



The
CENTER for
VICTIMS of
TORTURE

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New Online Tactical Mapping Tool Equips Human Rights Activists to Take Strategic Action

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Refugee bans. Discrimination. Deterioration of Rights. News of the day can inspire calls to action—but knowing where to begin can be daunting. How can activists start making real change? A new, free online mapping tool makes it clearer. Launched by [New Tactics in Human Rights](#), a program of the Center for Victims of Torture™, the [Tactical Mapping Tool](#) makes it possible for individuals, groups or entire organizations to work collaboratively to develop strategic, targeted and effective action, streamlining the path to change.

The Tactical Mapping Tool was developed as part of the [Rawabet](#) Initiative, a three-year regional Initiative that aims to empower youth, women and people living with disabilities in Tunisia, Jordan, Morocco and Egypt to promote social and economic rights using new technologies. The Initiative is led by [Equitas—International Centre for Human Rights Education](#) and funded by [Global Affairs Canada](#).

Available in English and Arabic, the Tactical Mapping Tool (TMT) allows activists to work cooperatively on a secure platform to assemble a database of key actors; assess where those actors sit on a spectrum from ally to opponent; analyze targets for effective intervention; and track and plan direct action. Users will also enter background information on individuals and relationships intersecting with their issue, and save reports to log a “tactical history,” eliminating the risk of loss of knowledge when a member of the group departs—a critical component, given that turnover of staff at organizations and burnout among activists remain high.

“We saw an opportunity to take the lessons we’ve learned training activists and use them to push innovation in the field of human rights advocacy,” said Emily Hutchinson, New Tactics in Human Rights program manager. “We want to give activists a tool they can use to boost their creative thinking and planning, and where institutional knowledge and lessons learned can live. We think the TMT could dramatically change the way activists organize.”

The backbone of the TMT is an adaptable process known as the [Strategic Effectiveness Method](#), used by New Tactics in Human Rights to train human rights activists around the globe for more than 10 years. The Method employs five steps to assist activists in recognizing areas of strength and challenge, which are at the core of the TMT:

- Identify the Problem

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- Create a Vision
- Map the Terrain
- Explore Tactics
- Take Action

As with any new technology, the designers of the TMT expect that there will be learning and improvement opportunities as more and more activists use the tool, and help is available via email directly to the tool's creators. The tool is currently in beta testing.

“The TMT is designed to be used by everyone from novices to seasoned activists. We hope to hear from users as they try out the tool, to learn what’s working and what needs adjusting,” said Brent Jensen, online engagement coordinator with New Tactics in Human Rights. “Feedback will be invaluable to ensure that the TMT evolves appropriately to truly meet the needs of activists in real-world situations.”

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The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Paul, MN, with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, D.C.; and healing initiatives in Africa and the Middle East. Visit www.cvt.org