



Community / Network Assessment

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Contents

Executive Summary	3
Part I: Survey Results	5
Introduction	5
Survey Analysis.....	6
Section 1: Role of the Mobilisation Lab.....	6
Section 2: Challenges & Opportunities in the Sector	10
Section 3: Self-Assessment	16
Section 4: Demographics of Survey Responders	21
Part II: Interview Takeaways.....	25
Introduction	25
Interview takeaways.....	25
Feedback on MobLab’s current work	25
Campaigning Context in Global South and East (GSE).....	26
Greenpeace affiliation	28
Should MobLab do more work in the GSE?.....	29
Coordinate with other organisations and networks	29
Additional ideas for MobLab support and content.....	31

Executive Summary

Why this review?

The Mobilisation Lab at Greenpeace has worked to support allies and partners through its “open by default” approach since it launched in late 2011, but the Lab’s primary mission has been to facilitate Greenpeace’s internal transformation into a more cutting-edge, people-powered campaigning organization. As MobLab evolves into its next phase, the team wanted to find out how it could support a broader array of campaigners, especially in the Global South and East (GSE) where campaigners face limited resources and shrinking civil space.

Who did we speak with?

More than 200 people from every continent on the planet participated in the Mobilisation Lab’s global listening project. We heard from local, national and international organisations, and from activists, volunteers and senior managers in NGOs and INGOs.

What did they say?

1. Mobile and social media still present the biggest opportunities for more effective mobilisation.

Campaigners in the GSE work mostly in resource poor contexts with low connectivity. Activists see mobile as an effective and inexpensive way to scale their campaigning and mobilisation efforts. Supporting mobilisation in the GSE means supporting mobile. From Bangladesh to South Africa, campaigners want to know what mobile strategies and technologies are working. MobLab can play an even greater role to surface existing insights and to spur collaboration on new tactics or solutions.

**“2.5 billion people have mobiles that aren’t smart phones,
so what’s the sustainable, effective way to engage with those people?”**

2. People are campaigning in increasingly risky circumstances and shrinking civil space.

Many governments are increasingly hostile to civil society organisations¹ and campaigners organise at considerable personal risk. Campaigners in the GSE in particular have to balance security and convenience, enabling people to act while guarding against surveillance. This has a huge impact on what mobilisation can look like. Campaigners need practices and tools that enable dissent to thrive. MobLab can address these needs by helping to bring together a community of practice to better support campaigners and individuals facing the greatest risks.

¹ See also: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/AboutUs/CivilSociety/ReportHC/67_CSIS-MendelsonGovTargetCivilSocietyNewAgenda-2.pdf and http://carnegieendowment.org/files/closing_space.pdf

**“Fear is the biggest barrier,
there’s no doubt that it’s virtually impossible in many countries in the region to mobilise.”**

3. There’s strong support for MobLab’s content.

Campaigners were enthusiastic about MobLab’s current mix of content, and they want more: stories describing other campaigners’ learnings, successes, or experiments – as well as MobLab’s conversation-pushing reports and review of mobilisation tools. Of all the potential roles of the MobLab, the strongest support was for the provision of advanced courses in mobilisation, engagement, and campaign strategy. Practitioners also want help coaching leaders on how to strengthen mobilisation, engagement, and people-powered campaigning within their organisation. We heard a clear need for support locating and developing local leadership capacity – specifically, a pipeline of high-quality GSE talent that comes from the locales and communities mobilising for change.

4. MobLab could support social change work in the Global South and East through local partnerships.

We heard from many campaigners that we need to improve our understanding of local contexts. Participants from the GSE said that the best way to work in their regions is by invitation and in partnership with local organisations and communities. We heard that it’s important to make explicit and address the power differentials in these relationships and explore whether or not we share the same values. Some people would trust MobLab more if the team included greater representation from the GSE. To serve groups in the GSE, MobLab support and content should be available in other languages in addition to English. We heard high demand for Spanish (though groups in Spanish-speaking countries also include many indigenous language speakers) and Arabic.

**“A lot of organisations would be happy to see Greenpeace reach out
and make sure their efforts in-country are deeply rooted in the local ecosystem.”**

What’s next for MobLab?

We will use this input to develop new partnerships and projects – and to develop fresh proposals for the MobLab’s work over the coming years. We’re looking forward to:

1. Surfacing more stories and developing new case studies that reflect the themes above, such as mobile campaigning, digital security/safety, and campaigning under difficult circumstances.
2. Convening a modern campaigning skillshare event in Oct/Nov. Stay tuned!
3. Facilitating design sessions with partners (July-Aug) to explore how we can better serve social change campaigners around the world.

Part I: Survey Results

Introduction

A short survey² was sent to MobLab subscribers and new contacts at organisations around the world to create a picture of the current needs and challenges in the campaigning sector and to explore how the Mobilisation Lab at Greenpeace can better support its allies to lead open, people-powered campaigns.

Between March 23 and April 18, 2016, we collected 182 responses in English and Spanish representing a diverse sample of organisation types (e.g., local, national, and international)³ and levels within an organisation (senior management, activists, volunteers). Of particular importance are the 58 responses from organisations working in the Global South and East, which includes Africa, Asia, Central & South America plus Mexico, and the Middle East). Annex 1 provides a full breakdown of the demographics of the survey responses and lists all of the organisations & countries that participated in the survey.

The survey analysis below is both quantitative and qualitative, using charts and selected answers. Quantitative charts have only been included where there is a large enough sample size (i.e., typically > 50 responses per category) to make a reasonably confident conclusion. To analyse the open-ended questions, we've highlighted text from some specific answers from Global South & East responses.⁴ These were selected based on how well the answer seemed to address the question at a meaningful level (but not for the actual opinion represented).

Where possible, we've offered key takeaways and areas for investigation. These insights were further tested during individual interviews and the interpretation workshop with the MobLab team in May.

² Sample survey questionnaire can be found [here](#)

³ Responses included 58 responses from Greenpeace staff and volunteers. Of these, 19 came from GS&E-based NROs.

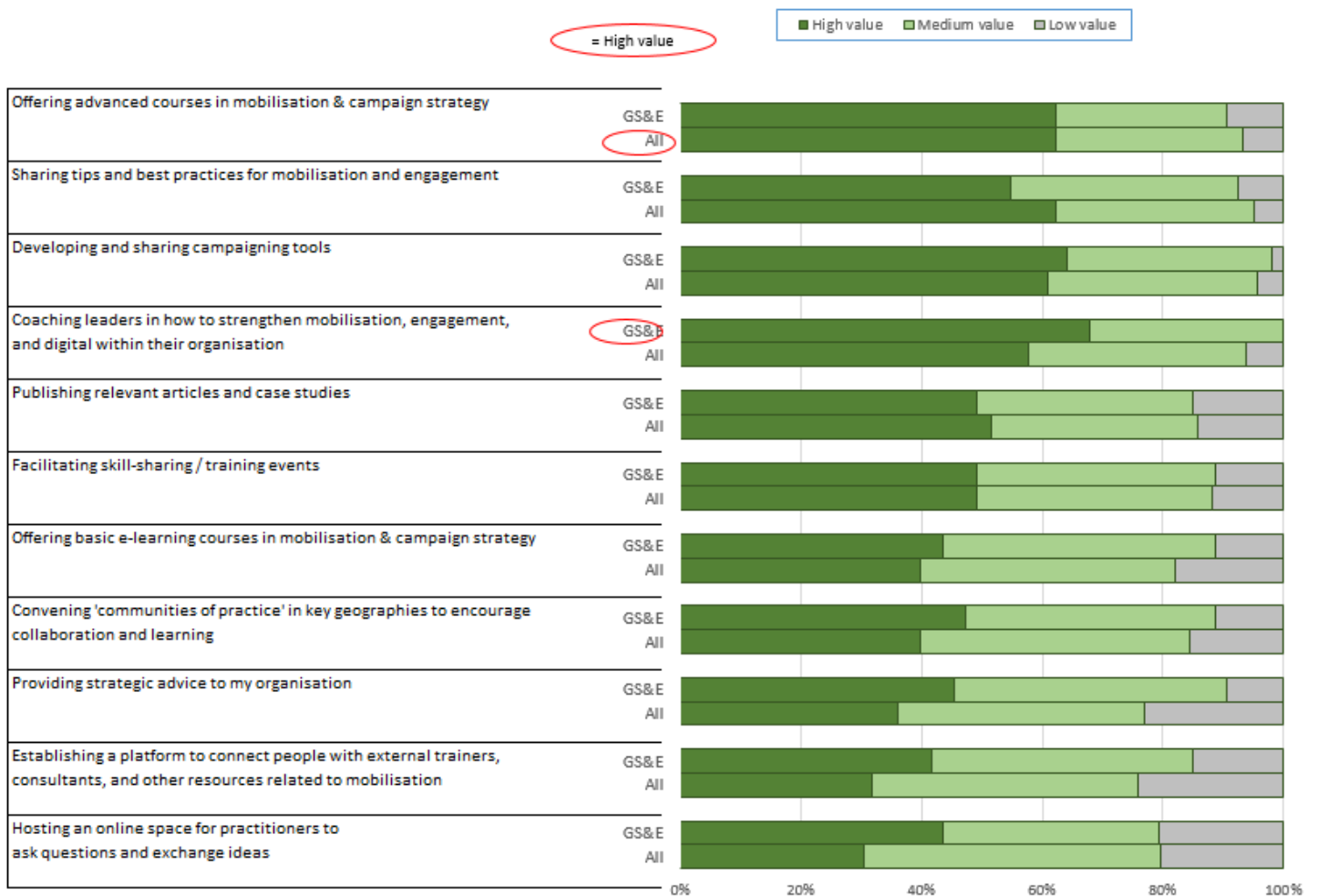
⁴ The focus of this consultancy is on the Global South & East, so sample responses are limited to this group.

