

# CIVICUS STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2008-2012

*“The growth of civil society in scale and importance over the last two decades has also increased its vulnerability.”*

In 2008, CIVICUS adopted its new 5-year Strategic Directions. The CIVICUS Board of Directors had taken the lead in mapping the state of civil society and in consulting with the CIVICUS members, partners, allies, critics and other stakeholders. The findings suggest that the growth of civil society in scale and importance over the last two decades has also increased its vulnerability. There is an increasing challenge for civil society from three directions:

- 1) internally through the risk of losing public trust;
- 2) externally through political threats to its right to exist; and
- 3) through the general threats that face humankind as a whole such as the impact of climate change, violent conflicts, poverty and inequality.

Recognising the challenges civil society faces and in support of CIVICUS’ mission as well as taking into account an assessment of the organisation’s strengths, uniqueness and other features, the organisation has adopted three mutually reinforcing Strategic Directions and key programmatic approaches to guide its work over the next five years (2008-2012).

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

**Protecting the rights of civil society actors**

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2

**Strengthening good practice within civil society**

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3

**Strengthening civil society’s ability to influence the policies and practices of governments, international institutions and the private sector**

## CIVICUS APPROACHES

**Knowledge generation and analysis**

**Communication**

**Convening and multi-stakeholder engagement**

**Advocacy**



CIVICUS staff discuss how to operationalise the 2008-2012 Strategic Directions during a retreat.

# CIVICUS WORK IN 2008

With the adoption of the new Strategic Directions, CIVICUS has started reviewing its current programmes so that they are maximally aligned with the organisational priorities as expressed in the Strategic Directions. Currently, CIVICUS activities are managed with the following understanding:

- All programmes contribute to the three Strategic Directions
- Some programmes contribute primarily to one or more Strategic Directions, as identified below
- CIVICUS as a convener and a network facilitator provides the organisation with a forum to promote all three Strategic Directions.

## CIVICUS PROGRAMMES



### CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX (CSI)

The Civil Society Index (CSI) is a participatory needs assessment and action planning tool for civil society. It is implemented at the country level by prominent civil society organisations, which take responsibility for co-ordinating input from a wide range of civil society and other perspectives. Using a structured methodology, civil society actors assess the state of civil society in their national context. Based on this assessment, they are then able to develop action plans in order to strengthen civil society and its role in development and good governance. Because of CSI's nature as a knowledge-generation programme, it serves all Strategic Directions by providing other CIVICUS programmes with key background information and analysis at the country level.

#### Main activities in 2008

- Redesigned its methodology between February and August, in conjunction with the Centre for Social Investment at the Heidelberg University and based on recommendations following

the previous CSI phase. The major goals were to streamline the CSI methodology and render it more user-friendly, and to decrease the resources and time needed for implementation while preserving the richness of the original CSI approach.

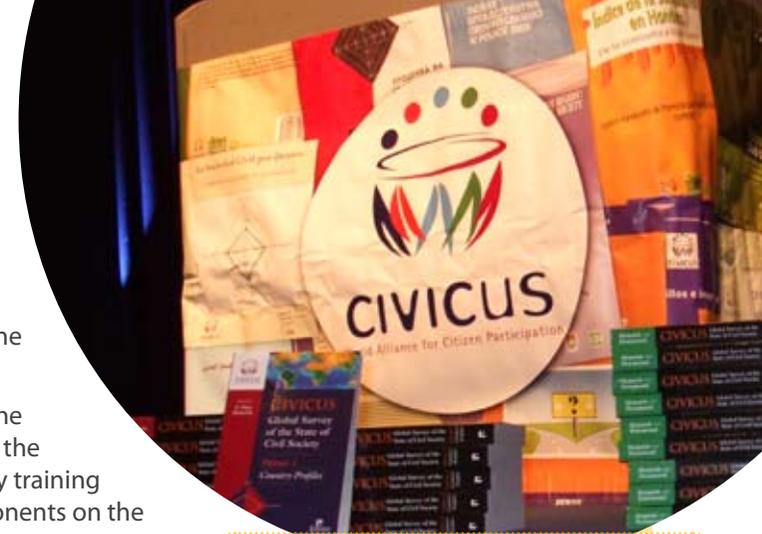
- Trained 45 partner countries, out of a total of 55 in the new phase, for the new phase of implementation of the project from July to December. A total of 5 three-day training workshops, covering the action and research components on the revised CSI methodology, were held in three languages.
- Communication and events:
  - Launched Volume 2, Global Survey of the State of Civil Society: Comparative Perspectives in Johannesburg on 24 February.
  - Hosted two workshops during the 2008 CIVICUS World Assembly: "CSI for Action" where past-phase partners shared signs of impact of the CSI in their countries; and "The Revised CSI Methodology", attended by over 70 people, in which the research team presented the revised CSI methodology to be used in the new phase of implementation.

