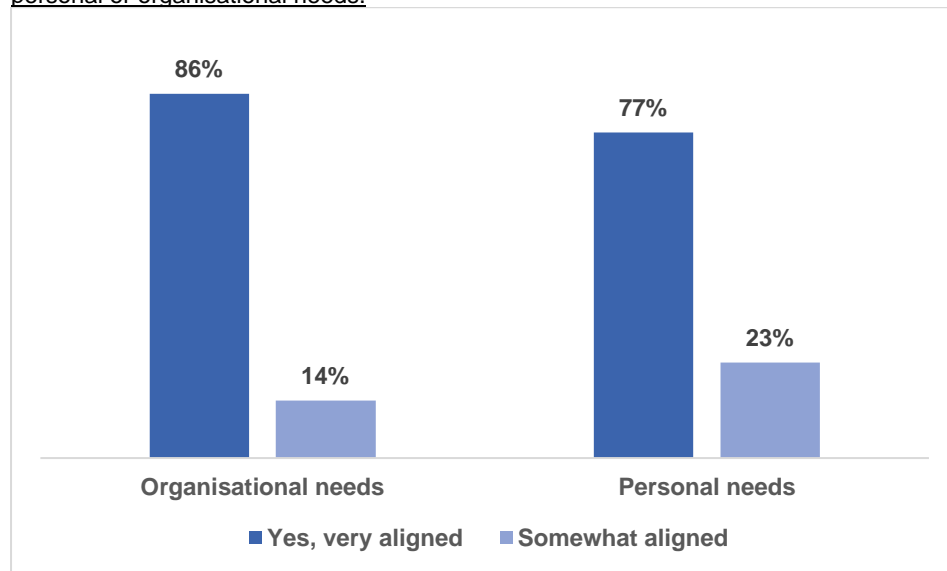
The primary target groups for training were CSOs and Human Rights organisations. The higher proportion of beneficiaries who reported training was *"very aligned"* to their organisational needs shown in Figure 1 could reflect this focus. All beneficiaries who completed the online survey received OpenNet training, and nine in ten reported using at least one other project output. Figure 2 shows the perceived relevance of OpenNet for users of Reports, the Website and Social Media. While users of all project outputs perceived OpenNet as relevant to their work[8], Report users were less likely to classify the initiative as *"very relevant"*.

Figure 2: % of Report, Website and Social Media users who reported OpenNet as very relevant for their work.
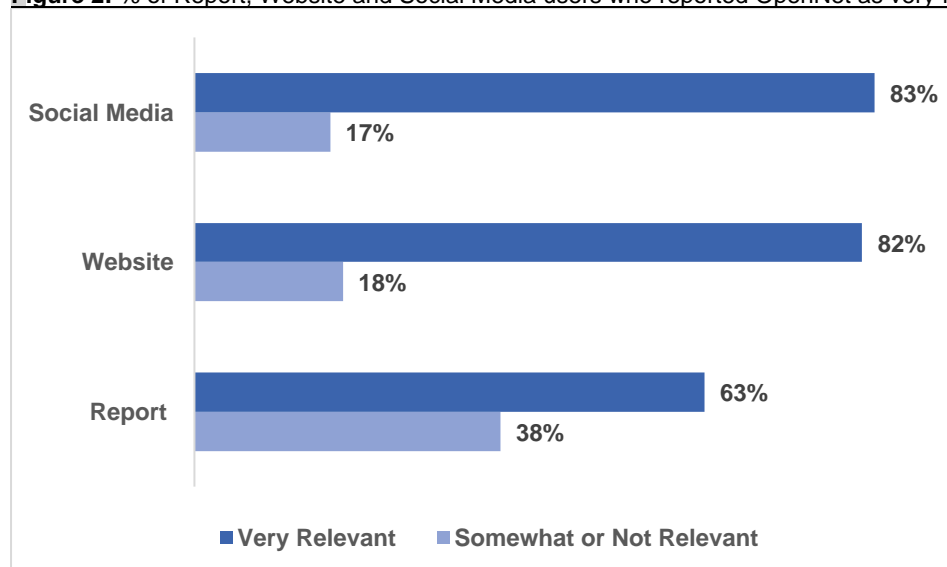
The lower perceived relevance of Reports somewhat contrasts with feedback from Key Informants who highlighted Reports as highly valuable, due in part to their regional and country relevance. With users describing the project's Country and Regional Reports as a unique resource.

---

[8] Even for Reports, 87% of users thought OpenNet was at least somewhat relevant for their work.

"If you look around; even in academia there is not much published about Africa. The reports are unique and they are up-to-date and focus on relevant policy issues determined by African stakeholders." **– OpenNet Africa beneficiary**

The project concept and objectives were also described as important, as respondents viewed the project as creating a strategic focus around Digital Rights not addressed through traditional governance work.

"OpenNet work is invaluable, in so many ways. Especially in Malawi, where the NGOs are more interested in issues to do with poverty, hunger, school, [among other issue]*). Then you have the civil society which is by and large mostly concerned with political issues. They don't work at strategic issues such as access to information"* – **OpenNet Africa beneficiary.**

Key informants could recall some similar initiatives, such as Freedom House and Afrobarometer. However, interviewees highlighted differences between them and OpenNet - such as competitors lacking regional focus. Thus, the project appears to be uniquely fulfilling the information needs of its beneficiaries.

New emerging needs: Key informants highlighted emergent issues that could have affected OpenNet's performance, alongside areas to consider further during future planning. Their responses clustered into two groups i) new thematic topics which OpenNet is yet to engage with, and ii) higher than expected interference by some governments.

Key informants recounted numerous emerging thematic areas for OpenNet Africa to focus on in the future[9]. For those interviewed, these emergent issues highlighted the need for regional monitoring and policy research. In other words, the dynamic nature of Digital Rights and Security would ensure OpenNet Africa remained relevant.

"The thing about this field is, it's dynamic, emerging issues will continue to arise but consistently we need to have collaboration and documentation. So, the themes will change but a consistent approach like OpenNet is needed." **– OpenNet Africa partner.**

Some key informants highlighted higher than expected scrutiny from governments, especially in Tanzania. The project's Risk Matrix[10] accounts for hostile political environments and different approaches to managing this risk. Approaches included, careful consideration of training and advocacy campaign countries, and specific engagement plans for resistant governments. For example, CIPESA co-hosting the 2019 FIFAfrica in Addis Ababa with the Ethiopian Government. Despite these plans, several security challenges emerged over the evaluative period. In Tanzania, local partners recounted how legislative amendments meant digital security training could have been deemed illegal. Advertising the training as such would have invited interference and intimidation from the Police, meaning they changed the name of training and undertook advocacy work with the Police to manage this risk. More significantly in April 2019, CIPESA Executive Director was also detained and later deported on arrival to Julius Nyerere International Airport in Dar es Salam, Tanzania. CIPESA and partners taking decisive legal action, and raising awareness of the violation swiftly resolved the detention. These challenges were found to be actively incorporated into project plans, as CIPESA staff reported incorporating incidents into the project's Risk Matrix.

---

[9] Such as, access for disabled individuals to online spaces in Africa, the interaction between Free Basics (internet.org) and factchecking, State Sponsored Disinformation, and Privacy Violations especially around health reporting.
[10] CIPESA (2018) OpenNet Risk Analysis Revised.

Conclusion: Against the assessment criteria of "*Relevance*", OpenNet Africa scored "*A – Very Strong*". The highest classification was awarded because; i) the project showed good alignment to National context and needs; ii) design was informed by an assessment of previous work and research; iii) the project was described by implementing partners as mainstream to their work; iv) who also reported actively adapting activities to local context, and v) beneficiaries perceive training and other outputs as highly relevant to their needs, with the project concept seen as adding unique value.

Validity: Assessment against validity aims to understand how well OpenNet Africa was conceived, and its results and targets defined and tracked. Specifically, it explored: the coherence of the intervention logic; the initiative's selection of target groups; the appropriateness of indicators and targets, and the credibility of the project's M&E.

Programme logic: The project had a logic model (Appendix 6) that informed the project's M&E framework. The intervention's logic benefited from having three clearly articulated objectives; that aligned with three groups of activities; monitoring and analysis, training and advocacy and awareness campaigns. Within these groups' activities were clearly and coherently stated, and contributed to their objectives. For substantial activities (e.g. delivery of training reports) delivery targets and timing were specified, and some output targets set. The project logic model included a list of risks and assumptions, that was expanded on comprehensively in a Risk Analysis Matrix[11]. However, while OpenNet Africa's logic was clear and explicit at an activity and output level, for project outcomes and impacts, the intervention logic lost coherence, in part due to the multiplicity of outcome and impact statements which were not situated in a clear results chain. For example, Objective 1 assessing the nature of threats had two outcomes and two impacts (Appendix 6). The outcome statements described activity outputs such as; "*reports acting as an evidence base… and reference tools*". The two impacts, one was focused on informing legislators, reflecting an outcome, and the second impact worded as an output "*reports highlighting policy priorities*". Thus, across outputs, outcomes and impacts the intervention logic is not in a sound results chain, with most outcome statements reflecting outputs.

In light of these challenges, the evaluation simplified the project logic model, to guide assessment against the criteria of Efficiency and Effectiveness. Figure 3 displays the simplified programme logic.

Figure 3: Simplified Programme Logic
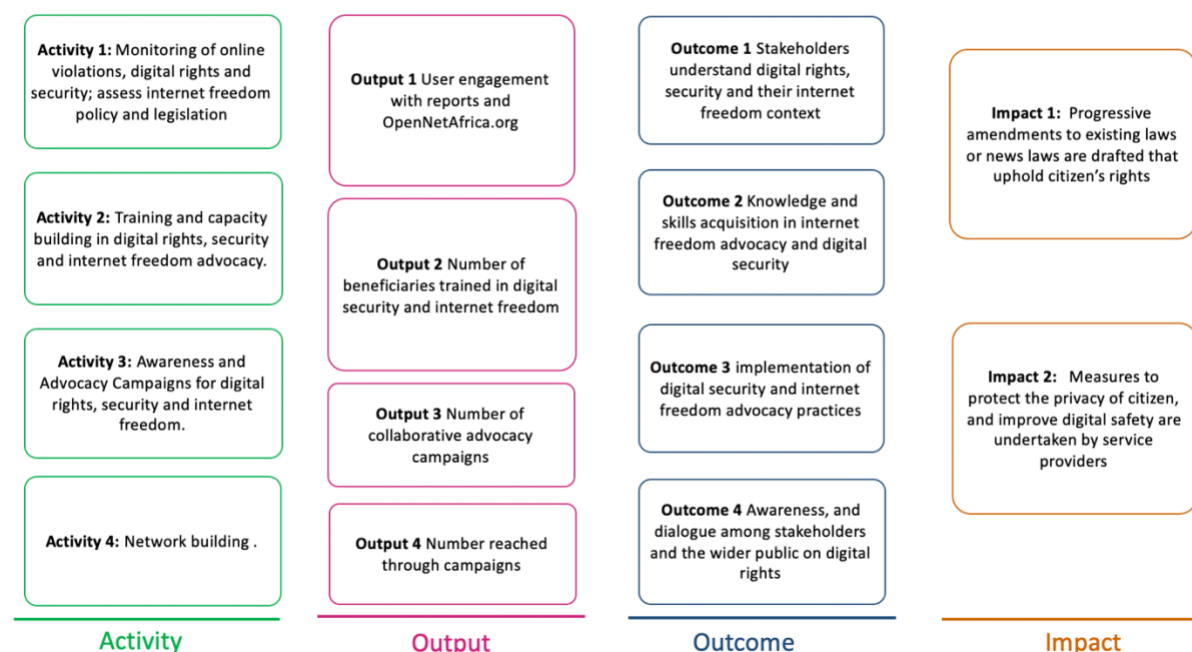
At the activity level, this Logic Model considers Network Building as distinct. The activities were originally grouped under Objectives 2 and 3; comprising maintenance of databases/directories, direct distribution of resources, convening and promoting learning exchange. Within the original programme logic for Objective 3, there were also a number of outcomes and impacts on collaboration, learning and collective advocacy (Appendix 6). Moreover, key informants highlighted the project's networking resulted in distinct benefits. Therefore, the evaluation examines "*Network Building*" as a unique set of activities to both improve the coherence of OpenNet's logic, and understand its added value.