Survey Analysis

This section analyses responses per survey question.

Section 1: Role of the Mobilisation Lab

Q9: Which of the following potential roles of the Mobilisation Lab do you think would be most valuable to you and your organisation / campaign?



Note: the rows are sorted by the most frequently selected as 'high value' across All responses.

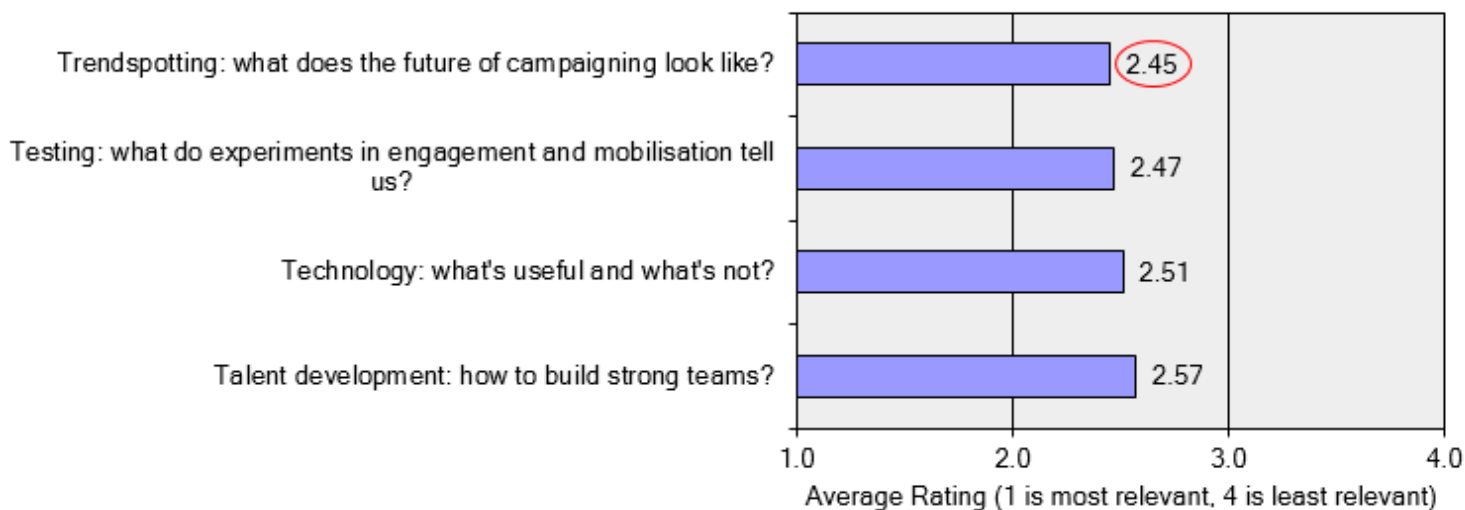
Key takeaways:

- *Each of the proposed roles is viewed as either high or medium value by a very high percentage (i.e., > 75% of all responses). When looking only at the responses from the Global South & East, there is even greater perceived value.*
- *For each of the 11 potential roles of the MobLab, a majority of all responses indicated 'high value' (there may be some 'polite' bias, but this is quite impressive).*
- *Out of all the potential roles of the MobLab, the highest perceived value is for the provision of advanced courses in mobilisation / campaign strategy.*
- *Coaching leaders to strengthen mobilisation within their organisations was scored as 'high value' most frequently and none of the responses indicated this would be 'low value'. This was the highest value role selected by the GS&E responses.*
- *Combining the concepts of offering advanced courses and coaching leaders, the preference appears to be for individual support, rather than organizational support. Support for platforms, online advice and strategic advice for the organisation scored significantly lower.*
- *There was not much difference in the outcomes when comparing between senior management and activists/campaigners, or between international/national organisations and local orgs.*

Areas for investigation:

- *Why do people appear to want more individual support rather than organisational support?*
- *What would be the best format for delivering coaching and advanced trainings?*
- *Why is there low enthusiasm for the 'network' role of the MobLab (i.e., community of practice, platforms, online forum)?*
- *Why are coaching and advanced training more valuable than basic training?*

Q10: Which of the following topics are most relevant to your organisation / campaign?



Sub-group Analysis	Trendspotting: what does the future of campaigning look like?	Talent development: how to build strong teams?	Technology: what's useful and what's not?	Testing: what do experiments in engagement and mobilisation tell us?
Global South & East	2.7	2.2	2.5	2.6
Non-GP Global South & East	2.3	2.8	2.5	2.3
GP	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.6
Non-GP	2.4	2.8	2.5	2.3
International organisation	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.5
National or regional organisation	2.4	3.4	2.2	2.1
Local community organisation / civil society	2.8	1.9	2.8	2.5

Yellow indicates 'most relevant' topic per sub-group

Key takeaways:

- The 4 topics are roughly of equal relevance in looking at the aggregate responses, with trendspotting and testing identified as slightly more relevant.
- Talent development was identified as the most relevant topic for organisations from the Global South & East, internal GP responses, and local CSOs.
- Smaller organisations seem to view talent development as very relevant. More so than larger organisation types.
- Additional topics below include managing risk & safety, how to contextualize best practices for Global South, and how to link local issues to global priorities.

Areas for investigation:

- How does this data help you narrow the focus of your work, from topics to work on to types of organizations to work with?

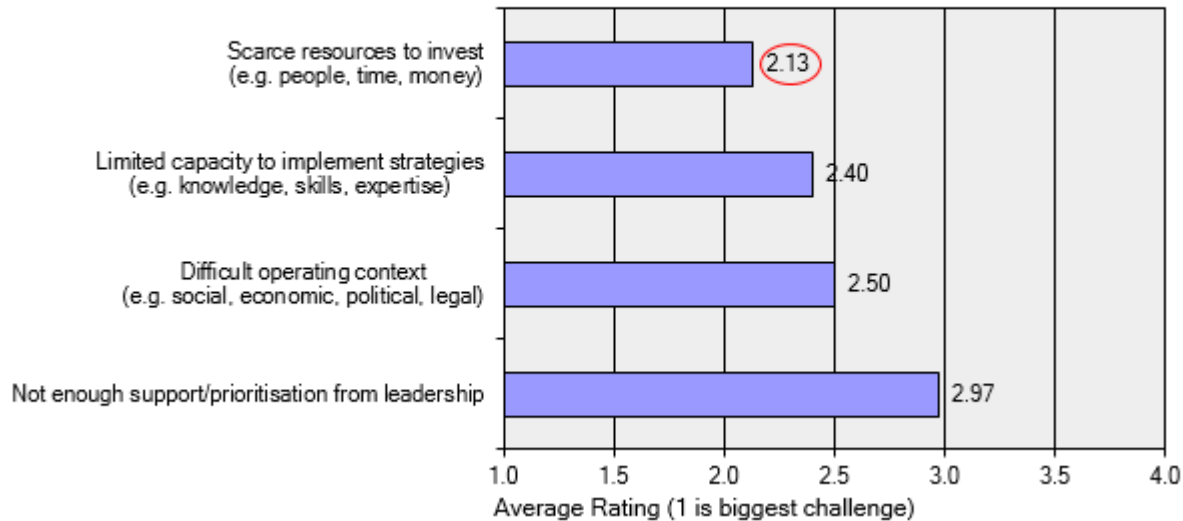
Q11: What other ideas and suggestions do you have about how the Mobilisation Lab can better support its allies, especially in the Global South and East?

Selected answers from Global South & East organisations:

- 1. Understanding the limitations of accessible political targets that are affected by petition-based advocacy. Understanding that there is a real risk to being public in advocacy (how does that fuse with online space?).*
- 2. What is the best way to engage with non-specialist audiences? What is the best way to mobilize typically digitally unconnected communities?*
- 3. Make a conscious effort to get trainers and resource persons who have experience in issues of the Global South. Only then will training & other interventions be contextual and not pedantic. Create opportunities to get global south experts to share their oppression breaking analysis with the community members of the global north.*
- 4. Immersion on local struggles in the global south.*
- 5. Help the various groups unite under a more structural analysis (i.e. connecting the dots between various struggles) as well as linking climate change to the broader capitalist system.*
- 6. Have training materials and courses in languages other than English.*
- 7. Translating case, studies, exercises in the local language. Give importance to mobile campaigning as 1 in 5 people in global south use mobile phones but don't use a laptop or use email.*
- 8. Providing up to date information on environmental issues especially for us in the global south.*
- 9. Analyse how we can run campaigns at the local and regional level which are relevant for global audiences.*

Section 2: Challenges & Opportunities in the Sector

Q12: What do you think are the biggest challenges related to effective mobilisation and engagement within your country/region?



Q12: Sub-group Analysis	Difficult operating context (e.g. social, economic, political, legal)	Limited capacity to implement strategies (e.g. knowledge, skills, expertise)	Scarce resources to invest (e.g. people, time, money)	Not enough support/prioritisation from leadership
Global South & East	2.0	2.5	2.3	3.2
Non-GP Global South & East	2.8	2.3	2.0	2.9
GP	2.4	2.2	2.4	3.0
Non-GP	2.4	2.8	2.5	2.3
International organisation	2.5	2.26	2.29	3.0
National or regional organisation	2.8	2.3	2.0	2.9
Local community organisation / civil society	2.3	3.3	2.2	2.3

Yellow indicates 'biggest challenge' per sub-group

Key takeaways:

- Overall, the most challenging factor is scarce resources and limited capacity to implement strategies. One implication of this is that any additional products/services of MobLab may need to be offered at a low-cost (or free) regardless of the amount of demand.
- The difficult operating context is an even greater challenge for orgs in the Global South & East than scarce resources or limited capacity (which are probably at least as severe for these organisations as others). The role of government in obstructing campaigns is cited in many of the explanations below – from jailing protesters to censoring or shutting down technology platforms.
- Language barriers and technology to fit the local context were additional challenges

mentioned in Global South & East responses.

