



RIGHT2KNOW

2018 Mid Term Review (MTR)



Meeting Report

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1. Introduction

The R2K elected leadership (National Working Group and Provincial Coordinators) and all Staffers met from 19-21 September 2018 for our annual Mid Term Review facilitated by a team from CDRA (APPENDIX 1: Participant list).

We agreed that this MTR would not constitute a comprehensive review of the 2018/19 programme, but would take a broader review of the health and strategic orientation of the organisation to address concerns impacting R2K's sustainability and to prepare for a revised 3-year strategic framework required by BfdW in early 2019.

The MTR was characterized by open honest and critical self-reflection. A number of key challenges were identified and unpacked. While the MTR agreed on a broad diagnosis, we did not adopt any resolutions in response to these challenges. Instead we have opted to produce this report to pose critical questions and enable continued reflection in the broader Campaign.

2. The road we've traveled

R2K has grown significantly in recent years, both in terms of our campaigning scope as well as our staffing and organisational complexity.

We began by looking back over the last eight years and identified a number of major campaign successes as well as significant milestones in our institutional development. The exercise mapped the considerable breadth of issues we've taken up as well the work we have done to build a democratic and activist lead organization. Examples included the campaign to stop the Secrecy Bill, expose the National Key Points, defend press freedom, put the costs of communication on the agenda, protect social grantee personal information, promote the right to protest, reform party funding, etc, etc, etc (See APPENDIX 2: Campaign Timelines).

Reflecting on these timelines we identified a number of concerning trends in recent years, most notably:

1. Despite efforts in recent years to contain and focus our work by reducing and prioritising Summit Resolutions, our advocacy has expanded to an ever-growing list of issues. This has affected our ability to follow-up consistently, and to do the popular education and consensus building required to ensure we have the unity and activist capacity to advance struggles.
2. Increasingly we are not mobilizing around core R2K issues where R2K plays a leading/coordinating role, but rather we are mobilizing in support of struggles lead by fraternal organisations. Examples include work on social grants, the nuclear deal, and solidarity with local struggles.
3. The campaign's staff has grown significantly in recent years and we have seen a high turnover of elected leadership (especially in the Provinces). We have lacked the capacity to induct and support this growth and yet are increasingly dependent on staffers to implement our work. In recent years we have also seen growing conflict, the weakening of commitment to core principles, violation of our Code of Conduct, and the degeneration in campaign structures. This is evident by the increasing amount of time spent on governance matters and increasing numbers of disciplinary cases. Many campaign activists with substantive knowledge of R2K issues have stopped attending PWGs and Focus Groups have battled to function.

In short, our energy is increasingly dispersed and weak. It was agreed that if we do not make fundamental changes to the Campaign programme, structure, and how we relate to each other we risk undermining the democratic activist driven and action-oriented nature of our organisation. This, if not proactively addressed, would ultimately lead to the collapse of the Campaign.

3. Shifting context

We undertook a review of the broader Campaign context and agreed that while the analysis presented at the 2018 National Summit remained relevant: Low/no levels of economic growth will continue to fuel social and political instability and conflict, creating fertile soil for the continued growth of populist authoritarianism and securitisation. The civil society response to this very challenging context remains muted and uneven. The labour movement remains weak and fragmented. While community protests are likely to increase in the run-up to the 2019 local government elections - communities are largely demobilised and local struggles are relatively weak and sustained local organising is very difficult. (APPENDIX 3: Summit Report on Context).

Within this context the MTR emphasises the following trends/risks:

The Ramaphosa regime's 'dark dawn' remains faithful to the ANC's commitment to a neo-liberal and unsustainable capital driven development path. However the tactics deployed by the Ramaphosa regime will differ significantly from those of the Zuma regime. While Zuma ignored and openly resisted civil society, Ramaphosa is adopting a more open and reconciliatory posture - we have already seen a number of 'consultative' summits and 'corrective' commissions of enquiry.

In a sense R2K, launched months after Zuma came to office, was custom built to confront the Zuma regime with a capacity for building broad coalitions, advancing principles, popularising slogans, and organising protests. While Zuma made it relatively easy to campaign, the Ramaphosa regime will take a more nuanced, technical, and 'consultative' approach to engagement. This will require more sophisticated engagement in more formal spaces while remaining rooted on a popular terrain.

The risks of division and co-option are high.

Broad coalitions and popular campaigns will be harder to sustain as opportunities are created from some of our traditional allies to 'work with the state'. The dominant media will communicate that 'while problems persist, the government has in place legitimate and inclusive processes to find solutions'. The resulting 'solutions' will be presented as 'reasonable compromises that should be given a chance'. Civil society organisations that continue to organise in popular spaces outside of formal spaces and/or reject the emerging 'solutions' will be characterised as 'uncivil', further laying the ground for the criminalisation of resistance.

