

# Navigating Digital Politics Safely

A practical guide for women  
and young people engaged in political and civic life



# Introductory Overview

---

Madanyat for Equality is a Lebanese non-governmental organization that works to strengthen democratic participation in public affairs, build the capacities of women and youth, and promote the principles of transparency and accountability in political life. Drawing on extensive experience in leadership training, community campaigns, and local governance, Madanyat is recognized as a specialized institution in developing practical tools that support political and civic actors in building a professional, impactful presence grounded in human rights and equality principles.

L'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) is a multilateral institution comprising 88 states and governments committed to promoting the French language, cultural diversity, peace, democracy, and human rights. Through its democratic governance programs, the OIF actively supports the participation of women and young people in public and political life, as well as capacity building for political actors and civil society within the Francophone world. It also supports the development of skills in political communication, civic engagement, and the responsible use of digital technologies, thereby contributing to more inclusive, safe, and sustainable political participation.

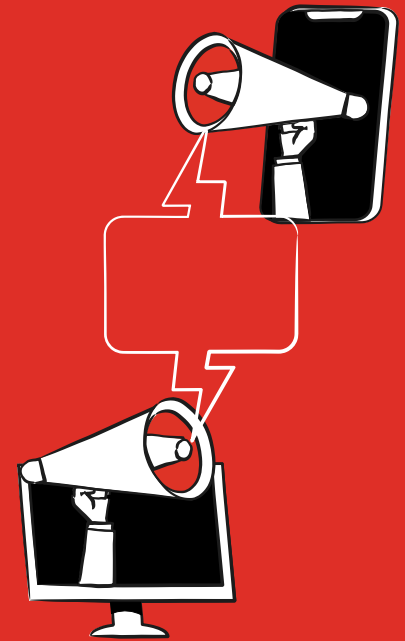
Both institutions share a common commitment to advancing participatory democracy and strengthening the capacities of political actors—particularly women and youth—enabling them to play an active role in the public sphere through contemporary digital communication tools.

*This handbook was developed within the framework of the “Generation Equality” project, implemented by Madanyat with the support of L'organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF).*



# Table of Content

	Preface	2
<b>1.</b>	Understanding the Digital Political Environment	4
<b>2.</b>	Digital Security Fundamentals	8
<b>3.</b>	Gender-Based Digital Violence, Hate Speech, and Strategic Response	11
<b>4.</b>	Disinformation: Detection & Counter Strategies	18
<b>5.</b>	Political Campaigning	20
<b>6.</b>	Wellbeing, Ethics & Sustainability	25
<b>7.</b>	Final Note	26



# Navigating Digital Politics Safely

# Preface

---

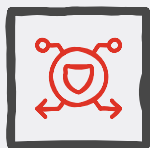
Women and youth are among the most active voices in digital political and civic spaces. At the same time, they are disproportionately exposed to online harassment, gender-based digital violence, hate speech, and disinformation. Their increased visibility, combined with prevailing gender norms, age-based power structures, and unequal access to institutional protection, makes them particularly vulnerable to coordinated attacks aimed at silencing, intimidating, or discrediting their participation.

Digital platforms have lowered barriers to political engagement, enabling women and young people to organize, express themselves, and mobilize beyond traditional power structures. However, these same platforms are frequently used to target them through abuse, threats, disinformation, and credibility-undermining campaigns designed to discourage participation or exclude them from public debate, especially during elections, advocacy campaigns, and periods of political tension.

## Scope and Objectives of the Guide

This guide is a practical tool designed to support women and youth engaged in political and civic work within digital spaces.

It brings together:



The fundamentals of digital security



Principles and practices for ethical and effective digital political campaigns



Ways to respond to gender-based digital violence and hate speech



Tools to counter misinformation and disinformation

The guide focuses on real risks, decisions, and practical actions, particularly in high-pressure political contexts such as elections, advocacy campaigns, and moments of crisis.

## Scope and Responsibilities of the Guide

For the sake of clarity, this guide:

- is not a legal document
- does not replace specialized legal, psychological, or security support
- does not encourage confrontation or escalation
- does not guarantee safety, but aims to reduce risks and strengthen preparedness

This guide promotes informed decision-making, not the pursuit of perfection.

## Note on safety, care, and well-being

Digital political participation may involve real emotional, psychological, and physical risks.

This guide encourages users to:

- Set clear personal and digital boundaries
- Prioritize personal safety in all forms of public engagement
- Seek support when exposed to abuse or threats
- Acknowledge emotional impact and burnout

Participation in public life should not come at the expense of dignity, well-being, or personal safety.

## Final note

This guide is intended to be:

- practical rather than theoretical
- supportive and guiding, without being prescriptive
- adaptable to different political and social contexts



# 1. Understanding the Digital Political Environment

Digital spaces have become central to political and civic participation. Social media platforms, messaging applications, and online media now shape how people:

- Access information
- Form political opinions
- Mobilize and organize
- Attack, silence, or discredit others

Understanding the digital political environment is the first step to participating effectively and safely. Without this understanding, digital engagement can increase exposure to risk without increasing impact.

## Traditional Politics vs Digital Politics

Traditional Politics	Transition or Shift	Digital Politics
Offline, institution-based engagement	Moves into online and hybrid spaces	Digital–offline political environments
One-way communication	Becomes interactive	Two-way, participatory communication
Messages filtered by traditional media	Bypasses media gatekeepers	Direct access to audiences
High barriers to participation	Barriers reduced	Broader participation (youth, women, marginalized groups)
Slow dissemination of messages	Accelerated by platforms	Real-time spread and instant reactions
Influence built through authority and position	Shifts to visibility and networks	Influence built through engagement and algorithms
Emotion moderated by media norms	Emotion amplified	Fast, emotional, algorithm-driven content
Clear separation of public and private life	Boundaries dissolve	Blurred personal and political identities
Limited exposure to harassment	New forms of harm emerge	Online violence, disinformation, surveillance

## How Power Works Online

In digital politics, power does not stem primarily from position or formal authority. It is built step by step.