The simplified logic has four output indicators all examining engagement - as this monitoring data was often collected. For outcomes, only one outcome per objective is listed; except for Objective 2: training

---

[11] CIPESA (2018) OpenNet Risk Analysis Revised.

and capacity building. Here knowledge and skills acquisition are separated from intended security and advocacy behaviours. The two project Impacts now only focus on policy and practice changes with legislators and ISPs, reflecting impacts reported back to the project funder.

Project Target Groups: This criterion assesses the selection and validity of the project's various target groups, including the selection of local partners and attention given to vulnerable groups. OpenNet's documentation provides a clear description of the project's groups comprising of a range of beneficiary types. These cluster into five key target groups which align with the project objectives. Namely;

1. **Civil Society Organisations:** Traditional Human Rights Organisations and Networks.
2. **At-risk individuals:** Individual Human Rights Defenders, online commentators, Journalists, Bloggers and LBGTQ.
3. **Advocates:** Academics, policy experts and other stakeholders working on digital rights and internet freedom in the region
4. **Practice:** Technology Organisations, Service Providers (telecom operators' ISPs) and Digital Innovators.
5. **Policy:** Legislators, Policymakers, and public service providers, local and national Governments such as Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

Target groups were engaged differently depending on the objective. For example, Objective 1; threat assessment, monitoring focused on CSO and *at-risk* individuals in addition to citizens more broadly. However, the country and regional reports are primarily targeted towards advocacy, policy and practice audiences. Key informants reported policymakers did not receive any training but were engaged through the project's advocacy work. This specification of project activities to target groups maximised project efficacy and demonstrated consideration of different beneficiaries. Selection of intervention groups was based on formative research, and the project focus on CSOs as the primary target group was based on a problem statement as recounted by this CIPESA staff member:

> *"We were already doing this kind of work, but there was no engagement with the traditional human rights organisations. The challenge now is they are trying to come online because of the shrinking civic space – so they need to amplify their work online. To meet this need we are trying to make sure they can also start advocating and defending the online space"* – **CIPESA Staff Member.**

The project targeted three at-risk groups; Human Rights Defenders, women and LBGTQ. For women OpenNet Africa attempted to engage them in training and outreach. This said, for women, training attendance was 28%, against a 50% target. For LBGTQ safety concerns meant CIPESA did not directly monitor this groups attendance. Nevertheless, 10% of survey respondents identified themselves as '*at-risk*'[12]. Safety concerns also resulted in training and advocacy campaigns not covering themes specific to LBGTQ. Though, some staff and partners highlighted concerted efforts were made to represent minority groups and the projects national and international events – such as sponsoring vulnerable groups to attend FIFAfrica, where sensitive topics could be engaged without raising concerns. Despite these efforts, some partners felt training could better address these group's needs.

> *"It is not just recruiting them for training, these groups often have certain challenges, it could be with access for example. Women or disabled groups have their own specific issues, and it would have been good to see trainings targeting these areas."* – **OpenNet Africa partner.**

Implementing partners could also represent an additional beneficiary group; with those interviewed highlighting several advantages to participating in OpenNet Africa. Programme staff recounted selection of partners was based on their comparative advantage to contribute to the project goals. Partner selection was reported as intensive, with recruitment accounting for the organisations' profile, local connections and thematic expertise.

---

[12] Respondent of the online survey, were given a number of options to describe their online freedom and security situation, 10% defined their selves as members of an at-risk group.

Programme indicators and targets: Results management was guided by two documents, an M&E framework in Excel, that formed the bases of donor reporting, and a more ambitious Indicator Framework[13]. Output indicators were captured within the programmes M&E framework, which also set targets. Results in this framework were set by the project donor; with it having clear and quantifiable results. At the outcome level, however, many indicators were not SMART[14] as illustrated in Table 1, these measures were mostly listed in the Indicator Framework. The project was required to collect only a few outcome indicators in the donors M&E framework. For the Indicator Framework poor coherence in the intervention's logic at the outcome level appears to have affected the setting of targets; resulted in an over-reliance on output measures, and ultimately meant the project captured limited information against outcomes such as skills acquisition, or increase in CSO capacity. Furthermore, the project's indicator framework did not account for impacts, though they were outlined in the M&E framework reflecting legislation and practice change.

Table 1: Extracted Outcome Indicators:

Logic Model Area	Indicator(s)	Comment on the indicator
Outcome: The research reports and policy briefs contribute towards creating awareness and understanding on issues of internet freedom and how this affects online behaviour in the focus countries.	No. of research reports produced, distributed and downloaded from online platforms	This is an output indicator Appropriate outcome indicator could be: "*X% of users agree that research reports and policy briefs supported their understanding of internet freedom and its effects on online behaviour*"
Outcome: Knowledge and skills acquisition in internet freedom advocacy and digital security	No. of beneficiary organisations that actively adopt/ implement digital security and internet freedom advocacy strategies within their operations	This is a behavioural outcome, which could be harder to achieve. Implementation of strategies was not collected "*X% of beneficiaries report an increase in knowledge or skills as a result of the training*"
Outcome: Understanding, awareness and dialogue among stakeholders and the wider public on digital rights, threats, best practices and emerging challenges	No. of IEC materials developed and disseminated No. of people participating in the advocacy meetings Traffic statistics of social media campaigns and online repository	These are output indicators. Not all information was routinely collected. Useful to report as a single statistic Alternative output indicator could be: "*No. of stakeholders and citizens reached by OpenNet Africa and its campaigns*"

Programme M&E: Of the fourteen indicators within the M&E framework, the majority were collated and reported in OpenNet to the funder[15]. However, four indicators were not systematically collected[16]. Some other areas data capture could have been improved, such as capturing all websites for downloads of country and regional reports. Overall, however, tracking was adequate for delivery of activities; and most data was captured for donor reporting. Though CIPESA should considered capturing more data on project outcomes. Especially those areas which are relatively easy to ascertain, such as the effect on training on actual knowledge and skills rather than perception of skills as measured by this evaluation. Or ensuring key actions for beneficiaries such as CSOs developing internet advocacy strategies is tracked. Identification and measurement of these types of indicators would enable OpenNet to better understand its effectiveness and thus ultimately improve the project design. Moreover, partners reported the only M&E requirements was for training, and this was delivered to CIPESA via narrative reports. These reports were effective in documenting attendance and content covered but produced little to assess the training's effectiveness. A limitation that was highlighted by several key informants, for example:

> *"The problem is, we don't know what happens to them, the people we train long-term. For other reasons I do speak to some of them, and feedback is generally*

---

[13] CIPESA (2019) OpenNet Africa Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Indicator Table
[14] Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.
[15] CIPESA (2018) M&E Framework OpenNet Africa
[16] Indicator 1.3.2 Number of laws, policies or procedures adopted, revised, stalled or changed to protect; 1.3.2.1 number of No. of legislation changed; 2.2.2: (%) of CSO adopting/ implementing internet freedom advocacy strategies in their operations; 3.1.2: % of private actors making changes within their organisation operations.

good. But we don't re-engage to see if more training is needed or to check success." **– OpenNet Africa partner**

Digitally CIPESA did routinely collect some output metrics (e.g. website visits, report downloads for OpenNetAfrica.org); but there was no evidence of a comprehensive measurement strategy. For example, low-cost output indicators, such as engagement with social media were not comprehensively captured. Again, this represents a missed opportunity to understand what online advocacy strategies and social media campaigns are most effective. At the projects impact level cataloguing of these was patchy, and CIPESA staff highlighted their typical approach to capturing impacts (via blogs and articles) could not be used for confidentiality reasons made at the request of the donor.

In summary, the project's M&E represents a limitation. The project has captured ten out of the fourteen indicators in the project M&E framework. Moreover, data captured by the project could only adequately measure if planned activities were implemented, and provided few results for their performance and effects. While capturing additional outcome and output data was not a '*requirement'* not capturing it represents a missed opportunity to inform programme adaption and prioritisation of the various project activities, limits the evidence narrative generated by OpenNet; ultimately making learning more difficult. Thus, CIPESA should refine the project's M&E as a priority.

Added value of the Network approach: The evaluation sought to establish the added value of networking to bolster collaboration between OpenNet Africa's beneficiaries and partners. The project used a number of approaches to facilitate collaboration, including maintenance of a directory of at-risk individuals and organisations for support and collaboration within the project's focal countries. The directory enabled the targeting and distribution of resources, identification of at-risk individuals, and organisations for training and advocacy work. Key informants also reported; advocacy campaigns, such as joint actions, social media campaigns, and events such as FIFAfrica as supporting collaboration.

In turn, collaboration between like-minded individuals and organisations was reported as critical in reaching advocacy objectives. Reflecting this, OpenNet Africa's logic had outcomes and impacts pertaining to collective advocacy. To assess the project's success in promoting networking, survey respondents were asked to what extent they felt OpenNet Africa made them feel part of a network collaborating for Internet Freedom. Figure 4 shows over two thirds of participants *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that OpenNet did this; however, one in ten participants reported the programme did not make them feel part of this Network.

Figure 4: % survey respondents who Agree OpenNet Africa made them feel part of a network of advocates collaborating for Internet Freedom.
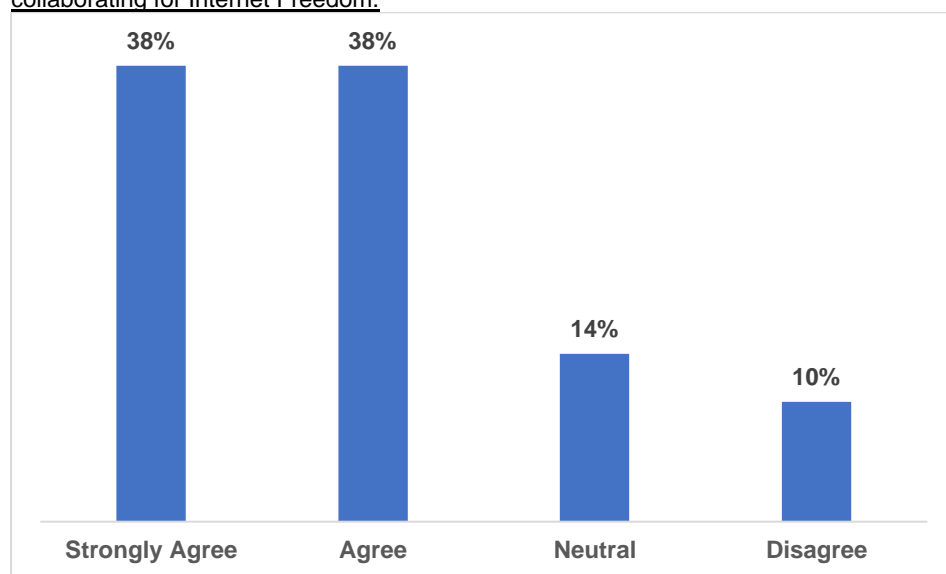
Collaboration was commonly reported by key informants as a benefit of participating in the initiative. The most common way this collaboration added value was through the opportunity to learn and share from like-minded actors, as elaborated in the following statement:

> *"There is a conference every year, when you attend these and other trainings and meetings you find those thinking about the same issues as you. The discussion is important, it gives you new ideas and furthers your thinking on old ones"* – **OpenNet Africa beneficiary.**

For partners, networking was seen as improving the capacity of their work alongside leading to new opportunities outside the initiative. These benefits include increased visibility and exposure, the ability for their work to engage National and International audiences, and development of professional relationships. Physical engagements such as conferences were reported critical in gaining these benefits, alongside being the primary way networks were established.