Further, the Ramaphosa regime represents the consolidation of the ANC/business alliance. Ramaphosa is a 'captain of industry' who made his fortunes fronting for capital in the name of BEE transformation. Ramaphosa's "Thuma Mina" can be heard as a recommitment to the ANC's project of defending the interests of big business in South Africa.

Under Ramaphosa we anticipate the increased consolidation of power in the state/capital nexus. Increasingly campaigns to defend democratic space and to advance socio-economic and environmental social justice will

need to confront corporate power directly. While this is not a new trend identified by R2K, it is set to intensify under the Ramaphosa regime.

Lastly, turning to civil society, the trends identified above are likely to make popular mobilization and broad civil society coalition building far more difficult. Fragmentation and weakening of the labour movement seems set to continue as labour laws are weakened and further attacks on the right to strike. Sections of civil society will be co-opted by Ramaphosa's tactic of 'inclusion'.

That said, the Ramaphosa regime is tasked with governing in the context of an increasingly fluid politics, increasing conflicts between factions of the elite and increasing discontent amongst the poor. To maintain cohesion they must make new friends and enemies, in this lies potential opportunities to advance the right to know.

In short, we will be required to work in an increasingly difficult terrain with increasing contradictions and the possibility of advancing our campaigns. To remain effective in the Ramaphosa era we are going to have to "up our game".

QUESTION 3.1: What are the challenges AND opportunities in our context should we emphasis when considering how to position the Campaign?

QUESTION 3.2: In the face of the changing social/economic/political landscape (nationally, regionally, globally) what is the next level for our work? What are the needs that the R2K Campaign can uniquely meet? Where should we be heading?

QUESTION 3.3: What capacities, strategies, and tactics must R2K develop to be effective in engaging the Ramaphosa regime?

4. Campaign Purpose & Strategic Orientation

We reflected on our shared purpose as expressed in the Campaign's vision and mission (APPENDIX 4) and largely confirmed that our purpose and strategic orientation remain highly relevant: We are a campaign about peoples' transparency, peoples' accountability, and peoples' control. We campaign for a participatory democracy that can meet the needs of all.

That said, there are a number of aspects of our Campaign where we are seeing limitations, weaknesses and contradictions emerging.

4.1 Uniting progressive civil society

Our Mission commits us "To coordinate, unify, organise and activate those who share our principles to defend and advance the right to know." For many years R2K has effectively drawn together a diversity of comrades and organisations across ideology, sector, class and geography to take up many issues under the banner of the Campaign.

In recent years we have not done enough to sustain and nurture relationships to create a welcoming and catalysing space in our structures, meetings and activities. We have seen a decline in the diversity and levels of participation in the Campaign. In some cases this has resulted in us lacking the capacity to adequately respond to issues. In other cases important right to know issues have been taken up and lead by other organisations once active in the Campaign.

QUESTION 4.1.1: Why have people and organizations disengaged from the Campaign? What in the nature of the Campaign no longer serves them (and us)?

QUESTION 4.1.2: Who else will be / and should be interested in the results of our activism? What can we do to enhance our inclusivity, draw old and new comrades into the Campaign, and strengthen our 'coalition' character?

4.2 Our ideological orientation

Our Mission also commits us “To propagate our vision throughout society.” We strived to do this by uniting diverse forces behind a vision of participatory democracy for social, economic, and ecological justice.

For many years the ideological framing of participatory democracy and justice (as outlined in R2K Principles - APPENDIX 4) offers a compelling ideological framework to work together on specific issues related to securitisation, transparency, free expression, etc. However in recent years, as our focus on our core issues has been diluted. Some in the Campaign have been advocating for the Campaign to embrace more narrow and politically sectarian perspectives drawn from various liberatory traditions. These more macro ideological arguments have fueled divisions and conflicts.

QUESTION 4.2.1: What underpins our activism? Is it a shared understanding of participatory democracy? Are our behaviours and organisational forms & structures in alignment with that?

QUESTION 4.2.2: If not, what (other) ideological perspectives and practices should the Campaign embrace?

QUESTION 4.2.3: How might we activate our principles to best do our work and activism? How do we 'walk the talk'?

4.3 Orientation to local struggles

Our Mission commits us to “To root the struggle for the right to know in the struggles of communities demanding political, social, economic and environmental justice.”

Since our inception we have worked hard to emphasise the connections between our campaigns and the daily hardships and struggles of working class communities. We have undertaken extensive popular education,

coalition building, and mobilization work. We have worked to offer practical support to local struggles to access their democratic rights to protest, access information, meaningful engagement, free expression, etc.

