

VENEZUELA
SWOT Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS</p>	<p>Although the current administration has suppressed communication rights, such as access to public information, the democratic culture of Venezuelans refuses to disappear. Citizens and journalists have resorted to unconventional methods to keep themselves moderately informed by means of news dissemination initiatives on social media and direct messaging services. The provisions of the highest law of the land, the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela promulgated in 1999, establish that communication in the country shall be free and plural.</p>
<p>WEAKNESSES</p>	<p>The laws enacted in the field of communications, such as the Law on Social Responsibility in Radio, Television, and Digital Media, as well as the "Law against Hate", among others, set up structured muzzling. Acts of violence against journalists continue to be conducted under a cloak of impunity. Other more subtle measures are also enforced to encourage censorship and self-censorship in the country, such as Internet service disruptions, digital blocking of news sites and the refusal to allocate newsprint to the independent press. Critical journalists do not have access to official sources. Citizens have engrained the fear of expressing themselves into their communicational practices.</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p>	<p>Investigative journalism startups continue; many of them appeal to collaborative journalism that has exposed irregularities in the handling of public funds. Although every day there are fewer opportunities to become self-sustainable in the country, there are still journalistic ventures by Venezuelans abroad and some within Venezuela. Social media allow patterns of disinformation, but also provide an arena for citizens to denounce matters of public interest.</p>
<p>THREATS</p>	<p>The possibility of continued seizures and arbitrary closures of media outlets remains certain, also the recent regulation on registration of NGOs. In addition, impunity for crimes against journalists leaves room for new homicides, aggressions, and harassment. Lawsuits by public officials sensitive to alleged defamations keep the people muzzled, as they feel vulnerable to court officials in reason of their activity aligned with the national Executive.</p>