Informants suggested some areas to further improve networking including; improved coordination of joint activities, such as the need to better identify synergies between partners to increase learning and efficiency; and identifying funding opportunities for collaborative advocacy work. For OpenNet Africa's advocacy work, informants noted in general collaborative advocacy campaigns were piecemeal. Thus, increasing their focus, size and scope could also boost joint action and engagement amongst advocates. More focused advocacy work may also aid in creating a stronger identity for OpenNet, which is distinct from CIPESA; a limitation identified for other project components, such as the Website.

In summary, beneficiaries reported OpenNet made them feel part of a network of advocates. Moreover, informants who participated in OpenNet's '*Network'* report collaboration with CIPESA and other actors, resulting in many benefits including learning, strengthening of capacity, exposure and building contacts in Digital Rights and Internet Freedom.

Conclusion: Against the criteria of '*Validity'* OpenNet Africa scores "*C - Satisfactory.*" Overall, this classification reflects mixed performance, with some areas in which the project achieved strongly and others where changes should be prioritised to ensure adequate performance. The evaluation identified the following areas where the project performed well; i) the project had clear objectives and activities, and output indicators; ii) some output indicators had targets that were set according to a baseline; iii) the project had clear target groups, whose selection is coherent and well justified; iv) the Network activities undertaken by OpenNet improved collaboration and was seen as supporting the development of partners and beneficiaries. However, the project's validity and M&E systems should be reviewed as a matter of priority in order to; i) have a more coherent logic, and indicator framework at the outcome and impact level, ii) make use of SMART outcome indicators, iii) undertake comprehensive collection of output, outcome and impact data; iv) CIPESA should also consider delivering specific activities, such as training topics for the projects vulnerable target groups.

Efficiency: This criterion assessed how economically resources (*funds, expertise, time, etc.*) were converted to outputs. It explored if activities were delivered to plan, targets were achieved; and delivered in a cost-efficient way. The evaluation also reviewed systems used to ensure effective use of inputs, and whether CIPESA's organisational structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms supported project delivery.

Measures to ensure effective use of inputs: Several mechanisms, systems and approaches were used by OpenNet to ensure good stewardship of resources. Including, use of long-term partners, capacity assessment for new-partners. Onboarding meetings, use of contracts with partners and audits of funds. As partners delivered discrete tasks; contact with CIPESA was activity-specific rather than ongoing. Project staff did provide remote (*Skype*) check-in where issues arose, particularly when adapting the project's training curriculum and undertaking edits to the country reports. Partners reported that CIPESA took active management and control of activities, with procedures in place to account for; and offer support when anything needed to change.

> *They* [CIPESA] *are also very flexible meaning when challenges do come about they are easily dealt with".* – **OpenNet Africa partner.**

Informants also reported few barriers to efficient use of resources; including that some requests were short notice. For example, one local partner felt last-minute request affected the quality of a curriculum adaptation and recruitment for training:

> *"Sometimes the trainings* [requested by CIPESA] *were very short notice, and you felt, you know. rushed for time. There needs to be a little more of a plan, I got the sense they were overstretched for time. Anyway, it did make our job harder."* – *OpenNet Africa* **partner.**

Delivery of activities and outputs to target: OpenNet Africa's M&E framework outlined the number and timing for substantial project activities, alongside tracking some output indicators. The delivery of activities, to the original project plan and achievement of outputs against targets, are considered here.

Overall, key informants reported few significant delays in implementing project activities. However, the CIPESA project manager highlighted some challenges. Funds from the project donor were delayed for the project's first quarter; resulting in no activities implemented in the project's first four months. Despite the delay, all funds were received, with no reduction in planned activities reported. However, the delay affected the training schedule. In Zimbabwe, the first country to schedule a workshop; training was pushed back over six months. This was in order to keep the Tanzanian training on schedule, as the country was a higher priority. Delays in funding were also reported as causing challenges in identifying new partners in Botswana; resulting in the decision to undertake training in Zimbabwe instead. Partners also highlighted in some instances that final edits to country reports caused delays in publishing.

The M&E framework has delivery targets for significant activities, enabling assessment of accountability in CIPESA's delivery of the project. For OpenNet Africa's first set of activities: threat assessment, the initiative had a target of 20 reports. Specifically, the project aimed to produce nine country reports and one regional report annually. However, the Botswana 2018 report was not published. Meaning a total of 17 country reports were produced against a target of 18. Both annual reports were published, alongside an additional regionally focused research report[17] resulting in the project meeting the overall report target. For Activity 2, all five training workshops were undertaken as planned. Due to security concerns training was also not undertaken in Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Burundi. Instead, as intended beneficiaries travelled to other focal countries. For Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns delivery targets were set for the number of Round Table Discussions, Advocacy Campaigns and FIFAfrica events hosted by CIPESA. Performance against these targets was mixed. The project undertook 25 advocacy campaigns, doubling its target of ten. OpenNet also hosted both annual FIFAfria events as planned. The first was held in 2018 in Ghana; the second was hosted in Ethiopia, in 2019. However,

---

[17] CIPESA. (2019). Despots and Disruptions: Five Dimensions of Internet Shut Down in Africa. [https://cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=283 Accessed 01/02/2021].

for Round Table Discussions; only two were delivered in Kenya and Uganda against the five originally proposed.

As with delivery targets, output targets were set and monitored for some activities. The output indicators represented engagement; thus, assessment against these targets can inform OpenNet's efficiency. For the first group of activities, output targets had been set for website visits and report downloads; the project underperformed against the first and overperformed against the second. The OpenNet website reported 4,881 unique site visits; under half the target of 10,000. However, CIPESA.org which shared much of the portals content received 470,455 unique site visits during the same period[18]. While the website did not appear in the projects M&E framework, it was integral in distributing reports. For reports at least 17,640 were accessed over the project period against a target of 1,000. A total 15,271 copies of this projects annual regional reports were downloaded from CIPESA.org alone, compare to only 369 downloads of both Country and Regional Reports from Opennet.org. An additional 2,000 'hard copies' of the project Report were distributed during conferences and other events. Activity 2: training and capacity building, despite participants from some nations needing to travel internationally, OpenNet almost doubled the output target of 50 CSOs trained, capacity building a total of 89 organisations and 96 individual beneficiaries.

For Awareness and Advocacy Campaigns, no output targets were set. However, OpenNet Africa's social media accounts have approximately 3,000 followers and this was reported by 57% of survey respondents as a way they interacted with the initiative. Indicating the campaigns hosted on these platforms would have achieved high reach; if this data were systematically collected. The project's twenty-five advocacy campaigns were a mix of attending internet related events, offline and online dialogue; which was often delivered with partners; making tracking of reach challenging. However, attendance at both FIFAfrica events was substantial. The 2018 form hosted in Ghana, was attended by 280 participants representing 43 countries, and in 2019 the Form hosted in Ethiopia attracted 300 participants from 60 countries.

Table 2 provides an overview of performance against delivery (e.g. if the activities were undertaken) and output targets (if they performed as expected). The table shows in summary that; overall OpenNet either met or over-performed against targets; with the project only undertaking less round table discussions than planned, and the usage of OpenNet.org being much lower than anticipated. Reasons for this are considered against the criteria of cost-effectiveness.

Table 2: Summary of OpenNet performance against Delivery and Output Targets

Area	Activity	Delivery Target	Output Target
Activity 1	Country and Regional Reports	On Target	Above Target
	Website / Portal	N/A	Below Target
Activity 2	Training Workshops	On Target	Above Target
Activity 3	Advocacy Campaigns	Above Target	N/A
	FIFAfrica	On Target	N/A
	Round Table Discussions	Below target	N/A

---

[18]CIPESA. (2020). CIEPESA.org website analytic report: Statistics for 2018 and 2019.

Cost-effectiveness: Partners report they felt within the project context the approaches were as cost-effective as they could be. Interviewees highlighted many factors which they felt made OpenNet Africa cost-effective, namely; i) the use of multiple channels for promotion and dissemination; ii) the repurposing of research and analysis for other outputs (e.g. blog posts and news articles), and iii) The use of OpenNetAfrica.org as a resource portal that could focus the audience on "*Digital Rights and Online Freedoms*". OpenNet receiving funding from multiple donors was also described as sustaining cost-efficiency. Additional funding enabled more African countries to be monitored[19]; growing the Regional Reports' depth, and the resources available on the portal. Finally, recruitment of local partners was cost-effective; with informants describing the project's ability to offer them residual benefits meant OpenNet attracted, and retained strong partners at a low cost.

> *"The partners benefited from the events, collaborating and other involvement. You know from undertaking research, writing reports. And this is what allowed us to keep the costs low"* – **CIPESA Staff Member.**

Alongside the strengths, partners reported areas to achieve further cost-effectiveness. For example, in Tanzania both partners interviewed, that the time spent adapting CIPESA training curriculum could reduce if in country partners collaborated for efficiency

> *"I think in terms of adapting [*training*] material, where we spent a lot of time thinking about these changes. So, for countries with a similar digital rights context, like Ethiopia, it would be good to collaborate and learn together"* **– OpenNet Africa partner**

Other cost efficiencies suggested included increasing the online availability of resources. For example, hosting digital security training content on YouTube; or making widespread use of digital forums and collaborative technology to supplement dialogue at physical meetings.

Due to the high number of Report downloads they cost approximately $1.8 per user.[20] Meaning from a cost per user perspective; reports were delivered at just under 6% of the planned cost of $32.00 per use. Key informants highlighted that project Reports had a dissemination strategy and were promoted across multiple channels. This alongside earlier findings that Reports were seen as unique, and highly credible explains the high usage, and thus very low cost per user identified. Only 2% of the 17,640 report downloads were accessed from OpenNetAfrica.org, moreover the website was the only project output that did not meet its engagement target (Table 2). Informants interviewed who used the website highlighted it was challenging to navigate, and that publications were inadequately catalogued. On reviewing OpenNetAfrica.org the portal's user experience is poor. For example; for the cataloguing of reports which publications appeared on the website was inconsistent[21]. Features such as country monitoring pages appear dated, and their purpose is not clear[22]. Informants highlighted the sharing of content between the OpenNetAfrica.org and CIPESA's own website blurred their distinction, and the lack of difference was another barrier to engagement with the project webstie. In light of this lack of distinction, CIPESA.org high usage and OpenNetAfrica.org dated functionality the role of the two websites should be considered further.

> *"So there is CIPESA the organisation (which) is well known, then there is the OpenNet website. As info is on both, most users will go to CIPESA and not go to OpenNet if they get what they need"* **– OpenNet Africa partner**

In contrast to the website; due to the high number of additional beneficiaries trained the project was approximately 92% more cost-effective than planned. OpenNet achieved this despite beneficiaries from half the project countries travelling internationally, meaning the project effectively-balanced efficiency

---

[19] Additional countries include; Ghana, Zambia, South Africa, and Senegal.
[20] Total cost of reports, was reported as $32,000 divided by the number of Reports downloaded; $32,000/17,640 = $1.8
[21] For example, the OpenNet Regional and Country reports appearing on both websites and the initiatives policy briefs not appearing only on CIPESA's website.
[22] For example, the focus country pages cover six of the nine focus counties, and South Africa. The purpose of these pages appears unclear, the user is presented with a few key statistics. Including internet freedom ranking, and affordability ranking. Metrics are not explained hindering their usefulness. Focus country pages provide a count of laws reviewed and evaluated for OpenNet, through the most recent update was in 2014. Links to country-specific reports also appear inconsistently updated

and security concerns. The survey also found training benefited others past direct attendants[23]; indicating training and capacity building activities were highly cost-effective.

