

STATE OF



CIVIL SOCIETY

2011



ABOUT CIVICUS

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation is an international alliance of civil society working to strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world, especially in areas where participatory democracy and citizens' freedom of association are challenged. CIVICUS has a vision of a global community of active, engaged citizens committed to the creation of a more just and equitable world. This is based on the belief that the health of societies exists in direct proportion to the degree of balance between the state, the private sector and civil society, and that governance is improved when there are multiple means for people to have a say in decision-making. CIVICUS seeks to amplify the voices and opinions of people and their organisations, share knowledge about and promote the value and contribution of citizen participation and civil society, and help give expression to the enormous creative energy of a diverse civil society.

CIVICUS, with its numerous partners, works by bringing together and connecting different civil society actors and other stakeholders in civil society; researching into and publishing on the health, state and challenges of civil society; and developing policy positions and advocating for the greater inclusion of and a more enabling environment for civil society. CIVICUS' membership encompasses individual citizens and local, national, regional and international civil society organisations, and CIVICUS has members and partners in around 100 countries worldwide. CIVICUS was founded in 1993 and has its main office in Johannesburg, South Africa.

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FOREWORD



This is the first incarnation of CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation's report on the state of civil society. In line with our core mission as an alliance that aims to amplify the voice of ordinary citizens, our inaugural report features five thematic chapters with salient contributions from an array of civil society constituents and 30 country profiles produced together with CIVICUS partners.

We cannot be effective if we don't know who we are as civil society. We cannot strengthen what we cannot see, cannot describe. CIVICUS walks the path of self-knowledge through structured action research. For 20 years CIVICUS has undertaken cutting edge action research on the dimensions and dynamics of civil society. This report continues this central line of our work as a critical champion and friend of civil society.

It is our goal to make this report a truly collaborative product, co-owned, co-authored and co-edited by CIVICUS members, partners and friends. We will now support a range of convening and advocacy activities around the State of Civil Society report with a view to supporting our partners' efforts to create a more enabling environment for civil society around the world.

We envisage that the report will serve as a space for diverse civil society groupings to reflect on their internal challenges and the external environment for their operations, to celebrate their dynamism and strengths, and to formulate collective strategies to achieve greater impact. Through the creation of a corresponding online platform, we hope this report will evolve into a living conversation through which civil society actors can explore key issues and use their evolving understandings to shape their work in real time.

If this report on the state of civil society today is able to become a highly participatory forum that is useful to civil society champions everywhere, then we believe that it can become a definitive regular snapshot by civil society on civil society.

I hope you find the report useful. Please work with us to make future versions more inclusive, comprehensive and definitive.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DB' followed by a stylized flourish.

David Bonbright

Chair, Board of Directors

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

ACRONYMS

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action – agreement of the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Accra, Ghana, 2008
AU	African Union
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CIS	Confederation of Independent States: most former Soviet Union Countries
CIVICUS	CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
COP17	17th Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Durban, South Africa, 28 November to 9 December 2011
CSI	CIVICUS Civil Society Index project
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
EC	European Commission
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FTT	Financial transaction tax
G8	Group of Eight: governments of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom and United States of America.
G20	Group of 20: group of finance ministers and central bank governors from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States of America, plus the European Union.
GCAP	Global Call to Action against Poverty, an international civil society campaign
GDP	Gross domestic product
HLF4	4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Busan, South Korea, 29 November to 1 December 2012
HRDs	Human rights defenders
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa
ICNL	International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
ICTs	Information communication technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENA	Middle East and North Africa region
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ODA	Official development assistance
OHCHR	Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights
PPPs	Public-private partnerships

R2P	Responsibility to Protect
Rio+20	UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 20 to 22 June 2012, commonly known as Rio+20.
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable development goals, posited as a potential successor to the Millennium Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHRC	UN Human Rights Council
UNSC	UN Security Council
UN Women	UN Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
UPR	UN Human Rights Council – Universal Periodic Review: the process by which States review other States' human rights reports
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WA	CIVICUS World Assembly, held in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in Montreal, Canada
WP-EFF	Working Party on Aid Effectiveness, which organises the High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness

DEFINITIONS

CIVIL SOCIETY

This report follows the definition of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index project, which understands the term civil society to mean ‘the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market, which is created by individual and collective actions, organisations and institutions to advance shared interests’. Civil society therefore encompasses civil society organisations (CSOs) and the actions of less formalised groups and individuals. Where the term ‘organised civil society’ is used in this report, it refers to independent, non-state and non-private sector associations and organisations that have some form of structure and formal rules of operating, together with the networks, infrastructure and resources they utilise.

CITIZENS

References to ‘citizens’ in this report do not imply any legalistic definitions of what constitutes a citizen and citizenship in any particular context, but are meant broadly to imply people who are governed and therefore have a stake in governance.

CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX PROJECT

One of the primary information sources for this report is the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project, a participatory, self-assessment exercise on the state of civil society, which was carried out in 35 countries between 2008 and 2011. The CSI, through a mixture of surveys, case studies, focus groups and workshops, takes the views of citizens, CSO leaders and external stakeholders with an interest in civil society, such as people from government, parliament, the judiciary, the media, academia and the private sector, generating a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data. It examines issues of people’s participation, the institutional arrangements of CSOs, the extent to which CSOs practise progressive values, the impact CSOs are perceived to achieve and the external environment which sets the context for civil society, as well as the historic development of civil society in a particular country and the power relations between different actors. It therefore attempts to build up a comprehensive picture of the strengths, weaknesses, constraints and opportunities for civil society in a participating country.

All in all around 50,000 members of the public, 5,000 CSO representatives and 1,500 external stakeholders fed their views into the 2008 to 2011 CSI. In 2011 the following countries published CSI data which is drawn on in various places in this report: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Guinea, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Liberia, Macedonia, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Philippines, Russia, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, South Korea, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela and Zambia. The CSI project’s research partners were the University of Heidelberg, Germany.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State of Civil Society 2011, published by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, April 2012, is the first report on the changing health and state of civil society. This pilot report was produced with inputs from a number of civil society activists, leaders and other stakeholders, and in future years will be developed through increasing collaboration with a widening spectrum of civil society actors.

INTRODUCTION

2011 marked a critical juncture for civil society. Authoritarian regimes buckled under the weight of citizen pressure, and prevailing political and economic orders faced unprecedented opposition from people power movements in a great wave of protests across many countries. The opening of new arenas and avenues for civic participation and mobilisation in turn provoked significant state backlash against activists and CSOs, with a heavier focus on restricting internet usage. Foreign investments by emerging powers, particularly China, impacted on civil society space in donor recipient countries, but this was not matched by a rise in advocacy by CSOs based in emerging powers to press for more progressive foreign policies by their governments. On the global stage, civil society continued to experience limited access to key multilateral forums and despite the rise of a cluster of economic and political powers, states tended to use the year's key global meetings to advance national interests. Many CSOs are facing existential crises, which includes problems caused by a deteriorating funding environment. New and broad-based coalitions between diverse civil society formations are needed to best capitalise on what is currently a generational opportunity to demand transformational political, social and economic change.

COUNTRY PROFILES

The report's 30 civil society country profiles, drawn from the research of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project, suggest the following conclusions when considered as a collective:

- Civil society space is volatile and changing;
- State-civil society relations are limited and mostly unsatisfactory;
- Financial and human resource challenges for CSOs are continuing and in some cases worsening;
- There is often a gap between CSOs' articulation of values and their internal practice of them;
- Networking is insufficient, with significant gaps in international connections and civil society-private sector relationships;
- CSOs achieve greater impact in the social sphere than in influencing policy, and there is a gap between high levels of activity and moderate levels of impact;
- There is continuing public trust in civil society as an idea but low levels of involvement in formal civil society activities compared to higher levels of non-formal participation;
- Understandings of civil society need to be expansive to encompass non-formal movements, traditional forms of participation and online activism;
- New processes need to be instigated to better connect formal CSOs with non-formalised forms of participation.

MAJOR CIVIL SOCIETY THEMES

The report looks at five key thematic areas across civil society: civil society response to emergency and crisis; protest, activism and participation; the space for civil society; the resourcing of civil society; and civil society's role in the multilateral arena.

CRISIS, RESPONSE, OPPORTUNITY: CIVIL SOCIETY AND EMERGENCY IN 2011

The many emergencies of 2011, such as the Japan earthquake, the East African food crisis and the Thailand floods, offer new examples of the complexity of crisis events for civil society. Disaster response forced international humanitarian NGOs in particular to grapple with challenges such as prioritisation, working with uncivil forces and cooperating with local CSOs. Emergencies can also provoke crises of legitimacy, which create new space and visibility for CSOs and expose inefficient and corrupt governments, and therefore serve as catalysts for civic mobilisation and broader societal change. It is often under the intensity of emergencies that the dynamics and tensions affecting civil society most clearly come to light, and the effectiveness of civil society's contribution, its support and its legitimacy can best be seen. In the immediate aftermath of a sudden natural disaster, civil society is often able to respond more rapidly, more nimbly and more effectively than government, and the existence of social capital and local community structures are key indicators of resilience and effective response to emergency. Investment in civil society in the sites of emergency should be prioritised to strengthen future response capacity.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

A power and legitimacy vacuum. Crises represent opportunities for governments and CSOs to demonstrate their efficiency, but a failure to deal swiftly and effectively with natural disasters and other emergencies can result in a rapid loss of legitimacy for both parties. Emergencies also offer moments for civil society to gain credibility and push for permanent social and civic gains.

Supporting diverse forms of civil society is crucial. Civil Society Index (CSI) data shows that trust in CSOs is generally at least 10% higher than trust in all other public actors. The findings also show that in most countries, faith structures have the highest trust of any non-governmental formation, followed by socially-oriented organisations and then environmental and women's CSOs. This suggests the need for approaches which identify the diverse locales of public trust and social capital and enable the contribution of the special strengths of different parts of civil society and the making of connections between them. For example, in cases of conflict, humanitarian INGOs playing politically neutral roles are often able to access areas and affected people which would be off-limits to other actors. Faith-based CSOs can

have the ability to reach and channel diasporic, immediate support. However, the primary interest among communities to 'help your own' can work to the detriment of the most marginalised citizens.

Humanitarian INGOs and the constant tension between their values and operations.

Humanitarian INGOs necessarily face constant self-questioning about issues of timing, methods, harm minimisation, partnering, relations with the media and the public, and how to strike a balance between delivering direct assistance and maintaining an independence that also allows them to become engaged in campaigning and advocacy.

Limitations of international solidarity and the challenge of public appeals.

Responses by INGOs and other CSOs depend heavily on public reactions to appeals, and so the varied reactions of people to different disaster events offer a challenge. Simplistic fundraising messages are risky for INGOs if they are relying on additional financial support from appeals to enable rapid and then sustained responses to a complex crisis. Compassion fatigue poses a problem too.

Enhanced role of new media. New applications of social and mobile media are enabling new forms of response, and thereby making possible new formations of social capital and new civic groupings. Innovative tools include those which enable existing CSOs and relief agencies to more rapidly coordinate workers and gather data, and those which enable people to self-report and self-organise.

Importance of donor investment in local civil society. The immediate presence of CSOs on

the ground in crisis situations suggests that more attention should be paid to supporting communities and groupings at the local level and connecting these with humanitarian INGOs. There seems to be some greater recognition of the importance of investments in local civil society. Emerging donors arguably share a disinclination to give through multilateral channels and a desire not to be seen simply as a source of financial support, which implies a corresponding need to develop the capacity of local civil society.

CITIZENS IN ACTION: PROTEST AS PROCESS IN THE YEAR OF DISSENT

2011 was the year of dissent, in which apathy became unfashionable and seemingly unassailable dictators and systems were challenged. At least 88 countries saw different forms of mass citizen action. The origins and motivations of dissent are complex, but the roots of 2011's protests were interconnected: protest was driven by the inability of states to address the fallout of the economic crisis, making serious income inequalities and corruption more acute, and compounded by demographic shifts giving rise to more urbanised, unemployed, frustrated young people. The internet, mobile and social media played a vital role in catalysing civic action, both as an organiser of physical protest and as a civic space in its own right. The state's response to economic crisis can be seen as impinging on the fundamental social contract between state and citizens, and protest can be understood as a way of citizens re-asserting the power to negotiate a new social contract. 2011's movements and moments of protest, dissent and activism must be seen as part of civil society, yet the mass waves of civic action were not foreseen by many CSOs, which in most contexts were not highly involved. A pressing issue for CSOs is the need to build broad-based collaborations with newly mobilised citizens; a challenge is to sustain momentum and a sense of a community of ideas and practice, and of continuing the globalisation of currents of mutual inspiration between protest movements in different contexts.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Awakening of a global consciousness. 2011 was a remarkable year of participation, activism, mobilisation and dissent, linked by common currents of inspiration and imitation. What was new included the scale of dissent, its spread, the methods employed, the connections made and the potential implications.