As a result we have successfully mobilized a wide range of community organisations in support of the Campaign and ensured that working class activism constitutes an important component of R2K activists. This in turn has created an unintended 'crowding out' of non-community organisations and allies within and as part of the larger support base feeding into the challenges around the content and character identified elsewhere in this report.

In recent years we have put significant energy and resources to strengthening the community orientation of our work. We've placed a stronger emphasis on solidarity with local struggles in addition to mobilising communities in support of R2K's identified campaigns and/or supporting aspects of local struggles that intersect with the right to know.

However, as we note in the our 2017 reflection report: "While community protests continue to mount - likely to increase in the run-up to the 2019 general elections - communities are largely demobilised and local struggles are relatively weak. High levels of poverty and unemployment, low levels of political consciousness, as well as limited organisational strategies, make sustained local organising very difficult." (APPENDIX 3).

In this context the MTR acknowledged the efforts made to support local struggles and began to reflect on the impact we are having. Concerns were raised that we lack the capacity to undertake the deep and long-term organising work required to strengthen local organisations. We reflected again on the merits and the contradictions of broad support versus deep support and acknowledged that for the most part we are providing broad support, but that the impact of the deep support in the few cases where it was possible, has been much more impactful.

Further, as 'resourced outsiders' the MTR noted that we risk creating relations of 'undemocratic dependency' and undermining self-organisation in communities. Despite our intention to see local struggles thrive, in some cases we could be doing more harm than good.

QUESTION 4.3.1: What is our intention with working with local organisations and struggles?

QUESTION 4.3.2: How do we identify local partners? What constitutes a "local struggle"? Do we need to develop clearer 'criteria' to identify the local organisations we work with?

QUESTION 4.3.3: How might we better offer meaningful support to local struggles? What are some of the ways of working with local partners that we want to let go of?

QUESTION 4.3.4: What kind of capacity would we need to develop to offer more meaningful support?

5. Campaign Focus

The MTR reaffirmed our broad objectives that we use as a framework to develop and refine our strategic priorities:

1. **STOP SECRECY:** We aim to ensure security legislation and the conduct of security agencies – in particular the policing of gatherings – is aligned to the South African Constitution and underlying values.
2. **INFORMATION ACCESS:** We aim to ensure that public and private sector information is easily accessible to citizens and that that people with information of wrongdoing and/or of the suppression of information in the public interest are free and encouraged to share information with the public.
3. **COMMUNICATION RIGHTS:** We aim to ensure that South Africa enjoys a free and diverse range of public, private and non-profit media and affordable access to the open and secure internet and telecommunications

The MTR noted that over the years we shown a strong capacity to convene board networks to review the context and developed shared campaign goals, share and conducted research to inform strategy and advocacy, driven popular education, and mobilized a wide range of organisations and activists into various campaigns. In doing so we have made important contributions and secured important victories to advance each of the objectives above.

Beyond the mandated campaign priorities adopted at annual Summits, we have also demonstrated the capacity to be flexible and responsive - rallying to confront new challenges and opportunities as they emerge.

Our Mission commits us “To struggle both for the widest possible recognition in law and policy of the right to know and for its implementation and practice in daily life”. This broad Mission together with our democratic agenda setting practice, commitment to contribute at the global, national and local level, as well as the wide ranging threats and opportunities impacting the right to know, has resulted in a Campaign focus that, too often, lacks focus.

We have a tendency to take on too much and then lack the capacity to undertake the necessary groundwork (coalition building, research, popular education, etowktring, advocacy, etc) and sustain our engagement, build on progress, and fully realise our intended results.

Given the organisational challenges outlined elsewhere in this report, the MTR agreed that we need to be better at prioritising our campaigns and ensuring better follow-through to secure victories. As noted in 6.2 below, our structures need to be more integrated and inclusive, less inward looking, and more action oriented. We need to develop the capacity for longer term action planning to sustain our work and build on the progress we make.

In addition the MTR noted that over the years the Campaign has relied primarily on very flexible discretionary or ‘core’ funding. As the our budget grows we have begun to accept project specific funding - a trend likely to continue. Project funding limits our flexibility and commits us to defining specific goals and outputs in advance.

In short, while the Campaign's broad objectives remain highly relevant to the unfolding context, a lot of work must still be done in the review process to deepen our shared understanding of the current context (section 3 above) and how it impacts to each of our 3 objectives in order to agree specific and better planned campaigns we want to prioritise in the coming years.

QUESTION 5.1: What are the specific threats and opportunities impacting on each of our three broad objectives?

QUESTION 5.2: Where do our strengths and weaknesses lie in respect of each of our three broad objectives?

QUESTION 5.3: What specific campaigns/goals do we want to focus on within each broad objective in the coming years?

QUESTION 5.4: How can we have greater focus and impact without losing the responsiveness and flexibility that has been a vital strength?