#### Year ahead

In 2009, CSI will finish training all partners in the new phase, including the Asia Pacific and Arabic-speaking countries and it is expected that the publication of the first country outputs for the current phase of implementation will be received. In addition the CSI will carry out an impact assessment on the first CSI phase (2003-2006).

## PARTNERSHIP WITH UNDP

During 2008, CIVICUS explored partnering with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to strengthen support for the CSI and establish a consortium of partners interested in the programme. In September 2008, a memorandum of understanding was signed by CIVICUS and UNDP.



2008 saw CIVICUS' Civil Society Index launch Volume 2, Global Survey of the State of Civil Society: Comparative Perspectives.

*“CSI has impressive follow up in putting civil society on the agenda of regional development and political change in Ukraine.”*

- CSI partner in the Ukraine

## CIVICUS PROGRAMMES (CONTINUED)

“As a novel threat detection system, the CSW Early Warning System will certainly evolve to become one of the most useful tools for strengthening civil society in the future.”

- Development Services Exchange, Solomon Islands



### CIVIL SOCIETY WATCH (CSW)

Civil Society Watch (CSW) aims to mobilise quick, principled and effective responses to events that threaten civil society’s fundamental rights to collectively assemble, express, associate and organise throughout the world. The CSW is closely aligned with the Strategic Direction 1.

#### Main activities in 2008

- Conducted the pilot phase of an Early Warning System project to predict and pre-empt systemic threats to civil society emerging through legislation, official policies or restrictive practices on the ground. Local partners in seven countries - Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Philippines, Solomon Islands, United States and Vietnam - participated.
- Laid the groundwork for a civil society networking and knowledge sharing project to exchange and promote best practices on working in restrictive environments in the Eurasia region.
- Undertook activities to protect the rights of civil society actors including analysis of restrictive NGO legislation in Ethiopia, Jordan and Uganda, submissions to the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review Process on freedoms of association and assembly in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, press statements on assassination of human rights activists in the Philippines and targeting of civil society members in Pakistan, a campaign to highlight patterns of restrictions and cases of activists detained because of their work in China, India, Iran, Syria and Uzbekistan, and a fact finding mission to Zimbabwe on repression of civil society freedoms.



Children smile for the camera during a CSW fact-finding mission to Zimbabwe in December 2008.

#### Year ahead

In 2009, CSW plans to build on the work begun in 2008 and extend the Early Warning System project to 14 countries, strengthen the Eurasia network to protect civil society’s rights with particular focus on Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, along with regular highlighting of threats to civil society around the world as and when they arise.



### PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE (PG)

Participatory Governance (PG) works to build the capacity of targeted Southern-based civil society and government actors to promote participatory and accountable governance of public institutions at local and national levels. Its multi-dimensional capacity-building strategy focuses on i) generating and sharing knowledge and learning; ii) helping targeted practitioners acquire practical skills and tools; iii) building bridges between civil society and government actors and an active “community of practice” among participatory governance practitioners; and iv) promoting innovation in participatory governance practices. PG is one of CIVICUS’ current interventions for the Strategic Direction 3 at the country level.

#### Main activities in 2008:

- Convened a global conference entitled “How to Build Political Will for Participatory Governance?” on 16-18 June 2008 in Glasgow. A rich body of knowledge was generated including the identification of key reasons for political “won’t” and exploration of strategies and tools that have proved successful in building genuine political will for participatory governance. A publication on the same topic is being developed (to be published in late 2009).
- Supported skills-building workshops, organised by the programme partners CLUSA in Ghana, Idasa in South Africa,

Polis in Brazil and PRIA in India, each attended by 25-40 targeted participatory governance practitioners from 3-4 neighbouring countries. To promote continued learning and practical skills, the workshops were followed by the establishment of regional networks, provision of mentoring services by the partner organisations to a select group of workshop participants, and small grants to strategically selected innovative participatory governance projects.

- Worked to develop an online resource centre (to be officially launched in the second part of 2009) to facilitate greater access to participatory governance resources and provide a forum for practitioners worldwide to engage in information sharing, peer-learning and joint action. More than fifty cutting-edge approaches/tools will be included in the online toolkit which has been developed in collaboration with a network of specialists from different parts of the world.