Advocating for system change. Protests often started out addressing local issues but blossomed into broader critiques of leaders, governance structures and ruling ideologies. Protest also seemed capable of absorbing individual or group concerns. Different demands were made in different contexts, while some movements were characterised by a lack of demands, other movements were seeking changes to the

prevailing status quo. What united protests could be summarised as a striving for dignity and a questioning of the current rules of engagement.

Online space, and social and mobile media as tools and arenas to organise and contest ideas.

New technology facilitated the viral spread of information, ideas and symbols, and enabled people to organise and mobilise offline protest. Movements originally largely downplayed by the mainstream media and politicians, made heavy use of social media to create headlines and generate momentum and cross border solidarity. Online activism needs to be seen as a valid form of participation which enables people to feel involved in a cause.

Protest as a brand. The Arab Spring and the 99% became frequently referenced and imitated brands that could easily be adopted across a range of contexts. 2011 can be seen as a ‘cultural revolution’, with cultural forms and acts of creation challenging the politics of dour necessity and asserting the value of idealism and imagination.

Redefining the paradigms of success, protest as a process. The eventual outcome and legacy of the 2011 movements is yet to be determined. In the MENA region, for all the complexity and continuing contestation, many people now believe they have an opportunity for their lives to be different. Elsewhere, politicians had to be seen to be taking the protests seriously. Beyond this, the success of the 2011 protests may be seen in their having forged new connections and galvanised, radicalised and exposed new publics to activism. Some of the movements that practice consensus-based decision-making and direct democracy are more about modelling alternatives than the articulation of specific policy recommendations, and the success of these movements should be seen as the endurance of processes that develop and practice alternatives.

The need for CSO vigilance and action. Some countries have extended freedoms, and vigilance now needs to be exercised to ensure that these are not rolled back. Some of the classic CSO roles – of acting as a watchdog on the state, proposing policy change, defending the rights of protesters and delivering services in sites of government failure

– are most needed. Contestation will remain in post-revolutionary and non-revolutionary sites of protest, and progressive voices will need to remain organised, engaged and imaginative.

Disconnected CSOs. Many CSO representatives expressed the view that they were behind the curve of protest in 2011. The picture is one of disconnects: disconnects between CSOs and other sectors of society; between CSOs of different types, such as NGOs, faith groups and trade unions, and between service delivery and advocacy CSOs; and between CSOs and citizens. The majority of people have no association with civil society in its institutionalised form, but globally, around half of people associate in less organised forms, in more organic structures. Involvement with CSOs is not an accurate barometer of civic activism; rich associational life exists beyond formalised CSOs.

The necessity of broad-based alliances. In 2011 many protesters experienced the ethos of civil society – participation, activism, collective action, self-help, empowerment – in the raw. New looser, more inclusive alliances and coalitions of different parts of civil society that reflect the unique roles, strengths and contributions of each must be developed to enable enduring pathways for continuing the activism and participation of the newly mobilised. These alliances must combine the institutionalised strengths of CSOs with the flexibility, creativity and mobilising power of the new movements.

A DISENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY: PUSHBACK, PERSECUTION AND PROTECTION STRATEGIES

The increase in protest action saw a corresponding rise in state pushback in both democratic and authoritarian states. Legal and extralegal measures were employed by both state and non-state actors to intimidate or cause harm to civil society personnel to deter them from carrying out their work. There were also several attempts to introduce repressive laws to regulate CSOs, while the key role played by mobile and social media in civic action in 2011 brought fresh attempts to place technical and legal restrictions on this evolving space. In light of this, there is a need to invest in and strengthen protection strategies for human rights defenders and civil society activists who come under attack. 2011 also offered some hope, due to some progressive multilateral measures to protect civic space. After a tumultuous year, at present there may be fresh opportunity to secure the new space opened by civic action by pressuring states to create a more enabling environment for civil society.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Mass protests, heavy pushback. A number of governments misused the law to pre-empt or crackdown on protests. In response to protests in Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Russia, Senegal, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe, the leaders of movements were detained in an apparent leadership decapitation strategy.

Activists and journalists: the targets of persecution. Persecution of civil society actors, including human rights defenders, trade unionists and campaigners, remained rife throughout 2011, and showed a marked increase in some contexts. Several activists were jailed during the year on the basis of ill-founded accusations. This phenomenon was particularly pronounced in countries ruled by long-standing despotic regimes or monarchies, which became increasingly nervous about popular movements taking inspiration from the Arab Spring, such as in Bahrain, Belarus, China, Ethiopia, the Gambia and Zimbabwe. Journalists in particular came under heavy scrutiny, for example in Burundi, China, Iran, Rwanda, Thailand and Venezuela. Women human rights defenders and LGBTI activists remained particularly vulnerable to targeting, intimidation and harassment, particularly in Cambodia, Egypt, Nigeria, Russia, Uganda and Yemen.

The influence of emerging donors. The global context is one of geopolitical shift towards a multi-polar world where the influence of Western democracies is being counterbalanced by the growing economic and political clout of new power centres. As major providers of foreign aid and investment, they sometimes provide a lifeline to governments facing sanctions or censure for human rights abuses from Western donors.

A disabling legal environment for civil society. The CSI research sheds light on laws covering aspects of civil society that are outdated (e.g. Madagascar, Zambia), fragmented and contradictory (Mexico, Tanzania) or assessed by CSOs as disabling (Albania, Jordan, Kazakhstan). A concern that arose in many countries (Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy, Madagascar, Philippines, Senegal, Turkey) is that laws that are on the books are not always translated into effective policy and implementation. In many contexts, relationships between civil society and the state are clouded by lack of transparency (Argentina, Morocco), and

key issues are not open for discussion (Georgia, Russia). Common complaints are of a pro forma approach to civil society consultation (Philippines, Rwanda, Slovenia), or of limited or sporadic dialogue (Bulgaria, Macedonia, Tanzania), and of relationships where the government exercises favouritism towards some CSOs (Kazakhstan, Morocco, Senegal) or where there is excessive government interference (Croatia, Guinea). Lack of government capacity to engage in constructive dialogue also emerges as an issue (Albania, Kosovo).

Changes in the regulatory environment for civil society. In 2011, several regressive laws were instituted or proposed that negatively impacted on the operating environment for civil society. A number of countries targeted the foreign funding of CSOs, e.g. Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Israel and Kyrgyzstan. Many governments imposed measures restricting the ability of individuals to exercise their freedoms of assembly, association and expression, including in Belarus, Malaysia, Uganda and several countries in the Middle East and North Africa. Also many governments proposed or enacted legislation affecting the formation, registration and general lifecycle of CSOs, such as in Algeria, Cambodia and Iran. Following intensive campaigning from domestic and international civil society, plans were shelved or delayed to introduce restrictive civil society laws in Cambodia, Iran and Israel. However, the threat of legislation remains a potent weapon for governments to subdue civil society voices. More positive reforms were introduced in Montenegro, Rwanda, Tunisia and the Kurdistan region in Iraq.

A clampdown on internet freedom. In 2011 a number of governments abused their control of infrastructure to limit access to controversial content, institute countrywide filtering and surveillance systems or, at critical political junctures, intentionally reduce the speed of connection or even shut down the internet. In the revolutionary contexts of North Africa, the shutdowns tended to be counter-productive, drawing greater international attention to restrictions on freedom of expression and bringing people onto the streets. As the parameters of what constitutes a journalist shifts with the rise of social media and blogging, netizens have increasingly come under attack by governments.

Towards an enabling environment for civil society.

CSO framework laws and access to information laws, amongst others, should not impede the work of CSOs but rather form the basis of frequent, transparent, consistent and institutionalised high-quality engagement between CSOs and the state. Support came from multilateral human

rights bodies that helped to advance international norms on freedom of expression, association and assembly. In 2012, these bodies and CSOs must continue to monitor the practice of states and strive to influence legal and policy developments to create a favourable regulatory framework.

THE CHALLENGE OF RESOURCES: CHANGING FUNDING PROSPECTS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

A key question for CSOs is whether they have sufficient resources to respond to the connected crises the world faces, and how those crises are affecting their funding positions. There seems to be growing influence of domestic political concerns on donor agendas, with many CSOs reporting declining funding and changing prioritisation of donors. In response many CSOs are paying more attention to fundraising and diversification of funding sources. Difficulties in analysis remain due to the lack of availability of comparable and up to date data from donors, which the growth of the International Aid Transparency Initiative may help to address, while a further information challenge lies in gathering data across the broad spectrum of civil society. The future of CSO funding will inextricably be linked in the next few years to broader debates on development effectiveness, the shifting roles of CSOs and changing global power relationships.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

The economic crisis, a turbulent time for CSOs.

The CSO funding landscape is characterised by unpredictability and volatility, lack of funds for capacity development and organisational strengthening, limited support to long-term strategies and planning, and declining support from a range of sources in the wake of the economic crisis. Various studies and projections indicate that the global economic crisis is expected to reduce capital inflows to developing countries through negative impacts on foreign direct investment (FDI), official development assistance (ODA) and receipt of remittances from diaspora populations. A majority of CSOs consulted by CIVICUS in 2011 reported constraints in accessing funding, with the situation worsening after 2009, and particularly during 2010 to 2011.

Increased role of commercial interests in shaping donor countries' funding priorities. Business-centred approaches to development cooperation have been promoted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's focus on the private sector as a development actor in the aid effectiveness process. Major bilateral donors such as Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden are increasing their share of ODA set aside for public-

private partnerships or for the full implementation of programmes through private actors.

The securitisation and politicisation of aid.

A heavy focus on bilateral aid from Western governments to countries of strategic importance such as Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq and Pakistan can be observed, suggesting politicised aid policies and practices that undermine international commitments on needs-based aid policies. Changes of government and austerity in many traditional donor countries are seeing a re-emphasis of the domestic agenda on international aid, partly in response to ODA becoming harder to sell in domestic politics.

Bypassing the middleman, changing North-South aid flows. Northern-based CSOs have traditionally had higher expectations of sustainability, partly because they have acted as conduits for development funding from Northern governments to the South, but there seems to be some evidence that donors are increasingly funding Southern CSOs directly. Northern donors are also beginning to offer pooled funding approaches to directly contract work with Southern partners.

Donors rush into the MENA region. In the wake of the Arab Spring, there is a sudden growth of CSOs and donors expanding their operations in the MENA region. CSI findings from former Eastern Bloc countries, where the previous great wave of civic revolutions happened in the 1990s, suggest that a sudden influx of donors can harm the long-term sustainability of CSOs.

Aid transparency gaining ground. A major challenge in understanding civil society funding is the lack of standardised, disaggregated and timely data. Although key advances on aid transparency were made at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness IV in Busan, more progress is still needed. New donor countries must commit to take real action on aid transparency.

Emerging donors support Southern states, not CSOs. Though data from emerging donors is particularly difficult to obtain, an assessment of published reports from new donors seems to show *prima facie* preference for large scale and prestige infrastructure projects, and direct support to governments, with little interest in CSOs. This could perhaps stem from a history in many of the new donor countries of top down development with minimal CSO participation.

Different types of CSOs display different funding patterns. Politically-oriented CSOs - those engaged in campaigning, advocacy, human rights work and policy level work – are highly dependent on donors and government funding. Socially-oriented membership organisations and faith-based organisations are less likely to face resource crises. More than half of CSOs consulted by CIVICUS in 2011 state that membership fees are

their most reliable source of income, followed by international donors and private foundations; the least reliable are individual domestic government contributions. In terms of the significance of these contributions, CSOs placed international donors first, followed by membership fees, then private foundations and lastly individual and domestic government contributions. Ideally, CSOs should have a mix of important and predictable sources of income.

Regional and North/South funding trends. Over 80% of the budgets of developing country CSOs surveyed depend on the contributions of international institutions, with bilateral donors being the principal source of income. In developed countries, individual contributions, corporate donations and government funds constitute the main part of CSOs' funding base.

The value of CSO networks. CSO platforms and networks are seen as important in offering CSOs access to sources of funding and technical support from peers, and networks are generally perceived by donors as more representative and legitimate voices than single CSOs, particularly in countries where political constraints inhibit a strong organised civil society sector. But there is some concern about competition for resources between networks and network members.

More research required. There is also a need to research trends in ODA in the coming years and to analyse the data from 2010 and 2011 once it is made available, to fully understand the impact of the economic crisis on funding patterns and trends.

CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE GLOBAL ARENA: HIGHLIGHTS AND LESSONS FROM KEY GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS IN 2011

The existing institutions of global governance have failed to provide people-centred responses to the current global economic, social, political and environmental crises. Too often in key multilateral meetings and processes, the narrow national interests of states prevailed. The Durban climate change summit (COP17) fell short of the decisive action required, as did the G20 meeting of the world's most powerful economies. Hope came by way of the advent of the new UN Women entity, the Busan summit on aid effectiveness (HLF4), and many of the stances adopted by the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva, particularly during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), its peer-reviewed assessment of human rights in UN member states. In Busan and in Geneva, the space guaranteed to civil society enhanced the credibility and quality of the process, and these

procedures should be regarded as minimal standards that should be extended to other arenas. A predicament for both states and civil society alike is the fact that disconnected summits purport to address intertwined issues such as economic growth, development effectiveness, climate change and human rights in silos. CSOs must combine to advocate for a multilateral system that has the reach and ambition to tackle connected challenges and the imagination to put global interests first.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Heightening tension between international cooperation and national sovereignty. In times of economic downturn, states tend to move away from multilateral action and adopt insular protectionist stances. Fears by states of reducing their economic competitiveness lie at the heart of failures to commit to binding agreements to reduce carbon emissions and to a financial transaction tax. Global decisions on finance, development, aid, the structure of multilateral bodies and climate change are the product of interactions between power-holders acting in their own interests. Several governments found themselves in a classic “prisoners dilemma”, seeking progress and understanding the value of cooperation, but fearful of the comparative advantage gained by states that choose not to act or do not play fair. The rise of new global powers is not translating into more effective multilateral institutions.

Asserting the value of civil society as a knowledge generator, norm-creator and guardian of the public interest. In addition to proposing advances on key issues, civil society must also assert its general right to inclusion in multilateral processes. Decisions and agreements made with civil society input are more aligned with the public interest. High quality civil society participation increases the legitimacy of, compliance with and accountability of agreements reached.

Finding common ground between activists outside high level meetings and civil society representatives on the inside. CSOs purportedly representing the voice of citizens at high level international meetings must endeavour to broker more strategic convergence between activists on the ‘outside’ of meetings and civil society representatives on the ‘inside’. Closer joint working within civil society, and stronger connections between those at the negotiating table and protest movements outside the formal arenas are required for greater impact and CSO legitimacy.

CSOs in emerging economies and global decision-making. While many CSOs in emerging powers have a history of pushing for reforms in their countries, their experience of galvanising national coalitions for international advocacy is less extensive. It is necessary for civil society in emerging powers to press their governments to adopt progressive foreign policy positions.

The HLF4, a model for CSO engagement. Although commitments to transform aid effectiveness and put human rights at the centre of delivery efforts remained elusive in 2011, the multi-stakeholder process leading up to Busan was viewed by many as a pioneering model of civil society engagement, with civil society emerging as a prominent, equal and valuable actor in influencing decision-making. The challenge now for civil society is to monitor adherence to commitments contained in the outcome document, as well as to promote the Busan approach as a minimal model for other processes.

Trends in CSO participation in the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review. From CIVICUS’ analysis of data on CSO participation in eight sessions of the UN HRC’s groundbreaking mechanism, it was determined that nearly three-quarters of CSOs engaged in the UPR came from Europe and North America. The system naturally privileges larger, better-resourced CSOs, which can afford to maintain a permanent presence in Geneva, suggesting a need for broader coalitions so smaller CSOs can benefit from the presence of CSOs in Geneva. It is also important to look beyond Geneva, as the domestic side of the UPR process can be of great value, particularly in the stage of implementation of the recommendations, and to support civil society activity around such national level processes.

UN bodies and the uprisings in the MENA region. UN bodies devoted much attention to promoting and protecting human rights and democracy in

the MENA region in 2011, with CSOs playing a pivotal advocacy role. However, 2011 showcased the shortcomings of UN processes: controversial multilateral action on Libya was followed by near paralysis on human rights violations in Syria. The Arab Spring was a citizen-driven call for peace and prosperity, yet fragmented world powers were unable to respond in a principled and effective manner.

Few entry points for CSOs at COP17. CSOs' disappointment with the outcomes of COP17 reflects the limited opportunities for CSO access, influence and engagement. With more observers than actors present at the negotiations, it is questionable whether CSOs can impact on state positions at highly technical, complex and brief

diplomatic summits. Given these drawbacks, it may be more beneficial for CSOs to invest in engagement strategies in advance of these meetings.

Converging crises demand ambitious transformational agendas. The connected crises the world currently faces underscore the need for a radical rethinking, reinvention and renegotiation of governance paradigms. CSOs can draw inspiration from citizen movements in 2011 that called for the end of business as usual and ambitiously pressed for systemic change. The Rio+20 summit in June 2012 will provide a key test whether the multilateral system can improve its ability to respond to present crises.

INTRODUCTION



Netsanet Belay

Director, Policy and Research
CIVICUS

TAKING STOCK OF A PIVOTAL YEAR: WELCOME TO THE CIVICUS STATE OF CIVIL SOCIETY 2011 REPORT

The beginning of the end of business as usual

2011 was an extraordinary year for the world, and for its civil society. Millions mobilised to demand more from their rulers. People sought democracy and a fairer distribution of wealth. They fought against corruption, exclusion and humiliation. They demanded dignity.

In some places, they achieved remarkable breakthroughs that deserve to be celebrated, albeit successes that demand constant vigilance and civil society engagement in the new spaces created. In others, the pushback from governments and other institutions of power was severe. In some settings, as the euphoria of protest faded, there was the reassertion of entrenched political and social orders, opportunistic jostling for prominence and power, and the fragmentation of protest movements.

The question for those of and engaged with civil society, and for this report, which seeks to understand the state of civil society after 2011, is where does civil society fit into all this? CIVICUS' response here is two-fold.

First, as civil society, we need to affirm that protesters, occupiers and online activists are civil society, even when they are not formed into organisations, and even when people have acted individually. The common disconnect that CIVICUS' research identified in 2011, between the institutions of civil society and citizens, needs to be addressed.

As civil society activists, although we know that the diversity and breadth of civil society are amongst our greatest assets, there is also insufficient connection between different forms of civil society in different locales. We have become better at networking with organisations similar to ourselves and with adjacent aims, but not with different kinds of organisations, and the unusual suspects. We remain fragmented. We compete, and a worsening funding climate for CSOs risks turning that competition toxic.

In civil society, we have also been slow to grasp what we should have understood naturally, the potential offered by social and mobile media to enable new forms of mobilisation and build social capital. In many places, CSOs were behind the curve of protest in 2011 rather than at the vanguard. We need to learn how we can serve and better enable the new protest movements, rather than seek to capture or instrumentalise them.

The new need, including amongst donors, governments, academia, the media and the private sector, as well as the people of civil society, is to adopt a more expansive understanding of civil society, as encompassing any actions in the public sphere which seek to advance interests that are not those of governments and businesses, and to recognise all such actions which promote democracy, good governance, human rights, social justice, equality and sustainable development as being part of the civil society that CIVICUS seeks to promote, strengthen and support. A fixation on the rather uninteresting organisational make-up of civil society should not inhibit our thinking.

Second, protest and pushback call renewed attention to the urgent need to establish and uphold a more enabling environment for civil society. Regardless of the source of mobilisation or the form it

takes, there must be appropriate legal and policy provisions to allow people to express themselves freely, gather in collective spaces, organise, model alternatives and make demands. In too many countries the environment for civil society remains profoundly disabling. Repressive laws that seek to limit space for civil society, for example through making it harder to hold a meeting, exerting onerous registration and reporting requirements on CSOs or limiting CSOs' ability to receive funding, continue to be put forward. Even when these do not pass into law, the mere threat of their imposition can have a chilling effect and result in self-censorship, and fighting them can consume considerable civil society energy.

Regardless of the form civic action takes, and the success of some protest movements in 2011, in the longer term, the key civil society roles of holding government and other power holders to account, offering spaces for the articulation of solutions, guaranteeing pluralism and, in many cases, addressing state and private failures of essential services provision, can only be sustained where there is space to convene, organise and act, whether that space be physical or virtual.

At the multilateral level, the space granted to CSOs is always a gift rather than a right, often contested, sometimes ceremonial. The rise to global influence of a new range of governments – such as those of the newly confident and powerful countries of Brazil, China, India, Russia and South Africa – has not, in the main, been reflected in the assertion of global interests over national interests, and multilateral forums tend to remain arenas for the testing and negotiation of different national powers. In 2011, civil society saw this in the climate changes talks in Durban, during the development effectiveness debate in Busan, and at the UN Security Council in New York and Human Rights Council in Geneva, amongst others.

Multilateral relationships based on national interest trade-offs and the privileging of private sector over civil society voices have not worked; as part of the problem, they cannot now be the solution.

Redefining the social contract

Indeed while the world is faced with a convergence of crises, economic, social, political and environmental, too often the response has been business as usual. At the national level, the state's reaction to crises has been to cut back on the public sector, crackdown on the spaces and vehicles for dissent and implement measures that drive increased economic and social inequality and poverty. At the global level, recent world summits have failed to muster the imagination and ambition required to tackle the pressing problems of the world, offering largely conventional approaches and technocratic tinkering. They have not understood the significance of the upheavals of 2011.



This suggests that government and related institutions are failing on even their basic obligations to people, at the national and international levels. We believe it is time to revisit assumptions. The impact of unilateral state actions on citizens has ruptured any notion of the fundamental social contract, as a mutual agreement for cooperation between holders of power and citizens. One thing is clear: there can be no going back. The existing institutional arrangements that governed relations between citizens, the state and other actors of power, including the market and the institutionalised section of civil society itself, are not delivering, at any level. They must now be up for renegotiation.

The challenge is that relations between citizens and institutions are already being redefined – but by the institutions themselves. The social contract is already being torn up and redrafted, by power holders such as governments and large corporations, in an exclusionary way.

For us as civil society, the pressing need arising from this is to assert our voice and our right to be included. To do this we need to organise ourselves, in more comprehensive, inclusive and multifaceted ways than we have managed before. We need to learn from the social movements which rose to prominence in 2011 to not just advocate, but to model alternatives in the way we organise, convene, act and speak. We need to develop new relationships based on consent.

Within civil society itself, this calls for fresh connections and changes in the balance of power – between North and South, international and local and between established, organised civil society forms and new movements.

To underpin all this, we need to generate our own intelligence, do our own research, and use this as the basis for our convening and coalition building.

The inaugural state of civil society report

It is therefore in these dynamic, volatile circumstances that CIVICUS believes there is a need for this: a state of civil society report by civil society. We believe that in changing and challenging times there is an urgent need for information on the health, state, challenges and evolving nature of civil society, and the trends affecting us. We believe that this information should be generated by civil society ourselves, rather than those looking in on what they define as a sector. And we believe that the rate of change is such that there is a need to track changes as frequently as possible, to be able in future years to identify emerging trends on such key issues as the changing shape of activism, the constantly contested enabling environment for civil society, the shifting resourcing of civil society and the space and impact civil society is able to make at the multilateral level.

CIVICUS has therefore worked with a wide range of civil society partners to develop this first and prototype report, which will continue to evolve and live through its web version and social media, and will expand in future versions to become more comprehensive and offer an even wider range of civil society voices and viewpoints.

Taken as a whole, CIVICUS believes the five thematic sections and the 30 country profiles, which form the core of our report, tell us that we are at the most pivotal and contested moment for civil society in a generation.

Everything now seems up for discussion, with new formations and methods for expressing dissent, renewed political contestation of civil society space and an apparent loss of faith in many of the traditional civil society forms by donors. Key opportunities arise in the mobilisation into action for the first time of many people across a great spread of countries, an extraordinary boom in access to mobile and social media and a growing acknowledgement that the existing institutions for international cooperation are unfit for purpose in an increasingly interconnected and multipolar world. The apparent paradox is that civil society, in its organised, institutional form, is more contested and subject to questioning than ever – but the need for civil society, understood in its fullest sense, has never been greater.

This is a time of shift and flux, and CIVICUS sees our new report as a contribution towards debate, a source of innovative thinking from within civil society and an attempt to make some sense of a volatile situation. We hope you find our information and insights fresh and valuable; and we look forward to partnering with you to take our analysis and reporting even further in future.

Netsanet Belay

Director, Policy and Research


CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

“In changing and challenging times there is an urgent need for information on the health, state, challenges and evolving nature of civil society, and the trends affecting us.”