- Support and prioritisation from leadership was scored as the least severe of these challenges across all sub-groups.

Areas for investigation:

- How can collaboration and preventing too much fragmentation alleviate resource constraints for these organisations?
- Can the MobLab play a role in resisting crackdowns on campaigning?
- How can MobLab take into account the much higher risks campaigners in the GS&E face when it comes to working with them, and developing resources for them?

Q13: Please explain your answer to the question above, including any additional challenges not listed.

Selected answers from Global South & East organisations:

1. *Affecting targets in a conflict zone is hard because there are no democratic structures to influence. Even the non-democratic ones are often far more concerned about military threats to power than civic ones. How do you mobilise people in a context when the real power to affect them lies outside of their social environment/country/region? It can be disempowering to say you need to affect the rich world to reduce conflict in your country.*
2. *Mobilisation is still seen as an add-on to campaigns and something 'fun' for the young activists to do. Senior leadership do not invest the time, people or money to improve the capacity in countries, especially in the south, to deliver great mobilisation for their campaigns.*
3. *The field of online organising is fairly new in India. We lack trained online campaigners and tech people specifically for activism. In the Indian context, it's also difficult to raise money for structural change (basically non-charity organisations).*
4. *It's very difficult to fund work that has a broader, structural, anti-capitalist critique. Which is how we know it's the most important thing we can do.*
5. *"Social movements" are linked to political parties [in Bolivia]. Very hard to engage with the public. We do not have a solid supporter base yet in the country. Very little interest.*
6. *Political context and cultural appreciation of the human rights concept.*
7. *Problems so systemic that oftentimes it is hard to convince people to start campaigns for change.*

8. *Human Rights organizations are attacked [in Palestine] - making work very difficult.*
9. *Its lack of resources that stop us from training and hiring the number of people we need to effectively tackle all the issues we want to.*
10. *Tech support is critical in the form of nimble campaigning that we do and money to pay for these investments we need to make as an org are few and far between.*
11. *Add to this the political and socio- economic scenario in our country, there are always risks associated with the work we do and the more we are in the public the riskier it gets. And one of the fastest ways to bring us down would be to clamp down on our meager resources. Leadership in the sector is still pretty traditional and person centric. In general and that too results in lack of a second tier of leadership that can make effective campaign decisions.*
12. *Limited internet accessibility, language barriers.*
13. *Most of the time when international groups design campaign strategies they don't take into context that things work differently in global south. You might block a coal mine in Canada and be out of jail in 24 hrs. But in global south [India] it means months in jail, beatings and worse case even death. I guess the context should be taken into account globally.*
14. *It is not something that the public engages, it is a nascent concept but use of social media to becoming a popular way of engagement. Government restrictions and censorship limit effectiveness and reach.*
15. *Many governments in this region [East Africa] are increasingly suppressing rights and freedoms which has the effect of limiting the civic space and spreading fear of reprisal among the publics we would typically engage with. Some have been known to cause internet lockdowns which means people cannot freely communicate and some people just end up staying away from any kind of campaign that governments may not like e.g. democracy.*
16. *Phone is main tool not many laptops especially as we go rural. Whatsapp is most used but a very sloppy platform to manage or archive or retrieve.*
17. *For projects/campaigns in the economic South/South Africa, in order to have global reach and impact we also need support to connect to a global audience/network other regional organisations/networks. So a networking/linkage/making the connection role is important.*
18. *Those who make the decisions have access to technology, communication, and resources; those who bear the brunt of them have none of those things and are divided by language, geography, etc.*
19. *The government [in Nicaragua] is very hostile to civil society organizations and attempts to silence them by many means. Internet access is still limited and few people are used to sign petitions online or using Internet for mobilization.*

Q14: What do you think are the biggest opportunities related to effective mobilisation within your country/region?



Q14: Sub-group Analysis	Harnessing technology for engagement (e.g. mobile, social media, collaboration tools)	Collaborating with similar organisations	Learning from our peers	Utilising data strategically
Global South & East	2.1	2.6	2.9	2.4
Non-GP Global South & East	2.2	2.3	2.8	2.6
GP	2.2	2.4	2.8	2.6
Non-GP	2.2	2.4	2.9	2.6
International organisation	2.2	2.4	2.8	2.5
National or regional organisation	1.9	2.9	2.9	2.3
Local community organisation / civil society	2.8	1.6	2.9	2.6

Yellow indicates 'biggest opportunity' per sub-group

Key Takeaway:

- *Harnessing technology was clearly identified as the biggest opportunity.*
- *Specifically, mobile and social media represent the most significant opportunities in the Global South and East – in particular for youth mobilisation (see explanations below).*
- *Local CSOs identified collaboration with similar organisations as the biggest opportunity.*

Areas for investigation:

- *The self-assessment shown in Section 3 shows a positive assessment for 'working with allies', so what are the opportunities for collaboration that are not occurring?*
- *What role could the MobLab have in enabling more collaboration? This could be a direct brokering function, especially since 'communities of practice, online forum, and platform' all scored relatively low in Question 9. Or it could involve partnering directly with organizations in the GSE to share expertise, funding, and risk.*

Q15: Please explain your answer to the question above, including any additional challenges not listed.

Selected answers from Global South & East organisations:

1. *Youth engagement.*
2. *Social media is really active now [in Turkey].*
3. *Collaboration is key! There are many organisations that have the similar end goal and as we are all struggling for resources we should be working together so that we can support each other in our mobilising!*
4. *Building tech for [Indian] activists is largely unexplored by domestic organisations.*
5. *Syrians and people across the region are huge users of mobile and Facebook. They are on it constantly. Particularly to keep in contact with a growing diaspora. It's not so hard to use that technology for spreading information, but for targeted action it's difficult (because a lack of accessible targets).*
6. *Bolivian government is trying to "control" social media. It is a hot topic now. Lots of engagement from civil society to develop tools and create an "informed social media culture".*
7. *Market not yet saturated with engagement organizations, possible to really make a difference in this space.*
8. *Building a support network by collaborating is absolutely essential!*
9. *Since we have a massive population to be reached [in Indonesia], the only way to do this effectively would be to be data-driven in our targeting.*
10. *Technology is not the solution. It's a tool. What we need is solidarity between various struggles that all hold a structural analysis.*
11. *Mobile phones hold the key to new campaigning styles in Global south. 1 in every 5 people use mobiles here, to call others, access Facebook and share images. In Bangladesh, where I went recently to network with groups working to stop the Rampal coal plant I found there is no one who reads email but everyone has an Facebook account and is active. Cheap Chinese smartphones are flooding the market and making 2-way communication an easy thing. I guess as org's we have to build on this and make mobiles/social media a key to our work.*
12. *Social media brings together youth specifically as the space doesn't really exist [in Jordan] for public interaction and engagement.*

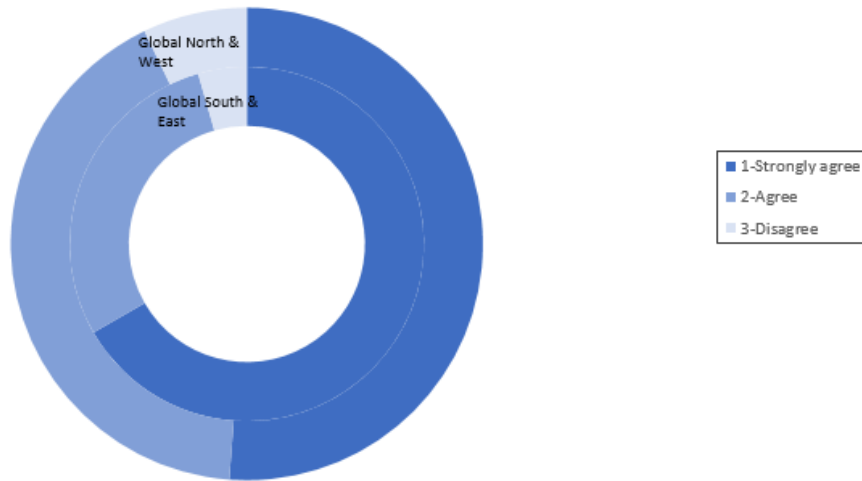
13. *Collaborating with similar organisations proves to be effective above all learning from peers has taught us lots of action plans, which we have implemented in most cases.*
14. *Mobile technology is penetrating this region [in East Africa] so it is only prudent to make the most of it in social media engagements etc. And makes sense to work in collaboration with our peers and learn from them too because of the support we can give each other.*
15. *Reducing overlap and fragmentation among orgs is key.*
16. *Groups need to learn to add more people instead of building different campaigns and solo efforts. Some also have tons of data but still don't know the value they have in their hands.*
17. *Sharing info quickly to get quick reply to action is what we mostly want. or awareness at least. Less interest in sharing data but maybe collecting it.*
18. *I think that as mobile and internet penetration increases [in Southern Africa/ Africa], there is a great opportunity to engage people through technology. Africa has a young, technology and knowledge-hungry population that is increasingly dissatisfied with the status quo and looking for social, economic and political change. And technology is the most effective and impactful way to engage them.*
19. *Disruptive technologies offer an opportunity to shift the balances of power and have a disproportionate effect.*
20. *Increasing development of digital infrastructure in the [Central American] region.*

Section 3: Self-Assessment

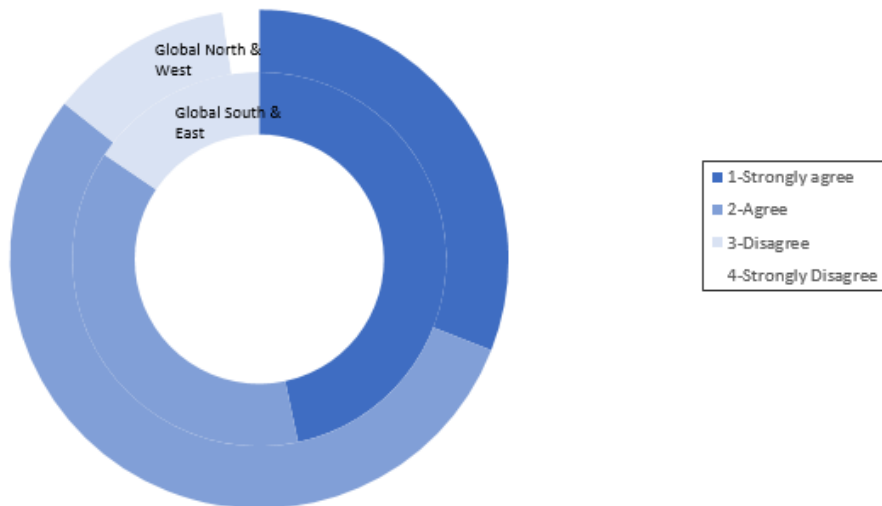
Global South & East Comparison

For each of the charts below, the inner circle represents the responses from Global South & East respondents while the outer circle represents responses coming from all other responses.