### Step 1: Visibility



Power begins with being seen. Platforms reward presence, frequency, and recognizability. Without visibility, voices, especially those of women and underrepresented groups, remain outside political conversations.

### Step 2: Influence



Visibility turns into influence when people start to listen, engage, and trust the message. Influence is built through relevance, consistency, and credibility, not titles or formal roles.

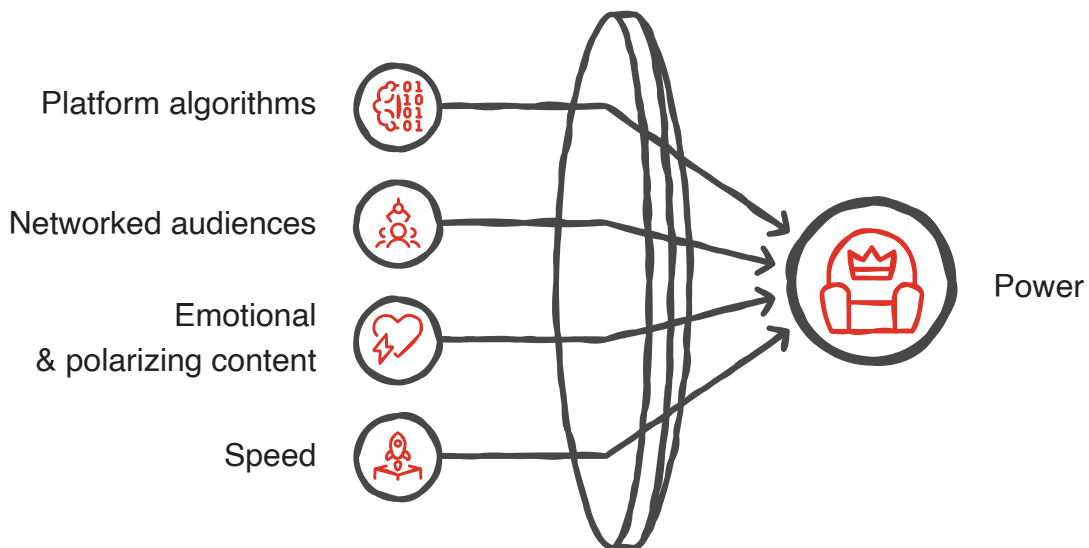
### Step 3: Attention & Targeting



Real power lies in directing attention strategically. Campaigns and movements gain impact when they reach the right audiences, voters, allies, and decision-makers, rather than everyone. This is where engagement becomes political leverage.

## What Shapes Online Power

Online power is not neutral. It is shaped by:



## Risks That Come with Visibility

Greater visibility brings new forms of vulnerability notably the following exposure to harm:

- Harassment & hate speech
- Gender-based digital violence
- Disinformation & smear campaigns
- Surveillance & data misuse



Effective participation in civic and political life requires understanding this balance between visibility and vulnerability.

## Gender, Youth, and Digital Inequality

Women and young people face distinct and recurring challenges when they engage in digital political spaces. These challenges are not only individual experiences of abuse or exclusion, but part of broader patterns that shape who feels safe to speak, organize, and remain visible online.

Women are more likely to be targeted through gendered harassment, threats, and attacks on their credibility, particularly when expressing political opinions or assuming leadership roles. Young people, especially young women, often face dismissal, ridicule, or coordinated pressure aimed at discouraging participation in civic and political life. These forms of digital inequality increase during elections, advocacy campaigns, and moments of political tension.

Recognizing these patterns is a first step toward responding effectively. Understanding how digital inequality operates helps political actors anticipate risks, make informed decisions about visibility and engagement, and adopt strategies that protect both participation and well-being.

## Key Concepts and Shared Language

- Digital Political Campaign**  
 The strategic use of digital tools and platforms to communicate political messages, mobilize support, and shape public opinion.
- Political Branding and Positioning**  
 The way a candidate, movement, or cause is perceived by the public, including its emotional, symbolic, and narrative dimensions.
- Misinformation**  
 Inaccurate or false information shared without the intent to mislead or cause harm.
- Gender-Based Digital Violence (GBDV)**  
 Online abuse, harassment, threats, or coordinated attacks directed at individuals because of their gender or gender expression.

*These concepts will appear throughout the toolkit.*

## Digital Participation



**DO**



**DON'T**

Be strategic about when and where you show up

Feel pressured to be online all the time

Make informed decisions before posting or engaging

Respond to every attack or provocation

Set and protect clear boundaries

Share everything publicly

Align your online activity with your values, safety, and goals

Engage in ways that compromise your well-being

Choose your level of visibility intentionally

Let others dictate how you participate



## Final Note

Understanding the digital political environment helps you to:

- Participate more effectively
- Protect yourself and those you work with

In political and civic contexts, the team may include campaign staff, communications officers, digital volunteers, moderators, or trusted allies who manage or support online accounts.

## 2. Digital Security Fundamentals

---

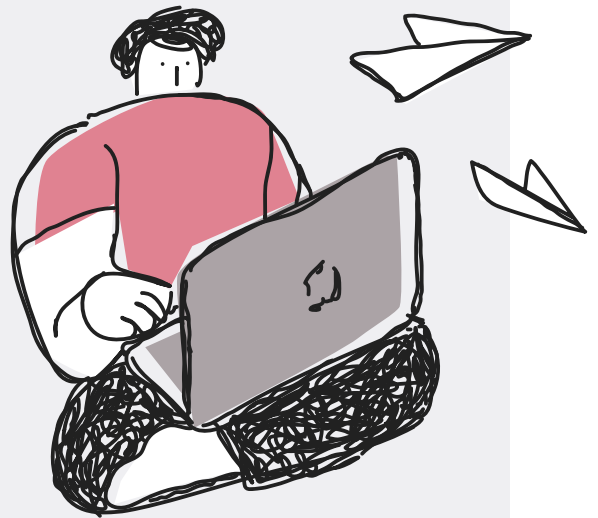
### What Is Digital Security?