PART 1



GLOBAL TRENDS AND HIGHLIGHTS







**CRISIS, RESPONSE,
OPPORTUNITY:**

**CIVIL SOCIETY AND EMERGENCY IN
2011**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Emergencies and crises, such as those caused by natural disasters, bring civil society response, both from CSOs and the spontaneous mobilisations of people. The many emergencies of 2011, which include the natural disasters of the Japan earthquake, the East African food crisis and the Thailand floods, offer new examples of the complexity of crisis events for civil society. Response forces international humanitarian NGOs in particular to grapple with challenges such as prioritisation, mounting successful public appeals, working with uncivil forces and cooperating with local CSOs. As such these events demonstrate in extreme form some of the key challenges faced in CSO action as a whole. Emergencies can also provoke crises of legitimacy which create new space and visibility for CSOs and expose inefficient and corrupt governments. The existence of social capital and local community structures is a key indicator of resilience and effective response to emergency, and the most effective way to invest in social capital is to support a diversity of civil society forms and spaces, but this has so far been a neglected facet of emergency response and disaster risk reduction. Current changes which suggest new opportunities to support civil society include a larger role of emerging donors and new global powers in supporting humanitarian aid, implying a potential for renegotiation of the terms of engagement, and growing acknowledgement of the need to work with and develop the capacity of local civil society. Investment in civil society in the sites of emergency of 2011 – for example in Japan, East Africa and Thailand – should be prioritised to capitalise on new space and strengthen future response capacity.

INTRODUCTION

2011 was, as many commentators put it, a year of ‘non-stop news’. Around the world, the year’s narrative jumped from revolutions to revolts to mass mobilisations to occupations. And as we saw in 2011, emergency can come in many forms, whether those be crises caused by civil and cross-border wars, sudden growths in protest and dissent against apparently entrenched governments, or the rapid globalisation of epidemics. Recent emergencies have often displayed the influences of current global shifts and crises, including the crisis of economic downturn caused by reckless financial speculation, of accelerating climate change and environmental degradation, and of the crisis connected to both of these of rising prices of food, fuel and other basic goods.

And of course these crises can feed off and stimulate each other: as discussed in this report’s section on protest and activism, the various effects of the economic downturn brought about a tipping point that threw more people in different contexts into dissent and unrest in 2011. Further, the various emergencies that confronted citizens, whether localised natural disasters, regional threats of food security and impoverishment, or the global impact of economic volatility, sometimes morph into crises of governance and legitimacy which provoke further mass contestation, as was the case in 2011.

From a civil society viewpoint, emergency is a driver of mobilisation and response, from individual citizens, spontaneous groupings and CSOs. And also, when emergency provokes crises of legitimacy and governance, new opportunities can be created to challenge existing orders, assert the role of civil society and open up more civic space.

In this section, we principally examine a particular facet of crisis and emergency: natural disasters, and assess how civil society responds to them, and how they can in turn shape the conditions for civil society.

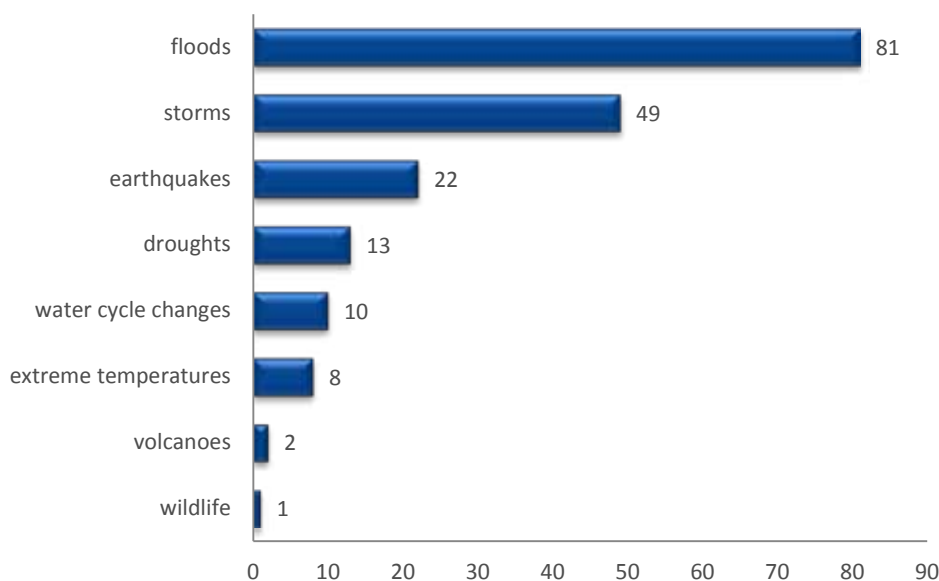


WHAT HAPPENED IN 2011?

2011 saw a number of highly visible natural disasters, including those in Japan, East Africa and Thailand. In Japan, the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 2011 was described by the then prime minister as the country's most serious crisis since the end of the Second World War. The earthquake and corresponding tsunami were estimated to have caused the loss of over 15,000 lives, and led to a subsequent nuclear accident and crisis. In East Africa, particularly in Somalia but also in its neighbouring countries, including Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, drought triggered a severe crisis that saw the UN's first declaration of an official famine, in Somalia, for almost three decades. Tens of thousands were estimated to have died in Somalia before the famine was declared ended in February 2012. Thailand, meanwhile, experienced severe flooding during its monsoon season, which saw 65 of its 77 provinces declaring flood disaster zones in the second half of 2011. Over 800 people were estimated killed and over 13 million were affected.

These were just three particularly high profile examples. The International Disaster Database of the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters lists 186 disaster events that occurred in 2011.¹ According to this, 82 countries faced different types of disasters, with the Philippines (20 disaster events), China (14) and Thailand (5) experiencing the most, while the most common types of disasters were floods (81), storms (49), earthquakes (22) and droughts (13).

The distribution of disasters in 2011 is as follows:



Source: EM-DAT, the International Disaster Database

19 of these 186 events (around 10%) affected more than a million people each. In addition to the disasters noted above, an earthquake killed over 600 people in Turkey and floods cost hundreds of lives in Brazil, Cambodia and Pakistan.

While it is difficult to assess the financial cost – and easier to obtain information on larger events – in 2011, 26 disaster events were estimated to have caused damage of more than US\$1m, and eight more than US\$1bn. The financial cost of the Japan crisis was estimated at more than US\$200bn, while the costs of the Thailand floods were estimated at US\$45bn, and the losses incurred due to the February 2011 New Zealand earthquake, which killed 181 people, were placed at US\$4bn.

Research published by the Economist suggests that five of the ten most financially expensive disasters ever have come in the past four years, and that the total financial cost of disasters in 2011 was the highest ever.² Oxfam, meanwhile, finds that reported weather-related disasters have increased by 233% since 1980, the proportion of the world affected by drought has doubled, the

seasonal distribution of rain has changed and flooding has become a greater threat.³ The challenge, particularly in developing country contexts, alongside the high costs in human lives and human dignity, is that high economic costs of disasters combined with apparently higher frequency can set back development and social justice agendas for years.

WHAT MIGHT THIS MEAN TO CIVIL SOCIETY?

While 2011 was clearly marked by a number of high profile natural disasters, which this section will focus on in particular, as events of high and lasting impact worthy of special attention, what the figures above tell us is that disasters and crises, while potentially devastating moments, and often thankfully one off events for the people who experience them, are not unusual on a global scale. They happen on a regular basis. They affect many people. They cause great cost, including human, social, financial and political cost. They are part of the recurring, constantly shifting - sometimes literally shifting - landscape against which attempts to progress development, uphold human rights, deepen democracy and strive for social justice are played out, recontextualised, disrupted or, sometimes, advanced.

It is often under the intensity of emergencies, as extreme moments, that the dynamics and tensions affecting civil society most clearly come to light, and within which the effectiveness of civil society's contribution, its support, its legitimacy, and its space and relations with other actors can best be seen. The lens of crisis offers a 'laboratory situation' in which the significant roles of both spontaneous citizen action and sustained action by organised, institutionalised civil society can be observed.

There is a need to examine to what extent, and under which combinations of circumstances, emergencies, and here disasters in particular, offer catalysts for bringing about broader societal change. It may be possible to learn some lessons about how civil society can contribute to the development of new social orders which can emerge to fill vacuums created by crisis situations. It is also helpful to consider what obstacles may prevent civil society from effectively contesting the new spaces and sometimes fleeting moments for lasting change that crises can create. Even so, when disasters and emergencies do not directly lead to dramatic political and social change, they can at least shed new light on prevailing challenges in governance, state effectiveness and the ability to promote and protect human rights.

In addition, understanding civil society contributions to disaster response as not only the airlifting in of food and medical supplies by international humanitarian NGOs, but also as the countless actions of citizens in affected communities, and further as contributing not just to disaster response but to disaster risk reduction, allows us to broaden our examination of exactly how civil society can contribute, and indeed what civil society in its diversity is.

COMMENTARY

Beyond disaster: Understanding crisis, moral orders of meaning and civil society as an alternative space

Harald Wydra teaches politics at the University of Cambridge, UK, where he is a Fellow of St Catharine's College. He is also an editor of International Political Anthropology. His work has focused on the role of civil society in shaping new moral orders which emerge in times of crisis and revolution. Here, Dr Wydra sets out a framework for understanding crisis which puts people and the fluidity of social structures at the heart of realising the significance of the emergencies of 2011.

The word 'crisis' appears in connection with terms such as humanitarian, ecological, environmental, and even the 'Eurozone'. In a world of ceaseless and instantaneous flows of information talk of crisis can easily become meaningless. How can we distinguish a real crisis from a rhetorical one?



One possible way is to look at the fluidity of critical junctures. In 'normal' times, people go about their business, and distinctive sectors of social life act, think and function according to their internal logics. The state administers, constrains and disciplines, the economy produces and grows, hospitals and doctors take care of patients, lawyers and judges care about justice, society innovates, politicians take decisions. People abide by rules due to habits, duties, long-term commitments, but also for fear of punishment.

In crisis situations, however, people publicly transgress norm-governed relations. Previously suppressed feelings may burst into the open, and laws and customs may be shunned. Revolutions and civil wars are such sites of intensified emotions, social disorder, and transgression. Apparently solid political, social, and economic structures literally collapse with the crumbling of solid buildings or the falling of walls. The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the twin towers in New York in 2001 or, metaphorically, the collapse or crash of Wall Street in 2008 symbolise such critical junctures. Much like the tsunamis in South East Asia in 2004 or Hurricane Katrina in the US in 2005, the Queensland floods in Australia in early 2011, the Japanese tsunami in March 2011 and the Thailand floods in the second half of 2011 destroyed the built environment, the livelihoods, the future, and the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Masses of liquid wipe out the basis of social life.

Yet liquid and fluidity in crisis can be seen as an analogy for reshaping structures of meaning in social relations. Even the most solid materials such as steel, iron or ice can become fluid and liquid. Similarly, critical junctures liquefy social structures. Crisis changes rhythms of mobilisation, logics of action, and behaviour patterns, often against the intentions and strategies of people. We usually look at how communities of norm-governed relations such as the state, markets, families or other sectors cope with disasters. Yet, it is also valid to ask how the fluidity of social relations makes emerge new configurations of solidarity, a new sense of cosmic order as well as affective-emotional understandings of future destiny.

How can civil society reshape meanings of moral order? First, social relations in a global communication age are perhaps more than ever pervaded by imitation. The notion of 'civil' in society refers to inhabitants of life spaces called cities. Cities are the places of highest degrees of rationalisation, division of labour, technological progress, and also isolation of individuals. However, they are also the places where imitation - both as conscious knowledge transfer and unconscious, emotional desire to have or be like others - is most intense. The density of masses in small spaces drives conspicuous consumption, fashion trends and crowd behaviour, as well as conformism and competition. If internal imitation is epidemic and contagious in terms of infectious social trends, it can also become contagious in terms of solidarity, human courage, and support for the shaken, dispossessed and victims. The closeness of others in moments of despair, destruction and loss is actually also an opportunity for a properly human response to the utter senselessness of nature.

Second, moral orders of meaning often refer to sacred moments of origin. It is true that when disaster hits people become focused on one's own self, on saving one's own life. It may be the moment of highest degree of egoistic interest in self-preservation. However, such existential threats also reveal to people the essence of humanity, in the sense that we are all the same despite differences in property, race, status, prestige or power. In the darkest hours of wars, concentration camps or natural disasters, people have claimed the sacred truths of faith. They have found solace in millennia old prayers, religious symbols, or rituals of human solidarity. Crisis moments leave people in awe. The crumbling of the Berlin Wall or of the twin towers and also major natural disasters tend to leave a sense of the sacred. They become markers of symbolic power standing for 'ends' and 'beginnings', often drawing a renewed sense of spirit and hope out of the senselessness of natural or human disaster. Whilst normal times are profane in that they are chaotic, banal, rational and calculable, the sacred is the moment of the whole, the cosmos, a symbolic unity.