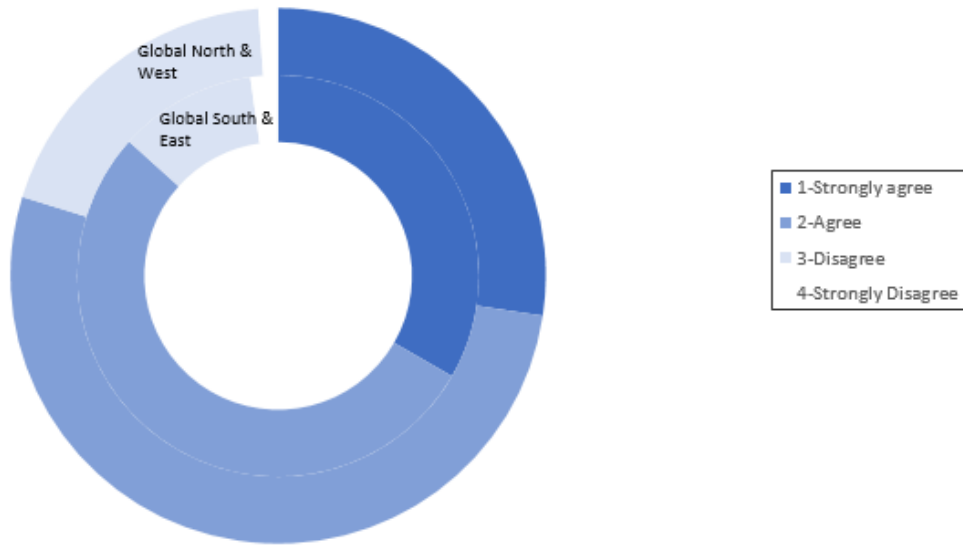
My organisation recognises the crucial role 'people-power' will have in transformational change to achieve our mission.



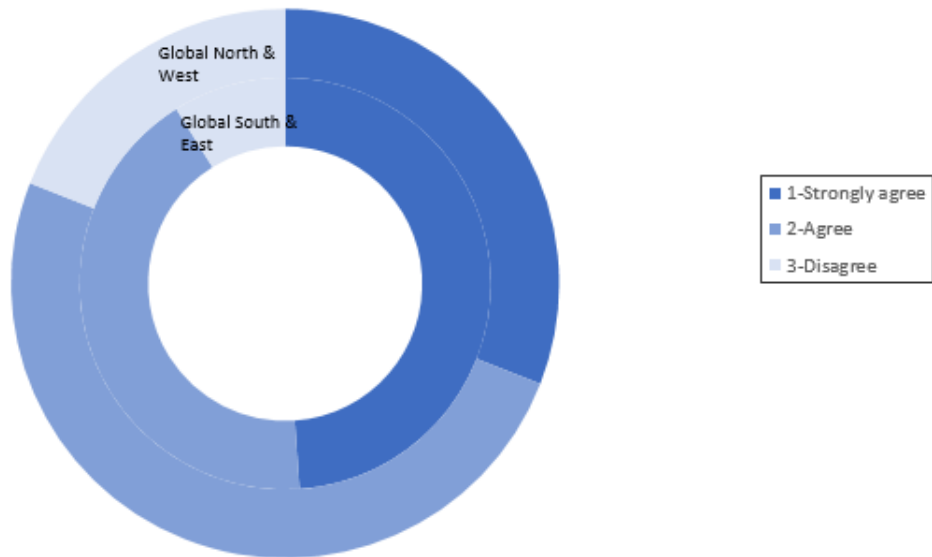
My organisation has a clear and credible vision of the role people will play in making change happen.



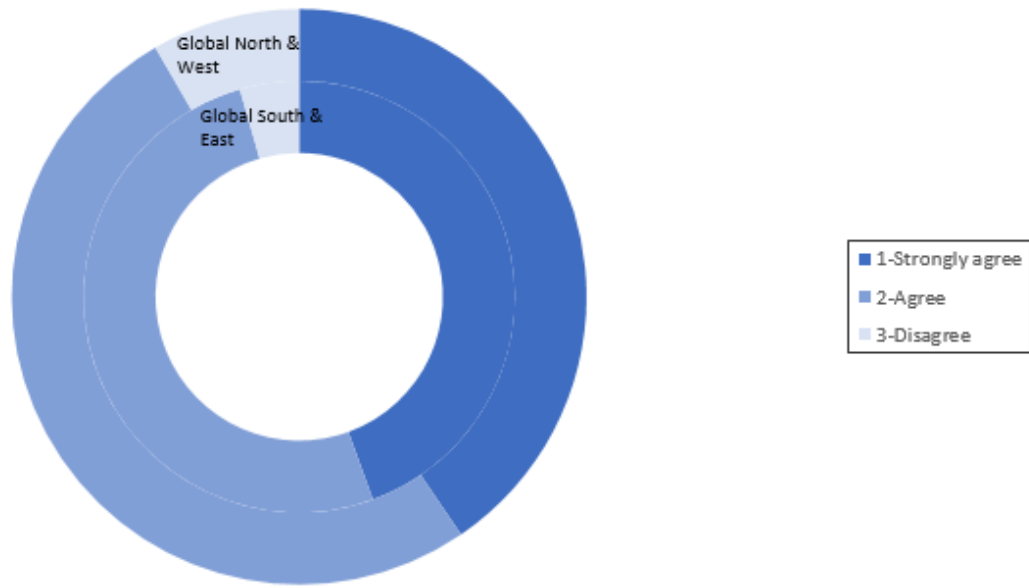
My organisation creates opportunities for public participation, leadership, and ownership in our campaign(s).



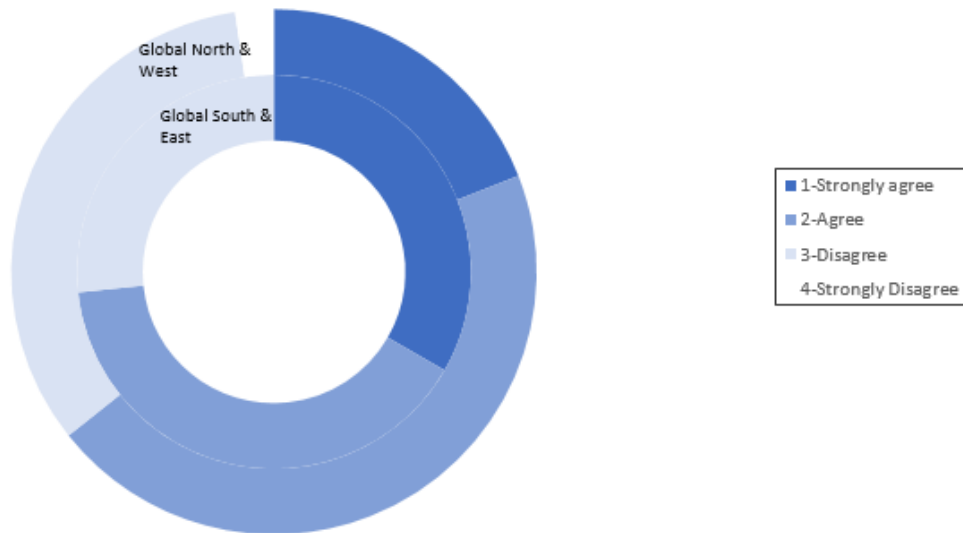
My organisation uses the power of stories to shift attitudes, values, behaviours and societal norms.



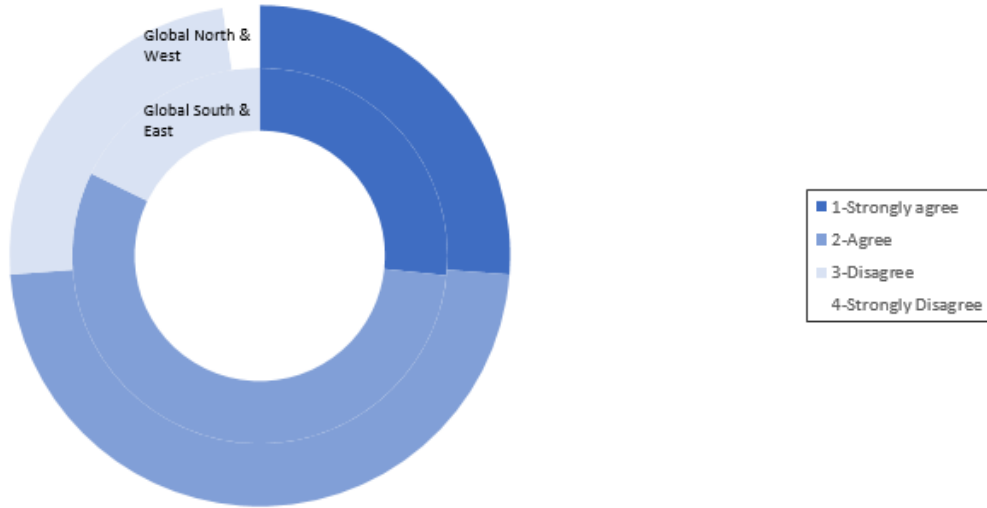
My organisation works with allies, partners and in coalitions to increase our impact.