Digital security refers to the practices, tools, and behaviors used to protect people and information in digital environments.

It includes:

- Protecting accounts and devices
- Securing private and sensitive communications
- Safeguarding personal and political data
- Reducing exposure to surveillance and digital attacks
- Limiting the impact of online harm

Digital security is not a one-time action. It is a continuous habit that evolves as risks change.



### Understanding Digital Threats

Political actors, activists, and campaign teams are often intentionally targeted.

Common digital threats include:

- Hacking: unauthorized access to accounts, devices, or websites
- Phishing and social engineering: fake messages or links designed to steal information
- Malware and ransomware: harmful software that damages devices or locks data
- Account impersonation: fake accounts used to spread disinformation or harm credibility
- Digital surveillance: monitoring communications, movements, or online behavior

These threats tend to intensify during periods of political visibility.

## Digital Hygiene: Everyday Protection

Digital hygiene means simple daily habits that reduce online risk.

Key practices:

- Use strong, unique passwords
- Enable two-factor authentication (2FA)
- Keep devices and apps updated
- Avoid suspicious links and attachments
- Be careful on public Wi-Fi
- Log out on shared devices
- Share less personal information online

## Passwords & Account Security

Online accounts are often the first target.

Use strong, unique passwords, avoid reuse, use a password manager, and change passwords immediately after any suspicious activity. One breach can expose multiple accounts.

### Secure Communication

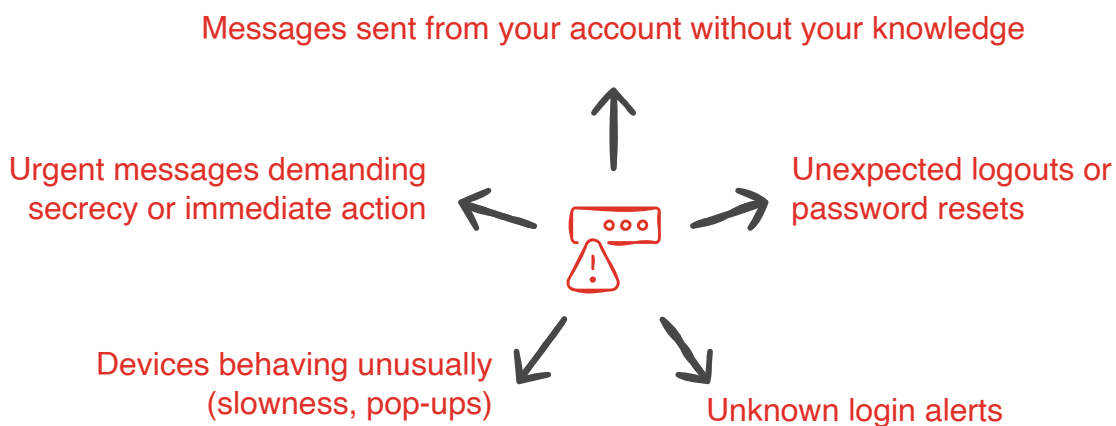
Choose platforms with end-to-end encryption, minimal data collection, and trusted ownership. Sensitive conversations need higher protection, and security depends on both the tool and how you use it.

### Protecting Your Data

Data such as contacts, media, documents, and messages must be protected, as loss or exposure can cause political, legal, reputational, and personal harm, and effective data protection relies on control, preparation, and responsible handling.

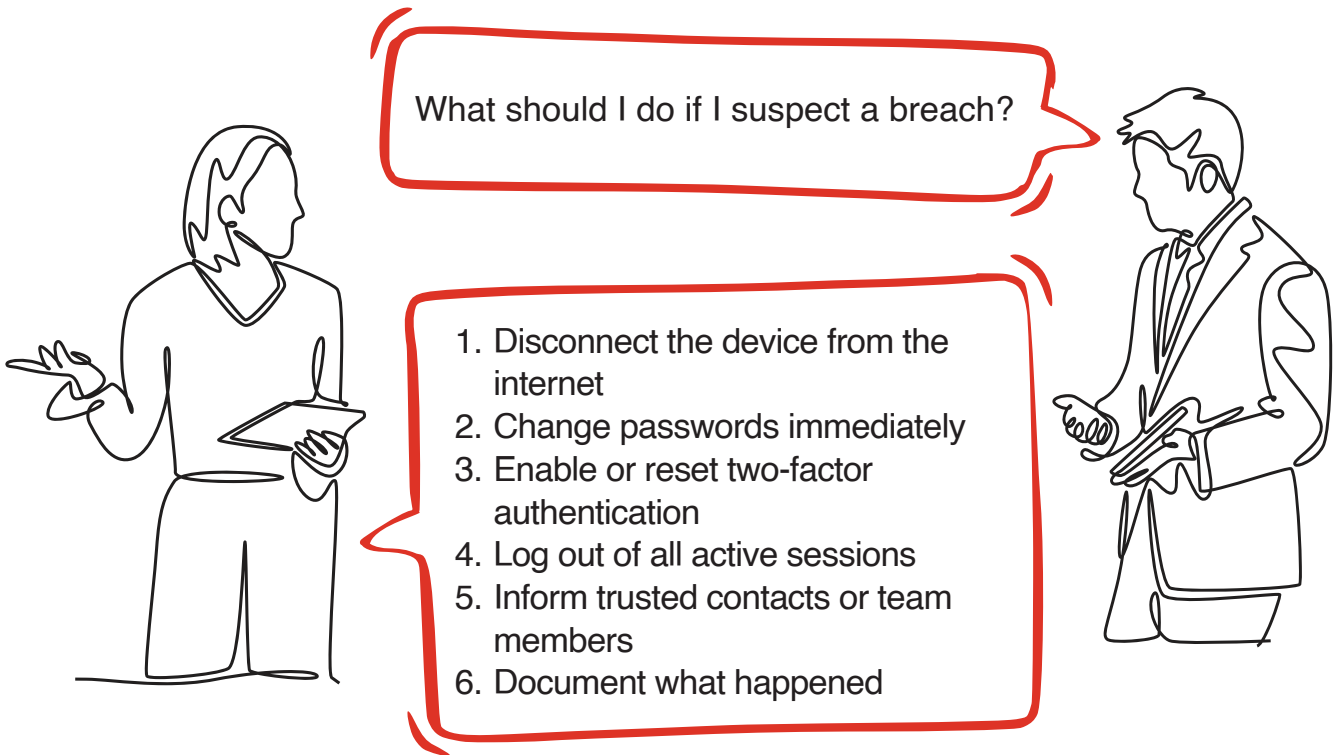
### Recognizing Warning Signs

Digital attacks often show early signs. Pay attention to:



*If something feels wrong, pause and verify before acting.*

## What to Do If You Suspect a Breach



*Acting quickly can limit damage and escalation.*

## Digital Security and Wellbeing

Digital security protects both your safety and mental health by reducing stress, preventing burnout, and supporting healthy boundaries, shared responsibility, and timely support.



## 3. Gender-Based Digital Violence, Hate Speech, and Strategic Response

Online spaces are key to political participation but also enable exclusion and harm, especially through gender-based digital violence and hate speech affecting women and young people. Understanding how this violence operates is essential to responding safely and strategically.

### What Is Gender-Based Digital Violence (GBDV)?

Gender-based digital violence is online abuse or attacks targeting individuals because of their gender or gender expression, involving digital behaviors intended to intimidate, humiliate, control, silence, or exclude.

Digital violence does not need to escalate into offline harm to be damaging. Its effects are real, cumulative, and deeply political, shaping who feels safe to speak, participate, and remain visible in public and political spaces.

### Violence Against Women in Politics (VAWP)

Violence Against Women in Politics refers to acts of psychological, physical, sexual, or digital violence aimed at women because of their political participation or leadership.

#### Scope:

- Targets women who are candidates, elected officials, activists, journalists, or political advocates
- Occurs within political or civic contexts
- Often intended to silence, intimidate, or exclude women from public life



## 1- Digital dimension of VAWP

When VAWP occurs online, it overlaps with GBDV but is politically motivated.

### Examples

- Coordinated online attacks against women candidates
- Gendered disinformation questioning competence or morality
- Threats linked to political positions or campaigns
- Sexualized attacks used to discredit women leaders



### Key Difference (Simple Comparison)

Aspect	GBDV	VAWP
Focus	Gender-based harm online	Gendered harm in political participation
Context	Any digital space	Political and civic spaces
Targets	Women and gender-diverse people	Women engaged in politics
Motivation	Control, harassment, discrimination	Silencing, intimidation, and political exclusion

For this reason, this toolkit uses the term gender-based digital violence (GBDV) throughout, as it allows for a comprehensive understanding of the risks faced by women and young people across different forms of political and civic engagement, while fully encompassing violence directed at women in political contexts.

## 2- Common Forms of Gender-Based Digital Violence

GBDV often appears in multiple overlapping forms, especially during coordinated attacks:

- **Online harassment and insults**  
Repeated abusive comments, name-calling, and humiliation.
- **Sexualized attacks**  
Sexual threats, degrading language, or comments targeting appearance, morality, or sexuality.
- **Moral defamation**  
Accusations linked to honor, family, or personal life are often rooted in stereotypes.
- **Threats and intimidation**  
Threats of physical harm, sexual violence, or social consequences.
- **Impersonation and fake accounts**  
Accounts created to post harmful content in someone's name.

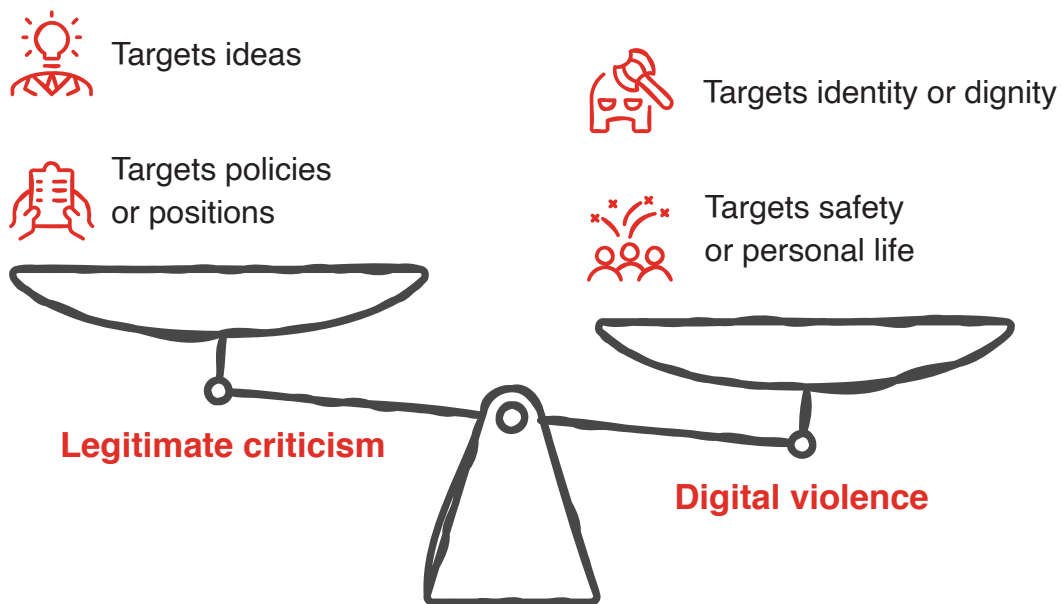
- **Doxxing**  
Publishing private or personal information without consent.
- **Blackmail and coercion**  
Threats to release private images, messages, or information.

## What Is Hate Speech?

Hate speech promotes hatred, discrimination, or violence based on identity, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, or political affiliation. In politics, it is used to dehumanize, normalize violence, mobilize attacks, and polarize audiences.

## Legitimate Criticism vs. Digital Violence

Not all negative online content constitutes violence.