Finally, it is this tension between contagious solidarity and its ritualised forms of the sacred which can bring hope for a form of human understanding of knowledge about our future in terms of responsibility. Ever since the start of the nuclear age we cognitively know that humanity is capable of self-destruction. Scientific evidence, even if sometimes contested, has linked natural disasters to the authorship of humans. And yet ever since Cassandra and biblical prophets, people tend not to attach the necessary weight of reality to prophecies of future catastrophes. The future destiny of humanity or planet Earth may be in serious danger,

but are we really involved? Governments, politicians and voters in nationally circumscribed states care about power, economic growth, standards of life, or reducing budget deficits. They have few incentives to link the knowledge about natural disasters with an emotionally binding response. Political, scientific and economic rationality lack the affective ties that would bind us to the future in ways peoples' emotions bind them to other people they love, be they contemporaries, or their children and grandchildren. Here, experiencing loss, despair and destruction in community with others also offers a chance to make sense of the destructive power of nature.

Rather than subordinating the future of humanity to strategies of electoral campaign, business interests, or the purchasing power of ideology, forms of civil society are the sites to cultivate commemorations of catastrophes in order to mark moments of loss and despair as the markers of the common good.

THE CHALLENGES OF COMPLEX EVENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL NGOS

Crises offer complex events that challenge CSOs, and particularly international humanitarian NGOs. 2011 saw such INGOs continuing to face difficult questions thrown up by the reality of seeking to save lives on the ground – questions of practice, ethics and hard choices. Questions here include how to prioritise and who to choose to help; who to cooperate with, which could include the state, other CSOs, religious structures and rebel groups, with the constant risk that cooperation can be seen as a legitimiser; how to manage the power relations between INGOs and local CSOs; and how to decide on the methods of response, which could include actions such as supporting local CSOs and mobilising local volunteers, beyond the classical emergency provision approach.

In 2011, medical humanitarian INGO Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) chronicled some of the moral conundrums which the organisation had confronted in recent years, including the compromises made with repressive political regimes and military groups in order to reach people in politically and militarily contested locations such as Sri Lanka and Somalia.⁴ Assistance in Somalia during the 2011 food crisis remained controversial, since hardline Islamist group al-Shabaab controls large parts of southern Somalia. As well as the danger this presents to INGO staff operating in this context, US government restrictions could potentially criminalise an organisation working in southern Somalia for benefiting a designated terrorist operation. There were also reports of al-Shabaab stealing food and levying 'taxes' for aid to pass through its territory. Response to famine could imply financially contributing to the support of very repressive groups.⁵ The deals that humanitarian agencies make with deeply uncivil forces in emergencies in conflict settings sometimes equate to 'supping with the devil'.⁶

Persistent questions about the rules of engagement by INGOs come in the light of a mounting challenge in recent years, including in academic studies, to notions and constructions of humanitarianism and models of disaster response, and seem unlikely to go away, particularly when some commentators are questioning the link between INGOs' funding and their ability to create a narrative of ever-escalating disaster.⁷ In the words of one political analyst in 2011:

"By continually upping the rhetorical ante, relief agencies, whatever their intentions, are sowing the seeds of future cynicism, raising the bar of compassion to the point where any disaster in which the death toll cannot be counted in the hundreds of thousands, that cannot be described as the worst since World War II or as being of biblical proportions, is almost certainly condemned to seem not all that bad by comparison."⁸

Responses by INGOs and other CSOs depend heavily on public reactions to appeals, and the varied and unpredictable reactions of people to different disaster events offer a challenge. While INGOs



are reluctant to engage in comparisons of the public response to different appeals, the Haitian earthquake appeal of January 2010, attracted a much higher response than that for the floods in Pakistan from July 2010, where funding received fell short of target. The varied response to the large disaster events of 2011 came as a further reminder of the limitations of global solidarity. When floods happened again in Pakistan in 2011, news was barely heard.⁹

Further, an analysis of Google search trends shows that the search traffic for the 2010 Haiti earthquake¹⁰ was 20% less intensive than that for the 2011 Japan emergency,¹¹ while the East African food crisis received only a quarter of the search traffic as Japan. The time it takes for searches to taper off also seems to vary according to the type of emergency: in essence, it took one month for the sudden disasters of Haiti and Japan, compared to three months for the 2010 Pakistan floods¹² and five months for the East Africa crisis,¹³ both more complex events unfolding over a longer time period.

In comparing the varied reactions to the Japan and East African crises of 2011, we can speculate that reasons may include the shock factor at the spectacular nature of events in Japan compared to the more slowly unfolding East African crisis, the corresponding media reactions to this combined with news values that relegate African events to a position of lesser importance, and the easier identification of the northern public with a developed country against somewhere many would struggle to find on a map.¹⁴ Compassion fatigue, particularly when there is more than one headline disaster event in a year, remains a challenge, alongside the risk of stakes-raising appeals rhetoric fading in impact over time.

Further, the president of MSF in 2011 controversially accused aid agencies of glossing over the difficulties of providing aid in such difficult contexts as Somalia in order to offer a simplistic fundraising message to the public that their contributions would save lives.¹⁵ It can be suggested that the simplification of messages in public fundraising appeals is a particular risk for INGOs, if they are relying on additional financial support from appeals to enable rapid response to crisis.

Questions will persist, and are often a source of friction between humanitarian aid workers and the media, of the ethics of presenting people as victims and the objects of pity in order to leverage emergency help, which can have the effect of perpetuating welfarist stereotypes of people in the global South, and in doing so ultimately impede understandings by Northern publics about the structural and political nature of global inequalities and poverty and how these are played out in emergencies.

“Questions will persist of the ethics of presenting people as victims and the objects of pity in order to leverage emergency help.”

Further questions include the enduring ones of coordination between agencies, and of when to make an intervention, with these issues brought to life by a January 2012 report from Oxfam and Save the Children which suggested that thousands of deaths could have been prevented in East Africa in 2011 if agencies had acted earlier, and that earlier interventions could have been more effective and reached more people, for example, by allowing longer term investment in boreholes rather than delivering emergency water by road.¹⁶ The report suggests that government denial of the existence of an emergency for political reasons was a factor – something which echoed the controversy over the Turkish government’s apparent initial denial of the need for external help following its October 2011 earthquake.¹⁷ Also, there is evidence from Somalia that sophisticated early warning systems were ignored until agencies saw more proof of disaster.¹⁸ In such circumstances, has a recent emphasis on demonstrating impact and effectiveness of aid stymied the potential for rapid, preventative response? And what may be the implications of this for future appeals to avert a disaster of ‘biblical proportions’?



Some emergencies are of course more complex than others: with an earthquake or tsunami, there may be little or no advance warning, but it is clear to see when a disaster has occurred. With a famine, there is longer to anticipate potential disaster, but more to dispute, not just by governments seeking to resist what can be seen as a pretext for external meddling, but also by different sections of civil society and the media. For example, the 2008 Norwegian TV programme *The Famine Scam* sparked controversy by accusing international agencies and the media of overstating the 2005 Niger crisis into a famine that never was, and of de facto colonialism in attitudes to local people and their traditional food sources. While its argument remains the subject of fierce dispute, is it conversely possible that new fears of not wanting to declare a famine too early contributed to a slow response in 2011?

Partly to address these issues in the difficult and contested area of famine, 2011 saw the launch of the Charter to End Extreme Hunger by a coalition of INGOs, which acknowledges the flaws in the international emergency system as experienced in East Africa in 2011, and which has started to win political support from Kenya, Norway, the UK and the EU.¹⁹

In short, humanitarian INGOs necessarily face constant self-questioning about issues of timing, methods, harm minimisation, partnering, relations with the media and the public, and how to strike a balance between delivering direct assistance, which can call for difficult compromises in emergency contexts, and maintaining an independence that allows them to become engaged in campaigning and advocacy roles, as Alpaslan Özerdem suggests below. They exhibit a constant tension between their values and their operations; as such, they demonstrate in large the challenges that occasionally confront CSOs in general.

COMMENTARY

Responding to disaster: Where does civil society fit? Lessons from Turkey

Professor Alpaslan Özerdem is Chair in Peacebuilding at the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, University of Coventry, UK. Here, Professor Özerdem analyses the role of civil society in disaster management and, drawing on the example of Turkey, which has experienced a number of recent earthquakes, pays particular attention to civil society's differing roles in disaster preparedness and disaster response.

Civil society occupies a key place in reaction to crisis and disaster response, and the experiences of 2011 around the world re-confirm this fact. The surge of liberalism in development and peacebuilding circles since the end of the Cold War has certainly played a significant role in the way civil society has achieved such an ascendance. In the redefining of the way states, markets and voluntary associations interact with each other, Edward (2004) asserts that civil society has been 'the prime beneficiary of wider political and ideological changes'.

However, from a Tocquevillean formulation, civil society today struggles to serve the dual purpose of representing the masses and resisting or scrutinising governmental extraction and legislation. Such an advocacy role is increasingly under pressure as more and more CSOs opt for becoming the deliverers of humanitarian aid in disaster-affected environments due to contemporary funding policies and neo-liberal centred state-civil society relationships. As a consequence of such a political context, NGOs, in relation to other types of CSOs such as social movements, social organisations and nationalist and religious groups, have shown a strong drive for attracting funding in disaster response in many parts of the world. Nevertheless, the decentralisation of disaster management responsibilities also continues to pose a number of paradoxes and challenges.

First, the diverse nature of CSOs is certainly civil society's primary richness, but in disaster affected environments, fault lines along ethnic, religious and political divisions, such as the secular-religious binary in the context of Turkey (Özerdem and Jacoby, 2008) can be highly detrimental for undertaking a joined-up



approach to disaster response. The primary interest of helping ‘your own’, particularly for local charities and national organisations, continues to be a divisive issue. The NGO Code of Conduct in Disaster Relief is far from being fully implemented in the provision of assistance by such local groups.²⁰ Such divisions are also critical in the way civil society response is often negated by a lack of coordination, as the diversity in civil society often translates itself into a lack of trust and confidence when it comes to cooperation in disaster response. This was particularly the case in the disaster response by CSOs to the 1999 Marmara Earthquake in Turkey (Jalali, 2002).

Second, the lack of trust and confidence among disaster response stakeholders are often exacerbated by a lack of understanding and respect between them. The binaries of state and civil society, civil and military, Northern and Southern, donor and implementer, and international and local are decisive in defining how these different actors perceive and interact with each other in a disaster context. The presence of a culture of competitiveness and professional jealousy among different actors worsens such perceptions further. Moreover, the criticism of insularity and authoritarianism in the relationship between Northern and Southern CSOs, particularly in the spending of donor funding, is yet to be addressed.

Third, assumptions for the representativeness of civil society vis a vis disaster affected communities still play a significant role in the way donors tend to disproportionately fund urban and professional groups despite the fact that in many disaster affected countries they have a narrower constituency of support than other types of CSOs. Until the Marmara Earthquake there was in fact a deep suspicion towards CSOs among the general public (Kalaycıoğlu, 2002). Such an approach forms a primary cornerstone of the short-termism in civil society strengthening based on Western liberalism. Consequently, those CSOs which rely heavily on external funding in disaster response act like shooting stars.

Fourth, a multi-disciplinary approach in disaster management in terms of ensuring the involvement of all stakeholders – CSOs, government, donors, private sector, military, emergency services – does not seem to have been achieved in many disaster-affected environments. Disaster response continues to be seen as a responsibility for national authorities as this is considered to be the best way to ensure a coordinated action. From the Marmara Earthquake to the 2011 Van Earthquake response in Turkey, civil society still struggles to receive full recognition for the significant role it plays in disaster response (TÜSEV, 2011). On the other hand, the experience of 2011 shows that state authorities are often overwhelmed by the sheer size of disasters and due to their lack of preparedness, particularly for coordination with other stakeholders, there are often long delays and bottlenecks in the provision of effective response to emergencies and crises.

Finally, in relation to the state-civil society relationship, civil society continues to be a key actor in disaster response, but not disaster management in general. For other phases, such as post-disaster reconstruction, mitigation and preparedness, the role of civil society is often limited to the provision of search-and-rescue and humanitarian aid. On the one hand, this is the result of a state-centric understanding of disaster management and deliberate containment policies by the state to constrain possible roles that civil society could and should play in mitigating and getting prepared for future disasters. On the other hand, CSOs often shy away from getting involved in such disaster management phases as they would naturally involve some advocacy or political action. For example, after the Marmara Earthquake, there has been a huge increase in the number of municipality, work-place or neighbourhood centred search-and-rescue teams, but civil society’s role in overall disaster management has remained highly limited (Özdemir and Jacoby, 2008).