QUESTION 5.5: How should we approach our work to both have the necessary focus and synergise our efforts across the 'silos' of work?

6. Tensions in Structure and Roles

Right2Know is a democratic activists led and driven organisation. Our complex structure is intended to enable maximum activists participation and control.

6.1 The National Working Group

The MTR reflected on the structure and performance of the democratically elected NWG that serves as our strategic centre and board with legal and fiduciary responsibility for the Campaign.

Concerns were raised that the process of selecting the NWG by popular election at the National Summit had resulted in the NWG having insufficient capacity to perform their legal and fiduciary responsibilities. There was a proposal that the Constitution be amended to ensure the NWG has necessary legal and financial skills. The counterview was that this would undermine our open democratic practice, skewing power to those with more middle class skills and that the Constitution already enables the NWG to co-opt members if additional skills are required.

Concerns were raised that the practice of maintaining a flat structure within the NWG (with all members equal) resulted in a lack of efficiency.e. It was proposed that the NWG's efficiency could be enhanced if we had a division of labour with a Chairperson (political head), Secretary, Treasurer, etc. The counterview was that, while the Constitution allowed the NWG to appoint these positions, doing so would 'outsource' the power of the collective, create new hierarchies, and leave the majority of NWG members with a very passive role.

The MTR also considered the proposal that NWG terms should be extended to two years to ensure more stability given the steep learning curve after election.

It was stressed that NWG members must take personal responsibility for the work/position they committed themselves to.

QUESTION 6.1.1: Should we adopt specific criteria for election onto the NWG - skills, experience etc?

QUESTION 6.1.2: Should we move from the relatively flat current structure of the NWG to one with office bearers? Why would we do that? What are the consequences of doing so?

QUESTION 6.1.3: Should the term of the NWG be extended beyond one year? What would be a reasonable term?

QUESTION 6.1.4: What else can be done to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of the NWG to ensure better democratic governance and strategic coordination of the Campaign?

6.2 Provincial Working Groups & Focus Groups

Provincial Working Groups (PWGs) and thematic Focus Groups (FGs) have always been seen as the engine of the Campaign.

As described in 2.2.5 of our policy, the “task of the PWG is to prioritise and implement the Campaign programme in the province. The Campaign programme derives from National Summit Resolutions and priorities identified by the National Working Group and its Thematic Focus Groups. Within this framework the PWG identifies strategic priorities for the province’s programme.” PWGs constitute the operational base of the campaign and control our programmatic budgets.

As described on 2.3.3 of our policy, Thematic Focus Groups are structures “where activists with specific interests and expertise work together to draft Campaign positions, support consensus building in our Work Groups and Summits and prepare technical statements or submissions to various policy or legal processes.”. FGs are constituted and NWG subcommittees and have no control of budgets.

The ‘relative autonomy’ of PWGs and FGs creates a very decentralised and dynamic power structure able to harness a wide range of energies and capacities. When the structure works well it offers individual activists/organisations an opportunity to contribute their time in a collective where their skills can have the most impact. This in turn has resulted in high levels of productivity with the Campaign having the collective capacity to engage on many issues in many forms simultaneously.

When the structure works well there is a strong cross-pollination between PWGs and FGs. The intellectual work of FGs feeds into and shapes the programmes of PWGs and issues from PWGs shape the agenda of FGs. This requires a healthy interaction between FGs and PWGs with an overlap in membership and lots of communication, popular education, joint workshopping of issues, and consistent coordination from the NWG.

When this cross-pollination is lacking, the decentralised structure has created unhealthy power dynamic where the FGs can think/speak for the Campaign and PWGs are instrumentalised as mere ‘implementers’. Conversely, at times, PWGs can take ill-informed positions that undermine and alinat FGs or fail to prioritise issues/programmes identified by FGs.

As the Campaign has grown in scope and complexity the bonds uniting different structures have weakened. In recent years we have seen significantly less overlap in PWG/FG membership. As our programme has expanded the NWG has battled to play an effective coordination role. Efforts to share information across the campaign - including publishing of reports/minutes and the production of a weekly newsletter highlight thematic developments have not had the desired impact as the quality of communication can be overwhelming and many comrades either battle to access/read their email or are just not interested in other aspects of the Campaign. Individual activists/organisations traditionally active in FGs have become far less active - resulting in the collapse or stagnation of some FGs. Efforts to re-enrol these comrades have not received sufficient attention. Efforts to develop thematic capacity within PWGs through the establishment of provincial focus groups (and integrate these comrades into national FGs) have not been sustained.

The result - at its most dysfunctional - is 3 PWGs and 4+ FGs acting in silos, unable to draw on the synergies of each others capacities, and all lacking the capacity to fulfill their envisaged roles in the Campaign.

