

**WE AS A COMMUNITY  
OF ACTIVISTS  
AND STAFF  
PLEDGE OUR  
SUPPORT TO THIS  
ACTIVISM MANIFESTO.**

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June 2016  
ACT 10/4005/2016



# ACTIVISM MANIFESTO



# WE INSPIRE AND MOBILIZE ORDINARY PEOPLE TO DO EXTRAORDINARY THINGS THROUGH...



1. Engagement and  
Mobilization



2. Growth



3. Youth Engagement



4. Active Participation



5. Leveraging  
Technologies



6. Activism Organizing  
Models



7. Innovation



8. Flexibility and Speed



9. Relevance and  
Alignment




10. Integration



11. Capacity Building



12. Organizational  
Learning



**WE ARE A DIVERSE COMMUNITY OF  
ACTIVISTS OUTRAGED BY INJUSTICE.  
WE INSPIRE AND MOBILIZE ORDINARY  
PEOPLE TO DO EXTRAORDINARY THINGS.**

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While our individual contributions will depend on our national and regional contexts and the priorities of our sections, structures, national and regional offices; we as a community of activists and activism staff pledge our support to this Activism Manifesto.

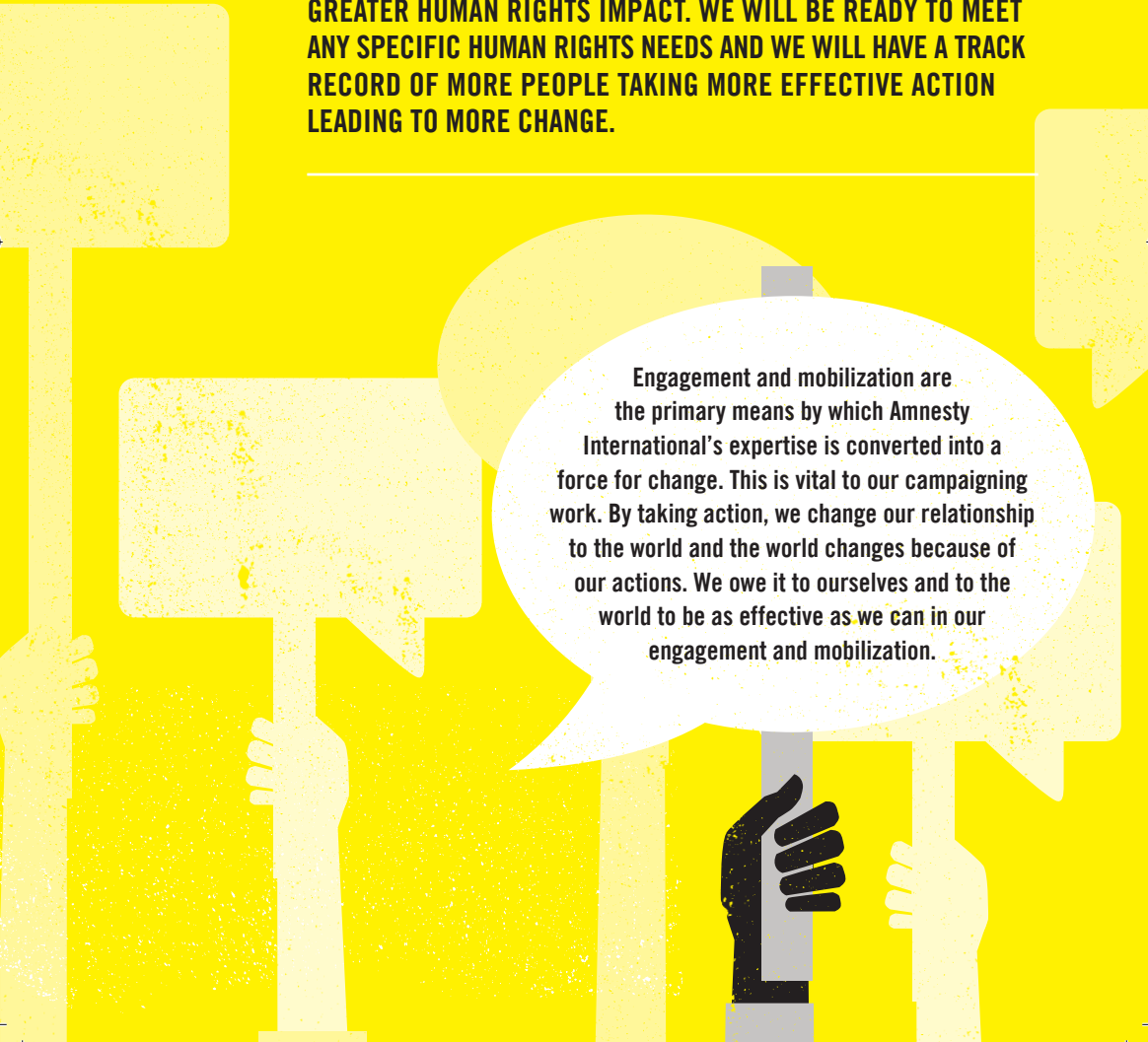
In order to achieve the strategic goals of our movement, by 2019 we will have transformed our human rights activism and inspired new audiences to take injustice personally. We will have engaged far more young people and we will have become a larger, stronger and more diverse people's movement relevant to our changing world – with strengthened capacity to make a tangible difference to people's lives.