KEY SHIFTS IN 2011

In 2011, amongst issues linked to the effectiveness of humanitarian INGOs, two are highlighted here which saw a particular shift. First, the recent emergence of new international actors in disaster response should spark discussion, re-evaluation and renegotiation of approaches to international cooperation amongst existing actors. A particular case here was the response to the Somalia famine. In an emergency meeting in August, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation pledged US\$350m, while Turkey separately offered US\$280m. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait contributed US\$60m, US\$16.9m and US\$10m each.²¹

There is a sense that this response to the Somalia crisis was a game-changer in challenging traditional humanitarian aid modalities, which have hitherto largely been of North giving to South and West giving to East. With these new donors arguably sharing a different perspective, combined with some suspicion of UN and other established agencies, a disinclination to give through multilateral channels and a desire not to be seen simply as a source of financial support, one senior official in the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) suggested that, particularly coming in the context of the Arab Spring, Western aid organisations and UN bodies, "...should make an effort to meet these organisations on their own terms, listen attentively to their interpretation of humanitarian affairs and, importantly, speak their language."²²

Combined with the emergence of new donor infrastructure and resources from a range of Southern countries, including the BRICS countries, as this report's section on civil society funding identifies, this challenges the existing dynamics of Northern donor and international civil society response, both in development as a whole and in the extreme situation of emergency response. This suggests a changing playing field on which new attempts at meaningful cooperation and better coordination will have to be made ahead of and in response to the disasters of 2012.

Second, there seems to be some shift afoot in organisations, as highlighted by Sam Worthington's contribution on behalf of the US civil society alliance InterAction below, to recognise and acknowledge the importance of investments in local civil society, without which the efforts of international humanitarian NGOs would be unsustainable and ultimately wasted.

As suggested above, tensions often exist between international and local civil society in emergency situations. Better cooperation is needed to strengthen the quality of emergency response and disaster risk reduction. These ideas were captured in an Oxfam briefing paper, *Crisis in a New World Order*, published February 2012, which called, amidst a backdrop of emerging humanitarian donors but also, as mentioned earlier, a growth in weather-related disasters connected to climate change, for more emphasis on local civil society cooperation, local capacity building and respect for local nuance in the application of humanitarian principles.²³

COMMENTARY

Civil society in crisis response

InterAction is the largest alliance of US-based INGOs, with more than 190 members working in every developing country. Here, Sam Worthington, President and CEO of InterAction and CIVICUS Board Member, highlights the growing realisation in 2011 that international relief NGOs can best succeed in their work in the long term by supporting investments in local civil society.

In the aftermath of a natural disaster, the first help to arrive is often your neighbour - not a UN agency, INGO or donor country expert, but the helping hand of the person next door or a neighbourhood civic organisation. Even when the international community does arrive to fill gaps and meet needs, the local population still makes up the large majority of the response. Most disasters don't make international news, and in crises which are smaller and less spectacular, although still deadly, international institutions have less of a presence. Community groups, often in partnership with an established CSO working in the area, provide a significant portion of the overall response even after official help arrives.

In the international humanitarian community, we have a tendency to focus on what we do for others, even as we critique and try to improve our work. But we cannot ignore the assistance that is taking place within a community: in responding to crises, local civil society has a leading role to play. What is often lacking - and what international actors can and should support - is capacity. A society's disaster resilience depends heavily on the capacity of local government but also of local CSOs to respond with the appropriate skills, accountability, and technical expertise. The effectiveness of responses to future disasters will depend on local capacity and resilience.



Unfortunately, most money flowing into a disaster response is restricted to providing food, shelter, health care, and other immediate services, not building the capacity of local groups. This is in large part because of many donors' emphasis on the delivery of services and the media's attention on immediate results. When solicited, feedback from local CSOs often highlights the lack of capacity-building and disaster risk reduction efforts, and notes that international relief NGOs must ensure adequate accountability, greater coordination, and a focus on human rights.

Local governments also must realise the role of civil society in crisis response and promote its capacity. Far too often, governments fear the voice or power of CSOs and suppress or restrict their work. In Haiti, even with Port au Prince destroyed, the Haitian government was extremely reluctant to work with youth, farmer, disability, student and other civic groups interested in rebuilding their country. After the earthquake, the Haitian government resisted meeting with Haitian civil society, holding one meeting only at the urging of InterAction and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, representing the INGO community. A country cannot be rebuilt without the voice of its people.

Governments do have a critical role to play in crisis response, but it must not be a restrictive role that ignores the voice and capacity of CSOs to save lives and shape their own future. Consider the different outcomes of disasters hitting Bangladesh and Burma/Myanmar. Bangladesh's robust local civil response, based on neighbourhood-level capacity, effectively keeps death rates down and mitigates the impact of each crisis. In Burma/Myanmar, where military dictatorship long suppressed local civil society, the country was ill-equipped to respond to Cyclone Nargis in 2008 and the storm left thousands dead. Developing countries with significant disaster risk reduction efforts - including building the strength and capacity of their civil society institutions - are better positioned to respond to disasters.

International relief agencies must redefine how they carry out relief efforts in order to better enable local civil society. Helping broker the aforementioned meeting in Haiti is one success story, but there are negative examples as well. One major challenge for INGOs in crisis response is how to support local groups without creating dependency. In major disasters, when large amounts of money from international actors are funneled into a developing country, local organisations can become dependent and collapse when aid dollars stop flowing. Unless funds are set aside to support long-term capacity, the volume of short-term cash in large disasters can be harmful and will overwhelm all actors' capacity to use it effectively.

Perhaps the most challenging environment for civil society is that of a complex emergency: a humanitarian crisis in a war zone, where there is far less space for both international relief efforts and civil society to function due to the lack of security. A central tenant for international relief NGOs is to do no harm - a concern that many aid workers grapple with on a daily basis. The most obvious solutions (e.g. a refugee camp to provide shelter) are often more complex than imagined (camps can become recruitment centres for violent militias). A second rule is impartiality, which is also difficult. Especially in a warzone, or when a belligerent actor is also a donor, it is extremely important for INGOs to build local trust and partnerships with all community groups intent on building peace.

Our vision must be one where international relief NGOs help by supporting local efforts to build functioning societies that are themselves capable of responding effectively to disasters. We have a long way to go. But the next steps are clear: local CSOs must have a voice to ensure the accountability and sustainability of any relief effort. International relief NGOs need to listen to, coordinate with and enable local civil society to respond to 21st century disasters.

CRISIS, CHANGED SPACE AND TRUST

Notwithstanding the challenges that civil society faces, as highlighted earlier, civil society is increasingly being recognised as a valuable actor in emergency response and disaster risk reduction. This is because, as Sam Worthington set out, in the immediate aftermath of a sudden natural disaster such as an earthquake or flood, civil society, across its broad spectrum, is often able

to respond more rapidly, more nimbly and more effectively than government. In cases of conflict, humanitarian INGOs, which experience considerable danger but seek to play politically neutral roles amidst the challenges highlighted above, are often able to access areas and affected people that would be off-limits to other actors. Faith-based CSOs can have particular routes in to some sections of the public and the ability to reach and channel diasporic, immediate support. CSOs also have the potential to promote the interests of groups of vulnerable or marginalised people, who often disproportionately bear the consequences of disaster, and ensure that disaster relief efforts and resources are not simply channelled to those who shout the loudest or who are best organised.²⁴

Effective civil society responses to emergencies can contrast sharply with those of governments. Beyond this, the costs for states of not working with international and local CSOs to prevent and respond to disaster can be exceptionally high. In the most extreme cases, inefficient, corrupt and out of touch governments can be ruthlessly exposed by disaster. In such cases – particularly those where a dictatorial government has stuck to type by centralising emergency response and excluding non-state actors – failure by government to deal swiftly and effectively with natural disasters and other emergencies can result in a rapid loss of legitimacy.

A classic example of this came with the 1972 earthquake which flattened Managua, the capital of Nicaragua, which was one critical turning point in the fall of the Somoza family dynasty, whose response was primarily to embezzle funds meant for disaster relief. The legitimacy crisis which followed turned into a full-blown revolution, eventually bringing the Sandinistas to power and shaping the course of modern Nicaragua.

The 1985 earthquake in Mexico City had a similar catalytic impact for Mexican civil society. As the CIVICUS Civil Society Index 2011 country report for Mexico highlights, not only was the earthquake response a milestone for the eventual end of the century-long Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) government, but it also had an immediate impact on CSOs:

“[Another] factor that catalysed the emergence of citizens’ activity was the 1985 Mexico City earthquake. This saw a social response to the government’s mistakes in the handling of the earthquake and is considered by many authors as a turning point in organised and voluntary participation by the Mexican people. In addition to opening a new scenario for social participation, the earthquake provided CSOs three changes that empowered their development and consolidation: a diversification of financing sources, the need to coordinate efforts, and as a result, greater public visibility. The significant resources sent to Mexico for the emergency and reconstruction efforts also gave CSOs better capacity for action, negotiation and public influence.”²⁵

In a different context, an often-highlighted example of a loss of legitimacy in recent times followed the US government’s slow response to Hurricane Katrina, which opened discussion about the racial and class dimensions of differentiated responses, and led to accusations of state bias and neglect of the poor. Here too, civil society helped fill the void left by the neglectful and tardy federal response.



Even in China, where there is little formal space for organised civil society, the July 2011 crash of two high-speed trains, which killed 40 people, sparked rare public dissent on microblogging sites,²⁶ while the unusual sight of mass public protests, against nuclear power, was seen in Japan in response to the 2011 crisis.²⁷

Emergencies, in short, create vacuums and highlight failures, and in doing so generate the potential for civil society to demonstrate its unique value and seize legitimacy and space. They offer



moments, often fleeting, for civil society to gain credibility and push for permanent social and civic gains after the dust of disaster has settled.

Such examples further suggest that states should beware of the political risks of sidelining civil society, not just in disaster response, but in the other stages of disaster risk reduction – lest failure to manage a crisis in an inclusive or effective way causes sharp losses of trust in or increases in dissent towards government. Inclusive, multi-stakeholder approaches to all aspects of disaster management, which build and strengthen social capital, can be seen to represent an important investment in their own safety by governments.

In August 2011, the resignation of Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan in the wake of criticisms of government response to the March crisis suggested that representative elected government with many of the functional institutions of democracy has certain safety valves to prevent a natural disaster becoming a full-blown crisis of legitimacy. Nevertheless, in Japan, the response to the crisis arguably exposed a broader tendency within the Japanese state to tightly control information and impose hierarchical control structures, regardless of the government of the day.

Correspondingly, the 2012 Edelman Trust Barometer calls attention to a sharp drop in trust in public institutions in Japan in the wake of the March emergency, with perceived failures of leadership and communications causing declines in trust in the government, the media and key sections of industry. It also records a fall of trust in NGOs.²⁸ Crises represent opportunities to demonstrate capability, but also junctures at which legitimacy can be lost, for both governments and CSOs alike.

CASE STUDY

Responding to catastrophe: Sharing experiences of Chile and Japan

Christian Blanco (Soles Foundation, Chile) and Naoto Yamauchi, Naoko Okuyama and Midori Matsushima (Osaka University, Japan) implemented the CIVICUS Civil Society Index in Chile and Japan respectively between 2008 and 2011 in order to assess the state of civil society in their countries. Here, the authors combine to offer a comparative analysis of the response of civil society to crisis in 2010 and 2011, and the potential impact on civil society.

The disasters in Chile and Japan

Two of the most devastating earthquakes followed by tsunamis shocked Chile in February 2010 and Japan in March 2011, generating unprecedented infrastructure damage and dramatic human losses. The disasters posed enormous challenges to society as a whole. In the case of Japan, situations were unique and complicated due to nuclear power plant accidents, as the site had to be secured, spreading uncertainty among the affected population. In Chile, the failure of communications and the lack of basic services provision prevented help from being delivered adequately, causing panic and looting in several cities. Demonstrating strengths and difficulties, civil society has played essential roles in post-disaster reconstruction.

Civil society: rapid response and informal networks

In Chile, inefficiencies of government agencies delayed the alert of the coming tsunami, and government was unprepared to maintain communications, with neither landlines nor cell phones working, while the Japanese government spent almost two months putting the reconstruction headquarters into operation.

Compared to this, practice driven by private initiatives offered a flexible, prompt and agile response to ever-changing and specific needs of disaster victims and areas. Japanese CSOs started their disaster relief activities, a new support network began assembling immediately and many individual citizens collaborated extensively. Operations performed by volunteers accounted for 20% of emergency medical interventions. The work of fire-fighters, which are formed into CSOs in Chile, was crucial in aiding affected areas, gathering

local communities and coordinating rescue tasks. Chilean CSOs also played a critical role in maintaining communication through radio broadcasting, and community-based organisations set up emergency shelters.