#### Year Ahead

In 2009, PG will expand the skills-building programmes to three more regions (South-East Asia, Central America, and the MENA region), launch the publication "From Political Won't to Political Will: Building Support for Participatory Governance" and the online resource centre "PGExchange", and operationalise a global community of practice on participatory governance.



## LEGITIMACY, TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY (LTA)

Legitimacy, Transparency and Accountability (LTA) aims to enhance the credibility of civil society organisations (CSOs) by strengthening

internal mechanisms for legitimacy, accountability and transparency. LTA works with members, partners and other allies to support initiatives to maintain and when necessary to improve the accountability, transparency and legitimacy of CSOs and to encourage and support CSOs to comply with the highest

standards of conduct in all aspect of their work. LTA is an evolving programme closely aligned with Strategic Direction 2.

#### Main activities in 2008

- Made plans to engage CIVICUS programmes to develop two communities of practice: i) with the Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA), a collective of 56 national associations, to assist in developing, maintaining or enhancing the legitimacy, transparency and accountability of members and ii) with CSW to sensitise CSOs on responsibilities in regard to their existence in environments that are associated with threats to civic space.
- Presented LTA to two regional groups: Promoting CSO Legitimacy, Independence and Credibility – an East African Regional Conference from the 3rd to the 5th of September and a regional meeting of social welfare organisations for children, Play Soccer, in November in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Conceptualised an e-forum as the medium for the discussion of common issues and presentation of innovative solutions by the community of practice. The e-forum will be active following the community of practice workshops in September 2009.
- Convened an advisory group comprising of eminent scholars, practitioners and stakeholders who have extensive knowledge and experience on matters related to civil society legitimacy, transparency and accountability.

#### Year Ahead

LTA aims to develop a platform that is flexible to promote cross-learning and effective communication between CSOs and their constituents but robust enough to allow for CIVICUS to assist in building sustainable capacity where it is needed. In order to achieve this, LTA aims to create five communities of practice around CIVICUS programmes in order to increase awareness of LTA issues.



Participants engage with the proceedings during a Participatory Governance in Glasgow in June 2008.

*“LTA works with members, partners and other allies to encourage and support CSOs to comply with the highest standards of conduct in all aspect of their work.”*

## CIVICUS PROGRAMMES (CONTINUED)



### DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS AND COOPERATION (DEC)

In the light of GCAP becoming a separate legal entity from CIVICUS (see below), in 2008 CIVICUS also embarked on developing a programme of work on development effectiveness and cooperation. The main focus of this new programme is to increase the engagement of civil society in the development effectiveness arena. DEC will have strong resonance with all of the Strategic Directions.

#### Main activities in 2008

- Actively engaged in the OECD 3rd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF3) in Accra, Ghana, in September as part of the aid effectiveness CSO International Steering Group (ISG) process. CIVICUS' main contribution to the ISG was in developing communication together with the members of the communications working group.

- Contributed to the CSO Development Effectiveness process as an active participant in a dedicated CSO-led process called the "Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness". The Forum was formally acknowledged in the Accra Agenda for Action, endorsed at the HLF3 in Accra. The Open Forum is headed by a Global Facilitation Group (GFG) composed of 25 member organisations, led by a Consortium of six GFG member organisations, including CIVICUS. CIVICUS' mandate is the outreach to and mobilisation of International CSO networks and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs).

#### Year Ahead

INGOs and International CSO networks involved in the Open Forum will gather evidence on the specific contribution of International CSOs and their networks to development effectiveness; contribute to the development effectiveness principles and the political strategy of the Open Forum by defending collectively the CSOs' "global space" occupied by these INGOs and networks.

### IMPACT, PLANNING AND LEARNING FRAMEWORK (IPLF)

In 2008, CIVICUS embarked on a journey of building an Impact, Planning and Learning Framework (IPLF). IPLF is primarily intended as a tool to help CIVICUS monitor the progress of implementation and impact of our work under the Strategic Directions 2008-12. It was also designed to facilitate the process of collective learning, by way of strengthening the organisational system in programme monitoring and evaluation as well as organisational development matters.

The work began by developing a concept paper that provides the current sketch of the organisational situation in CIVICUS regarding learning, monitoring and evaluation and offers suggestions as to how an IPLF could be created. This first phase was carried out by engaging external consultants and forming a staff reference group.