*This Activism Manifesto was co-created by the Activism and Youth Unit, the Global Group on Activism and the Activism Community of Practice in conversation with the activists and other stakeholders, including at the Global Activism Skillshares in November 2013 and Activism 360 in September 2015.*



# 1. ENGAGEMENT AND MOBILIZATION

**WE WILL HAVE RELEVANT AND REGULAR CONVERSATIONS WITH OUR EXISTING SUPPORTERS AND COMMUNITIES, AS WELL AS REACH OUT TO NEW ONES. WORKING TOGETHER, WE WILL HAVE GREATER HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT. WE WILL BE READY TO MEET ANY SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS NEEDS AND WE WILL HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF MORE PEOPLE TAKING MORE EFFECTIVE ACTION LEADING TO MORE CHANGE.**



Engagement and mobilization are the primary means by which Amnesty International's expertise is converted into a force for change. This is vital to our campaigning work. By taking action, we change our relationship to the world and the world changes because of our actions. We owe it to ourselves and to the world to be as effective as we can in our engagement and mobilization.

**We will** strive to better understand and respond to the needs, interests and motivations of different people we work with. We will have ongoing and empowering two-way conversations and offer people more diverse and flexible ways to engage with Amnesty International, to feel connected and contribute to campaigns in ways which are meaningful for them, so that their journey with the organization is rewarding.

**We will** choose the forms of activism most appropriate to the specific campaign objectives, the constituency and to the context in which we are working, rather than because they are the things we like to do or have always done.

**We will** focus our mobilization where it is strategic and has most impact, recognizing that activism is just one of the means to bring about human rights change.

## 2. GROWTH

OUR MOVEMENT WILL BE LARGER, BROADER, MORE DIVERSE AND MORE EFFECTIVE. WE WILL INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ACTIVISTS. WE WILL MATCH THE INCREASED NUMBER OF ACTIVISTS WITH MORE EFFECTIVE ACTIVISM.

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By 2020, Amnesty International will inspire 25 million people each year to take action for human rights and engage more and more diverse voices for human rights impact (Strategic Goal 5.1). Reaching out to a much wider and diverse group of people will give us greater strength in numbers, visibility, credibility, power and influence.



**We will** contribute to reaching our organization's growth targets by attracting a diverse range of activists, based on our external context and human rights priorities.

**We will** outreach to constituencies that are under-represented in our movement, such as women (in some parts of the world) and young people and make our activism accessible and attractive to them.

**We will** increase the retention of existing activists and supporters by diversifying our activism approaches and methods, tapping the potential of technology, and empowering our activists to lead campaigning and reach out to new audiences.





