Hivos
people unlimited

HIVOS'
DIGITAL PRINCIPLES

SUSTAINABILITY

ACCESS

AGENCY

PRIVACY

INCLUSION

OPENNESS

SAFETY

Hivos
people unlimited
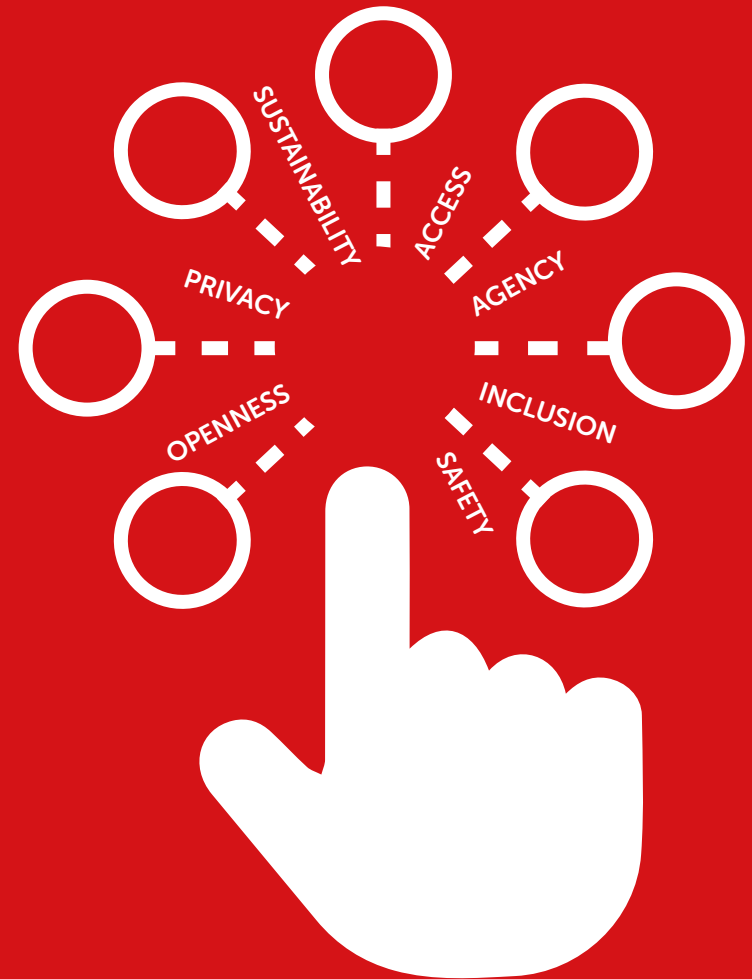
Since 1998, Hivos has worked with partners around the world to set up programs that advance equitable and more inclusive digital spaces and systems. Foremost amongst these programs are the **Digital Defenders Partnership**, **Making all Voices Count**, **Open Up Contracting**, and **R.O.O.M.**

We have also created a set of digital principles based on our work that explain our values and determine the digital tools and approaches used in our programs. These principles are based on our **core values** and represent the issues we prioritize in all our work. They are also inspired by the **Feminist Tech Principles** and the **Principles for Digital Development** – which we strongly support.

ACCESS AGENCY

ACCES A little under half of the world's population has no access to the internet. Most of these people live in the developing world. And even those who are connected cannot count on an internet free from censorship or extractive technology. Yet access to the internet is no longer a luxury. It has become a basic necessity and a human right. While we recognize that communities can choose to remain unconnected, we believe they always have the right to define their own standards of how they want to live.

AGENCY People should be at the center of the digital transformation. Hivos believes that every human being has the right to live in freedom, voice their opinion, and challenge and influence the established order. Freedom and agency also include freely making one's own choices online, including which technology to use, based on open and reliable information. For example, this means that people are informed about how best to deal with algorithms and artificial intelligence, and that these technologies are not used to pre-determine people's choices.

INCLUSION
SAFETY

INCLUSION A digital transformation should leave no one behind. The experiences, needs and risks of women, gender minorities, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups must be included when designing technology. This way, digital tools and platforms can better serve the people who will directly interact with their technology. Technological solutions and designs have to be affordable and helpful for those who need them, creating a positive impact on the lives of millions across the world.

SAFETY Instead of creating safer digital spaces where people feel empowered to speak freely and exchange ideas, social media platforms capitalize on trauma, mis/disinformation, and hate speech. Under pressure to prioritize commercial growth, these platforms compete for human attention, while surveilling and radicalizing their users. To ensure collective and individual safety and well-being, technologies must center on the needs of communities rather than prioritizing profit maximization above all..

HIVOS' DIGITAL PRINCIPLES

OPENNESS
PRIVACY

HIVOS' DIGITAL PRINCIPLES

OPENNESS Too often, scarce public and international development resources are invested in new software and innovations with unaffordable licenses and data that is only available to a few. An open approach to technology increases access, collaboration, and innovation and avoids duplicating work. Through open standards, open data, open source technologies, and open innovation, anyone can build upon a public investment and create something new. Creating and maintaining critical open (source) systems, tools and platforms is just as important as innovating.

PRIVACY Addressing privacy involves careful consideration of which data is collected and how it is acquired, used, stored and shared. We believe that we must all have the agency to determine how, for what purposes, when, and for how long our data is used, shared and saved. Responsible practices for organizations collecting and using individual and group data include being transparent about how data is collected and used, minimizing the collection of personally identifiable and sensitive data, and implementing policies to protect privacy and manage post-project data.

ACCESS
AGENCY
INCLUSION
SAFETY
OPENNESS
PRIVACY

SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY The climate crisis and the future of technology are inextricably linked. Technology can support just climate action. For example, citizens can pressure governments and the private sector and hold duty bearers to account through climate and environmental data collection projects. And innovative local solutions can reduce the impacts of climate change. At the same time, there are serious environmental costs to digitalization, such as the extraction of raw materials, e-waste sites, and the enormous **environmental impacts of data centers**. Social media platforms are rife with misinformation about climate change, and climate justice campaigners are subject to increasing digital attacks. Every aspect of digital data and technology use needs to have a climate justice dimension.

OUR TRACK RECORD

In 1995 Hivos became the first Dutch development organization to have its own website, and by 1999 an intranet connected all regional offices to the head office. In 2000 the document "Access for All" laid the foundations for Hivos' internet policy. Its aim was emphasized in the subtitle: "Equal opportunities in cyberspace." For Hivos, access for all also meant access to power for people in the Global South.

Two memorable events marked Hivos' early steps into cyberspace. The first was the livestream connection with Nairobi that Hivos demonstrated during a large-scale event in Rotterdam in 1998. The second was the 1999 workshop that Hivos and IICD organized for partners in Tanzania.

Budgets were limited, so the participants had to gather some ten kilometers outside Dar es Salaam. There was nothing out there except an internet connection supplied by an Indian company via several Wi-Fi points.

At the end of 2012, we won a tender put out by the Freedom Online Coalition to host the Digital Defenders Partnership. The same year we also won a 45 million USD tender to implement one of the earliest programs using ICT for governance: **Making all Voices Count**. And over the years we have created various digital fellowships and research publications like the digital natives publications developed in 2009. And we have launched programs such as **Open Contracting** (2016-2020) and **Digital Earth** (2018-2022).