In recent years PWGs have spent less time/resources on outward-looking coalition building, popular education and campaigning - and more time/energy looking inward addressing issues of their own governance, cohesion, and resource allocation and (lack of) accountability. Where PWGs were intended to mobilize and coordinate diverse supporters across the province to drive the campaign programme, they increasingly imagine themselves as the Campaign and focus on their own 'mobilisation'. Central to this has been the weakness to sustain and nurture relationships with (non-community) allied and supportive organisations at provincial level.

Further, our open-door policy that invites all campaign supporters into PWGs and/or FGs has resulted in bloated structures where often the majority of those present in PWG meetings or on FG email lists do not participate actively and do not involve themselves in campaign implementation.

Ironically a structure intended to enable democratic control and dynamic activism at times produces the opposite: Bloated, overly bureaucratic and inward looking collectives that are not engaged in strategic campaigning.

In light of this self-critical reflection the MTR began to consider fundamental structural changes - including the scraping of PWGs and introduction of more advocacy focused and action orientated Campaign Action Teams. The MTR did not have the time to fully unpack or debate these proposals, but revising our structure to address the issues identified above must be a critical outcome of the review process.

QUESTION 6.2.1: How can we restructure the Campaign to enhance democratic control, unity, cohesion and increased action orientation?

QUESTION 6.2.2: What are the lived values or principles of the Campaign that we must emphasis to enhance democracy, and unity - and an increased action orientation?

QUESTION 6.2.3: What else can we do to enable greater activism and draw effectively on all the capacities within our networks?

6.3 Provincial Coordinators

The MTR focus on the critical role played by elected Provincial Coordinators. Section 2.2.5 of our policy states that “Each province also has volunteer Provincial Coordinator/s who ensure overall leadership in the province, manage the Provincial Organiser/s day-to-day, and takes critical decisions in between PWG meetings, and oversee the province’s finances, developing budgets and ensuring funds are accounted for.”

In recent years, as staff, programme, and budgets have grown, we have seen a high turnover of elected Coordinators. In this context we have experienced an increasing number of challenges with provincial leadership, staff and financial management.

The MTR agreed that the wide ranging and critical responsibilities allocate to Coordinators where to much too time consuming to expect from volunteer activists. There was a strong view that we should be compensating people for fulfilling many of the Coordinator functions. In addition, concerns where also raised about how we ensure Coordinators have the necessary technical skills and experience to fulfill their responsibilities when they are elected by popular vote at Provincial Summits (by the PWG in the case of KZN).

QUESTION 6.3.1: Should Provincial Coordinators remain responsible for strategic and programmatic leadership as well as staff and finance management roles?

QUESTION 6.3.2: Should Provincial Coordinators be paid given their extensive responsibilities?

QUESTION 6.3.3: If yes, how should coordinators be selected to ensure they have the necessary skills and experience? How would this impact on our democratic activist lead character?

7. Activism, Staffing & Incentives

While reflecting on weakness in our structures we considered some of our practices that may create relational tensions and ‘perverse incentives’ for participation in the Campaign.

7.1 On Staffing and Activist Relations

With the increase in staff we note that dynamics have changed and increasingly responsibility for driving substantive issues now lies with staff. The MTR affirmed that the Campaign requires staff with the necessary time, skill and experience to be held accountable for key tasks and core functions. Concerns were raised about the high gap in the Campaigns pay scales as well as ongoing tension between staff and activists with some staff feeling unappreciated and unsupported while some activists feel bullied and undermined.

In addition, regarding both PWGs and FGs, the increased appointment of staff has resulted in less activism as there is an expectation that employees will carry the bulk of burden of implementation. The result is for activist structures to see themselves as mandating and holding staff accountable, rather than driving programmes

themselves with the support of staff. These structures have therefore largely become primarily concerned with issues of governance and internal decision-making, rather than programme and strategic leadership.

QUESTION 7.1.1 Is the gap between the highest paid and lowest paid staff members too great? Are there unfair discrepancies between staff doing similar work? Do we adhere to the principle of Equal Work for Equal Pay?

QUESTION 7.1.2 What are the underlying causes of tension between staff and activists? How do we address these?

QUESTION 7.1.3: What can we do to limit staff substituting for activists and ensure greater activism? What is the proper balance between staff and activists working on the Campaign?

7.2 On paying activists

Related to this the MTR again considered the question of paying activists that was debated at the 2017 Summit and resolved at the 2017 MTR. A few comrades argued that the Campaign should compensate activists for their time as a necessary “legitimate campaign cost” to acknowledge time and effort contributed. Other comrades reaffirmed the position captured in the 2017 Reflection Report: “we should not pay activists because paying activists would transform the democratic activist lead nature of R2K. It would undermine our independence/autonomy and militancy. It would drag us into a culture of opportunism and conflict. As our nature transforms we would lose donor confidence and funds would dry up. Also paying activists would dramatically increase the administrative and legal burden on the organisation - requiring more resources for these functions”.