# 3. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

**YOUNG PEOPLE WILL PLAY A KEY ROLE IN LEADING AND INSPIRING ALL AREAS OF OUR WORK. WE WILL STRENGTHEN COLLABORATION ACROSS GENERATIONS UNDERPINNED BY MUTUAL TRUST AND SHARED LEADERSHIP.**

**We aim to become a truly global human rights movement of people defending human rights for all (Strategic Goal 5). Young people are central to achieving this goal. The vision of our International Youth Strategy is of an environment in which young people are protected, inspired and empowered to play an active role in creating a world where everybody enjoys human rights.**



**We recognize** our members, supporters and activists consist of an extremely diverse and fluid group of young people. We have a lot to gain from young people's knowledge and expertise on overcoming barriers in exercising their rights. There is a need to go beyond an education and school based organizing model in engaging young people, and to strengthen our collaboration with youth organizations.



**We will** deepen our understanding of the realities of young people and promote the rights of young people in our work, based on an intersectional analysis.



**We will** develop deeper relationships with young people underpinned by mutual trust, shared leadership and joint decision-making at all levels of our work in a safe environment.



**We will** create opportunities for young leaders to enhance their leadership and build capacity for young human rights activists. This is to enable them to lead our campaigns and activism. We will also build the knowledge and skills and develop the attitudes for the stakeholders who work with young people to make this a reality.





# 4. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

ACTIVISTS, PARTNERS, RIGHTS HOLDERS AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS WILL BE AT THE HEART OF OUR CAMPAIGNING AT ALL STAGES. WE WILL ENABLE THEM TO INFLUENCE THE PROCESSES AND DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES AND/OR AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S CAMPAIGNING.

**Strategic Goal 5 envisions “Amnesty International is strengthened through active participation of a more diverse constituency at all levels.”**

**Active participation is in itself an empowering process that creates ownership and leadership within our constituencies. Enabling participation must go beyond implementation of campaign and activism activities and encompass all stages of campaigning including the planning, implementation, evaluation and impact assessment.**

**We will** consistently employ participatory approaches at all levels and stages of our campaigning and activism including planning and prioritization. Through this we will identify and develop more effective and contextualized tactics for change.

**We will** apply participatory approaches not only in campaigning and activism but in all aspects of our decision-making processes. We will learn from the knowledge and ideas generated through participatory processes and experiences.

**We will** strengthen our capacity to use participatory approaches and tools and, through those, build the capacity of the constituencies we work with to become effective agents of change and human rights activists.





# 5. LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGIES

**WE WILL PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF WHAT TECHNOLOGY CAN DO FOR OUR MOVEMENT. WE WILL TAP THE POTENTIAL OF TECHNOLOGY TO HELP US ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND BUILD THE POWER OF OUR GLOBAL ACTIVISM, WHILE ENSURING WE STAY LOCALLY RELEVANT.**

Technology is everywhere and is always evolving. We need to harness the power of technology, through integrating it with our activism, to meet our objectives. This will allow us to amplify our human rights impact – both through building a stronger and more diverse movement, and through reaching and influencing more decision-makers in more ways.

**We will integrate digital and offline activism as part of a coherent 'supporter journey.'**

**We will harness the full potential of existing digital technologies and tools. We will stay informed and experiment with new and evolving digital tools, collaborate in how we share digital tools, and use them effectively to influence our targets and mobilize our audiences.**

**We will strive to ensure the security of the information we collect and help our activists and defenders stay safe online.**