Conclusion: For the criteria of '*Efficiency',* OpenNet Africa scored '*B – Strong*'. Overall the project performed well against the criterion, but CIPESA should further consider strategies and tactics to increase usage of the project Website. Despite this the project performed well in the following areas; i) measures put in place by OpenNet to assure effective planning and use of financial resources; ii) few significant delays were reported, iii) identified delays were actively managed; iv) the project met almost all delivery targets; v) capacity built many more CSOs than planned; vi) substantially more Reports were accessed than planned; and vii) finally, key informants reported cost-efficiencies in the projects' design, funding, alongside the recruitment of local partners. Notwithstanding the strengths, the project website had low engagement and it had a very limited role in distributing the projects reports. While a project portal offers clear benefits, such as allowing participants to focus on the Topic of Digital Rights and Internet Freedoms, it is clear currently the portal is not distinct from CIPESAs own website and is only responsible for a small aspect level of project engagement. Considering these findings; CIPESA should review the portals' functionality; and consider if its purpose could be better served within a section of CIPESA. Further limiting performance in this category, was the insufficient output data collected for some activities; for example, not all social media engagement comprehensively tracked limiting the evaluations assessment of Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns.

---

[23] 95% of survey respondents reported "Yes" to Have you shared any of the knowledge and skills from the training & capacity building with others?

Effectiveness: The assessment of effectiveness established the extent to which the project achieved its objectives and outcomes. Specifically, the evaluation explored: beneficiaries' and partners' perceptions of achievement against Outcomes, the programme policy and practice Impacts; reasons for the achievement or non-achievement; and barriers to progress. The assessment is made against outcomes and impact as defined in the simplified programme logic presented in Figure 3.

Outcome 1 - Stakeholders Understand digital rights, security and their internet freedom context

Country and Regional Reports were cited as key in addressing Outcome 1; though Informants saw other project areas contributing, including the Website, News Articles and Blogs. To ascertain OpenNet Africa's achievements for this Outcome, survey respondents were asked two questions about the success of the initiative in documenting violations and supporting in their advocacy work.

Figure 5 shows the responses to these questions. Beneficiaries overwhelmingly viewed OpenNet as supporting their understanding and advocacy. Every survey respondent either Agreed or Strongly Agreed that OpenNet contributed to the documentation of online violations. Moreover, all reported that the initiative supported their internet freedom advocacy either "*A Bit*" or "*A Lot*". Reflecting the importance of Country and Regional Reports; Figure 5 disaggregates Report users' responses. Users of OpenNet publications perceived OpenNet as more effective at documenting violations and more supportive of their advocacy when compared to respondents who did not use reports. With almost nine in ten Report users, responding OpenNet helped them "*A Lot*".

Figure 5: % report users vs all survey respondents who Strongly Agree OpenNet contributed to documenting violations and supported A Lot with their advocacy work.
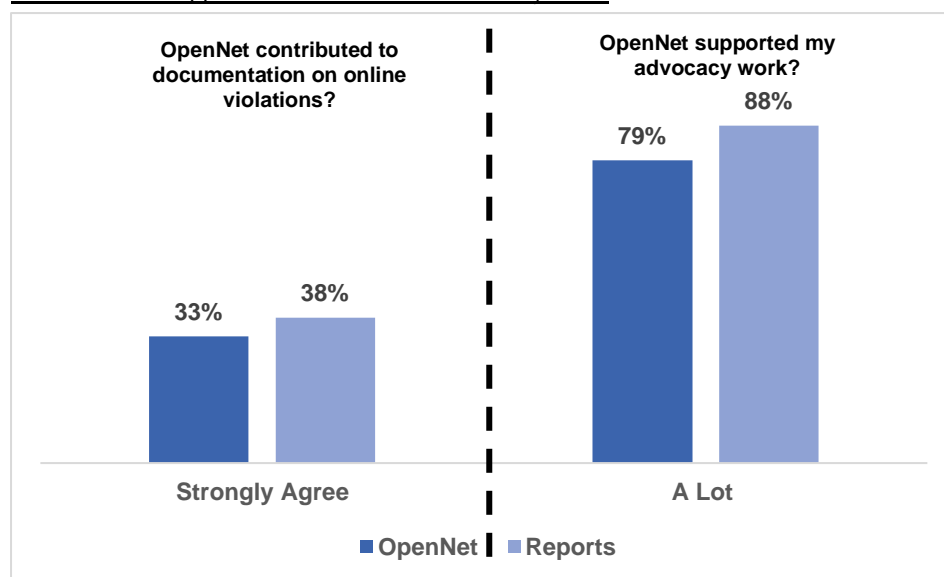
Survey responses triangulated with Key Informants' feedback; who reported using publications in many ways, including informing the content of training and workshops, informing news stories, blog posts, other reports, teaching, advocating, and informing policy. The project's focus on multiple African nations reports using yearly themes, and the long duration of OpenNet Africa meaning these resources were seen as a 'catalogue of reports', that increased their usefulness and ultimately their effectiveness. As Informants felt these features gave sufficient analytic depth, enabled comparative analysis of trends over time and between countries. Partners reported undertaking several research activities to inform Reports including; qualitative interviews, desk-research and policy analysis. This resulted in Reports being perceived by their users as well informed and credible, that provided insights and information not available elsewhere.

Informants suggested a few improvements to strengthen Report effectiveness for policy audiences, such as regulators and legislators. Namely, the increased use of physical meetings with these groups; with some partners noting that buy-in from these groups was significant when they attended events such as FIFAfrica. Two Informants also suggested that developing an external review or peer review board could further strengthen the Reports' rigour, with one highlighting this need has come about due to increased traction and awareness of the project and its outputs:

"If I had to say one thing to improve [the Reports].. probably.. it is that the work is moving beyond just having Reports and moving on to true engagement in policy making, having some kind of review board or peer review will increase their credibility. This could be required for some groups like academics or those making laws" – **OpenNet Africa beneficiary**

In summary, for results examined for Outcome 1 against the criteria of '*Effectiveness'*, OpenNet Africa scores "*A – Very Strong*". The high achievement against this criterion was a result of: Respondents highlighting Country and Regional alongside other project outputs (e.g. *Policy Briefs, Commentaries, Blog and News Articles*) as contributing to Outcome 1. Both the project overall and Reports specifically were perceived by beneficiaries as effective at documenting online freedoms and supporting their advocacy work; and Key Informants reported using OpenNet Africa's publications to inform a number of advocacy actions. Further, supporting the project's strong performance against Outcome 1 project Reports were seen as credible and offering unique information, with informants only providing minor suggestions to bolster their effectiveness.

Outcomes 2 – knowledge and skills acquisition in internet freedom advocacy and digital security; AND Outcome 3 – implementation of digital security and internet freedom advocacy practices.

The evaluation examined both skills acquisition and implementation of practices together to assess the chain of results from skills to practice. Training workshops were the way OpenNet addressed Outcomes 2 and 3. In addition to training, however, the project leveraged other components, such as joint advocacy campaigns to further cement beneficiaries' skills.

Survey respondents were asked how much their knowledge and skills improved because of the training. Figure 6; shows the extent to which they perceived improvement in either digital security and advocacy skills.

Figure 6: % of participants who reported improved knowledge & skills as a result of the training.
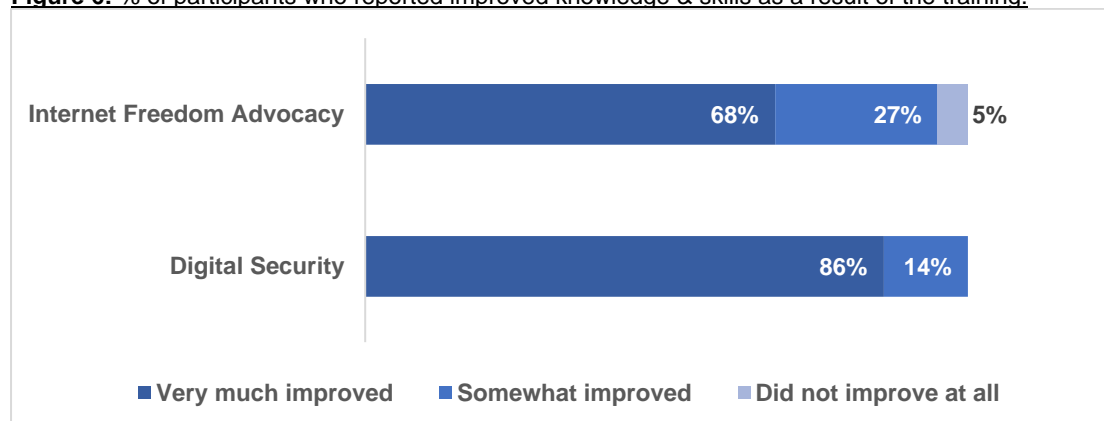
For digital security, almost one in nine survey respondents reported their skills improved "*very much*" due to training. Moreover, all other respondents perceived their skills somewhat improving. Figure 6 shows that survey respondents were slightly less confident in the skills they acquired for advocacy. Nevertheless, over two-thirds of respondents still felt their skills and knowledge "*very much improved,*" and only 5% believing the training did not improve their advocacy skills at all.

To assess effects on Digital Security behaviours, survey respondents were asked if they did anything differently for their digital safety because of the training. Over nine in ten[24] reporting yes, they changed their practices. Behaviours included numerous small actions, such as using email encryption, VPNs and complex passwords, to helping others improve their digital security. Just over 4 in 10 reported implementing substantial practices, such as training others, developing security strategies, and local discussion networks (i.e. via WhatsApp). Thus, training appears to have been highly efficient in bolstering beneficiaries' skills and improving digital security practices.

---

[24] 91% of survey respondents reported "yes" they did something different as a result of the training.

Advocacy practices tended to be more significant undertakings, often requiring time and financial resources from the Beneficiaries' organisation. All CSOs trained were expected to develop organisational Internet Freedom Advocacy Strategies. A few beneficiaries did report developing these, but in implementing them, CSOs lacked resources; as described in the following statement:

> *"I developed a Digital Advocacy Plan to be implemented in Botswana, it was a great learning experience. However, due to limited resources, we were unable to execute the plan"* –**OpenNet Africa beneficiary**

Unfortunately, OpenNet Africa did not routinely assess if beneficiaries developed and managed to implement Advocacy Strategies, and therefore performance cannot be comprehensively assessed. Less resource-intensive advocacy actions were widely reported including; i) the formation of advocacy groups; ii) networking with stakeholders for lobbying; iii) and writing communication materials on policy topics. Beneficiaries trained also reported undertaking joint advocacy campaigns with CIPESA. With OpenNet Africa delivering Joint Statements with 92 capacity built CSOs. Social Media campaigns also further engaged beneficiaries following training providing additional opportunities to cement skills.

Furthermore, beneficiaries trained demonstrated high engagement with other project outputs. Including the projects Social Media Campaigns (57%), the website (52%) and project reports (48%). Thus, it appears those trained made use of OpenNet resources to continue their advocacy work. Beneficiaries also reported to what extent the training supported them in advocating for internet freedom. All survey respondents felt that training supported them at least "*A Bit*", and almost three-quarters of those trained reported they were supported "*A Lot*"[25]. Some beneficiaries described how the abstract nature of internet freedom made the skills learnt during training challenging to apply. However, other informants recounted the use of tangible examples, and practical group work vastly supported their understanding.