QUESTION 7.2.1: Should we consider paying activists for their time?

QUESTION 7.2.2 If so, how should activists be selected and what payments should be made?

7.3 On Transport & Catering

Our campaign is supported by a large number of working class activists and organisations. Whilst activism is voluntary, the Campaign has a policy of paying for “legitimate campaign expenses”. Within the context of massive unemployment and cruel poverty within local working class communities, this practice may create tensions and influence the reasons why activists participate in the Campaign.

Arising from our reflection on the state of our structures number of concerns were raised: Paying of transport and (at times) catering costs incentivises some comrades to place activities of R2K above their own community organising work. Further, we are attracting supporters who sit through entire meetings without contributing or taking tasks. Finally, concerns were raised that in some cases transport claims could be inflated enabling supporters to take home a few rand to put food on their tables.

In short, while it is a very difficult issue to confront, we need to be honest about our motivations and challenge signs of self interest, opportunism and corruption in the campaign.

QUESTION 7.3.1: Do we maintain our ‘open-door’ inclusive practice, or do we develop clearer criteria for participation in the Campaign? If so, what criteria would be appropriate?

QUESTION 7.3.2: Should we continue to pay travel costs? If so, how should these rates be calculated?

QUESTION 7.3.3 What more must we do to build a culture of honesty and accountability?

8. Conclusion & Way Forward

In just over two short days the MTR was able to cover considerable ground and confront a number of difficult and challenging issues impacting our work. In Doing so leaders and staff have modeled R2K’s commitment to openness and honesty. Key issues have been unpacked and important questions uncovered. A solid foundation has been laid for a broader consultation within the Campaign.

Regarding the way forward, this document will serve as the basis for broader consultation across the Campaign. The NWG will also establish task teams to engage feedback and develop proposals on various aspects under review.

The elected leadership and staff will gather again with CDRA towards the end of November this year to engage the feedback and proposals and reach points of consensus or deeper understanding of differences. These points of consensus and difference will be presented in a document that will serve as a basis for the 2019 Provincial and National Summits in February/March next year.

We trust the Summits will interrogate the outcomes of this reflection process and adopt a set of resolutions that place the Campaign on a clear path and firm footing to continue to fight for participatory democracy and advance the right to know in South Africa and beyond.

ENDS

APPENDIX 1: Participant list

NATIONAL WORKING GROUP: Alison Tilley, Biko Chisuvi, Carina Conradie, Cleopatra Shezi, Dale McKinley, Gcina Makhoba, Ghalib Ghalant (also WC Coordinator), Mshengu Tshabalala (also WC Coordinator), Muzi Mkhize, Ngazini Ngidi, Sinenhlanhla Manqele, & Wendy Pekeur.

PROVINCIAL COORDINATORS: Thabo Maile (KZN), Daniel Dunia (KZN), Eunice Manzini (GP), Khaya Xintolo (WC), Joyce Malebu (WC).

STAFFERS: Mark Weinberg (National Coordinator), Janine Julisen (National Administrator), Bongani Xizwe (Outreach Organiser - day 1 only), Busi Mtabane (National Communicator), Murray Hunter (Secrecy Organiser), Lazola Kati (Right to Communicate Organiser), Mluleki Marongo (InfoAccess Organiser), Sthembiso Khuluse (KZN Community Organiser), Ntombi Tshabalala (GP Community Organiser), Thami Nkosi (GP Campaigns Organiser), Nomacebo Mbayo (WC Administrator), Phezu Ntetha (KZN Administrator), Moeketsi Monaheng (GP Administrator) & Rowena Salo (temporary National Administrator)

GUESTS: Karabo Rajuli (day 1 only) & Siviwe Mdoda

CDRA FACILITATORS: Desiree Paulsen & Rubert Van Blerk

APPENDIX 2: Campaign Timeline

YEAR	CONTEXT/CAMPAIGNS	RIGHT2KNOW
2010	Post Polokwane Securocratic Presidency (ANC Factions) Secrecy Bill and proposed Media Appeals Tribunal being real threat to democracy. Strong International movements versus Info. Rights. FIFA 2010. Racism and Xenophobia.	Launch of R2K. Popular mobilization against Secrecy Bill (week of action) Funding secured & Staff hired. Worked together with many organisations, was home to all.
2011	Serti Commission. Nkandla,	2nd Big Secrecy Bill march First national summit, PWG's established. Legs identified. Worked for a long time towards big events
2012	Hlaudi(Acting COO) and SABC, Guptas, Wikileaks, Snowden, Asanye, Marikana, EFF, Serti Commission, Racism and Zenophobia	PWG s Focus groups. Provincial Staff, Expansion to communities. Combat Patriachy
2013		
2014	Hlaudi and SABC, NKP, Gupta,National Elections, Nuke Deal,Cyber Crime, Data	Tweaking constitution, Online Leadership School,B.U.N.,Prov. Admin, Right2Protest, Party