# 6. ACTIVISM ORGANIZING MODELS

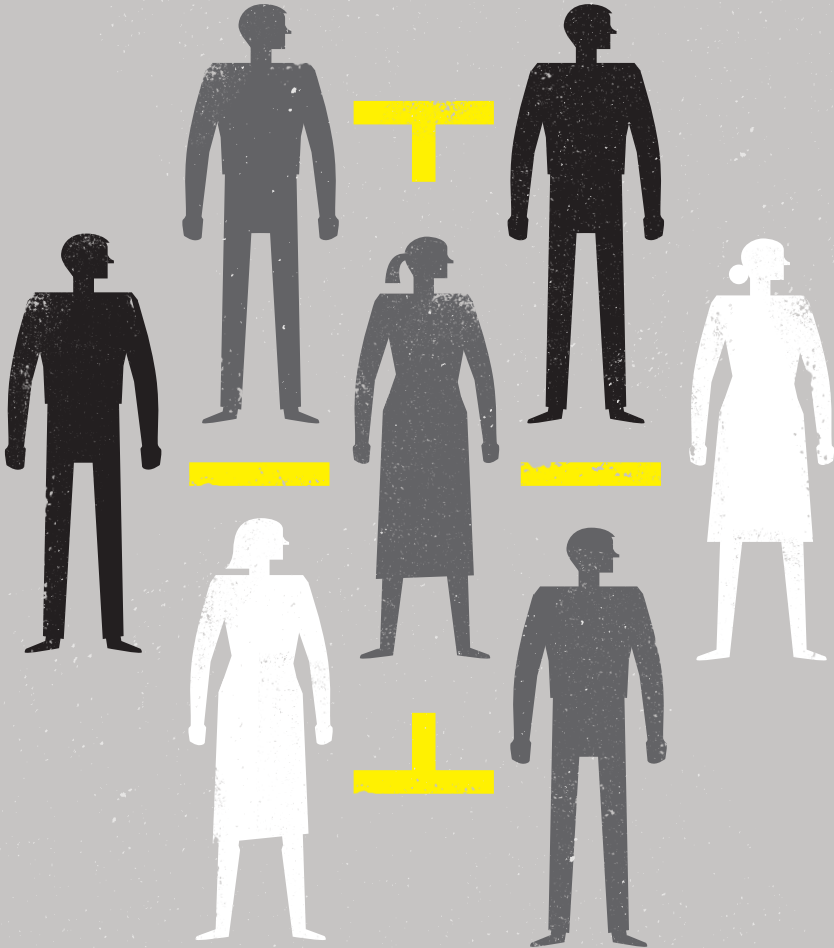
**WE WILL HAVE EVOLVED OUR ORGANIZING MODELS, TRANSFORMED OUR ACTIVIST STRUCTURES AND ALIGNED OUR INTERNAL PROCESSES TO DELIVER RELEVANT AND EFFECTIVE ACTIVISM.**

Our traditional structures sometimes hinder our ability to generate new and diverse activists and offer flexible forms of engagement. Our activism at the national level is often geared to support our organizational model, rather than the organizational model creating the desired impact through diverse activism. Therefore, we need to evolve and transform our activist structures. This will help to conserve our resources and align activism to our priorities.

**We will** review the effectiveness of our existing activism organizing models and structures. We will research and learn from external organizing models.

**We will** listen to activists, rights holders and partners about their experiences of working with us in campaigning and we will share and learn from each other within the activism community.

**We will** adapt and integrate good practices to make our activist structures flexible, inclusive and fit for purpose so that they evolve with changes at the national level.