> *"I am able to relate digital rights to human rights in a practical sense now, meaning I know the options available to me for action."* – **OpenNet Africa beneficiary**

As outlined when assessing OpenNet Africa's Relevance, training was perceived as highly aligned to beneficiaries' needs in-part due to attention paid by local partners in tailoring content. The project's use of a master training curriculum was described by informants as facilitating effectiveness as it ensured best practice. Nevertheless, the evaluation identified some barriers to effects. Variable ICT skills of those attending the training slowed its progress. Beneficiaries from traditional? human rights organisations, in particular, lacked ICT skills. Here, informants proposed several solutions, such as training cohorts based on their experience; and providing training videos or other background resources. Some local partners highlighted that one workshop over two days was unlikely to be sufficient to see long-term capacity improve, and refreshing and further training would sustain project impacts.

> *"What we have found is [*for such a new topic*] two-day training is really just like a drop in the ocean. We don't get time to cover everything in the workshops, and these are new skills so I think if we don't follow up then it won't stick."* – **OpenNet Africa partner**

> *"I think it should be targeted at different levels, as they are generally self-nominated or their organisations send them, and you realise some of them are so green, where others already know the basics. So that's a challenge to bring everyone to the same level."* – **OpenNet Africa partner**

In conclusion, against the criteria "*Effectiveness*" for Outcomes 2 and 3, OpenNet Africa scored "*B – Strong*". The project score reflects; i) participant feedback from the training indicating they acquired both skills and knowledge; ii) the training content was perceived by beneficiaries as relevant and practical; iii) almost all participants reported undertaking digital security practices; iv) the project leveraged advocacy opportunities to further build capacity; and v) beneficiaries overwhelmingly

---

[25] 71% of survey respondents reported training & capacity building supported them "A Lot" in advocating for internet freedom.

perceived training supporting their advocacy work. Preventing OpenNet achieving the highest score, was the lack of follow up with CSOs following initial capacity building, in particular, if these organisations implemented an internet advocacy plan, which was a key objective. Furthermore, to improve the effectiveness of training, CIPESA should consider offering refresher sessions and targeting workshops based on attendees' existing ICT capacity.

Outcome 4 Awareness and dialogue among stakeholders and the wider public on digital rights

The final project outcome was for Objective 3 awareness-raising; with OpenNet Africa addressing this outcome primarily through advocacy campaigns and physical engagements. Though the project's website and communication materials (e.g. News Stories, Blog Posts) were also reported by key informants as addressing Outcome 4. Different Awareness-Raising activities were aimed towards different target groups (e.g. at-risk individuals, CSO, service providers and policy), as summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: OpenNet Awareness – Raising Activities by Target Groups

OpenNet Africa Awareness -Raising Activities	Target Group					
	Civil Society Organisations	At Risk Individuals	Advocates	Practice	Policy	Public
Website (incl Blogs, Articles)	X	X	X			
News Articles / Stories						X
Advocacy Campaigns (incl events)	X		X		X	
Social Media Campaigns	X	X	X			X
FIFAfrica	X				X	
Round Table Discussions				X		

Therefore, OpenNet Africa did not only use a multichannel approach to raise awareness; but the project also benefited from specifying channels for the different target groups. Key informants understood the need to engage with certain project groups differently. For example, reporting that physical engagements were critical in working with Policymakers. This was because for both policy and practice groups, established relationships were described as creating traction through dialogue. For the policy group, the development of a strong working relationship between CIPESA and members of the Ethiopian government resulted in the co-hosting of the 2019 FIFAfrica in Addis Ababa. On the other hand, for the practice group, hosting less than the number of planned Round Table Discussions reflected new relationships with organisations such as ISPs; which, on reflection, the projects' 24-month duration was insufficient to establish. The funds saved from not undertaking all round table discussion were used to increase the joint advocacy campaigns offered to CSO trained[26].

> *"We planned to have five round table engagements, the challenge here is private organisations are not an open book; it's hard to call up a telecom service provider; they just assume people will just give them problems. So, those initial one-on-one conversations are important so they can understand our work and set up relationships. Next time we will be able to have dialogue as the relationships are there, and they are now aware of our work"* - **CIPESA Staff Member.**

Citizens were targeted with News Stories and Social Media Campaigns to raise awareness and promote dialogue. Unfortunately, CIPESA did not collect usage data for external News Stories or systematically collect data for Social Media Campaigns. However, the evaluation identified Twitter hashtags used by

---

[26] Such as In February 2019, hosting 35 CSOs from 18 African countries (including - Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe) in partnership with the International Centre for Not-For-Profit Law (ICNL) and the Civil Society Reference Group (CSRG) to identify challenges to protecting the right to freedom of association and assembly in the digital age and develop recommendations and strategies to counter such threats.

OpenNet for prominent campaigns[27]. Therefore, Twitter analytics for these hashtags can provide a Case Study for the project's awareness-raising. Between 2018-2019; 2,359 tweets were posted under these hashtags, which generated approximately 432,000 views per month[28], indicating that social media was a highly effective strategy for awareness-raising. However, success in promoting dialogue was more mixed. Amongst the hashtags top 10 contributors; 41% of tweets were posted by Stakeholders, with the remaining tweets posted by CIPESA, suggesting social media had been successful in promoting dialogue. Retweets were also high as each post was shared on average 3.9 times. But replies were less common, with posts generating a total of 900 replies compared to a total of 12,700 retweets.

Social Media Campaigns were also cited as critical in raising awareness amongst CSOs, at-risk individuals and advocate target groups. Three in five of the survey respondents from these groups reported engaging with Social Media. Key informants from these groups suggested OpenNet's convening and networking opportunities were critical in raising awareness, dialogue and maintaining their focus on digital rights. Events achieved this by enabling dialogue with like-minded actors, as detailed in the following extracts.

> *"As a participant I believe that it is our role now to use digital spaces to advance good governance and democracy in our states, advocate for affordability and quality services as citizens, create avenues for engagements between governments, private sector and civil society and learn from insights and forums like these…."* – **OpenNet Africa beneficiary**

> *"The CIPESA forums, and exposure they give really helped me build capacity, not just in terms of understanding policy issues, but also to understand the process of advocacy."* – **OpenNet Africa beneficiary**

Overall, beneficiaries perceived OpenNet as both raising awareness and promoting dialogue. Survey respondents were asked if they felt the project had contributed to raising awareness around digital security and internet freedoms. Figure 7 shows 95% of respondents *agreeing* with the statement.

Figure 7: % respondents who agree OpenNet raised awareness for digital security and internet freedom.
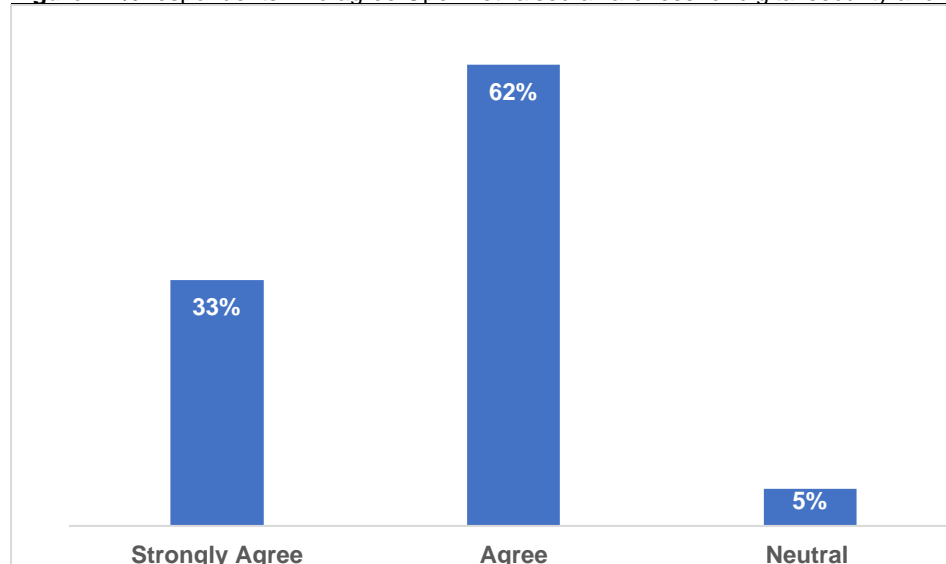

Respondents were also asked to what extent the project contributed to ongoing discussions and collaboration for Internet Freedom. As shown in Figure 8, OpenNet Africa was perceived as effective at promoting discussion and collaboration; with 43% of participants strongly agreeing that the project addressed these outcomes, alongside an additional 52% agreeing with the statement.

---

[27] Hashtags used were; #InternetFreedomAafrica; #FIFAfrica2019; #FIFAfria2018; #KeepitOn; #ChangeAfrica.
[28] The project reported 5.4 million potential impressions measure the total number of views possible – how many timelines a Tweet could have appeared in, if everyone was around to see a post or didn't scroll quickly past it .Research indicates 8% of potential impression result in actual views, meaning the twitter hashtags received an estimated 432,000 views per month (see: https://unionmetrics.com/blog/2016/10/comparing-actual-potential-impressions-twitter/#:~:text=On%20Twitter%2C%20we%20measure%20two,didn't%20scroll%20quickly%20past.)

Figure 8: % respondents who agree OpenNet contributed to ongoing discussion and collaboration for internet freedom
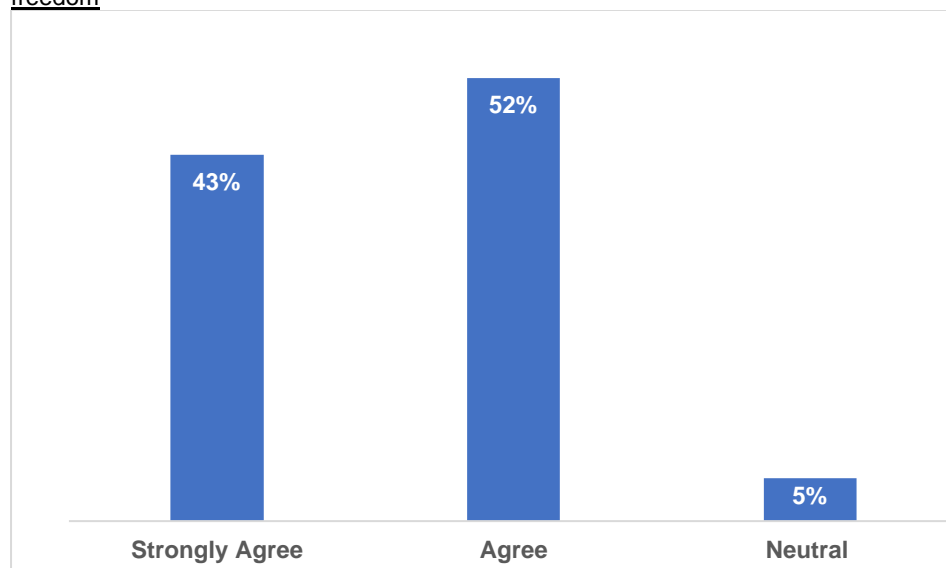
In summary, the assessment of Outcome 4 against the criteria of '*Effectiveness'* OpenNet Africa scores "*A -Very Strong".* Reflecting project strengths including; i) use of multiple channels to raise awareness; ii) different channels for the project target groups; iii) partners perceived network activities and physical engagements as highly effective in increasing awareness and promoting dialogue; and available analytic data from social media suggest the campaigns were highly effective at awareness raising, and also promoted online discussion on Digital Rights and Internet Freedoms.

Project impacts:

In reaching impact, OpenNet Africa contributes via two pathways. The first is a direct pathway, resulting from OpenNet Africa's Advocacy campaigns. The second is an indirect pathway through which the project supports advocacy by providing resources, building beneficiaries advocacy skills and embedding these actors within a network. Both of these pathways fundamentally aim to improve regulation, policy and practice of legislators, regulators and service providers, as encapsulated in the project's impact statements:

- **Impact 1:** Progressive amendments to existing laws, or new laws are drafted that uphold rights.
- **Impact 2:** Measures to protect the privacy of citizens, and improve digital safety are undertaken by service providers.

