

話そう! KHULUMA!  
¡EXPRESATE!  
**SPEAK!**  
EXPRIMEZ-VOUS!  
FALA ÂE!! نكلم  
CAMPAIGN

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A group of young people, including men and women of various ethnicities, are seated at a table in front of a vibrant red wall. The wall features graffiti in black ink that reads "I AM NOT TALENTED I AM OBSESSED" in large, bold, capital letters. Below this, the name "Conor McGregor" is written in a cursive script. The individuals are looking towards the camera with serious or thoughtful expressions. Some are holding bottles, and one man on the right is holding a folder or book.

I AM NOT TALENTED  
I AM OBSESSED

*Conor McGregor*

# SPEAK! CAMPAIGN

RNW Media's Citizens' Voice programme works in restrictive settings where freedom of expression is limited and young people lack opportunities to participate in public debate. Citizens' Voice projects in 5 countries participated in the Civicus 2018 Speak! Campaign. Speak! was created in response to the current global context, in which people face increasing attacks on their basic freedoms, and a culture of division is causing many of us to turn against each other.



## Together, We Speak

In 2018, the campaign aimed to address increasing social and political polarisation with the theme *Speaking with*, focusing on breaking down barriers between people and communities. The campaign ran from 16-18 November 2018 in 63 countries and 211 events took place.

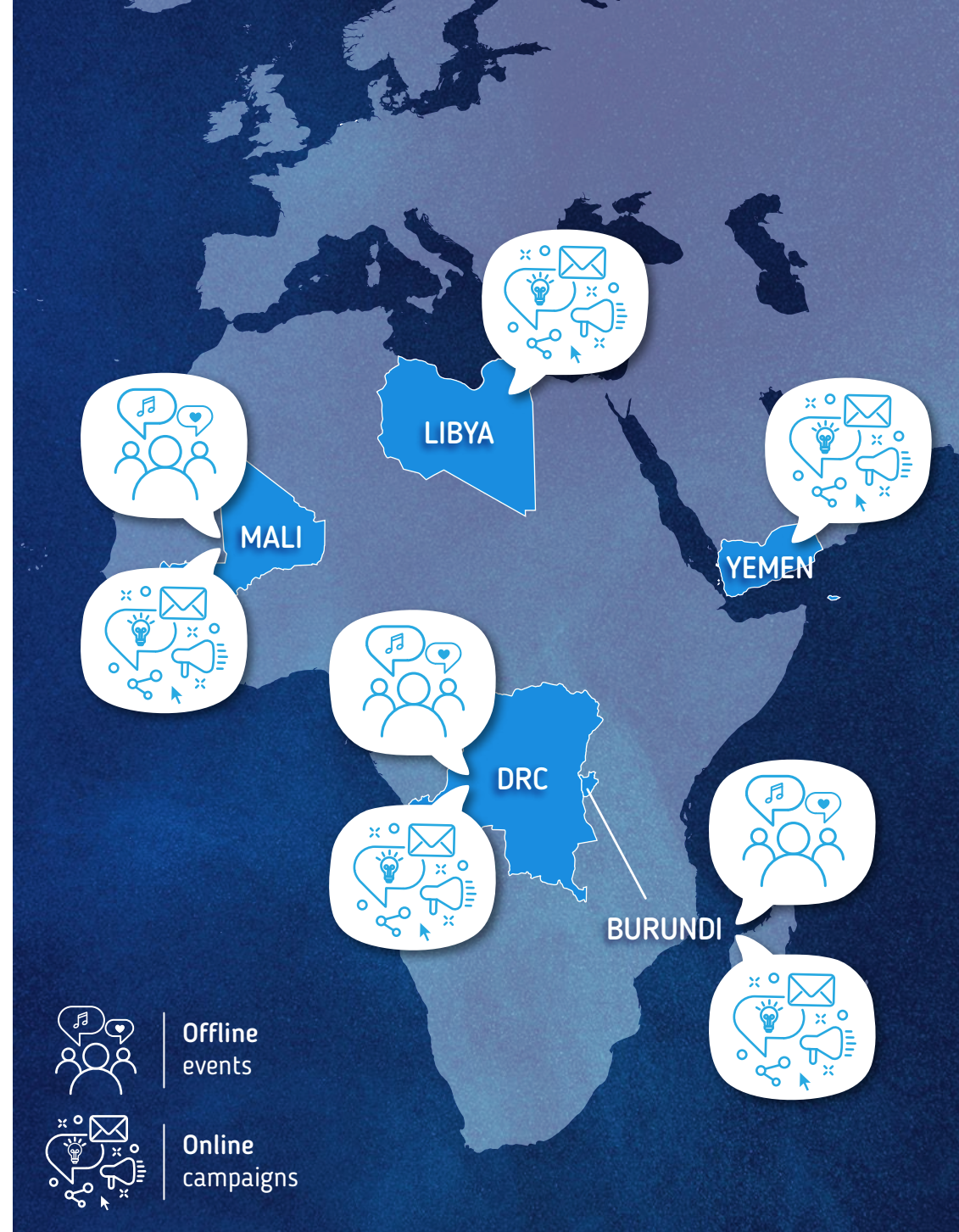
### RNW Media and Citizens' Voice participation in Speak!