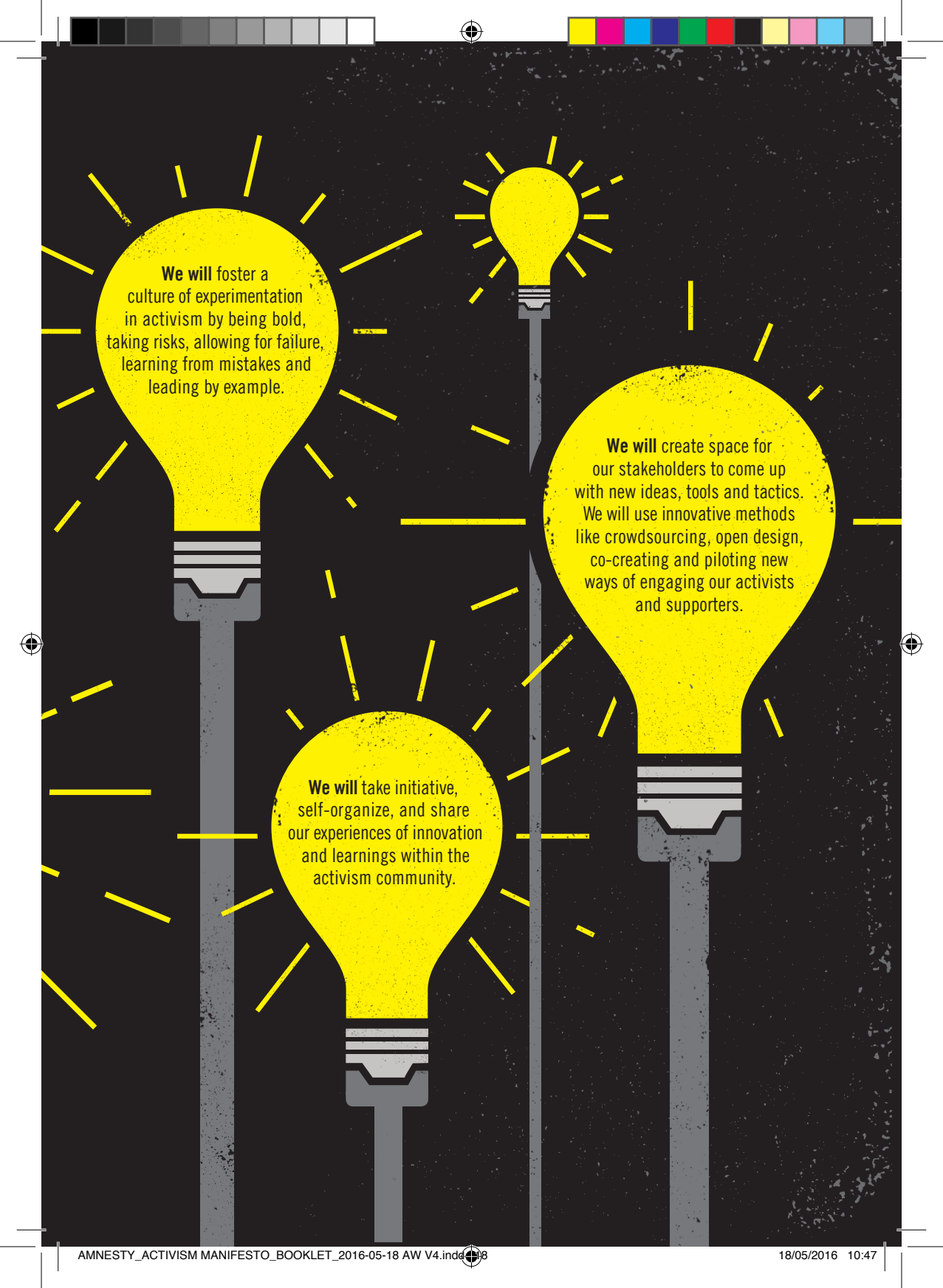


# 7. INNOVATION

ALWAYS RESPONSIVE TO THE CHANGING EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT, WE WILL EXPLORE THE WORLD AROUND US AND TAKE RISKS, APPLY NEW ACTIVISM TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES, TRY OUT DIFFERENT ORGANIZING MODELS AND SUPPORTER JOURNEYS.



Activism needs to evolve and adapt in response to internal and external changes, while retaining our distinctive voice. By doing this, we will motivate and inspire people to join us in taking action; make the story of human rights change compelling and empowering; and help people connect their actions to real world change.




**We will foster a**  
culture of experimentation  
in activism by being bold,  
taking risks, allowing for failure,  
learning from mistakes and  
leading by example.

**We will create space for**  
our stakeholders to come up  
with new ideas, tools and tactics.  
We will use innovative methods  
like crowdsourcing, open design,  
co-creating and piloting new  
ways of engaging our activists  
and supporters.

**We will take initiative,**  
self-organize, and share  
our experiences of innovation  
and learnings within the  
activism community.

# 8. FLEXIBILITY AND SPEED





**OUR ACTIVISM WILL BE  
AGILE; IN SYNC WITH THE  
FAST PACE OF GLOBAL  
ACTIVISM, AND EXPLOITING  
NEW METHODS AND TOOLS  
AS THEY ARISE.**

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**The rise of protest movements and ordinary people self-organizing for human rights and justice has changed the campaigning and activism landscape. Our activism needs to be nimble, dynamic and in sync with the wide range and pace of activism currently taking place in the world.**

**We will** strengthen rapid response capacities and put in place mechanisms to react quickly to opportunities, crises and emerging short-term needs.