The project's objectives of i) monitoring and policy analysis; ii) training and capacity building; iii) awareness building and advocacy campaigns are aligned to achieve impacts via the two pathways outlined. Moreover, as discussed during the assessment of outcomes, reports, training and events were highly supportive of the users' advocacy work. Project Reports and other communication materials have been cited in publications from other leading institutions[29], and beneficiaries outlined many ways in which project outputs furthered their digital advocacy. Networking and collaboration were also reported by key informants as the projects' main benefit as it promoted learning and built their professional networks required for advocacy. For example, one partner described how training, then attendance at OpenNet events, and the relationships he developed has enabled him to become a thematic expert and lead on advocacy work in his home nation. Therefore, the respondent described a pathway from training that and networking he received, and how this equipped him to achieve impacts as an individual actor outside of the project.

> *"Collaborating with CIPESA I have learnt a lot. Since the first time in 2016 in*
> *Kampala, I have attended all forms and lots of trainings. At the start, I did not*

---

[29] For example, the evaluation identified citations in policy reports from; Internews, Freedom House, United Nations and the Media Defence initiative.

have large knowledge…. These trips and workshops through training, discussion, exposure to experts and donors dealing with the same issues I was working on. These opportunities allowed me to build knowledge, learn the advocacy process and identify projects. After all these opportunities over the years I can now consider myself an expert." – **OpenNet Africa partner.**

Developing this level of capacity took longer than the evaluation period. Despite this, it is apparent from the assessment of outcomes that OpenNet built the prerequisites for advocacy work, and these areas are important steps in impacts. However, in demonstrating linkages between outcomes and direct policy or practice changes, evidence is scarce. For example, during 2019, the suspension of 26 Sections of Kenya's Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act, 2018 following a petition by BAKE was the only case cited where a network advocate played a significant role in policy reform.

For the direct impacts of OpenNet Africa's advocacy campaigns, some evidence was found. When asked about advocacy impacts, Informants recounted examples, such as; supporting Facebook in the development of an external oversight board in a meeting in Kenya in 2019, direct lobbying or issuing of joint statements and engagement with governments. Interestingly OpenNet's engagement with Facebook was reported as both contributing to the development of the oversight board, alongside learning about the large service provider's needs and challenges. It is important to note that these examples pertain to engagement with evidence-based advocacy, but are not evidence of its impacts. Two policy and practice amendments in which project advocacy campaigns played a significant role in achievement were identified. The first was being the suspension of sections of Kenya's Cybercrimes Act outlined above. The second was in Uganda, in 2018 where CIPESA presented comments on the 2015 Data Protection and Privacy Bill. Contributing in revisions to sections covering citizens' rights over government data processing. These two examples of policy impacts are less than the projects target of five changes in '*laws policies or procedures*. Project staff reported this under-achievement was at least in part due to a lack of systematic documentation of impacts. Collation of examples was hindered as CIPESA's typical approach too collation of examples through articles and blogs, was not undertaken at the funders request. Meaning this evaluation is unable to ascertain if the lack of examples reflects challenges in achieving impacts, or simply, an absence of impact assessment

Thus, while the evaluation can conclude that OpenNet performed well in establishing key steps to reach policy impacts, these findings are not an end in themselves. Furthermore, when describing advocacy work Informants realised OpenNet's impact was contingent on long-term engagement by and action on the part of legislators and service providers. Therefore, for both indirect and direct pathways these two target groups played a critical role. As found during the assessment of efficacy the intervention experienced challenges in engaging with private sector stakeholders. Some informants also questioned if sufficient time was devoted to offline interactions with these groups, considering their importance.

"You have to remember we are trying to engage the biggest violators of rights, government and regulators, to get them to come and talk about these issues and engage with our agenda. So to succeed we must build relationships which often take a significant number of interactions" – **CIPESA Staff Member.**

While some success in engaging governments and legislators was identified; it is believed OpenNet Africa could have a greater impact by deepening relationships with both policy and practice target groups. Specifically, the evaluation's findings suggest sustained engagement, the opportunity for follow up, strong relationships are all necessary conditions to achieve advocacy impacts. In addition to the importance of offline, physical interactions; many assumptions of the linkage between outcomes and impacts remain unverified. CIPESA should therefore seek to validate links and assumptions between outcomes and impacts in order to support the evidence narrative generated for the project, and more importantly, ensure all barriers and relevant assumptions to impact are addressed in the project's design.

Against the assessment of Impacts for the criteria of '*Effectiveness'* OpenNet Africa scores "*C – Satisfactory*". Reflecting the assessment finding convincing evidence that project outcomes have been achieved, and that those outcomes were very likely to support advocacy impacts. However, OpenNet's performance for impact was limited to only two examples of changes to legislation as a result of the programme. This said, collation of impacts was not systematically undertaken meaning the evaluation

is unable to determine if a lack of examples found reflects activities failing to culminate in impacts, or just reflects the inadequacy of data collected.

Conclusion: Across each of the project outcomes and the assessment of impacts the project scored an average of "*B-Strong*". Good performance reflected convincing evidence that OpenNet Africa achieved its outcomes; particularly for awareness-raising, promotion of dialogue and understanding, skills acquisition; and digital security practices. Evidence for advocacy arising from OpenNet was less robust, but beneficiaries overwhelmingly perceived the project and its outputs as supporting their efforts. Informants also reported several programme features that aided in achieving outcomes namely; i) the uniqueness and quality of reports and other publications; ii) the use of additional social media and advocacy touch-points to build experience; iii) the practical and applied nature of the training iv) the use of multiple channels, targeted towards different groups to raise awareness; and v) network and collaboration promoted by the project was important in achieving all project outcomes. Physical interactions were critical in engaging with policy and practice target groups and achieving impacts through these stakeholders. Considering their importance in realising project effects to ensure impact the project should devote increased focus on offline engagement with these groups. This or other unverified assumptions over how project outcomes deliver impacts could be acting as a barrier to effects. However, a lack of a systematic approach to collating examples of policy and practice impacts means the evaluation is unable to conclude if barriers are preventing impacts, or lack of achievement simply reflects inadequate tracking of these impacts.

Sustainability: This section examines how OpenNet Africa has performed against the criteria of sustainability. Views were sought into which project components were sustainable, the duration of effects and assessed the ability to secure ongoing funding. Thus, against the criteria of sustainability, the evaluation assessed the extent to which there would be lasting benefits after project implementation.

Mechanisms to promote sustainability: Informants highlighted several sustainability mechanisms used by OpenNet Africa. The longevity of project outputs, such as the multiplicity of Reports published resulted in informants seeing the reports as a repository of resources for digital security in the region. Moreover, the project's continuing networking activities were seen as a critical component in its sustainability. Here ongoing events such as FIFAfrica helped to sustain connections and motivate ongoing involvement in the project through establishing networks and personal relationships. Indeed because of the Network; partners monitoring violations in-country continued to collect this information and inform CIPESA after December 2019.

> *"For me the project has given many sustained effects. First it sparked an interest in me, it allowed me over the years to gain detailed knowledge and connections and now it is supporting me undertake training and research work. So, yes, it's sustainable – personally, it kickstarted something for me which would not be there without OpenNet"* – **OpenNet Africa partner**

For local implementing partners a key sustainability outcome was funding they received to undertake work in digital rights and internet freedoms. All partners reported that OpenNet funding, though small, supported them to continue their work; meaning the project was perceived as building and sustaining their work in-country. Namely, when undertaking formative research and producing reports partners saw their technical capacity grow. While undertaking training was viewed as bolstering their organisational credibility and leading to opportunities delivering similar work.

> *"It has given us other opportunities which snowballed. So, I think the project was a good starting point, it allowed us to get good trainers and be known for doing this work"* – **OpenNet Africa partner**

Sustainability of project's effects: Survey respondents were asked directly how sustainable project benefits were. Two-thirds of survey respondents reported yes, they thought project achievements would be maintained following its end[30]. Though, key informants highlighted the sustainability of effects depended somewhat on the project objective and outputs, as illustrated in the following quote:

> *"Some activities need to be funded continuously, especially events, and monitoring which needs to stay current and up to date. Though the relationships and learning are sustainable, as they ensure knowledge gets passed from one person to another".* – **OpenNet Africa partner**

For Training, over the sixteen-months following the last workshop just over three-quarters of survey participants still "*agreed*" or "*strongly agreed*" that OpenNet made them feel part of a Network. Sustainable actions were also reported by beneficiaries as arising from the capacity building; including the establishment of advocacy plans, groups, and knowledge sharing. Virtually all survey respondents reported sharing the knowledge gained during the Training,[31] including delivering formal training to others, for example;

> *"After the training, I have already carried out 3 trainings in digital safety with other organizations working for the human right and civil society like Defend Defenders, Access Now, Amnesty International"* – **OpenNet Africa beneficiary**

Therefore, the project's Networking and Training effects appear sustained following the completion of the funding period. Some partners highlighted the lack of Refresher Training as a potential barrier

---

[30] 66% of respondents reported 'yes' to do you think OpenNet Africa's effects would be sustained following the project's end.
[31] 95% of survey respondents stated 'yes' they shared knowledge and skills from the training.

limiting its sustainability, other informants also reported efforts to diversify funding could have been expanded by OpenNet.

Efforts to diversify funding: Through fundraising efforts, CIPESA has secured capital to continue the initiative. As reported for efficiency during the evaluative period the project was supported by multiple funders that aided its cost-effectiveness. Owing to those multiple funders; key informants were confident in the initiative's continuation.

> *"Over time, the project has continued to become strong and established. Because more people are aware of it, and organisations making funds to participate in it, and people making requests to give sessions [*at FIFAfrica*]. So, yes, the work is sustainable, as we have become better known and more respected"* – **OpenNet Africa partner**

CIPESA reported continuing the operation of the Website, Social Media and production of communication materials between funding periods and during delays in receiving payment. With the sharing of news content generated for CIPESA's own website enabling this to be done at low cost. However, some beneficiaries and partners felt sustainability could have been improved by identifying joint funding for advocacy work. Similarly, partners also hoped in the future there would be more collaboration in identifying funding; bolstering their sustainability. For example;

> *"The way we worked was in implementing [*the project*] we did not generate any funds with CIPESA or others. I think that collaboration for external funding, in identifying external requests, and responding to calls for proposals would really help grow our expertise"* – **OpenNet Africa partner**

Conclusion: Against the criteria of sustainability, the evaluation awarded OpenNet Africa "*B - Strong*". Reflecting the project performing well against; i) demonstrating several mechanisms to promote sustainability including the establishment of local expertise; ii) beneficiaries perceiving project benefits as sustainable, iii) beneficiaries reporting some sustainable actions as a result of OpenNet, e.g. establishment of advocacy groups iv) relationships established through OpenNet events were viewed as a highly sustainable benefit; and v) the project's longevity, and benefit attracting recurrent funders means the project was, and will likely continue to be sustainable. Notwithstanding these achievements, the evaluation identified a few areas to increase sustainability including; i) use of booster training and longer-term engagement; ii) the need for collaboration in joint funding opportunities to further build local expertise, and strengthen the advocate network.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Conclusion: OpenNet Africa achieved well against the six criteria used to assess performance but could have done better with some adjustments. The project performed very well against the criteria of Relevance; demonstrating objectives aligned to the rights and security needs of beneficiaries, the project concept was unique and viewed as adding value. When assessing validity, the programme exhibited strengths in its core design and benefited from clear and coherent objectives, activities, outputs, and target groups. However, the results chain between outcomes and impacts should be revised to provide the same clarity. More broadly, the project's M&E requires strengthening; starting with a logical hierarchy in outcomes and impacts and use of SMART indicators. While the evaluation found M&E was routinely undertaken, data collection plans were extremely limited in scope, which curtailed the strength of evidence generated for assessment of Effectiveness and Efficiency.