RNW Media's vision is to contribute to a world where young people in restrictive settings confidently claim their rights, assume their place in society and shape a better future. This vision aligns with the goals of Civicus and the Speak! campaign.

The Citizens' Voice programme works in restrictive settings where freedom of expression is limited and young people lack opportunities to participate in public debate. As a result, young people are divided and disempowered to challenge existing socio-cultural norms, make informed decisions, and influence formal and informal decision-making.

Citizens' Voice thus builds inclusive communities and creates alternate civic spaces where young people from disparate groups can come together and move from polarised discussion to constructive debate and dialogue. The 2018 Speak! theme '*Speaking with*' resonates with the Citizens' Voice values and approach.

Citizens' Voice participated in the 2018 Speak! campaign through its projects in sub-Saharan Africa and Middle East and North Africa. In 2017, RNW Media participated through its Citizens' Voice project in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

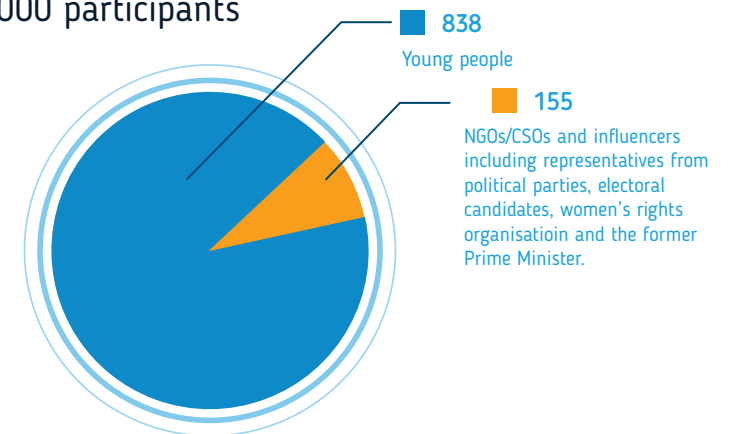


RNW Media's participation in the 2018 campaign involved different stakeholders across the organisation globally. The Citizens' Voice team in the Netherlands worked closely with CIVICUS and its own regional teams, as well as RNW Media's Communications department to build the campaign from the ground up. The strategy was to build a pyramid campaign structure with participation at the regional, programmatic and organisational levels. By doing so, we aimed to create coherence, increase reach and amplify impact.

In DRC, Burundi and Mali, the teams ran an offline and online campaign with a focus on the offline events. In Yemen and Libya, the focus was on online campaigning through content and engagement.

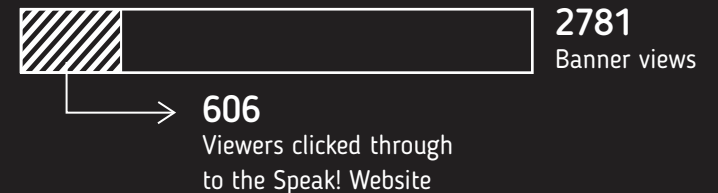


- 5 countries in MENA and sub-Saharan Africa
- 8 events in Burundi, DRC and Mali
- A reach of 900K viewers through online platforms
- 1,000 participants



## TODAY WE GO DARK

As part of the global SPEAK! campaign, at the corporate and regional levels, RNW Media participated by going dark online—in solidarity with those whose freedom of expression has been repressed. On the first day of the campaign, the RNW Media corporate website and project platforms had a full page dark banner with the message 'Today we go dark'. Clicking on the banner led to an article about our participation in the campaign which was linked to the Speak! website.