The decentralised nature of civil society allowed aid initiatives in Chile and Japan to be flexible and non-bureaucratic, favouring an explosive mobilisation of volunteers, gathering national and international donations and organising teams for reconstruction. Civil society made the best of its organisational advantages, in which the pre-eminence of informal links and quick networking based on social trust among citizens and organisations was a decisive factor.

Establishing cross-sector alliances

A rapid response to the disasters in both countries was also observed from the market through corporate social responsibility. Private companies in Japan donated money and goods for reconstruction and some of them allowed workers to take leave to volunteer. In Chile, a massive television fundraising campaign channelled both individual and corporate donations to CSOs that provided assistance to victims. The quick response of civil society in cooperation with the market allowed many of the reconstruction tasks to be highly effective.

Evaluation of civil society response capability

In both countries, the quick response of civil society can be positively evaluated. The CSOs that participated in the first few weeks after the earthquakes showed notable capability to assist local affected communities because of their grassroots base. The CIVICUS Civil Society Index project in Chile, 2011, also showed that local impact in disaster relief was a major strength of Chilean civil society.

Nevertheless, some weakness of civil society also became apparent. In Japan, where the administrative functions of local governments in municipalities experiencing disaster were catastrophically damaged, mutual help by the informal provision of assistance among local neighbourhoods was more easily and favourably accepted by local affected people, which made it more difficult to utilise individual and private assistance provided from outside the disaster area. The extremely difficult conditions in which CSOs tried to coordinate volunteers were aggravated by the accident at the nuclear power plant. However, some argue that many CSOs had failed to engage with the public under normal conditions, which made them incapable of mobilising volunteers in the time of the disaster. Chilean CSOs faced similar problems, as aid initiatives suffered from coordination issues, duplication of work and even conflict between different CSOs, complicating the delivery of aid.

Furthermore, cooperation between CSOs and local governments in affected areas was lacking, in spite of well-established networks outside the affected areas. Decentralised efforts without the establishment of proper alliances led to inefficiencies and confrontation between different organisations that were trying to channel help.

Transparency regarding the usage of donations was a shared issue in Chile and Japan. Some CSOs were questioned over the effectiveness of their activities as well as the destination of funding, affecting social trust in civil society. A small number of CSOs commanded the major part of reconstruction funds. Smaller organisations lacked resources for their activities, generating unsatisfied demands.

Lessons and challenges for civil society

At the time of writing, Chile and Japan are still recovering from the earthquakes. Numerous CSOs are carrying out reconstruction work where the government cannot reach, and showing great advantages, such as flexibility and rapid mobilisation. Still, civil society preparedness to respond to disasters remains limited, and future challenges include improving coordination among CSOs, increasing transparency practices and establishing fruitful alliances with the government and private actors. In Japan, the country is standing at a crossroads of navigating civic engagement opportunities, and it remains to be seen whether there will continue to be growing participation motivated by the sense of solidarity and continuing philanthropy,



including the development of a civil society strengthened by private philanthropy, or whether this will be a temporary phenomenon.

The great damage sustained in both countries will take years to recover from and will require sustainable civic engagement, including resourcing and coordination. Overcoming the weaknesses in response to catastrophe is a main concern for civil society in both countries, but transforming this tragic experience into learning to improve the sector as a whole is the greatest challenge for civil society in Chile and Japan.

CITIZENS, SOCIAL CAPITAL AND RESILIENCE

While CSOs at the international and national levels play a critical role in emergency response and disaster risk reduction, less has been said about the role of the individual citizens and informal citizen groupings.

Some studies have established the key role of community and informal social networks in disaster management. Reports on Hurricane Katrina in 2005, for example, highlight the efforts of the Vietnamese community in New Orleans to successfully mobilise an expansive social network to locate community members and deliver on-the-ground assistance in the days after the Hurricane struck.²⁹ In Guatemala, analysis suggests that when Hurricane Stan struck in 2005, the Guatemalan National Coordination for the Reduction of Disasters failed to properly take into account the strength of local communities, which meant resources were wasted in the development of new response structures instead of making good use of existing social capital and community structures.³⁰

2011 bore testament again to the critical role of informal community groups and individual citizens in being the first to react to disaster. In Japan, for example, commentators welcomed the role of “Japanese youth ... frequently dismissed in recent press analysis as self-obsessed ‘herbivores’, they have mobilised spontaneously through Facebook and other social media and have been shown carrying elderly citizens to high ground on their backs.”³¹ A parallel can be drawn here with the rapid mobilisation of technologically knowledgeable, educated and cosmopolitan young people previously dismissed as apathetic in other scenarios in 2011, whether that be the Arab Spring, the Occupy movement or many others, as discussed in this report’s section on protest and activism.

New applications of social and mobile media are also enabling new forms of response, and thereby making possible new formations of social capital and new civic groupings. Newly available tools include those which enable existing CSOs and relief agencies to more rapidly coordinate workers and gather data, and those which enable people to self-report and self-organise. Examples include Frontline SMS, a mass text messaging tool,³² which was used to gather emergency information in Haiti in response to the 2010 earthquake³³ and the social mapping tool Ushahidi, recently taken up in Haiti, where the application of social and mobile tools in emergency settings arguably came of age,³⁴ and Japan.³⁵

Of course, as in the case of the various protest movements which came to the fore in 2011 and made heavy use of social and mobile media, technology is not a magic bullet. Rather than engage in reveries about the wonders of technology, there is a need to examine and focus on supporting the intersections and collaborations between new forms of civil organisation and established ones such as INGOs and CSOs, and between new forms of communication and longstanding ones such as radio, which is still a valuable information source in crisis settings for many communities.³⁶

It is evident that social capital, however it is organised and manifested, can contribute to the resilience of a community to withstand emergency. Smit and Wandel (2006) suggest not only that the collective coping capacity, adaptability and resilience of a population is critical in responding in the days after a natural disaster, but also that individuals’ trust in community leaders is such that the community has a critical role to play in disaster preparedness, and the role of community leaders

in advising members when to heed government warnings is vital.³⁷ While some of the evidence for the unrealised potential of communities in disaster management remains at worst anecdotal or at best based on case studies, indicators of the level of trust between fellow citizens and between citizens and public bodies, such as those generated by the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI), the World Values Survey and the Edelman Trust Barometer, could offer further room for investigation.

For example, amongst the conclusions of the 2008 to 2011 phase of the CSI was that trust in CSOs is higher in almost all countries, and generally at least 10% higher than trust in all other public actors, such as presidents, prime ministers, the government, the military, the police and political parties. The implication here is that working with civil society in emergency response and disaster risk reduction offers a short cut to accessing public trust and utilising social capital.

Further, the disaggregated CSI findings on trust in civil society also show that in most countries, faith structures have the highest trust of any non-governmental formation, and usually the highest trust of all public actors, followed by socially-oriented organisations, while environmental and women's CSOs also usually score high, suggesting the need for approaches which identify the diverse locations of public trust and social capital, and which enable the contribution of the special strengths of different parts of civil society and make connections between them.³⁸

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND THE UNCIVIL: A COMPLEX INTERACTION

While community and social capital offer important resources in times of disaster, two important caveats should be noted. First, as Alpaslan Özerdem recognises above, the primary interest among communities and charities to 'help your own' can create or deepen fault lines along political, ethnic, religious or other identity group lines and lead to the uneven distribution of resources, often to the detriment of the least powerful, worst organised and most marginalised citizens, entrenching marginalisation and repeating existing patterns of privilege and inequality.

“Social networks designed to mitigate the impact of disaster have been proven to be effective even when driven largely by the state and in situations many would consider undemocratic.”

Among the first actors to respond to the devastating Kashmir earthquake in Pakistan in 2005 were local militant Islamist groups, some of which are designated as terrorist organisations by the US and others, but which provided effective humanitarian response in a manner unrecognisable from a local civil society response. At the time of immediate emergency, the recipients of support are unlikely to care about its source, and the Kashmir earthquake offers some remarkable examples of groupings that would not normally coincide shelving profound ideological differences to serve immediate needs. It serves not just as an example of the challenges of defining civil society in a dynamic context, but also shows that effective action, in this case arguably by 'uncivil civil society' does not necessarily expand civic space.

Further challenges come later, with fears about the legitimisation of uncivil actors and the additional influence this may give them over populations. Of course, there is always a question to be asked about the motivations in general of humanitarian aid from donors, and the extent to which agencies hope to win hearts and minds to advance other agendas through intervention. Often the connections to strategic political or economic concerns, or support of donor country suppliers, are also not far away.³⁹

Second, social networks designed to mitigate the impact of disaster have been proven to be effective even when driven largely by the state and in situations many would consider undemocratic. For example, Sims and Vogelmann (2002),⁴⁰ noting the highly successful role played by the Comités de la Defensa de la Revolución in Cuba, particularly in contrast to neighbouring Haiti and Jamaica (although in analysis that may now appear a little dated given the subsequent rise of social media) conclude that:



“Countries’ responses to natural disasters may be more related to their social and organisational systems than to wealth or regime type. Countries with strong economies and democratic forms of government have not necessarily weathered hurricanes well. Nations with highly organised government structures, public enforcement powers, a media that informs citizens of the weather or likelihood of an earthquake, and an educated citizenry with access to media channels via televisions and radios seem to be the most prepared to face disasters with minimal loss of life.”



Indeed, does the correlation between active community participation and effective disaster management necessarily extend to democracy, civil society and the right to freedom of association and assembly, or instead does the lived experience of citizens’ roles in disaster management sometimes challenge our preconceptions?

Strong social capital seems to be the key asset, but what does an acknowledgment that it may have many sources, be sustained in many ways and indeed be ‘bonding’ social capital that sustains group identity rather than ‘bridging’ social capital that builds stronger connections between people in different groups mean for our future approaches?

CIVICUS would argue that an investment in a diverse civil society that offers multiple spaces for self-expression, reflection, analysis and collaboration is but one way of generating valuable social capital – but it is also the best way of building an active and empowered citizenry able to respond to the manifold challenges of the day, an important one of which is serving as a source of resilience and a pool of talent for disaster risk reduction and emergency response.

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

With these challenges in mind, how can governments and donors seek to navigate this uncertain terrain and invest in community spaces, particularly when community responses are often at their most effective when spontaneous and in the direct aftermath of a disaster? Looking at responses to the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, two Malaysian commentators suggested that:

“Policy-planners should think carefully about the ways that they can facilitate the construction and maintenance of social networks. For example, providing communities and community groups with communications devices such as cell phones and email connections can help them stay in contact during the post-disaster diaspora. Further, NGOs and the government can focus on setting up not just temporary homes for people to live in, but meeting places for local community groups. Officials can also sponsor information sessions specifically for established faith-based or neighbourhood-based groups and do everything possible to house relocated communities together, as opposed to separate locations. These are simple and relatively low-cost solutions, but they may have far-reaching positive consequences for communities struck by disaster.”⁴¹

The significance of community, and its immediate presence on the ground in places where the government cannot always be quickly, suggests that more attention should be paid to connecting communities and groupings at the local level with humanitarian NGOs, including INGOs, governmental bodies, and those coordinating disaster risk reduction programmes.

Disaster risk reduction, by focussing more on enabling community spaces in advance and supporting diverse sources of social capital and civic groupings, can invest in a better capacity to mount disaster responses that are inclusive, civic and better able to reach people. Robust disaster preparedness has to involve investment in a diversity of civil society and the spaces in which civic action can form.

There are three challenges in this for governments. The first is to supplement what is often the conventional fallback response of making heavy use of military units. The second challenge lies in governments' comfort levels in investing in spaces which can express critical voices, and where critical voices may gain additional advantage and space from emergency experiences. The third challenge is the continuing relatively minimal attention given to disaster preparedness and mitigation compared to the response and recovery stages of the disaster cycle. It is estimated that around 20% of humanitarian aid is spent in responding to disaster, compared to under 1% spent on prevention and mitigation.⁴²

A STILL UNRECOGNISED ROLE

Amid a loud and sustained campaign from civil society in 2011 and before, which gained growing recognition from donor governments, that development must be about much more than financial aid - and that greater focus should be given in international development policies to other components of improving the practice of development, such as more equitable trade agreements and a more enabling environment for civil society - the principles of how humanitarian work should be carried out in order to be effective continued to shift. As discussed in this report's section on the key global civil society events of 2011, the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, South Korea, November to December 2011, established new principles for 'development effectiveness' as opposed to 'aid effectiveness', including a reaffirmation of the role of civil society and the importance of an environment which enables its work.

“There is still work to be done in building recognition of civil society's role and in articulating what such recognition would mean for changing practice.”