One of the key findings from this phase was that CIVICUS should work on the systems design for IPLF, including identifying the various rhythms for planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and offering guidance on how these can be structured to maximise learning. In 2009, the work will continue by hiring an IPLF Manager who will be responsible for leading this process of building and constantly upgrading the organisational framework.

*The aid system should not be a pyramid, but a circle, with donors and beneficiaries engaging on the same level*  
- CIVICUS helped organise a photo essay on aid effectiveness during the HLF3 in Accra, Ghana.



## VOLUNTEERING AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Pathways for participation in human development

## SPECIAL PROJECT ON VOLUNTEERISM

CIVICUS, in partnership with the International Association of Volunteer Effort (IAVE) and United Nations Volunteers (UNV), undertook a number of activities to raise awareness about the diverse contributions of volunteerism to civil society and citizen participation.

### Main activities in 2008

- In October, the three organisations published a discussion paper entitled, "Volunteering and Social Activism: Pathways for participation in human development." The paper explores the role of volunteering and social activism in fostering people's participation in social change and human development. A geographically diverse range of over 100 volunteer-involving organisations from the CIVICUS, UNV and IAVE networks contributed to the research project. The paper is available in multiple languages on World Volunteer Web, a clearinghouse for information and resources on volunteerism.
- A select group of participants helped to highlight the key findings of the paper at the 20th IAVE World Volunteer Conference as well as the 8th CIVICUS World Assembly.

### Year Ahead

CIVICUS is currently renewing its partnership with IAVE and UNV, and jointly identifying activities to undertake in the lead up to the International Year of the Volunteer + 10 (2011). As part of this process, CIVICUS will be exploring options for integrating its volunteerism work into new and existing programmes and operations, including the development of a Volunteer Programme and Management Scheme.

“Volunteerism is a key strategy for creating a global community of informed and active citizens.”

- Karena Cronin, United Nations volunteer with CIVICUS

## CIVICUS AT THE UN

The purpose of CIVICUS representation at the United Nations in both Geneva and New York is to enhance the space and impact of civil society in decision making processes. In particular, during 2008 the focus continued to be: i) enhancing civil society space and participation at the UN with particular regard to the participation of women, gender minorities and southern civil society in a human rights framework, ii) UN democratisation and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

### Main activities in 2008

- Engaged on a voluntary basis with a new representative at the UN in Geneva, Renate Bloem, former President of CONGO in June.
- Networked with the UN NGO Community in New York and Geneva, as well as around the world with whom CIVICUS maintains regular contact, including attendance at meetings and participation in joint initiatives.
- Secured the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) NGO executive committee's participation at the World Assembly 2008 in Glasgow, as well as CIVICUS participation at the DPI NGO Annual Conference in Paris, including the Civil Society Watch's workshop on threats to civil society and interventions by our Secretary General.
- Participated in civil society co-ordination meetings at the UN Mission and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Spring Meetings with the international financial institutions, including various UBUNTU meetings on financing for development and on taxation of international financial transactions.
- Engaged in the preparatory process and the final event of the Durban Review Conference on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance.
- Delivered statements, prepared reports and organised side-events during key UN meetings on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 60, on civil society under threat, on human rights education and human rights defenders.

### Year Ahead

The US financial implosion occurred in the midst of the UN High-level meeting on the MDGs and took all development discussions to another level of magnitude and most immediately to the General Assembly Interactive Panel on the financial meltdown. Working to ensure that the voices of civil society and citizens from around the world are heard in discussions on the impact of this crisis and ways forward will be a priority for CIVICUS UN in the year ahead.

*CIVICUS engagement with the UN in New York and Geneva is spearheaded by voluntary representatives. CIVICUS thanks these hard-working individuals for their dedication to CIVICUS and civil society.*



Renate Bloem, CIVICUS' new representative to the UN in Geneva.

## CIVICUS AS A CONVENER AND NETWORK FACILITATOR

*“The next World Assembly will be on 20-23 August 2010 in Montreal Canada. We hope to see you there!”*

In addition to its programmatic work, CIVICUS aims to bring together the many voices of civil society in order to exchange knowledge, build best practices and develop strategies for enhancing the sector. In this role as a convener, CIVICUS hosts the World Assembly and facilitates several networks of civil society organisations and activists. The following provides highlights on these activities from 2008.



### WORLD ASSEMBLY

The CIVICUS World Assembly serves as a primary venue for civil society practitioners, researchers, activists, concerned business leaders and representatives from governments and development agencies to share ideas and experiences on strengthening citizen participation and to engage with donors and government representatives.

