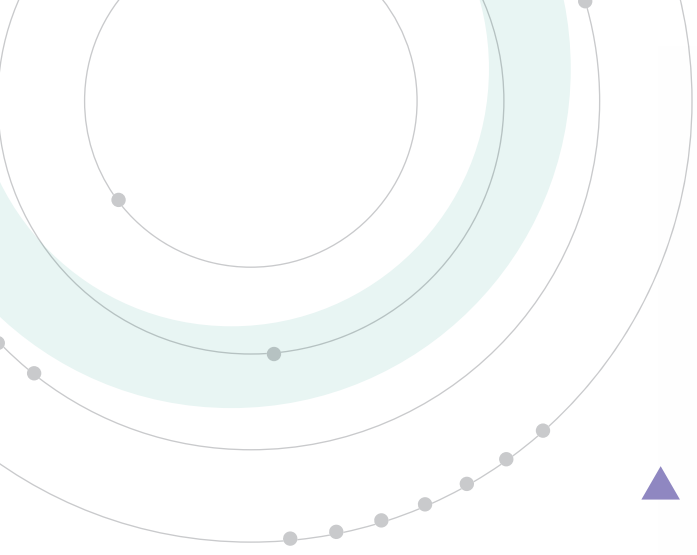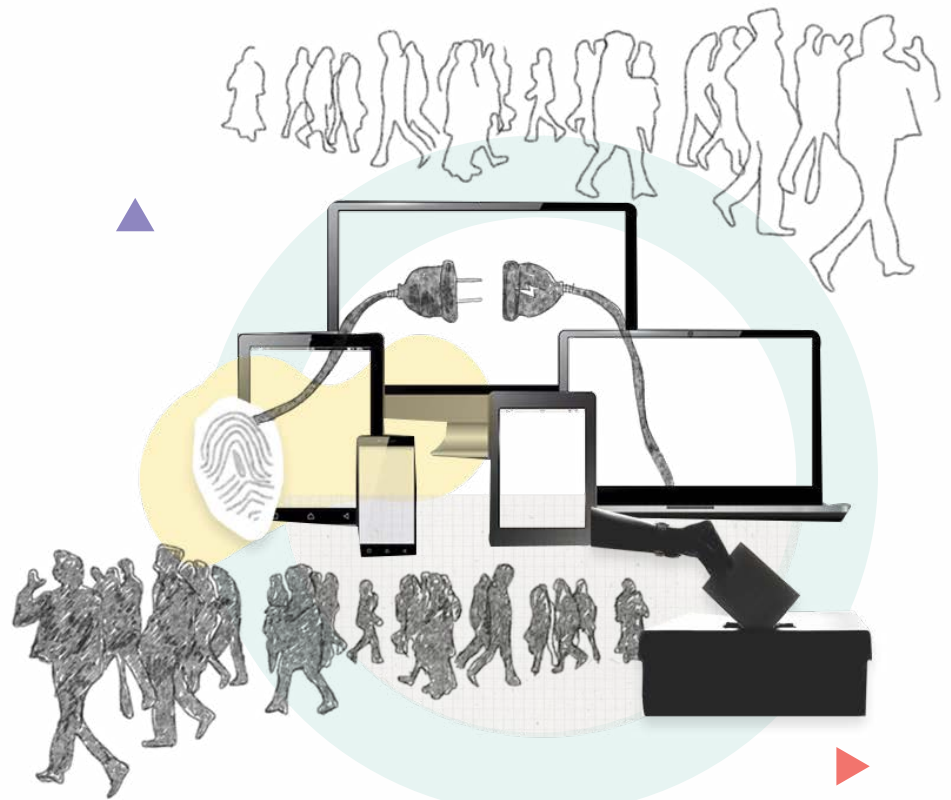# Digital Democracy

Digital Democracy

Digital democracy can be understood through systematic integration of technology and everyday life practices.

Digital democracy influences the conditions, institutions, political engagements, and ethos of democratic governance. Normatively, digital democracy can be seen as an evaluation framework projecting democracy as an accessible, open, and alterable form of political organisation that continues to evolve with enriching feedback through social interactions.

*Collective self-governance and mediation with digital infrastructures.

PILLARS OF ASSESSMENT
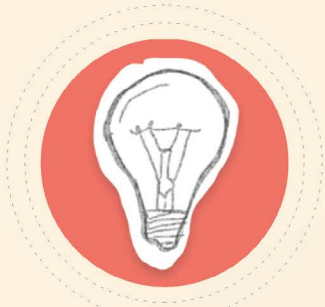## DIGITAL DEMOCRACY

1 Access

Digital divide – affordability and accessibility of digital tools, networks and infrastructures

Power and control at point of access shaped by patriarchy and structural disadvantages

Socially differentiated across race, class, gender, ethnic positions as well as literacy and language capabilities

2 Information

Reliable information is produced from open and publicly accessible data that is contextual, relational and meaningful

Meaning information provides the possibility to situate present challenges within a historical trajectory as well as foresee challenges in the future

INFORMATION IS GEOGRAPHICAL, TEMPORAL AND SOCIALLY DIFFERENTIATED

Unverifiable information can be manipulated into misinformation, disinformation, and mal-information

3 Knowledge

Increased knowledge results from accurate and reliable information

ABILITY TO FACT-CHECK AND VERIFY INFORMATION LEADS TO ENRICHED KNOWLEDGE

4 Critical Consciousness

Increased knowledge leads to an in-depth understanding of one's position in the world

The ability to understand individual and collectives struggles as part of a wider pattern of historical, structural and social marginalisations

PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS OF A DIVERSITY OF VIEWPOINTS AND POLITICAL APPROACHES TOWARDS THESE STRUGGLES