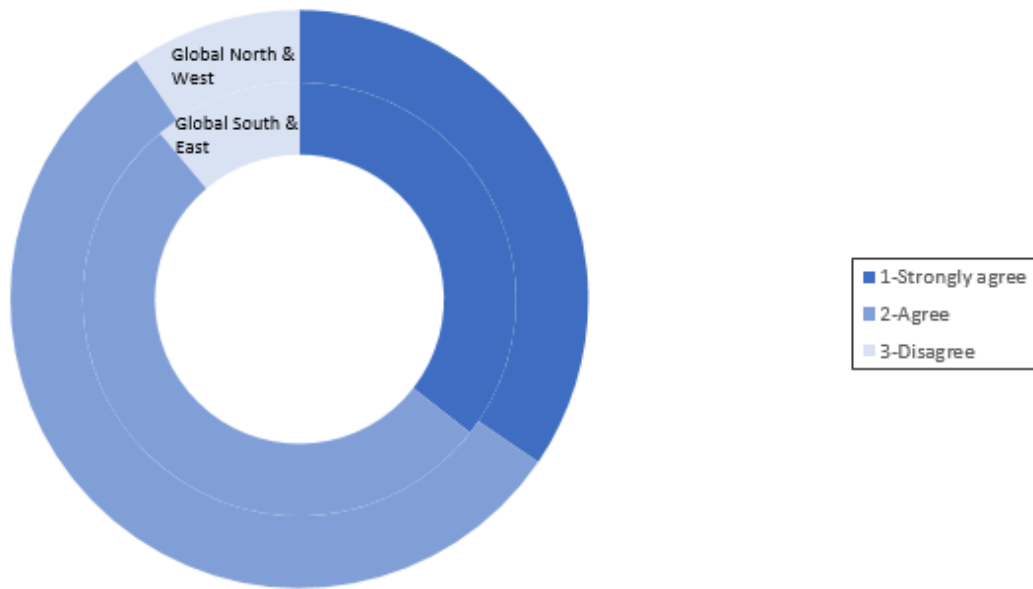
My organisation asks our supporters to take courageous acts and use their power and influence to shape the future.



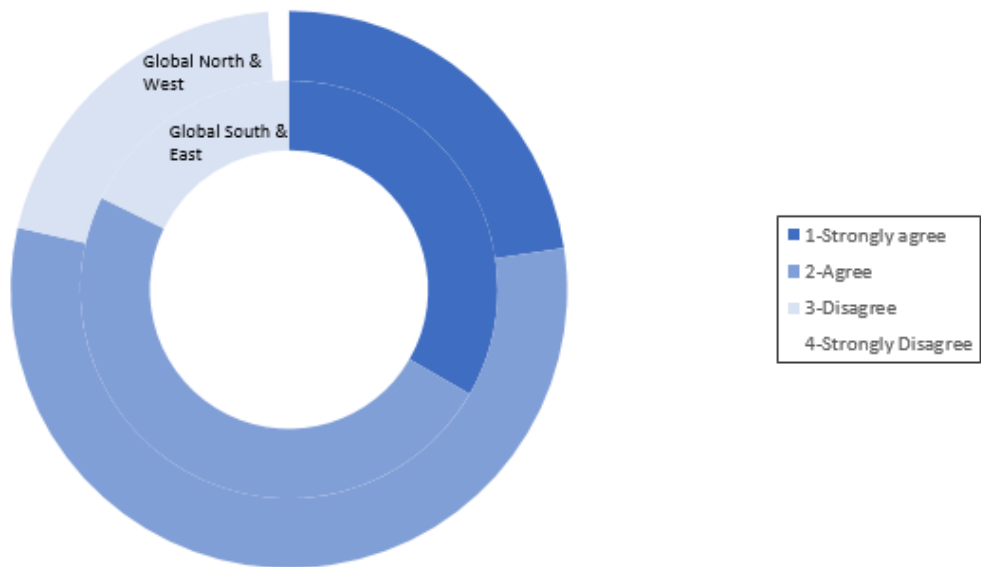
My organisation uses experimentation and learning to develop innovative ways of engaging more people.



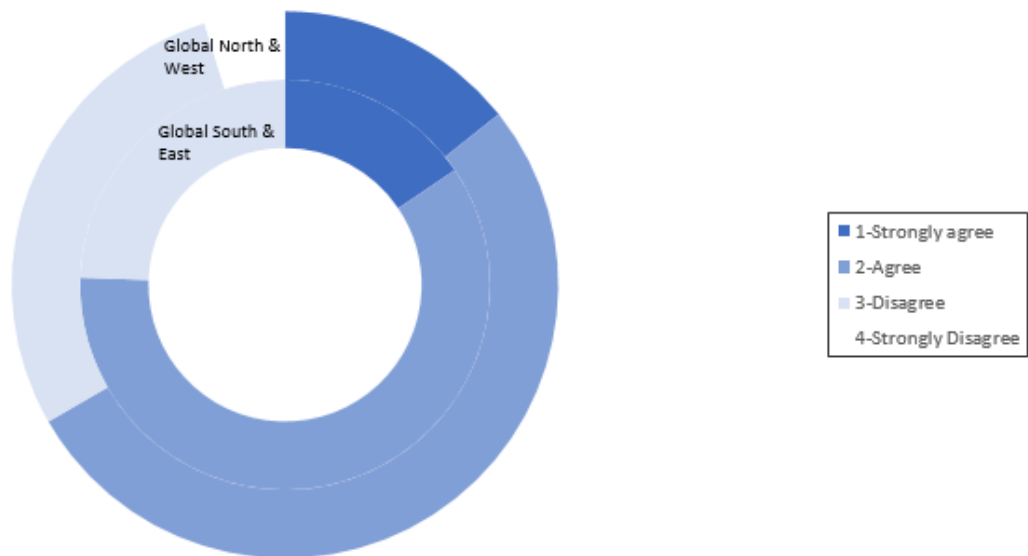
My organisation uses a range of different communication channels to engage with audiences



My organisation keeps up to date with how digital tools and technologies are evolving.



My organisation uses data to measure progress, make better decisions, and build better relationships.



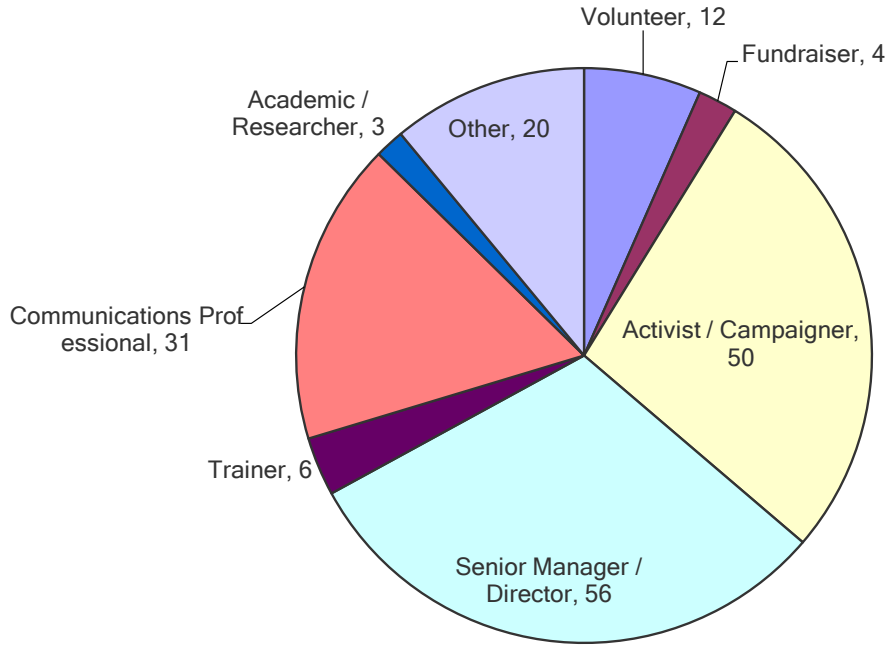
Section 4: Demographics of Survey Responders