*Recognizing this difference helps avoid unnecessary escalation, self-blame, or emotional harm.*

## Why GBDV Is Political and Leads to VAWP

GBDV functions as a political tool.

Its objectives often include:

- Silencing women and youth voices
- Forcing withdrawal from public spaces
- Damaging credibility and reputation
- Reinforcing traditional gender roles
- Deterring others from participating

Attacks are frequently timed around:

- Elections
- Campaign launches
- Media appearances
- Political crises
- Moments of increased visibility

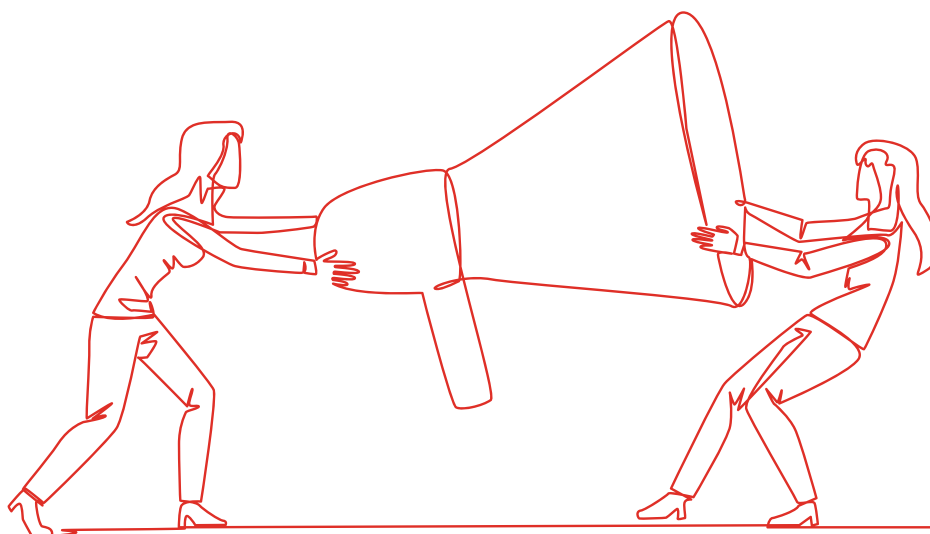
## Impact of Digital Violence

GBDV has serious and long-lasting effects, including stress, anxiety, fear, burnout, emotional exhaustion, self-censorship, withdrawal from digital spaces, and damage to political and professional credibility, with potential long-term psychological harm.

### Why Do Many People Stay Silent?

- Abuse is normalized
- Reporting often feels ineffective due to unclear procedures or lack of follow-up
- Fear of retaliation, or further targeting
- Fear of social stigma, reputational damage, or blame
- Absence of legal protections and accessible reporting mechanisms
- Lack of clear response strategies or institutional support

Silence is often a survival strategy, not a sign of weakness.



## Responding to Digital Violence: Core Principles

### Responding Is a Choice

You are never obligated to respond to online abuse.

Choosing not to respond can be:

- A safety decision
- A strategic decision
- A well-being decision

Silence does not mean acceptance. In many situations, it is self-protection.

**The goal of any response is not to win online, but to:**

- Reduce harm
- Protect safety
- Preserve dignity
- Sustain long-term participation in civic and political life

### A Strategic Response Framework

#### 1. Pause Before Acting

Online attacks often aim to create urgency and panic.

Pausing restores control and reduces risk.

#### 2. Assess the Situation

Before acting, ask:

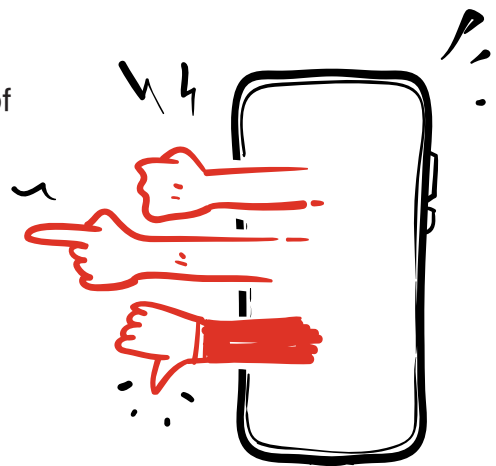
- Is this isolated or coordinated?
- Is it personal, sexualized, or identity-based?
- Is false information spreading?
- Does the content include threats or the exposure of personal data?
- Is it escalating across platforms?
- Do I have support?

If safety is at risk, it must come first.

#### 3. Identify the Level of Risk

- **Low Risk:** isolated insults, no threats  
⇒ Ignore, mute, block, document
- **Medium Risk:** repeated harassment, disinformation  
⇒ Limit engagement, use moderation tools, report, and seek team support
- **High Risk:** threats, doxxing, blackmail, hacking  
⇒ Prioritize safety, document everything, report, and seek external support

High-risk situations should never be handled alone.



#### 4. Decide whether to respond publicly

Public responses are useful when:

- Correcting widely shared false information
- Reassuring supporters
- Reaffirming values and boundaries

They are rarely useful when attacks are personal, sexualized, or intended to provoke.

#### 5. How to respond (If you choose to)

Effective responses are:

- Short and calm
- Factual and non-defensive
- Focused on values rather than on the attackers

Avoid engaging in debates, tagging abusers, or feeling compelled to explain your presence, legitimacy, or dignity.

#### 6. Use platform safety tools

Blocking, muting, restricting, and reporting are protective measures, not censorship.

Teams should agree in advance on how to use them.

#### 7. Document everything

Documentation supports reporting, legal action, and strategic decisions.

Store evidence securely and systematically.

#### 8. Do not handle it alone

Collective support reduces harm.

Share responsibility with teams, allies, and organizations.