#### Main activities for 2008

- The 2008 CIVICUS World Assembly, held from 18-21 June at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, was the third and last in the Glasgow series. CIVICUS and the World Assembly team would like to thank our Scottish partners, SCVO, for their excellent hosting of this event and for the close ties forged between our two organisations over the past three years.
- The World Assembly centred on the theme “Acting Together for a Just World” with a focus on “People, Participation and Power”. This was discussed in 4 plenaries, 2 mini-plenaries, 30 workshops and 10 break-out sessions. Delegate participation was central and included break out sessions, 4 live BBC radio programmes and formal and informal networking sessions.

Pascal Lamy, Director General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) responds to a question from the audience during a session at the 2008 World Assembly.

- A total of 789 delegates attended from 102 countries. Southern participation was enhanced through bursaries. Key national and international government and multilateral institution representatives also participated (e.g. DFID, the World Bank, and UN agencies).
- Some of the speakers at this year’s event included Sharan Burrow, President of the International Trade Union Confederation; Salil Shetty, Director of the UN Millennium Campaign, Pascal Lamy, Director General of the World Trade Organisation; Jose Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the Organisation of American States; Douglas Alexander, UK Secretary of State for International Development; David Nussbaum, CEO of the Worldwide Fund WWF; and Ela Bhatt, a former member of the Indian parliament and a member of The Elders.
- In addition, a second successful Youth Assembly was held with 198 delegates, 72 from developing countries. 117 of the youth delegates joined the World Assembly. They played a large part in the march and rally held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and led off by Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- Evidence of concrete partnerships and work streams resulting from the World Assembly, both South-South and South-North, is strong. Two Innovation Awards, arising out of World Assembly participation in 2007, were presented to a Scottish-South African project on the MDGs, and a human rights education project in the Niger Delta region.

#### Year Ahead

In 2009, CIVICUS will be preparing for the next series of World Assemblies to be held in Montréal, Canada, from 2010 to 2012. The first of the series will be on 20-23 August 2010. Please visit [www.civicassembly.org](http://www.civicassembly.org) for information on the programme and registration. We hope to see you there!



## AFFINITY GROUP OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS (AGNA)

The Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA) convenes national associations of civil society organisations to enhance their effectiveness by i) convening members to share experiences about their work and engagements and adopt collective responses to common challenges, and ii) facilitating discussions and mutual learning on how to run national associations effectively.

### Main activities in 2008

- Launched the AGNA resource guide; “How to establish and run a National Association”, which gathers the knowledge and experience of AGNA members on the factors to consider when establishing a National Association (part 1) and resources for established National Associations on securing their legitimacy, accountability and transparency, among other issues (part 2). Members have indicated that the guide makes their work more effective.
- Peer-learning exchange visits were conducted, in particular between the Independent Sector (IS) USA and the Chinese Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO) China, to provide space for AGNA members to learn from each other, exchange experiences and identify joint solutions to common challenges.
- Organised a workshop at the 2008 CIVICUS World Assembly to bring together representatives of national associations. Three joint research papers were presented by members: ANGOA (New Zealand) and DES (Solomon Islands) on “National Associations’ experiences in improving the terms of engagement with government: Pacific experiences,” OFOP (Poland) and SCVO (Scotland) on “National Associations as initiators of establishing and improving the standards of Public consultations,” and CEMEFL, POJAJU and ANONG on “Incidence in public social policies of national associations in Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay.”

## GENDER EQUALITY TEAM

2008 was a year of growth and expansion for the CIVICUS Gender Equality Team (GET). GET is an all-voluntary team of CIVICUS staff, volunteers and interns, as well as Board members, which seeks to integrate a focus on gender equality throughout CIVICUS.

At the 8th CIVICUS World Assembly, GET convened a group of leading women’s rights and gender equality advocates. The constructive feedback shared at this meeting informed GET’s priorities for the remainder of the year. For example, GET participated in CIVICUS’ strategic planning processes for 2009-2012 and ensured that gender equality issues were discussed throughout. GET also conducted several staff sensitisation campaigns, and held a day-long staff workshop to further explore the relevance of gender and power to our personal lives, our programmatic work, and to global civil society more broadly. Following this, GET members assisted departmental managers in assessing their work and identifying ways of integrating gender equality into their plans. This process resulted in very real and achievable targets that go beyond viewing gender equality merely in terms of equal numbers of men and women.

Next year, GET will focus on developing new and sustainable institutional structures, as well as increasing its gender expertise so that CIVICUS can strengthen its commitment to advancing gender equality. This will be closely linked with the work of Impact, Planning and Learning Framework.