Q3 & 4: Country & Organisation

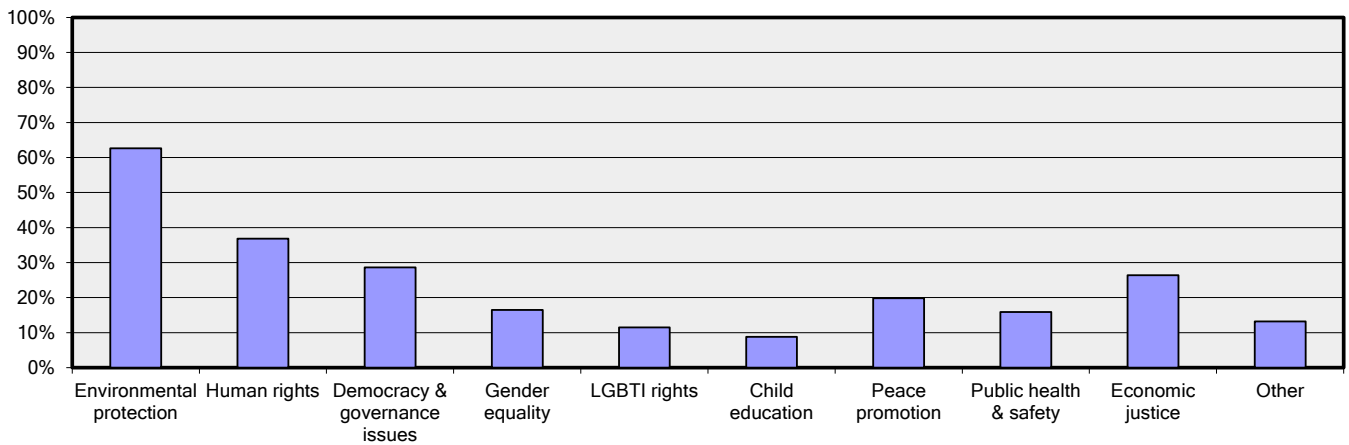
Continent	Region	Country	Organisation
Africa	Eastern Africa	Kenya	Amnesty International Jane Goodall Institute Kenya
		Zimbabwe	Living Green Campaign Zimbabwe
	Southern Africa	South Africa	ActionAid / Activista Grassroot Soccer The Moneychangers Network The Rules
Americas	Mexico & Central America	Mexico	Amazon Watch Amnesty International International Secretariat Americas Regional Office Socialtic
	Northern America (except Mexico)	Nicaragua	The Campaigner
		Canada	Georgia Strait alliance Independent Stop Oléoduc Capitale Nationale This Changes Everything
		United States of America	350PDX ACLU AFSC All Out American Civil Liberties Union American Friends Service Committee Animal Place Article 25 Auburn Seminary Catapult.org Change.org Common Cause Endangered Species Coalition Everytown for Gun Safety FCNL Food & Water Watch Forward Together Here Now (most recently) International Budget Partnership Johns Hopkins University MattHolland.com Mijente Moms Clean Air Force National Guestworkers Alliance National Trust for Historic Preservation Netcentric Campaigns PCDN Purpose Real Food Media Resource Media Social Movement Technologies Spitfire Texas Impact The Hive The HSUS The Humane League

			The Rising WITNESS World Childhood Foundation
	South America	Brazil	Clímax Brasil Meu Rio Red Nuestras Ciudades
		Chile	Global Voices Online
		Bolivia	Oxfam
Asia	Eastern Asia	Hong Kong	Amnesty International
	Middle East	Israel	972 magazine
		Jordan	ARDD- Legal aid Leaders of Tomorrow UN
		Lebanon	The Syria Campaign UN
		Palestine	AMIDEAST Avaaz Dalia Association and Aid Watch Palestine
		State of Palestine	epalestine.com Leaders Organization
		Turkey	350.org Kesh Malek
	South-Eastern Asia	Indonesia	Jhatkaa.org
		Philippines	350.org
	Southern Asia	India	350.org CREA Jhatkaa.org Medecins Sans Frontieres MSF
		Nepal	Blue Diamond Society, Nepal
Europe	Eastern Europe	Slovakia	FOUR PAWS International
	Northern Europe	Ireland	Trocaire
		United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Age UK Bliss Children's Food Campaign, Sustain Citizens Advice Community Foundation for Northern Ireland Detention Forum friends of the earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland Here Now International Tibet Network KCLSU Reclaim the Power Student at University of Warwick Superact CIC / freelance Tearfund
	Southern Europe	Spain	Amnesty International change.org Migrant Voice
	Western Europe	Austria	NEOS
		Belgium	odcommunications.com Vredesactie
		Germany	Robin Wood Umweltinstitut München WWF Germany
		Netherlands	The Black Fish
	Switzerland	Campax	
Oceania	Australia and New Zealand	Australia	Amnesty International Australia Australian Youth Climate Coalition Change.org

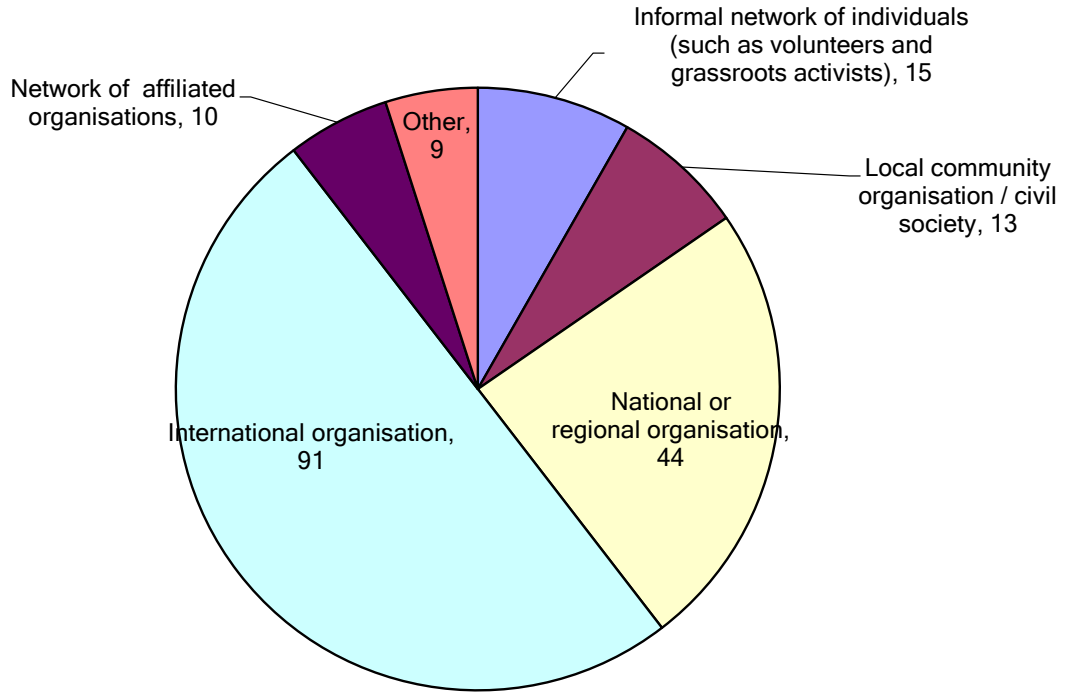
Q5: How would you describe the nature of your role? (# of responses)



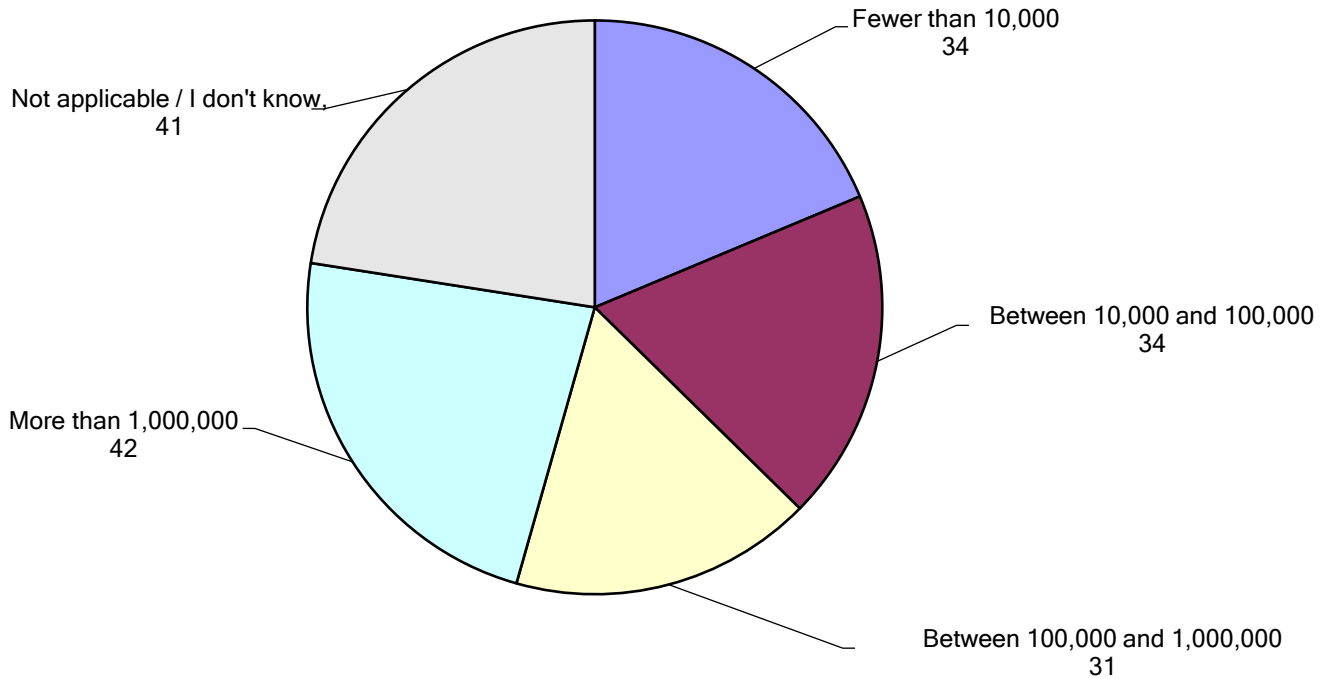
Q6: Which category best describes your mission or issue area? (please select all that apply)



Q7: How would you describe the organisation of your campaign / movement? (# of responses)



Q8: How many supporters or members does your organisation currently have? (# of responses)



Part II: Interview Takeaways

Introduction

In the second phase of the assessment we carried out 36 interviews, 24 of which were with organisations in the Global South and East. We spoke to people who are already working in this mobilization space and want to improve and/or expand their work and so could benefit from MobLab tools and expertise, and whose organizations are sufficiently developed to be able to do this. We further tested the findings from the survey, and then discussed those and the takeaways from the individual interviews at an interpretation workshop with the MobLab team in May.