Habari RDC, Yaga Burundi and Benbere (Mali) participated in Speak! through offline events and online campaigns.



In DRC, Habari organised an offline event in four cities: Lubumbashi, Goma, Mbuji-Mayi and Kinshasa. Different topics were chosen in each city, relevant to the local context and aligned with the overall theme of Speak!

Across the cities, 436 young people participated in the different events. The events also saw the participation of 50 NGOs and civil society organisations and 105 young influencers (including 1 electoral candidate and 50 representatives from political parties).

In Lubumbashi, the focus was on regionalism in Katanga. In Goma the event aimed to address 'speaking with the other' at the workplace through its discussions around the topic: Employment- a question of tribe or merit. In Mbuji-Mayi, Habari's Speak event was titled 'Tuambilangana' meaning 'Let's talk (face to face)' and addressing prejudices that women face in the professional environment. The event started with a dialogue between women and men on the causes and impacts of these prejudices. This dialogue was supported by a presentation given by a woman lawyer Heide Kabuya on how to transcend these prejudices. The event closed with a theatre piece by the comedian Samy De Bangloff and a song by the artist Max Ngoyi, all related to the theme. In Kinshasa, the Habari team organised a Gala de la Paix to bring people with different political viewpoints together to discuss tolerance and social cohesion during an election. The event saw the participation of 50 young people from political parties and 1 young candidate for the elections.



In Burundi, Yaga participated in the Speak! campaign by focusing on gender issues. The campaign emphasised dialogue between women and men about unaddressed and unresolved gender issues. Three offline discussion activities were organised, and Yaga used youth-friendly, creative approaches to address the issues including a slam poetry session – a form of poetry that combines the elements of performance, writing, competition, and audience participation. This was followed by an interactive theatre session and a public debate. The events broke through many of the taboos around women’s sexuality and feminism.

Yaga also ran an online campaign. Eight articles were published on Yaga’s website and social media platforms getting around 209,000 views (Facebook reach and views onsite) and over 3,000 engagements (likes, shares and comments on social media).





Inter-community violence is rife in central Mali with tensions between members of the Dogon and Fulani communities further inflamed by jihadists linked to the Macina Liberation Front. There have been numerous efforts to address the issues underlying the violence and many meetings have taken place behind closed doors. Benbere, determined to tackle the theme of prejudice head-on, hosted a conference as part of Speak! that brought representatives from the communities face-to-face for the first time. The conference *"Speak North, Central and Southern Mali"* saw the participation of representatives of the Peulh's and Dogon's associations as well as 100 students from 2 private universities in Bamako.

Former Prime Minister Moussa Mara, a popular figure among young Malians, congratulated the Benbere team for taking the initiative to bring communities closer together and encouraged them to continue the good work:

"It is important to multiply this kind of activities at the local level to strengthen social cohesion and avoid inter-communal conflicts between Malians."

The mediation team of the UN's peacekeeping mission in Mali, MINUSMA, invited Benbere to a meeting at which it was agreed they would finance a peace forum later in 2019, to be co-hosted by Benbere, to build on the success of the conference. The EU Delegation in Mali also invited the Benbere coordinator to meet with them to discuss further steps in reconciliation.

The objectives and outcomes of the conference were broadcast by 3 radio stations and it was live streamed on social media. Related articles were published on Benbere's platforms receiving 35,000 views, 167 comments, 168 shares and 13242 likes.





Huna Libya participated in Speak! with an online campaign focusing largely on different types of racism in Libya. As part of Speak! Huna Libya published 6 articles on their online and social media platforms, which reached 470,000 people and 13,681 young Libyans engaged and talked about different forms of racism (comments, likes and shares).



Yemen Youth Panel conducted an online campaign for Speak! and published 6 articles during the campaign, reaching 692,000 users and generating over 16,000 engagements (comments, likes and shares) on social media.

The online campaign focused on different issues related to the Speak! theme that were further addressed during the Yemen Youth Panel's monthly surveys. These issues ranged from the impact of war on social cohesion in Yemen to gender issues.



THANK YOU!

For more information on the work of Citizens' Voice, please visit our website: [www.rnw.org](http://www.rnw.org)

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