Representatives of national associations of civil society organisations discuss engaging with governments during the 2008 World Assembly.



The CIVICUS GET team

*“Our national association has very limited resources to carry out in-depth research and analysis and the AGNA meeting and workshop filled an important gap in this respect.”*

- A representative from ANGOA-New Zealand on the AGNA workshop

## CIVICUS AS A CONVENER AND NETWORK FACILITATOR (CONTINUED)

- Organised the AGNA annual general meeting to provide an opportunity for AGNA members to meet face-to-face to address challenges facing national associations, discuss areas of progress and identify priorities for the coming year.

### Year ahead

AGNA will continue its activities into 2009 to promote networking and knowledge sharing and create opportunities for joint action among AGNA members. In particular, AGNA will be working with CIVICUS' LTA programme to increase the knowledge base of AGNA members on those issues.



### INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY NGOS NETWORK (IANGO)

The annual IANGO Workshop creates a space for leaders of IANGOs to engage in reflection, learning and strategic thinking with the aim of enabling action on common challenges and opportunities. One tangible output is the International NGOs Accountability Charter, which sets a common code of conduct for organisations that work transnationally on the protection and promotion of public goods.

The Accountability Charter has an independent website at [www.ingoaccountabilitycharter.org](http://www.ingoaccountabilitycharter.org). CIVICUS functions as the secretariat for the annual Workshop and the Charter.

### Main Activities in 2008

- The Accountability Charter's members increased to 64.
- The Accountability Charter Company became a registered company in the United Kingdom in February.
- The 6th annual IANGO workshop was successfully held from 1-3 June in Berlin.

Delegates listen to a discussion with The Elders during the 2008 CIVICUS World Assembly in Glasgow.

### Year ahead

The role of the secretariat will be further defined in light of the Accountability Charter Company becoming a registered company in the UK. In addition, the long-term future of the IANGO Workshop will be examined after the 7th annual workshop in Barcelona in May/June 2009.



### GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION AGAINST POVERTY (GCAP)

As a growing alliance of trade unions, community groups, faith groups, women and youth organisations, NGOs and other campaigners working together across more than

100 national platforms, GCAP is calling for action from the world's leaders to meet their promises to end poverty and inequality. In particular, they demand solutions that address the issues of public accountability, just governance and the fulfilment of human rights, trade justice, a major increase in the quantity and quality of aid and financing for development, debt cancellation and gender equality. During 2008, CIVICUS continued to host the global secretariat of the GCAP.

### Main Activities in 2008

- GCAP coalitions around the world brought together citizens from diverse organisations and social groups to call for an end to poverty and inequality.
- With a focus on individuals and groups 'Taking Action', people from 131 countries were involved, an increase in the number of countries from 2007.
- Coalitions came together around the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, for which almost 117 million people were mobilised around the globe setting a new world record.

- GCAP also came together around key moments in 2008 and was prominent as a force denouncing the lack of political action to address the three main crises devastating poor people in the year; the food, fuel and financial crises.
- 12 'Poverty hearings' were held at the national level throughout 2008 and fed into a global poverty hearing, held in New York around the UN High Level Event on the MDGs. This brought the voices of those living in poverty to the global decision making stage.

#### Year ahead

Much of 2008 was spent developing the structure for GCAP to become more independent, streamlined and accountable, through a process of formalising a new entity, the GCAP Global Foundation (to be registered as an independent not-for-profit organisation in the Netherlands), and the election of a new governing body, the GCAP Global Council. As of May 2009, GCAP will have secured an autonomous legal registration and thus become independent of CIVICUS.



GCAP campaigners take to the streets.

## CIVICUS COMMUNICATIONS

CIVICUS' communication department is focused on three objectives, i) enhancing the image and brand of CIVICUS as a whole, ii) providing support to CIVICUS programmes and iii) enhancing the information exchange on civil society issues with members, partners, and civil society practitioners.

#### Main activities in 2008

- Reached over 70,000 individual subscribers with the weekly e-newsletter, e-CIVICUS, covering a broad range of issues affecting civil society.
- Launched a new CIVICUS website ([www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org)) in July, which addressed many of the technical issues of the former website.
- Engaged with local and foreign media, improving the coverage and profile of CIVICUS as a whole, as well as that of individual campaigns and civil society more broadly.
- Produced CIVICUS printed and multimedia materials, including an interactive World Assembly CD-ROM, and programme-specific brochures.