Interview takeaways

Feedback on MobLab's current work

Many campaigners were glad to learn of resources to support their campaign learning, but outside Greenpeace (GP), **almost three-quarters of the people we spoke to had not heard of the MobLab**. Even people who knew about the MobLab didn't know about its openness to also supporting/serving groups outside GP. In one telling example, a former GP staffer who now works at Change.org, and who led an email training for MobLab, still didn't know about the programs available to campaigners (events, email newsletter, etc).

Those who were familiar with MobLab's work were clear that it was high quality. For example one person noted that the skillshares are a huge added value, because people in GP don't know each other because a lot of the work is national and those who are not senior don't have opportunities to interact within other national offices. Another interviewee, from outside GP, has used, and passed on to others, MobLab's resources and thought they were excellent. However, they noted that it felt like many of MobLab's resources were only for GP staff, *"My interaction with MobLab has been as a taker, not a giver. Don't feel there's a natural space for creating community. But that's ok. I know there are things that are only available to internal GP people. It's like you're invited in to look at things, but can't keep them. Invited into a cool nightclub, but there's a cool roped off VIP area for GP and members."*

One organisation sent a member of staff to one of the events or "camps" and noted. *"She [the staff person] got sense she was one of very few from the Global South (GS⁵)...she felt this conversation doesn't match our experience. Communities don't even have access to power, let alone technologies, so it's not like we or they have a huge staff who are dedicated to tech. There was a divide between technologies, [and a] difference between huge INGOs and smaller NGOs."*

⁵ Dragonfly has used the general term Global South and East (GSE). When you see Global South (GS) it's because an interviewee used that term.

Campaigning Context in Global South and East (GSE)

Low connectivity and prioritising mobile technologies

The key characteristics of campaigning in the GSE, as described by the interviewees, are low connectivity (limited and sporadic data and bandwidth availability), resource poor, using mobile networks and technology to mobilize, and ensuring that mobilization is led by marginalized people of colour on the ground (very strong emphasis in South Africa—white-led organizing both inside South Africa and from the Global North (GN) is highly problematic).

Interviewees were clear that the biggest need is to find effective ways to mobilise using mobile technologies. As one interviewee put it, *“2.5 billion people have mobiles that aren’t smart phones, so what’s the sustainable, effective way to engage with those people? There’s no such thing as an international phone campaign, because there are only national networks. How do you make it locally relevant and particular?”*

One interviewee in South Africa noted, *“One of the big things we’re trying to work on is to build a mobile distributive platform, e.g., via WhatsApp. Find a way for us to know what’s gaining traction, then a system where we can use SMS to push that forward. This is hard online, but translating into mobile is a mission...Also on organizing, how best to use SMS for events and rapid response.”* One interviewee warned, *“Beware of not stacking the deck for people who are already privileged. For example, if you use WhatsApp in Palestine, only get men will participate.”*

Campaigners from the GN don’t understand campaigning in the GSE

Many interviewees described their frustrating experiences of working with campaigners from the Global North (GN), who don’t understand the local context in that country/region or seek to impose their ways of doing things on local groups.

One said, *“Grown-up movements in the GS, especially ones that have been around for a few years, are very attentive to people seeking to use them for their own agendas and will turn distrustful very quickly...A lot of what I’ve seen is this sort of imposing mental models of what organizing should look like, consultant-driven approaches to theories, paradigms and frameworks that get imported but in reality for people in very difficult circumstances facing very difficult challenges, they don’t need a framework....Even like deliberation platforms, democratic tools used in GN, it’s a no-go in our environments. There’s cultural presumption...in developed world that people can get together but they’re distracted and so we need to make it really easy to talk to each other. In GS it’s an inverse model; people want to mobilize because issues are incredibly pressing and real. Participatory budgeting in US is about a pretty village square, so in GS it’s about the toilet that’s killing us.”*

Another person did not react to well to the MobLab phrase “cooking up people-powered campaigns” saying it sounded *“like astroturfing a campaign, which is more typically related to the right, the idea of creating backing for an idea where it might not have naturally arisen. The idea of sort of office-based CSO from GN is sort of convincing communities to care about something that they might not have cared about.”*

Increasing our understanding of the local context can yield important insights into how mobilising can best happen then. In the course of our interviews we heard a number of these. For example, in terms of whether or not storytelling or narrative is a useful tool we heard from campaigners in South Africa, Syria and Japan.

One activist from Syria said, *“I don’t think I’m a big fan of this idea [using storytelling, personal narrative]. It over-simplifies the ideas of social behaviour. It’s sometimes about economic, and religious structures not just social behaviour.”* Instead they wanted to see a stronger emphasis on campaigns that fully embraced their Islamic context, *“One of my problems with our campaigning, we are afraid of context, of Islamic context, we’re afraid of our songs, but we use same old social media activist messages, where people think alike.”* And from South Africa we heard, *“...you don’t have to explain things, they know what the problems are. So for majority of campaigns there isn’t a lot of narrative stuff, they know it’s an issue. There’s a bit of narrative around the theory of change, why we should act now.”* Finally, one campaigner in Japan noted that, *“Using justice and who’s good and bad is not an easy way to get people on your side. You come across as judgmental, coming off as trying to be better than others which is not socially accepted way to behave.”*

Campaigning and mobilizing is high risk in GSE

Civil society spaces are closing, particularly in the GSE. One interviewee from Nigeria said, *“The very premise of campaign organisations like MoveOn and 38Degrees [in the Global north] is you have an electorate who elected X into office. There’s expectation that if we get enough people to tell Mr. Y what we want, Mr. Y has to respond. It’s flipped in my context. People don’t expect it.”* One interviewee from an INGO based in the UK noted *“96 countries where civil society space is closing.”* Another in Thailand said, *“Fear is the biggest barrier, there’s no doubt that it’s virtually impossible in many countries in the region to mobilize.”* An interviewee from Syria noted, *“Problem is how to create hope that people have power. People think democracy is overrated. They have no power. No one can affect the political aspect of the conflict.”*

Governments are increasingly hostile to civil society. Campaigners in the GSE have to manage a tricky balance between security and convenience, the ability to monitor who is accessing a group and enabling functions while still guarding against security services spying on people. On the other hand interviewees pointed out that in a lot of spaces in the region it’s the only way to participate in decision-making because there are no democratic routes to do that.

Language is an obstacle

To serve groups in the GSE, many campaigners thought that MobLab content/resources should be available in languages other than English. We heard high demand for Spanish (though smaller groups in Spanish-speaking countries also include many indigenous language speakers) and Arabic. One interviewee from Syria noted that, *“If you only produce materials in English only people from privileged background can use them.”*

One person in El Salvador has translated certain pages and concepts from the MobLab Cookbook to teach about campaigns: *“The ingredients the Cookbook talks about make it easier to understand what a campaign is, how you make allies, analyse power of people, how you engage people to keep working with you.”* But they estimated that only *“60% of the participants would be able to read a Spanish version.”* In addition, even though they found the Cookbook an indispensable tool, they didn't know about MobLab's other offerings. This organisation also mentioned the new Beautiful Rising tools, which are available in English, Spanish, and Arabic.

Greenpeace affiliation

Most people said the Greenpeace (GP) affiliation wouldn't be an obstacle to their working with MobLab. For most, GP is a well-known and respected organisation, so the affiliation is an advantage. One interviewee from ActionAid in El Salvador said about their training program that, *“We always show examples from GP because it's a stronger campaign organisation [than ActionAid]. Getting inspiration from GP would be amazing.”*

Some acknowledged GP is associated with a very particular form of campaigning (i.e., high-profile direct actions) and that this might not connect well with their own work. For example, one campaigner from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region said, *“People think GP is only about the environment, so they may not see the link to campaigning on other social justice issues...GP can be seen as very aggressive—when you work on women's rights issues in this region [MENA]...this can be an obstacle. When civil society is shrinking, you have to be careful about what you do.”* Another campaigner from India, where GP is the focus of the government's crackdown on NGOs, noted that some organisations might be wary of publicly associating with GP, but even there, groups are happy to learn from MobLab without public association.

One organisation did not think that GP supported their and their allies' stance on climate justice and saw this as a block to engaging more fully with GP and so with MobLab. They pointed out that climate justice is a human rights and a North-South question - that is whether or not countries in the Global North and South have equal responsibility when it comes to taking action on climate change. *“Not sure if GP is with us on that. 350 is with the climate justice movement. GP may say everyone has an*

equal responsibility... The brand does make a difference. It can be a concern about there not being a shared political objective around climate justice.”

Should MobLab do more work in the GSE?

There was a mixed response as to whether MobLab should do more work in the GSE. Some interviewees said that MobLab shouldn't come and organize in the Global South. This was because campaigners there already have what they need and/or it takes too long to explain the local context to organisations from the GN. Some interviewees said that MobLab should come but only if it is willing to go deep in learning the local context and building relationships. *“A lot of organisations would be happy to see GP reach out and make sure their efforts in-country are deeply rooted in the local ecosystem.”* In addition, some people would trust MobLab more if the team included campaigners from the Global South. One interviewee from India said, *“If MobLab has representatives from the Global South, it would help buy-in, so it doesn't feel proscriptive.”*

One possible solution is to develop pilot partnership relationships where you bring resources and enter the space through those relationships. One example of this could be to work with INGOs and NGOs already using digital campaign tools who have relationships, expertise and experience in particular regions. Once established in a region, these NGOs will connect the MobLab to the small local groups they work with.