	must Fall, Cybercrimes Bill,Zenzeleni,RICA, Racism and Zenophobia,Glebelands. President won't/can't sign the Secrecy Bill. NKP Court Victory, Signal Jamming @ Parly, 1st Corruption, Relationship in MVC in Party Funding Secrecy, United Front, Zuma#, #UB, Blikkies	Funding, Publications /Research, Focus orgs,
2015	NKP LIST, Signal Jamming, Workshops on DTT	Outreach Organiser appointed, Staff increased. Employ Provincial Admin, Provincial card
2016	Local Elections. Zuma must fall, Parliament inquiries, Right to recall, Hate Crimes, Moerane Parliwatch, United FRONT, Hlaudi went. Blikkiesdorp win, Zuma must go, Tabloids	Protest hotline launched, Financial policy, Staff dismissals, Durban Summit investigation, Disciplinary Code, Activist Code, Solidarity fund idea stalls, Tabloids, First NWG election challenged, Budget increased, Advocacy organisers, Political School, United Front, Godfrey passed. secondary advances.
2017	internet Shutdown Africa, Land Audit, Rosemary Hunter, SJC10, Intimidation SABC, Amicus Curiae, Land Audit. Stopped the Nuclear deal, Ifo Regulator, Data must Fall, lost Reserve bank case.	Advance Tracker, Focus groups weaker. Ops Coordinator. FG went to Province
2018	Stoppe Cybercrime Bill, Court ruled SABC board must be indep.	1ST Sexual harassment case, KZN probation, Staff suspended, PWG suspended KZN, Delay in financial statement. Peoples tribunal, UBC, R2P Rustenberg, Fighting Patriarchal work exclamation, land discussing, review of R2K structure, Budget constraints, Janines laptop stolen, CCMA Cases, Closure of secondary advances, No MTR, FOCUS ON LOCAL STUGGLES. NO PROVINCIAL ORG. IN WC, Staff turnover, 1st Sexual Harassment Case, Employ 2nd Prov. Org

APPENDIX 3: Summit Report on Context

As presented at the 2018 National Summit ([report here](#)):

2018 will be remembered as the end of the Zuma era! While this was an important advance in the struggle for an accountable government, and R2K was amongst the civil society organisations that made a contribution, many of the social ills symbolised by Zuma are set to persist.

In a sense the 'state capture' narrative that was dominant in 2017 suggested that high level corruption was the primary obstacle to a functioning democratic state that could meet people's basic needs. Unfortunately this analysis obscures the deep structural problems that remain the fundamental drivers of the increasing socioeconomic tensions that in turn

drive the phenomenons of rising surveillance and securitisation, lack of transparency and accountability in government and private sector, and the failure to democratise the communications landscape.

R2K maintains that the absence of an inclusive and redistributive economic plan remains at the heart of failures to realise the promise of full participatory democracy contained in our Constitution.

Our economy continues to stagnate with low levels of investment by private business and rising debt levels for business, households and the state. SA now has the 6th highest level of unemployment in the world at 27% (36% on the including those who have stopped looking for work). 3.7-million people were unemployed in 1994. Today this number stands at 9.3-million.

Wealth is being redistributed - but from the poor to the rich. Today 10 percent of South Africa's population earn around 60 percent of all income. The richest 10% of the population now owns at least 90–95% of all assets.

In 2015, with a poverty line set at R441 per person per month, the majority of South Africans (30.4 million people) lived in poverty. Growing inequality and unemployment and the declining value of social grants has exacerbated this indictment of our democracy.

Inequality expresses itself in almost every aspect of life. From health care and education to safety with the majority subjected to vastly inferior often life threatening conditions while a small minority access first class private services.

Economic hardship continues to fuel a social crisis characterised by increasing political polarisation and conservatism as well as intolerance, violence and conflict, opportunistic populism, misogyny, xenophobia and racism. Patriarch persists and it is estimated that a woman is raped every 26 seconds and over 40 percent of South African women will be raped in their lifetime. A woman dies at the hands of an intimate partner in South Africa every eight hours on average.

It is in this broad context that R2K's campaigns continued to confront Government and corporations which are resorting to increasingly draconian measures: ongoing militarisation, surveillance, police brutality, criminalisation of whistleblowers as well as attacks on civil society, the media and internet freedom – all aimed at undermining democratic accountability and suppresses public dissent.