#### Year ahead

2009 will see the development of a comprehensive CIVICUS communication strategy in order to improve the CIVICUS brand and the ability to reach out to broader civil society. Key activities for the new year include improving the navigation and information available on the CIVICUS website, updating and improving the content and format of e-CIVICUS and embracing new media and social networking platforms such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

*“You can visit CIVICUS at [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org), on Facebook and on YouTube!”*

*“Thank you for sending us all the useful information about various events. Thank you for enlightening us about issues from around the world and thank you for letting us share ours with you. Be always one of the first and best.”*

- Nigar Mammadova,  
Economic Research Center  
(ERC), Azerbaijan & CIVICUS  
member

## CIVICUS MEMBERSHIP

CIVICUS Membership is open to civil society organisations, foundations and individuals from across the spectrum and diversity of civil society.

During 2008, CIVICUS represented a wide influential network of civil society organisations and networks including large global INGOs, national, regional networks and grassroots CSOs centred around particular thematic areas, such as gender, climate/environment, poverty, governance and accountability, from 110 countries from the global North and South.

All members join in solidarity with other like-minded people and organisations by supporting CIVICUS' mission, vision and values. As such, members join as a show of support and based on a desire to join an alliance that helps:

*Protect the rights of civil society, promote good practice among civil society organisations and increase the influence of civil society with local, national and international governments and institutions.*

CIVICUS and its activities provided added value to members in 2008 in the following ways:

- **Sensemaking:** CIVICUS helped to monitor and make sense of the complex global civil society for its members through our electronic newsletters and other communications.
- **Convening:** CIVICUS brought together members from diverse regions and sectors to share knowledge, good practice and experiences, primarily during the 2008 World Assembly and several members' meetings.
- **Space-providing:** CIVICUS helped provide a space for its members to be heard on the global stage by organising side events and incorporating member views into its representations at international forums.

CIVICUS aims to 'sense' the needs of its members, serve their interests, reflect their views in its public stances and programme priorities and remain accountable to them. Accordingly, in 2008, CIVICUS adopted new Strategic Directions that seek to maximise membership involvement and position members at the centre of CIVICUS.

Looking ahead to 2009, the economic crisis has aggravated pre-existing human rights problems and now more than ever we seek the voice of our members to ensure the empowerment of people who can not speak for themselves. As a result in 2009, we aim to engage members further in conversation through new tools, such as social networking platforms, to ensure participation, networking, sharing and dialogue.

*“During our struggles in the coups that Fiji has faced, the global brotherhood and solidarity gave us hope when all looked bleak.”*

*I salute the organisation for representing the people in the many global discussions that we cannot be physically involved in and for keeping us updated on decisions made as well as commentaries that help us in developing advocacy and action on the ground. I salute the passionate people involved in this organisation for keeping us inspired. I hope many more successes come to CIVICUS and civil society sector around the globe as we struggle for human dignity.”*

- Sashi Kiran, Founder/Director, Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises N Development, Fiji