**We will** sharpen our campaign strategies thereby making our campaigning more nimble, responsive to changes and effective, in order to maximize opportunities, mobilize new and existing supporters quickly.

**We will** build a community of activists at the local level who are ready to spring into action and lead rapid response actions.





# 9. RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT





**OUR ACTIVISM WILL BE LOCALLY RELEVANT, ALIGNED TO THE ORGANIZATION'S STRATEGIES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MOVEMENT'S GOALS. OUR ACTIVISM WILL BE MEANINGFUL TO OUR COMMUNITIES.**

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**Our movement has the greatest potential for human rights impact when our activism is aligned to Amnesty International's strategic priorities and is locally relevant. This means finding ways to increase our local relevance at the national and regional level balanced with strengthening international solidarity.**



**We will** localize all priority campaigns, including the identification of locally relevant targets/influencers, and the development of messages and tactics, so that it resonates with identified national audiences.

**We will** align activism to wider campaigning and organizational strategies and ensure a balance between working on local issues and global priorities/international solidarity work.



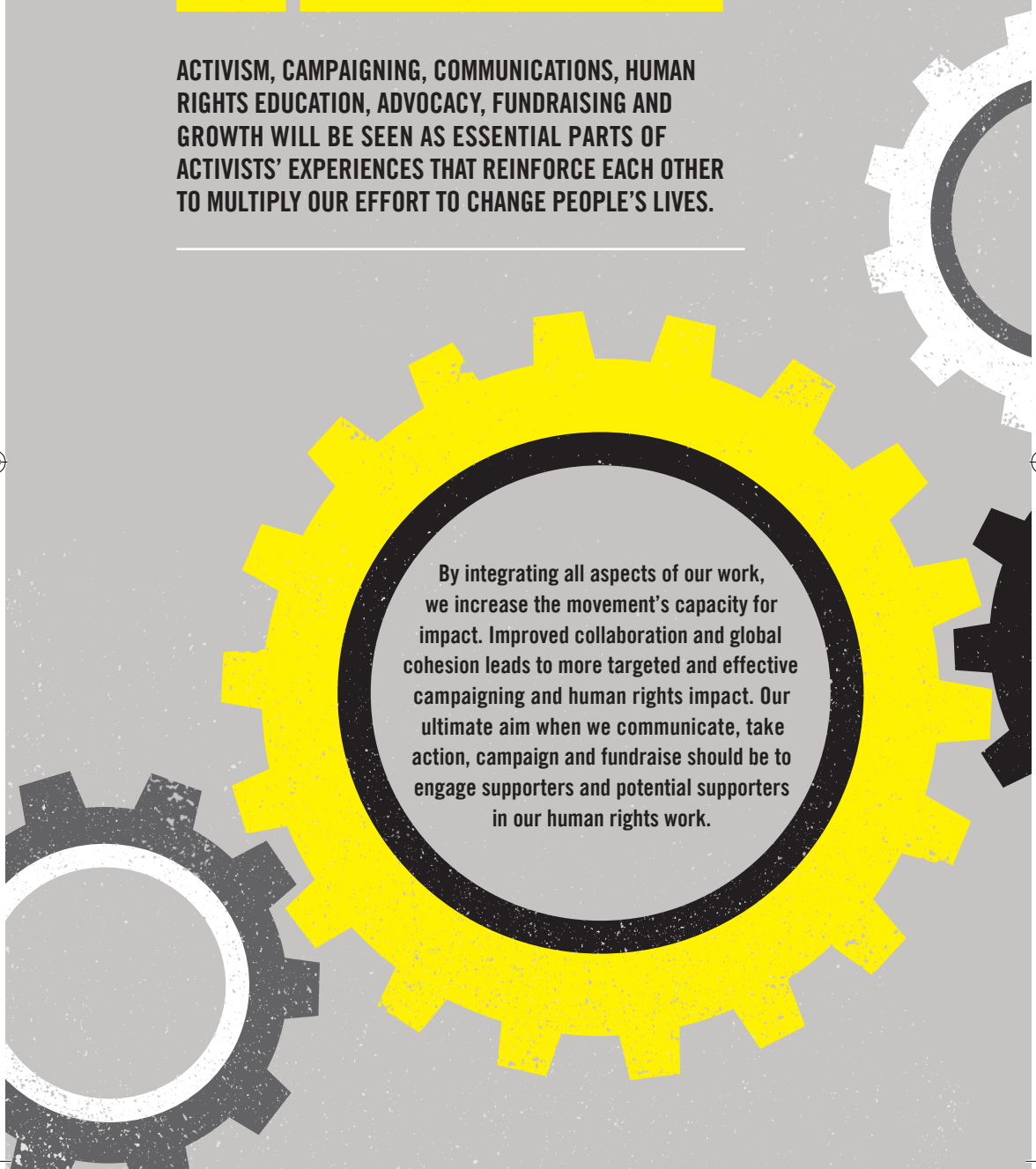
**We will** join forces with social movements on local issues through direct participation or by supporting their work.