Many of these trends are evident across Africa and around the world. Africa is once again seeing as a new scramble for resources reminiscent of colonial plunder. Persistent economic stagnation is activating racist and populist right movements in Europe and the USA. We see attacks on the democratic space for dissent, regimes of global mass surveillance, increased threats to journalists, the militarisation of the police, and other factors of repression.

In South Africa the response to this very challenging context has been muted and uneven. While community protests continue to mount - are are likely to increase in the run-up to the 2019 local government elections - communities are largely demobilised and local struggles are relatively weak. High levels of poverty and unemployment, low levels of political consciousness, as well as limited organisational strategies, make sustained local organising very difficult.

Despite the launch for the SA Federation of Trade Unions, the labour movement remains weak and fragmented. Proposed amendments to the Labour Relations Act (LRA) and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) threaten to undermine the right to strike - a key component of the right to protest/organize that R2K strives to advance.

On the party political front the ANC elective conference in December demonstrated that the ruling party remains divided and riddled with factions - and the decline of the ANC's hegemony as the 'liberation movement' seems set to continue. This will result in a political context that is very contested and fluid - both full of opportunity for the R2K, but also full of risk.

APPENDIX 4: R2K Vision, Mission & Principles

Our Vision

"We seek a country and a world where we all have the right to know – that is to be free to access and to share information. □ □ This right is fundamental to any democracy that is open, accountable, participatory and responsive; able to deliver the social, economic and environmental justice we need. □ □ On this foundation a society and an international community can be built in which we all live free from want, in equality and in dignity. □"

Our Mission

- To co-ordinate, unify, organise and activate those who share our principles to defend and advance the right to know.
- To struggle both for the widest possible recognition in law and policy of the right to know and for its implementation and practice in daily life.
- To root the struggle for the right to know in the struggles of communities demanding political, social, economic and environmental justice.
- To propagate our vision throughout society.
- To engage those with political and economic power where necessary.
- To act in concert and solidarity with like-minded people and organisations locally and internationally.

R2K Principles ("The Shalimar Principles")

Preamble

We subscribe to the right to know, which is founded in the right to dignity and is realised through rights freely to access and share information.

We shall defend and advance the right to know, encouraged that it and its constituent rights were won through peoples' struggles in South Africa and internationally, and are affirmed in the Constitution of South Africa, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We commit to the following principles, both in our own policies and practices and in the vision we propagate throughout society:

Principle 1: Access to Information

All people have the right to access information, and have it equally. This right has inherent value and enables many other democratic rights.

The right to access information must be defended and advanced in law, policy and practice as demanded inter alia by section 32 of the Constitution of South Africa.

Principle 2: Free Flow of Information

All people have the right to express themselves – that is to share information, including opinion – freely and equally. This right has inherent value and enables many other democratic rights.

The right to free expression must be defended and advanced in law, policy and practice as demanded inter alia by section 16 of the Constitution of South Africa.

Principle 3: Free and Diverse Media

The media have rights and corresponding duties to access and disseminate information, including opinion, freely and fairly, without fear or favour. These rights and duties are vital to the public's exercise of many other democratic rights. Media freedom must be defended and advanced in law, policy and practice as demanded inter alia by section 16 of the Constitution of South Africa.

Media diversity must be extended so that everyone, in particular the socially and economically marginalised, shall have a voice.

Principle 4: Accountability and Transparency

Transparency, achieved through the right to know, holds power to account so that political, social, economic and environmental justice is realised.

Principle 5: Informed Public Participation

The right to know empowers all people to participate in democracy actively and effectively so that they can defend and advance their political, social, economic and environmental rights.

Principle 6: Truth and Quality of Information

The rights to access information must be served through the provision of information that is reliable, verifiable and representative of the data from which it is derived, and must include the right to access source data itself. Information must be provided transparently and equally, untainted by partisan interests.

Principle 7: Proactive Dissemination of Information

Public and private bodies must disseminate information proactively. Laws providing for access to information must not be used as a shield to obstruct its release.

Principle 8: Equality

All rights, including the rights here demanded like any other right, are equal to all people regardless of any human or social characteristic including class, race, gender, language or sexual orientation.

Principle 9: Community Involvement

The right to know is vital to the struggles of communities demanding political, social, economic and environmental justice. Campaign efforts rooted in communities and their needs are vital to the campaign's success and the realisation of a responsive and accountable democracy that can meet the basic needs of our people.

Principle 10: Solidarity

The full realisation of the right to know cannot be defined by individuals, organisations or borders. Our campaign is best served where we act in concert and solidarity with like-minded people and organisations locally and internationally.

ENDS

APPENDIX 5: Campaign Organogram