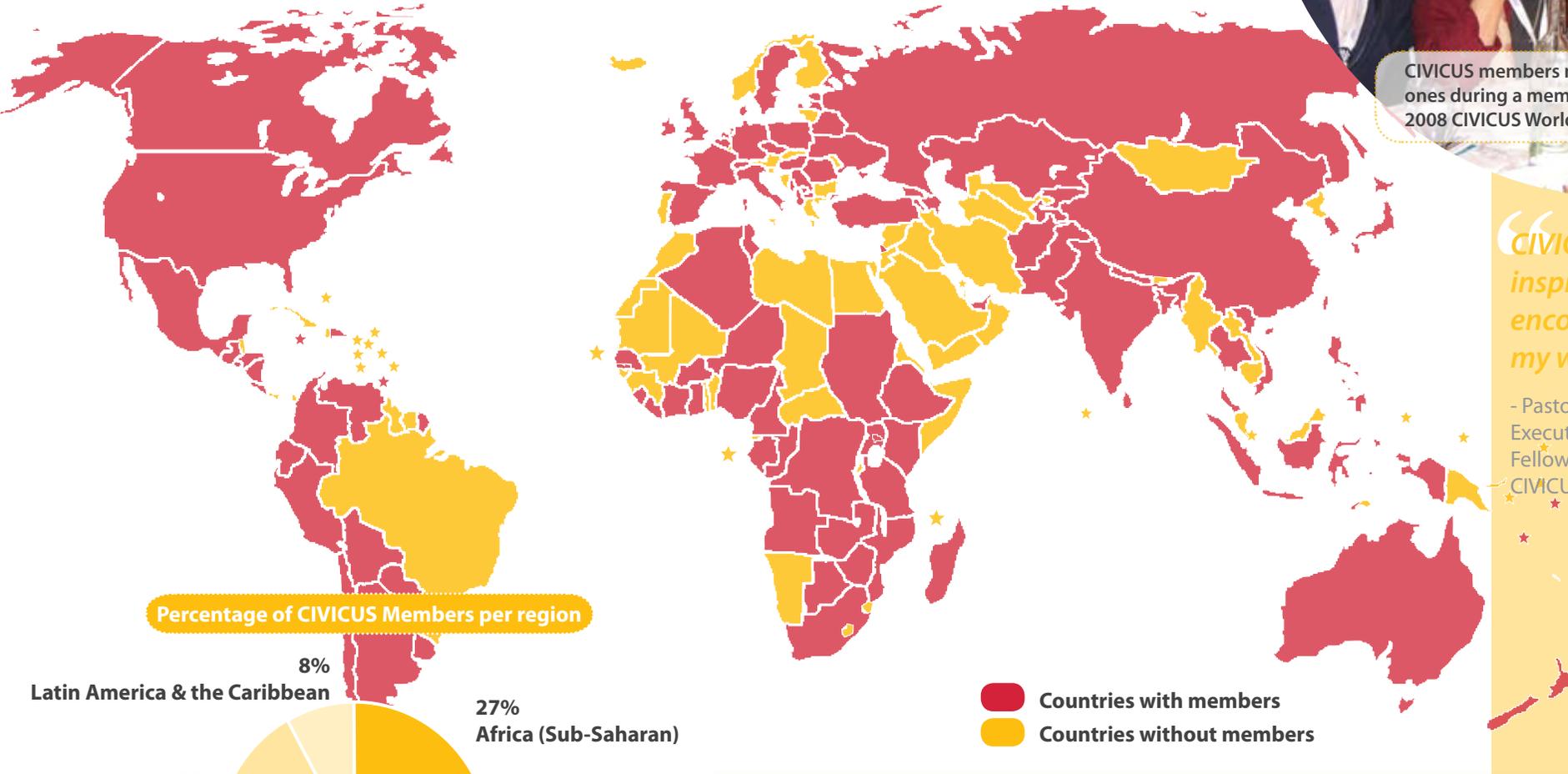
CIVICUS staff assist new members during the 2008 CIVICUS World Assembly.

# MEMBERSHIP BY COUNTRY AND REGION

In 2008, CIVICUS had members from 110 countries in all regions of the world. The following map and chart illustrate this spread of membership.



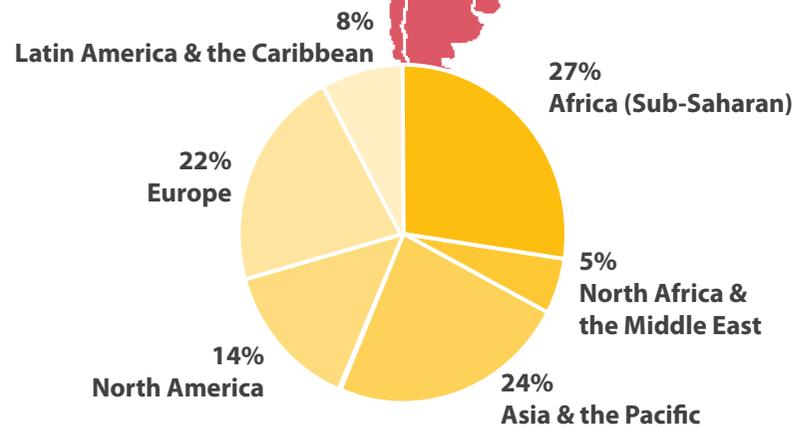
CIVICUS members make new friends and greet old ones during a members' networking lunch at the 2008 CIVICUS World Assembly.



*“CIVICUS for me is an inspiration and an encouragement for my work.”*

- Pastor Deo Gashagaza  
Executive Director of Prison Fellowship Rwanda & CIVICUS member

Percentage of CIVICUS Members per region



■ Countries with members  
■ Countries without members



## Are WE looking for YOU?

In 2009, CIVICUS is launching the One for One campaign with the goal of having at least one CIVICUS member in every UN member state. Are we looking for you? Find out at [www.civicus.org/1-for-1-campaign](http://www.civicus.org/1-for-1-campaign).