Against the criteria of Efficiency, however, the evaluation found that OpenNet's implementation was strong, with effective coordination and management roles and functions and the use of institutional mechanisms that assured flexibility and good stewardship of resources. In general, activities were implemented to plan, with some minor delays that were outside the direct control of CIPESA or partners. Such delays included funding not being received for the project's first financial quarter, challenges identifying partners with sufficient skills and developing relationships with service providers. Performance against the project's output indicators was more mixed. OpenNet significantly overperformed for the number of CSOs trained, and usage of the Country and Regional Reports. However, the project website significantly underperformed for website engagement and was responsible for less than 3% of Report downloads. Considering CIPESA.orgs much higher reach, importance in disseminating project Reports and highlighted similarity between the two websites; the usefulness and usability of OpenNetAfrica.org should be reviewed. Engagement data on Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns was encouraging, however results weren't systematically collected limiting assessment of these activities.

For effectiveness, the project's inability to track some outcomes and impacts represents a significant limitation. Despite some gaps in evidence for outcomes, OpenNet demonstrated strong results for Outcome 1 understanding digital rights and security context, Outcome 2 skills acquisition, and Outcome 4 awareness and dialogue. For Outcome 3, the evidence for digital security practices was more robust than for advocacy. Though beneficiaries described reports, training, and the project overall supported them in advocating for Internet Freedom. At an impact level, evidence of effectiveness was much weaker. The evaluation found the initiative provided beneficiaries with the prerequisites to undertake advocacy, but struggled to find evidence of tangible impacts; meaning postulated links between outcomes and impacts could not be studied. Finally, OpenNet Africa performed well against the criteria of Sustainability; owing to the project's duration, ability to attract multiple funders, and the project's use of networking.

This evaluation identified three key themes that cut across the assessment criteria; to consider in the future design and implementation of OpenNet Africa. These form the bases for recommendations but are summarised here. The first theme is improving the focus of OpenNet's activities, which emerged from the evaluation identifying many achievements resulting from core strengths in OpenNet Africa's design, and limitations reflecting lack of detail in the design of specific activities or insufficient forward planning. The second cross-cutting theme was building an M&E system for learning. While Monitoring and Evaluation should not take significant amounts of money away from activities, which is ultimately how OpenNet Africa success is judged. However, the reality is that there is numerous blind spots in the programme's M&E system that makes prioritisation and learning more difficult. The final theme is expanding network activities, to further build collaborative working amongst project stakeholders. Echoing the substantial success OpenNet has had in promoting networking, and the evaluation identifying networking and collaboration as critical in the achievement of outcomes and impacts.

Recommendation 1 Improving Focus of OpenNet Activities: The evaluation found the programme's efficiency and effectiveness could have been further maximised if OpenNet addressed the following areas:

- **Review the role of the project portal:** If delivered as intended OpenNet Africa's website could be a critical amplifier for the project's outputs, quickly disseminate updates on violations and threats and focus the project around Digital Rights and Freedoms. However, the evaluation found the portal to be dated, challenging to navigate and not dissimilar to CIPESAs own website. Thus, CIPESA should review OpenNetAfrica.org strategy; to set its purpose and then consider the scope of features. For example, if the portal's primary purpose is to collate reports and provide users with relevant news and updates the utility of having a dedicated portal may be limited, especially considering the CIPESA website attracted 45 times as many users over the project period.[32]

- **Develop a strategic focus for some Advocacy Campaigns:** there are advantages in addressing advocacy opportunities as they arise. However, for some Campaigns, OpenNet should attempt to focus advocacy work around certain topics to increase their focus, size and scope. In doing so CIPESA could devote more efforts to forming strategic partnerships, generate more awareness and draw in more advocates. For those capacity built; larger, more focused advocacy campaigns may offer further opportunities for learning; building on the success of the project's Joint Statements.

- **Increase training services offered:** Limitations to the effectiveness of training typically concerned variability of participants, be this difference in ability or needs. CIPESA should consider adding to the training, by offering additional physical online workshops covering specific topics, providing more advanced technical skills; e.g. techniques to identify disinformation for journalists and bloggers; or address specific needs of vulnerable groups such as women and LBGTQ. Online training could also be used to deliver content on basic skills and refresher sessions on key concepts that could address challenges such as attendees lacking basic ICT skills, and concerns over sustainability of the effects of training.

Recommendation 2: Build M&E Systems to Facilitate Learning: To improve learning and build an evidence narrative for OpenNet's work, CIPESA should consider:

- **Revise the Logic Model to include a clear results chain:** The establishment of such a results chain would clarify the causal links among the outcomes and impacts and highlight underlying assumptions. This would benefit OpenNet two-fold; it would ensure that all assumptions leading to change are explicitly mapped, alongside providing a list of outcomes and impacts to specify the project's M&E framework.

- **Consider contribution and attribution in the results chain:** When planning M&E activities it is useful to determine results which OpenNet is accountable for (e.g. skills acquisition) vs domains the initiative can only contribute (e.g. policy reform). Advocacy focused interventions will often monitor areas of attribution as outcomes; whereas for areas of contribution examples of impact are collated for reporting or further evaluation.

- **Focus M&E on key outputs and outcomes in the results chain:** to improve the project's routine M&E, CIPESA would do well to narrow the number of measurement commitments in the project's indicator framework. Narrowing the focus would then support OpenNet to verify the remaining indicators systematically in the projects M&E Framework. Prioritisation of the indicators should consider the importance of the domain in the results chain; if the result can be attributed to OpenNet and the ease with which data can be collected.

- **Formally test OpenNet pathways to impact through contribution analysis:** As described during the assessment of project impacts, there is uncertainty, and a lack of evidence on if and how OpenNet outcomes lead to impacts. Considering this death of evidence OpenNet would benefit from formal contribution analysis such as Outcome Mapping or Most Significant Change. Such methods would test and validate pathways between outcomes and impacts informing CIPESA how change is occurring. This would guide developing the projects results chain and, more importantly, ensure all important areas leading to impacts are addressed by the initiative.

---

[32] CIPESA. (2020). CIEPESA.org website analytic report: Statistics for 2018 and 2019.

Recommendation 3 Expand Network Activities: The evaluations findings indicate expanding networking will build on the project's success and increase the likelihood of policy and practice impacts.

- **Increase physical engagements for policy and practice target groups:** Physical meetings were identified as critical in engaging policymakers and service providers, who themselves are key gatekeepers for policy and practice reform. Informants reported successful advocacy engagements with both groups required sustained engagement and physical follow-up, preferably with some type of accountability, which was often achieved through personal relationships. Given both the importance of these target groups and the significant effort required to influence them; CIPESA should consider increasing the project's provision for working closely and directly with policy and practice groups.

- **Increase contact between network advocates:** Current networking activities provided by OpenNet resulted in many benefits for stakeholders. Respondents interviewed would like further opportunities for collaboration and discussion, suggesting the project could make better linkages between stakeholders, and could potentially provide the functionality to the portal that could support online collaboration at a low cost.

- **Establish a network identity:** The policy impacts sustainability, alongside addressing other challenges identified such as differentiation of the project from CIPESA could all be supported by having a more coherent external identity for OpenNet and its Network of Advocates. A stronger external identity would support advocacy through increasing actors' engagement and focus.

- **Consider fundraising activities:** Implementing partners reported hoping OpenNet would support them in gaining future funding. Furthermore, stakeholders engaged with the project's advocacy network felt that impact could be furthered through identifying funding opportunities for advocacy work. Thus, OpenNet may wish to develop a fundraising strategy for the network; to grant funds to further leverage its work, and support the resilience of local expertise developed as a result of the project.

List of Appendix:

- **Appendix 1:** List of OpenNet Africa Local Partners
- **Appendix 2:** OpenNet Africa Results Matrix
- **Appendix 3:** List of documents reviewed.
- **Appendix 4:** Discussion Guide for Key Informant interviews
- **Appendix 5:** OpenNet Africa Survey
- **Appendix 6:** Original OpenNet Logic Model.

Appendix 1: List of OpenNet Africa Local Partners

Country	Organisation
Kenya	Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet)
Zimbabwe	MISA - Zimbabwe
Tanzania	Jami Forums
	Africa Centre for Media Excellence (ACME)
Uganda	Internet Society Uganda Chapter, Defend Defenders
	Women of Uganda Network (WOUNET).
Malawi	University of Malawi
Burundi	Internet Society Burundi Chapter
Botswana	Botswana Watch

Appendix 2: OpenNet Africa Results Matrix

Results framework	Methods		
Relevance	**Document Reiview**	**KII**	**Online Survey**
Alignment to the National Context	X	X	
Selction of project focal countires	X	X	
Mecansum to account for contetual varation		X	
Precived relvance to personal and orngisational needs		X	X
Unquness of the project concept	X	X	
Project concept being the mainstream work of partners		X	
New emerging needs		X	
Validity:			
Coherence of the intervention logic	X		
Selection of target groups	X	X	
Project design consideration of vulnerable groups		X	
Appropriateness of indicator and targets	X		
Appropriateness & credibility of M&E	X	X	
Added value of the Network approach		X	X
Efficiency:			
Measures to ensure effective use of inputs	X	X	
Delivery of activities to plan	X	X	
Activment against project output targets		X	
Cost-effectiveness	X	X	
Effectiveness:			
digital rights, security and their internet freedom context		X	X
acquisition in internet freedom advocacy and digital security;		X	X
Activment of Outcome 3: Implementation of digital security and internet freedom advocacy practices		X	X
among stakeholders and the wider public on digital rights		X	X
Activment of project Impacts	X	X	
Progamme features to ensure effectivness	X	X	
Sustaniablilty:			
Mechanisms to promote sustainability	X	X	
Sustainability of projects effects:		X	X
Efforts to diversify funding:	X	X	

Appendix 3: List of Documents Reviewed

Type	Doc No	Document Name	File Name / Link:
Project description	1	CIPESA (2017). OpenNet Africa, Proposal Narrative.	CIPESA DRL Proposal Narrative-April 2017.pdf
	2	CIPESA (2017). OpenNet Africa Logical Model; revised	LogicModel-Revised.pdf
	3	CIPESA (2018). Timeline for OpenNet Africa proposal	Timeline for the overall proposal January 2018.pdf
	4	CIPESA (2018). OpenNet proposed training curriculum; revised	Proposed internet freedom advocacy training curriculum - Revised.pdf
M&E and Results	5	CIPESA (2018) OpenNet Risk Analysis Revised.	Risk Analysis-Revised .pdf
	6	CIPESA (2018) OpenNet Africa Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Indicator Table	Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Indicator Table-Revised.pdf
	7	CIPESA (2018) M&E Framework OpenNet Africa	CIPESA PPT M&Er.xlsx
	8	CIPESA (2019) OpenNet Africa - Promoting Internet Freedom in Africa: Programme Narrative Report.	Programme Narrative report.pdf
	9	Kenya ICT Action Network. (2019). Internet Freedoms Advocacy Training For Human Rights Defenders Held In Nairobi, Kenya June 27-28, 2019. Workshop Report	DRL Training report Nairobi.pdf
	10	Dashboard Twitter Tracker 2018- 2019	Twitter Tracker 2018- 2019.pdf
	11	CIPESA. (2020). CIEPESA.org website analytic report: Statistics for 2018.	Statistics for cipesa-2018.pdf
	12	CIPESA. (2020). CIEPESA.org website analytic report: Statistics for 2019.	Statistics for cipesa-2019.pdf
OpenNet outputs	13	CIPESA (2019). State of Internet Freedom in Africa 2019: Mapping Trends in Government Internet Controls, 1999-2019.	https://cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=307
	14	CIPESA (2018). State of Internet Freedom in Africa 2018: Privacy and Data Protection in the Digital Ear: Challenges and Trends in Africa	https://cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=278
	15	CIPESA. (2019). Despots and Disruptions: Five Dimensions of Internet Shut Down in Africa.	https://cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=283 Accessed 01/02/2021.
	16	CIPESA. (2020). State of Internet Freedom In Malawi 2019; Mapping Trends in Government Internet Controls, 1999-2019.	https://www.opennetafrica.org/?wpfb_dl=88
	17	CIPESA. (2018) State of Internet Freedom in Africa 2018: Privacy and Personal Data Protection in Tanzania: Challenges and Trend.	https://www.opennetafrica.org/?wpfb_dl=92
	18	CIPESA (2018) Challenges and Prospects of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Africa; CIPESA ICT Policy Briefing Series.	https://cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=272
	19	CIPESA (2018) The Reforms Ethiopia Needs to Advance Internet Freedom; CIPESA ICT Policy Briefing Series.	https://cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=273
Web-Pages	20	CIPESA.org	-
	21	OpenNetAfrica.org	-
	22	OpenNet Africa Twitter page	Twitter
	23	OpenNet Africa Facebook page	Facebook
	24	FreedomHouse.org	-
	25	Afrobarometer.org	-

Appendix 4: Discussion Guide for Key Informant Interviews

Introduction (READ OUT):
We are carrying out interviews to better understand the impact of OpenNet Africa on awareness and knowledge of internet freedom and improvements in digital security. We're particularly interested in examining your relationship with OpenNet, and how you feel about the training and resources the initiative provides. Any information you provide is useful, and will be used for our assessment.