5 Actions

Critical consciousness leads to taking action to address some of the struggles in one's life

Action includes engagement in participatory planning, deliberative democracy and peaceful protest, as well as forms of subversion and resistance

Actions aim to address power disbalances in social, economic and structural aspects of one's life
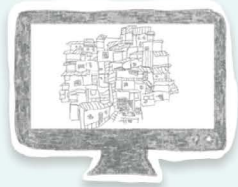
6 Empowerment

Practice freedom of choice, expression and speech

Freely debate and challenge accepted knowledge and practice

Claim rights in digital and analogue spaces

FREEDOM TO GIVE OR WITHDRAW CONSENT FOR SHARING ONE'S DATA AT ANY TIME

VOTE

PILLARS

Access → **Information** → **Knowledge** → **Critical Consciousness** → **Actions** → **Empowerment**

MEASUREMENT

Access	Information	Knowledge	Critical Consciousness	Actions	Empowerment
DISAGGREGATED NUMBERS OF MOBILE PHONES OWNED BY POPULATION IN TERMS OF AGE, GENDER, RACE, ETHNIC BACKGROUND, LANGUAGE AND SO ON	A REGISTER OF FACT-CHECKED INFORMATION THAT IS RELIABLE AND CONTEXTUAL	FREE ASSOCIATION TESTS, OBSERVING PATTERNS IN USAGE THROUGH USER ANALYTICS		MONITOR NUMBER AND NATURE OF DEMANDS FOR DIGITAL ACCESS, INFORMATION, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND DIGITAL INCLUSION	HOW ARE CLAIMS AND DEMANDS FOR DIGITAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY ARTICULATED IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE
HOW MOBILE PHONES ARE USED BY DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS, WHAT PHONES ARE USED FOR, AND WHEN	HOW MUCH INFORMATION IS OPEN SOURCE, PRIVACY ENABLED AND FREELY ACCESSIBLE.	SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS AND ENGAGEMENT WITH PEERS	ANALYSE NATURE OF CITIZEN ENGAGEMENTS IN TERMS OF QUALITY OF DEBATE, DIALOGUE, EXPRESSION AND CRITIQUE		VIBRANCY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN ARTICULATING RIGHTS CLAIMS ON BEHALF OF CITIZENS
NUMBER OF USERS OF E-GOVERNANCE PORTALS	CAPACITY AND FLUENCY IN INFORMATION ACCESS AND PROCESSING				FREEDOM OF CITIZENS TO RAISE CRITICAL VOICES AND ARTICULATE DISSENT IN DIGITAL SPACE

FOUR PATHWAYS TO
Digital Democracy

1 Democratic Governance (State)

Transparency and accountability of state officials in all citizen-facing interactions

Use of open and publicly accessible data to citizens

Use both face-to-face venues and digital platforms to encourage citizens' critical engagement in decision-making

Information on key development and welfare initiatives must be legible and accessible from the most basic mobile telephones

Encourage continuous feedback loop from civil society for critical evaluation of measures

Engage in evidence based policy making in collaboration with researchers, academic institutions

3 Participatory citizenship (citizens)

Increased awareness and knowledge through digital tools

Ability to freely express identity without fear

Ability to claim contitutional rights in digital space

ABILITY TO USE DIGITAL TOOLS IN CREATING COLLECTIVE POLITICAL SPACE FOR ACTION

2 Digital Diversity (Technology and Infrastructure)

Create open-source, data privacy enabled, and distributed software and apps

Cater for differential access to digital tools by different sections of society – eg. Senior citizens, women, minorities, less educated

Design more decentralised social networking platforms – e.g. Mastodon

Design for diversity of language skills and for those with low literacy

Design more voice enabled apps particularly in low literacy regions

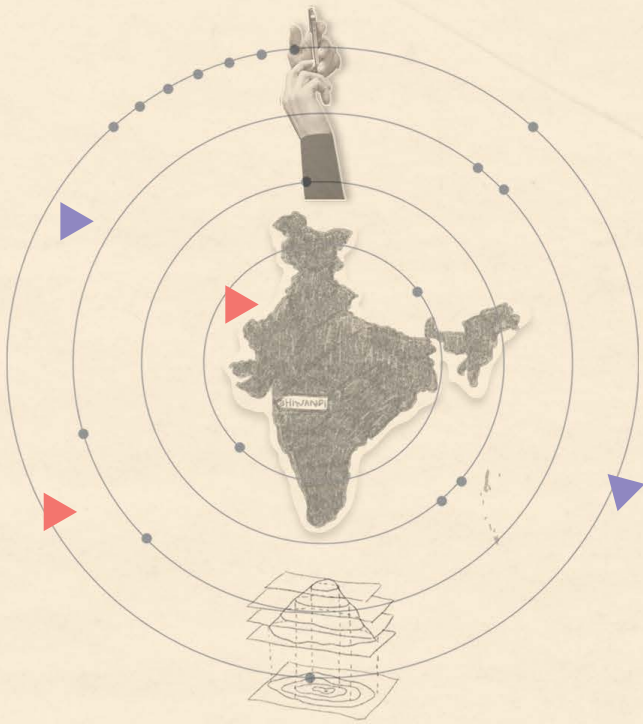## 4 Right To Information (Law and Regulatory)

Enable geographic spread and penetration of digital tools and infrastructures

Regulate citizen-friendly platforms for fact-checking and verification of information

Regulate for privacy and protect freedom of expression; against mis-information, malnews and hate speech in digital space.

Improvement in responsiveness, accountability, and transparency in digital space

DATA PRIVACY DESIGNED FOR THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, WITH THE PEOPLE

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