

Empowering Citizens:

Understanding and Building Community Resilience to Counter the Threat of Election Interference

Throughout 2020, the Paris Call Community for Countering Election Interference—led by the Alliance for Securing Democracy (ASD), the Government of Canada, and Microsoft in support of the Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace—convened a series of multi-stakeholder workshops, each addressing a critical topic related to preventing interference in the electoral process. The outcomes below are a first glimpse at some of the key observations made by practitioners during these workshops. A more in-depth overview of best practices is planned for early 2021.

An informed citizen combats foreign interference during elections by thinking critically about what they see online and understanding the fundamentals of democracy. Here are some recommendations we heard from stakeholders across government, industry, and civil society, on building resilience to empower citizens.



Support and Empower Trusted Speakers

- Engage with trusted community organizations and recognized leaders to effectively communicate accurate information.
- Though it may be difficult to stem the tide of disinformation, trusted speakers can encourage voting.
- Share tools with trusted speakers for identifying and tackling threats.



Be Proactive

- Flood space with accurate information early on.
- Pre-bunk issues that are vulnerable to disinformation and manipulation.
- Educate people on how to vote and the mechanics of democracy.
- Build cohesion in society around shared sovereign values and democracy – provide positive messaging.



Build Digital Literacy

- Digital literacy is not one-size-fits-all – a tailored approach is required to help people think critically about what they see online.
- Base digital literacy efforts on robust research regarding attitudes and behaviors.
- Know your audience and connect with them via the appropriate medium.



Use Effective Fact-Checking

- Explore and address systemic problems that create bad information.
- Keep up-to-date platforms hosting disinformation change rapidly.
- Be impartial—ensure that you are fact-checking all parties and viewpoints.