The interview is divided into five sections, with a total of 15 questions on your experience with OpenNet Africa.

If you consent to taking this interview, we would like to ask you some questions and make note of your responses. We will record the interview in order to return to the information that you provide. However, your responses to the questions will remain confidential, and your identity will not be revealed to anyone during or after the interview. The responses will be analysed by me, and entered into a report that we will share with the CIPESA staff and the OpenNet funder. This report may contain quotes provided by you but these will not include your name, location or any other identifiable information.

ASK FOR CONSENT: for interview and recording.

Consent	Ask all
Yes – for interview	X
Yes – for recording	X

Section 1 General:
1.   Kindly give us a brief of your work and situation in relation to internet freedom and digital security

2.   How have you participated in OpenNet Africa?
PROBE – *Using OpenNet Africa website/publications/reports, participating in individual training, Participating in capacity building, attending stakeholder meetings and roundtable discussions.*

3.   Can you tell me what (if any) OpenNet Africa tools and reports have you used under this project?
PROBE – *When did you use them? How often or frequently do you use them? How useful were these reports? Didi you experience any challenge in using the reports? Do you use resources online or offline?*

Section 2 Relevance:
4.   What if, any need of your personal or organisational needs did the project address?
PROBE - *How well do you think the project is aligned with the internet freedom and digital security needs within your country?*

5.   Have any new, more relevant needs emerged that the project should address in future? Which are these?
PROBE – *Such as new threats, or trends in internet freedom and security?*

Section 3 Efficiency:
6.   Did you feel there was any constraints (either internal or external) on addressing internet freedom and digital security?

7.   Do you have any ideas on how OpenNet Africa's training and reports and other resources could be delivered in a way which reduced costs while maintaining their quantity and quality?
PROBE – *ask participant to repeat for each type of engagement with OpenNet.*

8.   To what extent do you think that OpenNet Africa fostered a Network of internet freedom activist and actors over the project's focus countries?
PROBE – *how much do you feel like part of a Network. Focus countries are Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Botswana, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe & Malawi, did you collaborate with anyone outside of your country? Where there any other opportunities for collaboration?*

9. In your opinion do you think the OpenNet Africa project teem coordinated the project in a coherent manner?
PROBE – *What were the good practices? What should be avoided? Were there any pain points?*

Section 4 Effectiveness:

10. In your own words what do you think are some of the benefits of this project?

11. To what extent do you think OpenNet Africa has been successful in raising awareness and ensuring dialog on digital rights, threats, and internet freedom and its advocacy?

12. How successful do you think OpenNet Africa has been in documenting online freedom violations and informing users of best practice?

13. Do you think this project has contributed to achievement of online freedom in your country and the African Region as a whole?
PROBE – *Elaborate. Has the time frame been sufficient? What else (outside the scope of the project interventions) needs to be in place to realise impact?*

Section 5 Sustainability:

14. When this project comes to an end, do you think the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period?

15. Do you feel that OpenNet Africa has been effective at creating a regional network of actors that will continue following the project end?
PROBE – *project ended December 2019, why do you think effects will (or will not) last, what could be done to improve the sustainability of the network?*

Appendix 5: OpenNet Africa Survey

Introduction: You are receiving this survey because OpenNet Africa has previously provided you with training and capacity building in digital security, internet freedom and its advocacy.

To help us improve this support, we'd like to ask you some questions about your experience of training. Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary; however, we hope you will participate since your views are important. Your personal details will not be shared with CIPESA, OpenNet Africa or its funders. If you have any questions about the study, your participation, or what will be done with the results of the research, please contact Lillian Nalwoga, Programmes Manager on lillian@cipesa.org, phone +256 712 204335.

Consent statement: I voluntarily agree to take part in this study. And I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost:

Consent	Ask all
Yes - I consent to this survey	X
No - I do not consent to this survey	X

No	Question	Response	Skip
Section 1 background information:			
001	What is your name?	*(Enter Name)*	Ask of all
002	What is your gender? *(Select One Option)*	O Male O Female O Other	Ask of all
003	Please enter your name in years	*(Enter Age)…*	Ask of all
005	Which country do you live and work? *(Select One Option)*	O Kenya O Uganda O Rwanda O Burundi O Tanzania O Botswana O Ethiopia O Zimbabwe O Malawi	Ask of all
004	What would best describe your online freedom and security situation? *(Select One Option)*	O I am a member of an at-risk group O I am a journalist O I am a blogger, or social media commentator O I work for a human rights or civil society organisation O I am an academic or work in policy research O I work for a tech organisation (e.g., internet service provider, telecom operator)	Ask of all
005	What is the name of the organisation you work for?	*(Enter Name)*	Ask of all
006	Was OpenNet Africa's Internet Freedom advocacy training relevant to your work?	O Yes, very relevant O Somewhat relevant O No, not relevant at all	Ask of all
Section 2: Training and capacity building: The survey will now ask you some questions specific to the training & capacity building received form OpenNet Africa			
007	In your view, how well was the training & capacity building aligned to the internet freedom and digital security needs of your organisation? *(Select One Option)*	O Yes, very aligned O Somewhat aligned O No, not aligned at all	Ask of all
008	In your view, how well was the training / capacity building aligned to your personal internet freedom and digital security needs? *(Select One Option)*	O Yes, very aligned O Somewhat aligned O No, not aligned at all	Ask of all
009	How much did your knowledge and skills in digital safety improve as a result of the training & capacity building?	O Very much improved O Somewhat improved O Did not improve at all	Ask of all

	(Select One Option)		
010	How much did your knowledge and skills in internet freedom advocacy improve as a result of the training & capacity building? *(Select One Option)*	O Very much improved O Somewhat improved O Did not improve at all	Ask of all
011	Did you do anything for your digital safety as a result of the training & capacity building? *(Select One Option)*	O Yes O No	Ask of all
011a	If so, please tell us what?	*(Free response)*	Ask if → 011 = Yes.
012	How much do you think the training & capacity building supported you, or your organisation advocating for internet freedom? *(Select One Option)*	O A lot O A bit O Not at all	Ask of all
013	Have you shared any of the knowledge and skills from the training & capacity building with others? *(Select One Option)*	O Yes O No	Ask of all
Section 3: OpenNet Africa's online monitoring and research reports Now thinking of OpenNetAfrica.org, and the projects country and regional reports…			
014	Can you tell me if you have used any of the following? *(Select as many as apply)*	O Used OpenNetAfrica.org, O Downloaded regional, country or policy reports, form the website O Accessed regional, country or policy reports, offline O Engaged with OpenNet or internet freedom campaigns on social media (e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Twitter) O Other O I have not used any of these resources	Ask of all
014	To what extent did these resources support you in advocacy and awareness-raising for digital safety and internet freedom *(Select One Option)*	O A lot O A bit O Not at all	Ask if → 014 = Yes.
Section 4: Impact of OpenNet Africa: The below questions give some statements into OpenNet Africa's impacts. Please tell us how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?			
015	OpenNet Africa has contributed to ongoing collaboration and discussion in African Internet Freedom *(Select One Option)*	O Strongly agree O Agree a lot O Somewhat agree O Don't agree O Strongly disagree	Ask of all
016	OpenNet Africa has contributed towards documentation of online violations, raising awareness around internet freedom *(Select One Option)*	O Strongly agree O Agree a lot O Somewhat agree O Don't agree O Strongly disagree	Ask of all
017	OpenNet Africa has helped me feel part of a network of actors advocating for internet freedom. *(Select One Option)*	O Strongly agree O Agree a lot O Somewhat agree O Don't agree O Strongly disagree	Ask of all
18	Do you think any of OpenNet Africa's benefits will be sustained following its completion?	O Yes O No	Ask of all

Section 5: Survey End

Thank you for completing this survey. The information you have given us is invaluable for improving our capacity building and training support.

Your responses will be kept confidential. If you have any questions about this survey, your participation, or what will be done with the results of the research, please contact xxx, Programmes Manager on xxx@cipesa.org, phone xxx. Again, thank you!

Appendix 5: Original OpenNet Logic Model

Objective	Activity	Outcomes	Impacts
Assess the nature of threats to access, privacy and freedom of expression online their effect in the project countries	Develop an evidence base on the nine project countries and African Region that documents document rights violations online, assess policy and legislative developments on Internet freedom.	**Oc 1** Puclications contribute towards creating awareness and understanding on internet freedom and its affect online behaviour	**Imp 1:** Evidence base informs intervention, advocacy and awareness-raising strategies
		Oc 2 The research reports and policy briefs highlight priority areas that need immediate attention at the national and regional level	**Imp 2:** legislators to informed for amendments and enactment of laws and policies
Build the capacity of traditional human rights organisations, social media commentators, media and other at-risk groups in digital security and internet freedom advocacy.	Training of CSOs and individual actors in digital rights, interment freedom policy and advocacy, and digital security.	**Oc 3** Awareness on internet freedom and how it impacts the work of HRD, and at risk indeividuals	**Imp 3:** Integration of internet freedom advocacy in the wider human rights work of beneficiary organisations
		Oc 4 Knowledge and skills acquisition in internet freedom advocacy and digital security	**Imp 4** Ongoing dialogue and collaboration on internet freedom among OpenNets network
		Oc 5 Experience and best practice sharing among benefi- ciaries and their network	
Raise awareness among regulators, policy makers, private sector players (telecom companies and ISPs), service providers, law enforcement and internet users in Africa	These include undertaking advocacy campaigns, with CSO, policy and experts, dissemination of IEC materials, convening stakeholder round table meetings with legislators and telecom operators	**Oc 6:** Collaboration between CIPESA and organisations capacity built	**Imp 5** A vibrant network of internet freedom actors across the focus countries advocating for progressive policies and promoting dialogue on internet freedom.
		Oc 7: Understanding, awareness and dialogue among stakeholders and the wider public on digital rights	**Imp 6:** Progressive amendments to existing laws or news laws are drafted that uphold rights. Sevice providers implument firm measures to protect the privacy and educate citizens about digital safety, and publish regular transparency reports.
		Oc8: Proposals for a regional framework for progressive internet freedom policy tabled	