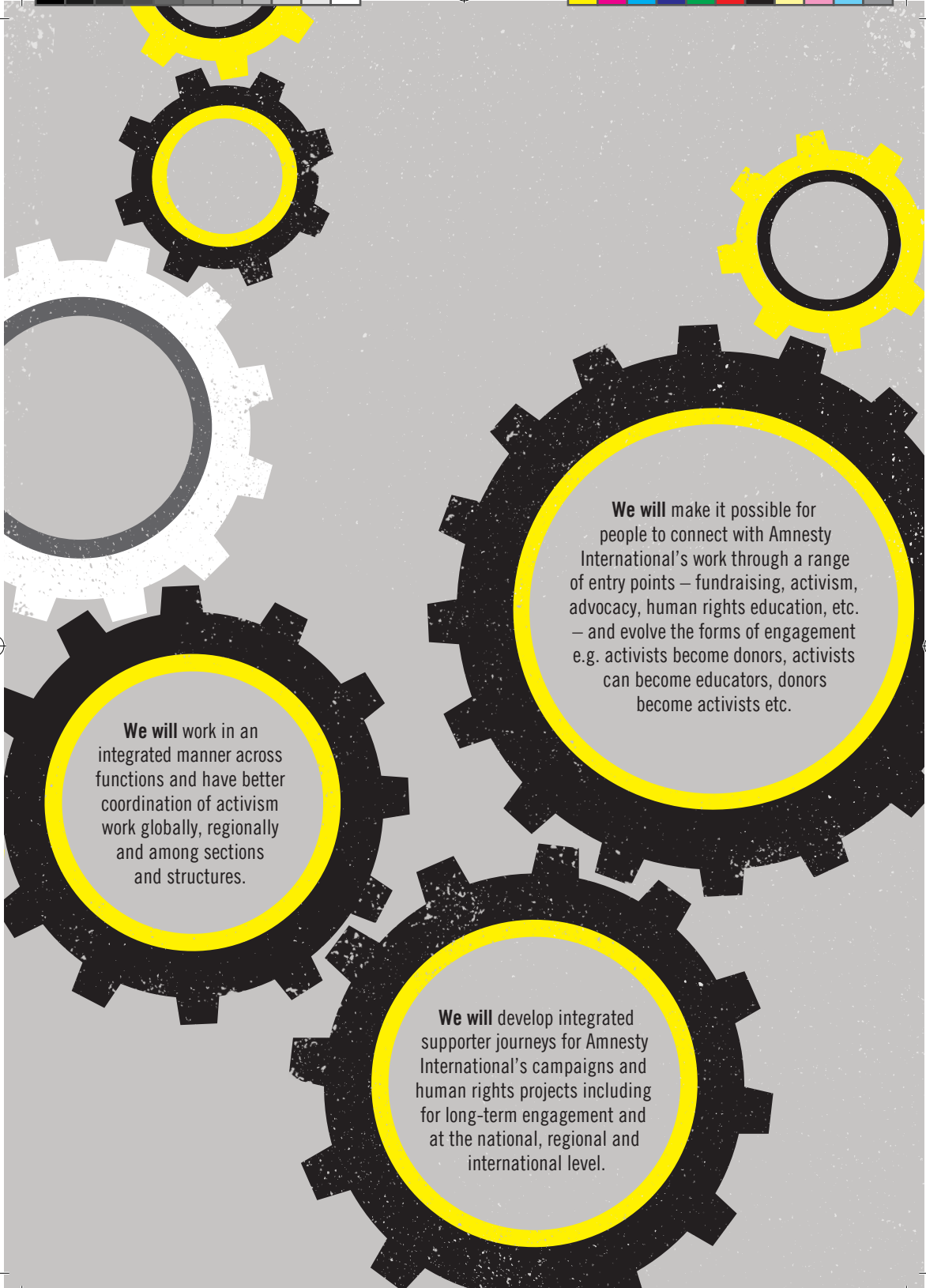
# 10. INTEGRATION

**ACTIVISM, CAMPAIGNING, COMMUNICATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, FUNDRAISING AND GROWTH WILL BE SEEN AS ESSENTIAL PARTS OF ACTIVISTS' EXPERIENCES THAT REINFORCE EACH OTHER TO MULTIPLY OUR EFFORT TO CHANGE PEOPLE'S LIVES.**

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**By integrating all aspects of our work, we increase the movement's capacity for impact. Improved collaboration and global cohesion leads to more targeted and effective campaigning and human rights impact. Our ultimate aim when we communicate, take action, campaign and fundraise should be to engage supporters and potential supporters in our human rights work.**



**We will** work in an integrated manner across functions and have better coordination of activism work globally, regionally and among sections and structures.

**We will** make it possible for people to connect with Amnesty International's work through a range of entry points – fundraising, activism, advocacy, human rights education, etc. – and evolve the forms of engagement e.g. activists become donors, activists can become educators, donors become activists etc.

**We will** develop integrated supporter journeys for Amnesty International's campaigns and human rights projects including for long-term engagement and at the national, regional and international level.





# 11. CAPACITY BUILDING

**ALL MEMBERS OF OUR MOVEMENT WILL HAVE REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS – MAKING US ALL AS STRATEGIC, INNOVATIVE AND AS FEARLESS AS WE CAN BE.**

**We need to build the movement's capacity for campaigning and activism. Our capacity building initiatives should be based on mutual learning and extend to rights holders, partners, activists, and young people. Through developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of stakeholders our campaigning and activism will become more effective and people will be empowered to claim their rights and campaign for the rights of others.