#### 9. Care and wellbeing

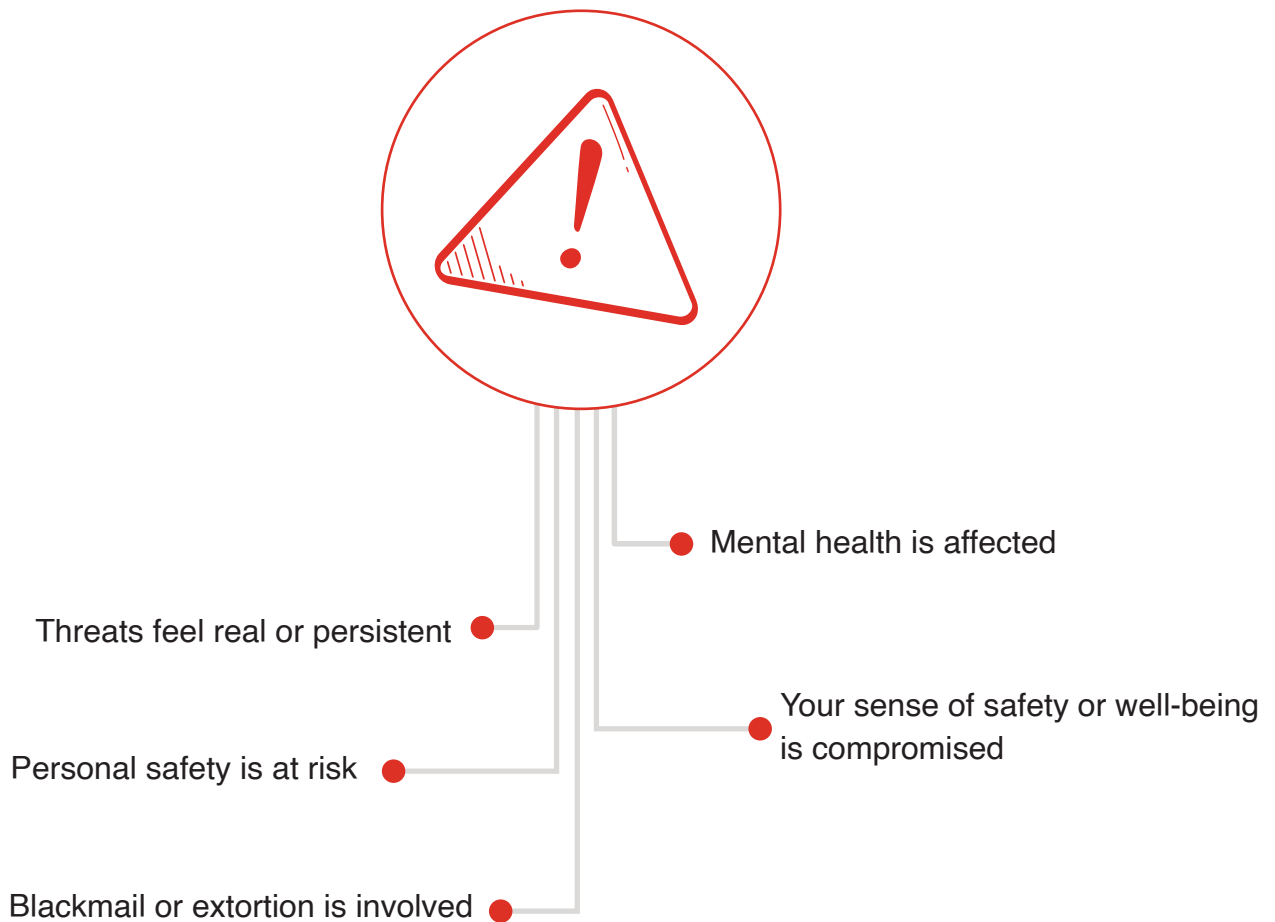
Emotional reactions to abuse are normal.

Protect yourself by limiting exposure, taking breaks, talking to trusted people, and seeking professional support when needed.

Care is not separate from political participation; it is essential to sustaining it.



## When to Seek External Support



Support may come from civil society organizations, digital security experts, legal professionals, or mental health providers.

---

### Final Note

Gender-based digital violence and hate speech are systemic and political phenomena that require strategic, careful, and collective responses. We have the right to protect ourselves, to set clear boundaries, and to prioritize our safety and dignity.

## 4. Disinformation: Detection & Counter Strategies

Disinformation manipulates opinion, discredits individuals, and erodes trust, often targeting women and youth with personalized, gendered attacks designed to provoke emotion and spread fast.

### What Is Disinformation?

Disinformation is false or manipulated information that is deliberately created and shared to mislead, harm, or influence.

It is different from misinformation, which may be shared unintentionally.

Disinformation is often:

- Coordinated
- Repeated across platforms
- Framed to trigger fear, anger, or outrage



### Why Disinformation Is Dangerous in Political Contexts

Disinformation can damage reputations, undermine credibility, distract from real political issues, polarize communities, and push people out of public participation, with the goal of creating confusion and exhaustion rather than meaningful debate.

#### 1- How Disinformation Spreads and How to Check It

Disinformation often appears credible at first, taking the form of false quotes, manipulated images or videos, fake accounts, rumors, or misleading headlines, and it spreads by triggering fast, emotional reactions that encourage rapid sharing without verification.

- **Check the source**  
Verify whether the information comes from a credible outlet or an official account. For political claims in Lebanon, for example, use Maharat News Fact-O-Meter, Fatabyyano, or AFP Fact Check to assess accuracy.
- **Pause before sharing**  
Disinformation relies on urgency and emotional reactions. If a post provokes anger or fear, stop and verify before engaging.
- **Verify images and visuals**  
Use reverse image search tools to check whether images are real, edited, or taken out of context: Google Images, TinEye, Yandex Image Search, FotoForensics
- **Check time and place**  
Old or recycled content is often reshared as new. Use Google Earth to verify locations and event details when relevant.
- **Cross-check with more than one source**  
If the same information cannot be confirmed by multiple reliable sources, treat it with caution.

## 2- When (and When Not) to Respond

Not all disinformation requires a response; engaging is only useful when false content is spreading widely, affecting safety or credibility, or risking real-world harm, while silence can often be a strategic choice that limits amplification.