Several campaigners suggested meeting with organisations in person or, at the least, by video to introduce the MobLab, learn about regional needs, and build relationships. One interviewee from Colombia said there is a lot of scepticism of online organizing among indigenous groups: *“People don't trust the Internet because they don't know who supporters are—culturally, you need to have coffee, shake hands, they need to trust you personally... To come to a decision might take 3 weeks instead of 1 hour because people take more time to consult.”* She suggested *“coming in to learn, not thinking everything is a formula.”*

Small groups are less likely to be comfortable in English and less likely to be running open campaigns. Their membership is less likely to use email. Facebook, mobile phones, or WhatsApp are more common, though by no means universal.

Coordinate with other organisations and networks

Every OPEN group could be deeply engaged with the MobLab, providing stories and serving as a regional hub from which other campaigners could discover MobLab. Clearly differentiating the offerings of OPEN and MobLab would allow each to focus on their strengths. Is the same true for Wellstone as the new home of the New Organizing Institute?

Campaigners at Oxfam and ActionAid showed a lot of familiarity with and energy for collaborating with the MobLab. In many cases, they were eager to build personal relationships with MobLab staff to understand how the programs could support each other. Oxfam and ActionAid both have longstanding relationships throughout the GSE and an interest in people-powered campaigning. They seem like natural partners.

Change.org and Avaaz also have global presence and a natural interest in their campaigners learning from other people-powered campaigns. For example, one interviewee from Change.org India described a recent Campaign Boot Camp run by Change, Jhatkaa, 350.org, and Haiyya: *“We built a community of campaigners to support each other. We provided 6 days of intensive training, then support throughout the year, then 4 more days of training at the end, including peer-reviewed campaign plans pitched to a panel of resource investors who could invest time or space. Some really good campaigns have come out of it.”* They suggested *“networking with digital organisations to get the word out, especially when you don’t have a strong presence in the country.”* They also recommended *“webinar trainings to bring in more people, then choose one or two partners to go in depth with.”*

There was support for MobLab to work more with other support/capacity-building/field-building organisations like Simlab (for profit), Rhize (non-profit), The Rules (non-profit) and Growald Family Fund (foundation) had strong opinions about what the field should look like and strong opinions about what support, therefore, should be offered.

Interviewees from these organizations made the following points:

- MobLab shouldn’t focus on digital campaigning because a) it’s useless and hasn’t had any major wins and b) should focus on movement building and addressing the underlying connection between climate change and capitalism in order to bring about systemic change.
- MobLab should think more about how to work more effectively, but also appropriately, with most marginalized people in the GSE. Who are you asking to take a billion acts of courage— aren’t they the people who already carry the bigger burden of living and also the security risk is much greater for them? What technology is relevant to people who have low connectivity and high risk (see above)?
- Organisations in the GSE need high levels of back office/system support including organisational development and strategic planning. Is MobLab working on this, or connecting with people who are? That is, if you are asking X organisation to do Y campaign in the GSE, and they don’t have the capacity, whose job is it to help them build that organisational capacity?

Ideas for MobLab support and content

There was strong support among interviewees for **testing** – that is passing on the learning from experiments in engagement and mobilisation. Campaigners were enthusiastic about hearing stories describing what other campaigners are trying, through an email newsletter or direct conversation, though most said it would be useful only if the cultural context is similar (e.g., Indian campaigners would learn more from South Africa than the U.S.). One interviewee from Japan said, *“Yes, if it was sharing experiences. Would love to hear this from GP Japan. Haven’t had too much interaction with GP Japan.”*

There was support for MobLab playing a **convening role**. Interviewees liked the idea of MobLab supporting intersectionality so that campaigners can learn from other movements (sectors). They also liked the idea of their bringing together activists from different geographies and sectors who are working on the same campaign/target. Some thought there was an opportunity to develop global narratives: *“Change.org ties local action to national narrative. I think there’s an opportunity for groups like MobLab to look at that kind of work and trying to create larger, more global narratives that empower.”*

They also supported building more **communities of practice**: *“I never know how embedded in GP they are. For a long time I thought they were GP’s internal knowledge management and tech section. They seem to have built out a new community. So their greatest strength is building communities of practice.”* One interviewee noted that, *“Donors don’t want to invest in that. Difficult to make case for in-person meetings, but it’s really important, and doesn’t happen enough. Convening with clear goals, say around coaching.”*

One interview from Colombia said that campaigners need skills in working smartly in coalitions. *“Can groups share their experiences working in coalition? People will learn better from other groups than from MobLab directly. MobLab could have simple case studies on working in coalition.”*

Interviewees said that they need help with **talent development**. This reflected the findings in the survey, where support for talent development was highest on the list of desired support from groups in the GSE. One interviewee from South Africa said that it would be good to get support on how to locate and develop high quality development talent, and another said, *“Most talent pipelines are predisposed to being full of white men.”* An interviewee from a support organisation said, *“[We have] got to build the pipeline of southern talent. We really have to have a deep pool of people who are rising. I know GP believes in this, and that’s why they decentralized. But this question of how you truly build a pipeline. If it’s mobilization, we need the next wave of people in GP’s local offices, what do we need to do to develop them?..What if there was a program inside GP for people to start new organisations, a mentorship program?”* Another support organisation is also developing campaigning and mentoring fellowships.

On the question of providing **coaching**, which an unexpected number of people asked for in the survey, there was a mixture of responses. Some interviewees didn't want to prioritise it but others identified with the desire for additional individual support. One person said that it's more effective if the system for finding a coach is informal. When it's a formal process it becomes bureaucratic and people are less likely to take advantage of it. An interviewee from a similar support organisation said, *"We brought on 10 volunteer coaches last year. Where we're going [is] moving from [us] centrally supporting movements, to investing in coaches and trainers who can embed in movements, then connect them, and support [them] over time."*

Campaigners also expressed enthusiasm for **webinars or in-person trainings**. For some, spotty internet access is an obstacle to webinars. For others, webinars are easier unless there's a travel subsidy. For in-person trainings, several suggested regional trainings. Roving regional trainings could be a good way to get the word out and build relationships. One interviewee from Nepal noted that their team could get to Delhi affordably and without a visa, and the international exposure is good for leadership development. Another from Papua New Guinea said that they prefer in-person trainings to online trainings and said it would be much cheaper to send campaigners to Australia or New Zealand rather than London, as they do now. One interview from the MENA region said, *"It would be best to go to an in-person training or boot camp in the MENA region contextualized to the region."* Regional trainings could also forge partnerships with other groups doing digital campaigning, which her program is eager for.

Ideas for other kinds of support and content MobLab could provide⁶

- **Participatory decision-making:** *"Many campaigns are civic in intention but autocratic in practice. Decisions are made by small bodies. So there's a role for MobLab there. What would a truly participatory digital campaign look like, and what should it look like?"*
- Campaigners saw the need for **high-end video production skills**
 - From Mexico: *"We need specialized capacity building on high end video production video and more on the street mobilizations that are very visual."*
 - From Colombia: *"I think Avaaz could be going into crisis because people don't read email. But people do sit and watch videos. It's important to be able to quickly create good videos."*
- Develop a **campaign bootcamp** for new campaigners who come into Greenpeace. Right now, there's no embedding process or campaigning training.

⁶ These ideas were suggested by either one or a very small number of interviewees.

- **Develop political participation tools:** *“If you gave people the tools to know how they vote and take action I think that would be immensely valuable, especially for building a base, speaking to the political moment. There’s always a tool overload, build an app, but the participation tools can be really helpful.”*
- **Supporting spontaneous citizens’ movements without clear leaders**
- Campaigners could use support in understanding **how to develop a theory of change and write campaign plans.**
- Some campaigners mentioned preferring **ongoing support over one-time training.**
 - This could look like coaching, establishing a network of peers to learn from, or even secondments.
- Many campaigners said a **lack of funding support** was one of their biggest obstacles to mobilisation.
 - One person raised a concern that Greenpeace’s investment in MobLab might replace GP’s commitments of financial support to smaller organisations.
- **Design tools for social movements:** *“You shouldn’t say we’ve made this tool, let’s get it out there. Instead, set a goal for 15 social movements to use this tool and achieve a certain result. Then you have to modify the tool to work for them...Make tools for the groups doing excellent work, not tools for everybody—Google is doing that, and you’ll only create it a few months earlier than they will.”*
- More on **digital security.** From Latin America: *“I want to learn about digital security: I use Tor, but don’t know how to use it well. Sometimes you need to send information about where you’ll be. We were campaigning against an Internet provider—how can we announce a location and plan without them hearing about it?”*
- Need for **“research and intelligence, especially about audiences.** *We don’t know what people think. We have hunches, and sometimes it’s urgent and you have to go with those, but when we have time, what do different publics in different parts of world think about civil society? No one has this information.”*
- Support a **global strike:** *“All other methods of trying to confront increasing inequalities and climate crisis have failed. Globalization has globalized capital, but we haven’t had a responding strengthening of cross-border labor movement or the power of other movements to withdraw consent. We have no other choice, the only way to effectively confront power is to withdraw consent.”*

- Support **relational organizing**. *“In order to get the scale of change we need, you have to do relational organizing, but how do you scale it up so that it’s big enough? 1) Take more seriously the relationship between face-to-face and digital organizing, and 2) reimagine how to organize inter-cities, between cities, not just inside cities, but on a global scale that connects across cities, across continents. I know GP is looking at megacities, probably via poverty lens, but it’s worth thinking of it in a bigger way.”*

Interviewee locations

UK
South Africa
Lebanon
Mexico
Turkey
Australia
USA
Japan
Thailand
El Salvador
Cambodia
Nigeria
Nepal
Papua New Guinea
Indonesia
Colombia
Brazil
India