**

**We will** constantly upgrade our knowledge and skills in campaigning, activism, empowerment and engagement of stakeholders and participatory methodologies.

**We will** adopt a holistic and sustainable approach to capacity building, which will cover a variety of learning opportunities and ongoing development, including campaign planning and prioritization, identification of suitable channels of influence, tactics, activism tools and techniques.

**We will** tailor our capacity building to create more activist leaders who will be able to act as multipliers, reaching out and building the capacity of others.

# 12. ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

WE WILL USE ACTIVISM KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS TO MEASURE AND EVALUATE OUR WORK. THESE WILL BE SUPPORTED BY DYNAMIC SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES FOR DOCUMENTING, ANALYZING AND REPORTING ON OUR ACTIVISM, AND WILL INCREASE OUR ABILITY TO ASSESS WHAT DIFFERENCE WE MAKE IN THE WORLD. LESSONS LEARNED WILL BE SHARED ACROSS THE MOVEMENT TO MAXIMIZE HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION.

Evaluating, learning from, and improving the way we do things will make us a stronger, more effective movement and increase our efficacy. More focus on reporting on impact and telling the story of how and where we are having an impact is the key to growth as a movement. This also contributes to our credibility and allows our activists, partners, and rights holders to hold us accountable.

**We will** have monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment inbuilt in our campaigning and activism strategies.

**We will** put in place monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that enable the participation of a range of stakeholders: staff, activists, young people, partners, rights holders.

**We will** do data-driven reporting and share lessons learned on activism based on a set of key performance indicators aligned to the Strategic Goals expressed through this Manifesto.