## 3- Responding Without Amplifying Harm

When a response is necessary, it should be brief, calm, and factual, focused on verified information rather than repeating or debating false claims, as repetition and emotional framing help disinformation spread.

## 4- Collective Response and Self-Protection

Disinformation is easier to manage collectively by sharing verification tasks, coordinating messages, and supporting those targeted, while protecting digital security and emotional well-being to sustain long-term participation.

## 5. Digital Political Campaigning

Digital political campaigning is not only about visibility or reach. It is about how power is exercised, how people are treated, and how participation is sustained safely and credibly over time. Ethical conduct, strategic execution, meaningful engagement, and strong team structures are inseparable parts of effective political campaigning.

Unethical or poorly managed digital campaigns can increase polarization, expose individuals to retaliation, normalize abuse and disinformation, undermine public trust, and reproduce the same harms this toolkit seeks to prevent. Ethical and well-organized campaigning is therefore not a limitation, but a strategic, protective, and credibility-building approach.

### Ethical Digital Political Campaigning

#### 1- What Ethical Digital Campaigning Means

Ethical digital political campaigning means using digital platforms in ways that respect dignity, avoid harm, and promote transparency and accountability, focusing not only on what is said but on how messages are framed, amplified, and how people are treated, with ethics shaping both impact and safety.

#### 2- Core Principles

Ethical digital campaigning is guided by:



Authenticity: communicating honestly and in your own voice



Transparency: being clear about intentions and positions



Respect: rejecting dehumanization or humiliation



Accountability: taking responsibility for messages and actions



Avoiding harm: refusing tactics that endanger people or communities

### 3- Political Identity and Authenticity

Political identity is shaped by values, tone, behavior under pressure, and consistency between words and actions, and authenticity builds credibility while unethical behavior quickly undermines it.

### 4- Political Branding and Responsibility

Ethical political branding and promises focus on values, vision, and trust rather than fear or attacks, avoiding stereotypes, shaming, and misleading claims. Credibility is built through clear, realistic commitments, consistent communication, and accountable behavior, especially under pressure.

### 5- Respectful Audience Engagement

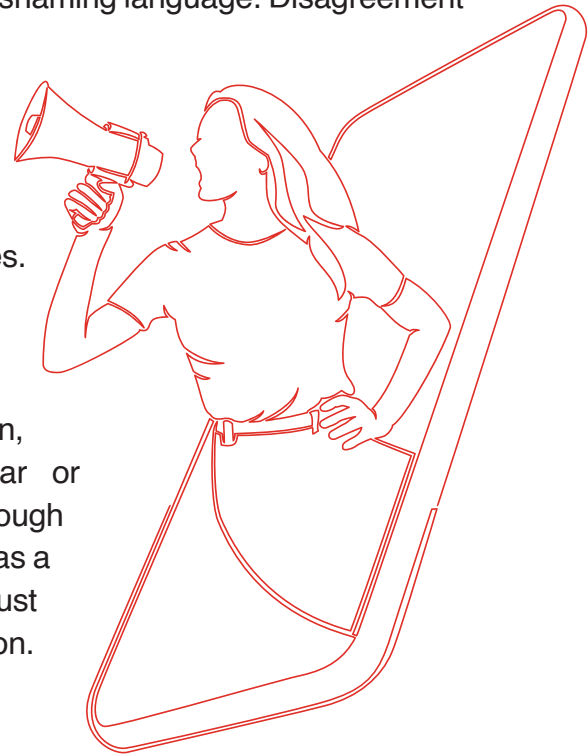
Ethical campaigning recognizes that audiences are diverse and hold different experiences and opinions. Respectful engagement includes listening, allowing disagreement without harassment, responding calmly, and avoiding humiliation or shaming language. Disagreement is part of politics; dehumanization is not.

### 6- Data, Privacy, and Consent

Ethical campaigns collect only necessary data, are transparent about their use, protect it securely, avoid unauthorized sharing, and respect consent at all times. Supporters are people, not data points.

### 7- Ethics, Safety, and Harm Prevention

Ethical digital campaigning avoids disinformation, manipulation, harassment, and tactics that exploit fear or stereotypes, recognizing that short-term attention gained through harm leads to long-term damage. Ethical conduct also acts as a safety practice by reducing retaliation, burnout, and loss of trust while supporting safer, more sustainable political participation.



## Digital Campaign Strategy and Execution

Ethical principles only become effective when translated into clear, organized, and safe execution. Poor execution leads to inconsistent messaging, increased security risks, burnout, and reactive decision-making.

### 1- From Strategy to Action

Digital campaign execution means turning goals into actions, coordinating people and platforms, and managing time, energy, and risk. Execution should be intentional, not constant or reactive.

## 2- Defining Campaign Goals

Clear goals help avoid unnecessary exposure and excessive posting that can dilute messages or increase risk. Campaigns should clearly define what they aim to achieve, who the target audience is, and what action is expected from them before deciding how often and where to post.

## 3- Campaign Phases

Most digital campaigns move through preparation, visibility, engagement, and sustainment phases. Consistency matters more than constant posting, and flexibility is essential.

- **Choosing Platforms Strategically**

Different platforms serve different roles. Platform choice should be based on audience, capacity, and risk, not trends. Messaging apps often support mobilization and coordination, while social platforms serve visibility, storytelling, or debate.

- **Content Planning**

Planning content reduces stress, burnout, and risk. A content plan helps balance messaging, anticipate sensitive moments, and coordinate teamwork while remaining flexible.

- **Tone, Language, and Style**

Effective political content is clear, accessible, respectful, honest, and human. Aggressive, humiliating, or dehumanizing language increases risk and undermines credibility.

- **Community Management and Moderation**

Community management focuses on engagement and dialogue with audiences, while moderation focuses on monitoring interactions, enforcing boundaries, and using tools such as blocking or reporting when needed. Moderation is boundary-setting, not censorship.

- **Monitoring and Adaptation**

Monitoring helps identify what resonates, emerging narratives, misinformation, and early signs of coordinated attacks. Monitoring should inform decisions without becoming a constant exposure.

- **Security During Campaigns**

Campaigns should limit account access, use strong passwords and Two Factor Authentication (2FA), agree on who can post or respond, and review security practices regularly.

- **Sharing the Work**

Digital campaigning should never rely on one person. Shared responsibilities reduce risk, mistakes, and burnout.

## Youth-Focused Political Campaigning

Young people are among the most active political actors online, yet they are often engaged symbolically rather than substantively. Youth-focused campaigning recognizes young people as political actors with agency, priorities, and power.

### 1- Beyond Tokenism

Tokenism occurs when youth are included only for visibility or promotion without real influence. Meaningful engagement requires shared decision-making, clear responsibilities, and recognition of contributions.

### 2- Authentic Communication

Young audiences value honesty, clarity, relevance, and respect. Authentic communication avoids forced language, imitation, or performative messaging and is transparent about limits, open questions, or decisions that are still evolving, rather than pretending to have all the answers.

### 3- Platform Choices for Youth Engagement

Platform choices should be intentional. Different platforms shape who is reached, how people participate, and what risks they face. Selecting platforms should be based on where young people already engage, the type of interaction sought, team capacity, and security considerations, not assumptions or trends.



#### **Instagram and TikTok: visibility and narrative building**

These platforms are effective for reaching large numbers of young people through visual storytelling, short videos, and relatable content. They support awareness-raising, identity-building, and message amplification, but also expose users to high visibility, algorithmic pressure, and potential harassment.



#### **WhatsApp and Telegram: mobilization and coordination**

Encrypted messaging platforms are useful for organizing, sharing updates, and maintaining closer community ties. They allow for deeper engagement and trust-building, but also carry risks related to misinformation circulation and limited moderation.



#### **X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook: public debate and outreach**

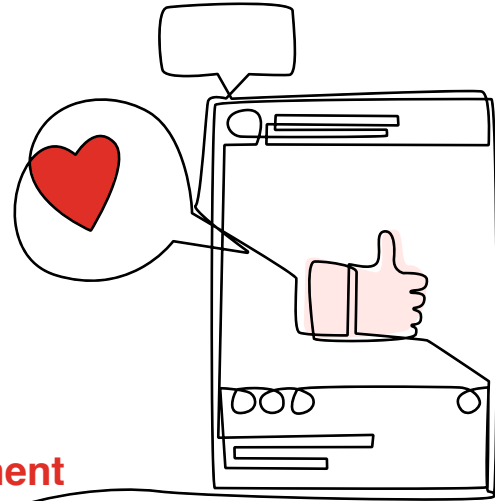
These platforms remain relevant for engaging with journalists, political actors, and broader public discussions. They can amplify advocacy messages but often involve polarized debates, trolling, and heightened exposure to online violence.

### Participation and co-creation across platforms

Youth engagement is strongest when platforms are used not only for broadcasting messages, but for enabling contribution, inviting young people to create content, lead discussions, and shape narratives appropriate to each platform.

## Protection, safety, and sustainability

Platform choice must account for differential risks. Campaigns should include moderation strategies, digital security guidance, clear rules of engagement, and mechanisms for reporting harm. Long-term engagement should support leadership development and avoid overexposure or burnout.



## Teams, Roles, and Campaign Management

Digital political work is collective. Campaigns that rely on one person are more vulnerable to mistakes, burnout, security breaches, and unsafe responses.

- **Clear Roles and Responsibilities**

Even small campaigns benefit from clear roles, including strategy, content creation, posting, community management, security oversight, and monitoring. Clarity protects both people and campaigns.

- **Account and Access Management**

Access should be limited, passwords secured, Two Factor Authentication (2FA) enabled, and access removed when roles change. Account security is a shared responsibility.

- **Internal Communication**

Clear internal communication channels support coordination, safer decision-making, and reduced stress during crises. Teams should know where and how to communicate before problems arise.

- **Moderation and Response Rules**

Teams should agree in advance on engagement boundaries, escalation processes, and who responds publicly. Clear rules reduce confusion and emotional pressure.

- **Sharing Emotional Labor**

Monitoring and moderation involve emotional labor. Rotating tasks, normalizing breaks, and supporting team members under attack are essential for sustainability.

- **Crisis Preparedness**

Campaigns should prepare for attacks, disinformation, hacking, and media pressure through emergency contacts, escalation plans, backup administrators, and agreed response principles.

## 6. Wellbeing, Ethics & Sustainability

---

Digital political participation is demanding, and constant visibility and online hostility can cause burnout and harm, especially for women and youth. Wellbeing is a political and ethical issue, not a personal weakness, and ignoring it undermines sustainability and credibility.

- **Wellbeing**

Digital political participation can be emotionally draining, especially for women and youth. Protecting well-being means setting boundaries, sharing pressure, taking breaks, seeking support, and stepping back when safety or mental health is at risk.

- **Ethics**

Wellbeing is not a personal weakness or a private issue; it is a political and ethical concern. When people are excluded through exhaustion, fear, or harm, democratic participation is weakened. Ethical political engagement rejects practices that normalize toxicity, exploitation, or harm and instead prioritizes dignity, care, and responsibility. Caring for wellbeing is a form of resistance, an ethical obligation, and a necessary condition for fair and inclusive political participation.

- **Sustainability**

Sustainable political engagement depends on how politics is practiced, not only on outcomes. Unethical or extractive practices exhaust individuals and teams, increase harm and retaliation, and erode trust over time. Sustainable engagement is collective rather than individual, caring rather than exploitative, and prioritizes people over performance, dignity over visibility, and long-term participation over constant intensity.



## 7. FINAL NOTE


---

This toolkit is a living resource. Its interest lies not only in its content, but in how it is used, shared, and adapted.

Ethical, safe, and sustainable political participation is possible when people are supported, protected, and respected.



 [madanyat.org](http://madanyat.org)

 +961 70 067 831

   @madanyatlb

 @madanyatlb8140

 [info@madanyat.org](mailto:info@madanyat.org)