Part of the challenge in the debate on humanitarian aid and emergency response is how these integrate with broader development approaches, and the ways these are changing in practice and development discourse is evolving. Changes of direction in development and aid will likely influence how humanitarian aid and emergency response is practised. The Busan forum acknowledged that development initiatives as a whole should build resilience in settings vulnerable to shocks, and should invest in disaster risk reduction, and that developing countries should lead in integrating disaster management in broader development strategies. It called for an increase in resources, planning and skills for disaster management, and investment in more shock resistant infrastructure. But a notable and worrying omission in the relevant section of the Busan outcome document is the lack of an explicit reference to the role of civil society in risk reduction, disaster management and development of more shock resistant infrastructure.⁴³ This suggests there is still work to be done in building recognition of civil society's role and in articulating what such recognition would mean for changing practice.

CONCLUSION

Through looking at disaster as a trigger for crisis, the challenges and opportunities that faced civil society in 2011 come to the fore. Emerging from many civil society perspectives in 2011, including those contained within this chapter, is a clear sense that disaster management, as with other interventions, works best if it is inclusive, multi-stakeholder, and involves civil society in different forms, throughout the disaster management chain, and not merely in cleaning the mess up after disaster has struck.





Inclusion of this sort rests on a broader recognition of civil society as having a voice that is legitimate and worth hearing through advocacy and policy influence, and in not constraining civil society's role to that of simply a service deliverer.

Approaches to emergency response and disaster risk reduction will need to continue in 2012 to shift away from a state-centric, often militarised view of responding to disasters. While military and quasi-military bodies remain important for carrying out certain functions, making disaster management more civic, as a contribution towards long-term, civilian solutions will be necessary, if disaster management is to be more than the short-term band-aid of reaction.

In addition to the need to better recognise civil society's potential contribution to mitigating the impact on citizens of emergencies, 2011 suggested again that the effect of emergencies upon civil society can be acute. As one leader of a CSO in Japan put it:

“This is a turning point for Japanese civil society. The emergency and its aftermath have resulted in a shift in thinking about the role of CSOs and a realisation that these actually formalise the idea of community solidarity that has been such an essential piece of the Japanese social fabric. In the six months since the disaster, we are seeing the emergence of civil society in the public consciousness not as an abstract idea, but as a formalised need, in a country where in the past the people had always expected - and mostly received - such services from government.”⁴⁴

This suggests that for those with an interest in enhancing the space for civic possibility, building social capital or indeed strengthening the future capacity for emergency response and disaster risk reduction, a key intervention in 2012 and the years beyond should be to support local CSOs in the sites of disaster in 2011.

The notion of 2011 as a turning point, as a critical juncture for civil society globally is a powerful and increasingly convincing one. The imagery, not just of occupation and the mass mobilisation of dissent, but of natural disasters – of crumbling structures, of a tsunami sweeping away all before it – was unmistakable, and lent to 2011 a strong visual symbolism of old orders and ways of doing things disintegrating before our eyes. But as the experience of the Arab Spring is already teaching us, the revolt is often the easier part. Building new social orders in the aftermath of crises that are more inclusive, more participatory and fairer than those which preceded them is the real challenge.

Perhaps the greatest tension for civil society lies in the knowledge that what comes next is uncertain, and is all to be played for. When social orders break down under crisis conditions, the power and legitimacy vacuum that is created far from guarantees the ascendancy of progressive, civil society values. Indeed, we can be certain that the structures of a social order – whether in Japan, the 'Eurozone', eventually even in Somalia – will at some point be rebuilt. Civil society will contribute, and will have a stake in the new structures which emerge. But what is less certain is what these new orders will look like when the dust settles, and who will win not only the struggle of ideas, but also the struggle for power.

If the other face of crisis in 2011 was a generational opportunity to reshape the world the way in which we want, then what factors are inhibiting civil society from shaping the world in the way that its different actors wanted? This is something the following sections of this report will explore.

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CITIZENS IN ACTION 2011:

**PROTEST AS PROCESS IN THE YEAR OF
DISSENT**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Protests, mass expressions of dissent and other peoples' mobilisations became a global, viral brand in 2011. The Arab Spring offered a crucial source of inspiration to people in Europe, the Americas and Sub-Saharan Africa. Different movements in different locales acknowledged mutual inspiration and shared information with each other, suggesting the potential to develop new global alternatives. The economic crisis, which brought to the fore underlying trends of inequality, corruption and poor governance, and many governments' response to the crisis, which saw a privileging of the private sector and the consequences of crisis falling disproportionately on the poor, were key drivers of protest, in bringing more people into insecurity. As well as inequality, other trends that fostered protest included rising food and fuel prices, a youth bulge, high unemployment, including of highly educated and young people, and urbanisation, while the mushrooming of internet access and mobile and social media use was a key catalyst for protest both on the streets and public squares, and online. The fallout of the economic crisis, and many governments' responses to it, can be seen as breaching the fundamental social contract between state and citizens, and protests can be understood as a way of trying to seize back some power to renegotiate the social contract on citizens' terms. A notable facet of many of the protest movements of 2011 is that they saw new civil society formations and newly mobilised people. In many locales existing civil society actors were not particularly influential in sparking and shaping dissent. This calls into question the relevancy and effectiveness of politically-oriented CSOs, and serves as a stark reminder that rich associational life exists beyond formalised CSOs. Another change the new protests may have brought is in redefining what constitutes civil society success, as many protests emphasised the modelling of alternate ways of working, such as processes of direct democracy, rather than the making of specific and negotiable demands, challenging conventional models of advocacy and of assessing the impact of civic action. The change in mindsets of some of those who participated, and enduring international, personal networks, may be the strongest outcomes of the activist events of 2011. The sustainability of both the new protests and existing civil society actors may lie in new forms of coalition-building, and communities of ideas and practice, which blend and respect the strengths of different actors.

INTRODUCTION

2011 was the year of dissent. In different places and in different ways, dissent, protest and people's activism grew, became more vocal and more visible, and demanded new responses. 2011 was the year when apathy became unfashionable and seemingly unassailable dictators were challenged. Countries accounting for more than half of the world's population, at least 88 countries in total, saw different forms of mass citizen action.¹

“2011 was the year when apathy became unfashionable and seemingly unassailable dictators were challenged.”

The year also saw a change, in the scale of dissent, its spread, the methods employed, the connections made and its potential implications. What happened in 2011 also raises fundamental questions about what civil society is and how those with an interest in civil society can understand it and try to work with it. The year's movements and moments of protest and dissent, and activism in its various forms, should be seen as part of civil society, and in some cases, as new and dynamic civil society formations.

While there was shared solidarity, and lines of inspiration and support between different protests, as will be examined further below, different protests on the face of it had different goals. In some places, such as in the Middle East and North Africa, powerful motivations included a struggle for



the right to make a living unhindered by interfering government and corruption; in other words, what could be characterised as a desire for the dismantling of barriers against individual enterprise and mobility, an opening up of opportunities previously limited to dictators' cronies, that ultimately entailed demands for the removal of dictators and the extension of democracy. Many struggles in Sub-Saharan Africa had similar motivations, but in addition often emerged around electoral fraud as a flashpoint. Compared to this, many of the protesters in Europe or North America saw themselves as engaged in a more fundamental or even anti-capitalist struggle.

Protests often started out addressing local issues but blossomed into broader critiques of leaders, governance structures and ruling ideologies. Protest also seemed capable of absorbing any number of individual or group concerns. What united them could be summarised as a striving for dignity and a questioning of the current rules of engagement.

In many contexts, the state's response to the current economic, political, social and environmental crises can be characterised as an implicit, perhaps irrevocable breach of the social contract, the implied arrangement by which citizens consent to be governed, implying some compromise of individual liberty, for example through taxation and forms of service to the state, in return for the state guaranteeing the conditions of basic personal security and dignity. If governments are not keeping their side of the bargain, why should citizens?

“Protests often started out addressing local issues but blossomed into broader critiques of leaders, governance structures and ruling ideologies.”

The notion of the social contract is of course a contested one, and perhaps a tenuous one in the context of a developing country with limited public infrastructure, an absence of social safety nets and a scarcity of basic goods. The idea that citizens living under the rule of unelected, autocratic regimes have consented to a social contract is dubious. But if we assume that some principles of fairness and mutuality should govern relationships between the state, the private sector and citizens, then it seems apparent that the economic and other crises, and reactions to them, are changing those relationships, and the questions then become those of who is driving the change, whether the renegotiation of relationships is transparent and fair, and who is being disadvantaged.

The response to crises can be seen as a unilateral revision of the social contract by the state, or an exclusive act between the state, large corporations and other connected institutions of power. Protest can be understood as a way of people seizing back some power over, and demanding a voice in, a process of renegotiation of the social contract.

This is not to simplify the diversity of dissent, protest and other forms of activism and participation. There are no clear-cut revolutions, and there is certainly nothing as straightforward as a Facebook or Twitter revolution. There is a need to take into account the multiplicity of mobilisations of people's dissent that occurred in 2011, some of which commanded more headlines than others. There will remain a need to examine the complexities and nuances of each new mobilisation of people; to try to understand the motivations and drivers behind them, and the different levels of risk involved as people take to the streets or seek change in other ways; the varying contexts of protests, and the different demands made, or indeed the lack of demands; the various ways in which social and mobile technology act as facilitators; the extent to which different movements make connections with each other and feel themselves to be part of a common consciousness; the connections made with other civil society formations; and the mechanisms of resourcing protest.

There is also a need to be aware of the danger, in taking a retrospective on 2011, of overlooking the past events that contributed to the explosion of protest, of failing to recall, for example, the inspiration of the 2009 Iranian protests and earlier movements in Egypt and Tunisia on the Arab Spring, or the role of the bank collapses of 2007 in the economic crisis that has fuelled people's present political dissatisfaction.

This section of the report first looks briefly at some of the key arenas of activism and dissent in 2011, and then tries to analyse what may have been some of the causes of the events of 2011, what is distinct about these, what the implications may be for civil society as a whole, and what the future may hold.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

The 'Arab Spring'

The early 2011 headlines were dominated by the Arab Spring, and the ramifications of what were largely mass, public protests against governments in a range of countries played out throughout the year, continuing as protests in Europe and then the Occupy movement also came to prominence. Whatever one thinks of the label of the Arab Spring, it is one that stuck, and it provides a shorthand for a huge and diverse series of events, encompassing the overthrow of governments in **Egypt** and **Tunisia**, the stimulus for regime change and subsequent foreign intervention which proved to be decisive in **Libya**, sustained and bloody civil strife in **Syria**, protest and its brutal suppression in **Bahrain**, conflict and a handover of power in **Yemen**, the granting of political concessions in **Jordan**, **Kuwait**, **Morocco** and **Oman**, the offering of less far-reaching economic and political changes in response to protests in **Algeria**, **Iraq**, **Lebanon** and **Saudi Arabia**, and protests also in **Mauritania** and the Morocco-occupied territory of **Western Sahara**.

Much of the outcome of these protests and movements, in terms of their contribution to lasting social and political change that enhances democracy and redresses injustices, naturally still hangs in the balance. Tunisia, where the Arab Spring brand was born in December 2010, sparked by the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi,² appears to have held a peaceful and rules-based election

in October 2011 to form its Constituent Assembly and coalition interim government. Attention is now turning to the question of how best to support and build the institutions of an organised civil society in a country where few CSOs were previously permitted, along with the challenges of negotiation between liberal and left groupings, and explicitly Islamic ones.³

“Attention is now turning to the question of how best to support and build the institutions of an organised civil society.”

In Libya, following the abrupt end of Muammar Gaddafi's 41-year reign in the culmination of an eight month civil war, the challenges are larger and more difficult still, of building a new nation on the ruins of an ancient autocracy and amidst the competition for power that follows its demise in the absence of a convincing political settlement and while militias hang on to their arms; and of developing a civil society in a space where organised forms of participation that did not service the former regime have long been forbidden.⁴

Egypt could be characterised as a stalled revolution, or at least one which has not so far reached its endgame, with events having swept away some of the political scenery to reveal the entrenched power of the military, which has seen around 12,000 people subjected to military tribunals by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces since it took over power from deposed President Mubarak.⁵ A heavy challenge of asserting the supremacy of the civil over the military and carrying forward the

expectations of the people amidst continuing protests and violence awaits the predominantly Islamist winners of the November 2011 to January 2012 People's Assembly elections.⁶



The Syrian government is widely accused of crimes against humanity as it has asserted a response of maximum violence to its uprising, with an ensuing death toll of an estimated 7,500 people at the time of writing,⁷ while Saudi Arabian military assistance put down the Bahraini revolt in March 2011 and enabled the state to throw an estimated 500 protesters into jail.⁸ Both governments benefited from permissive treatment from powerful nations with vested political and trade interests. In Yemen there is nervousness about what happens now that the 33-year rule of President Saleh has passed to his vice president in February 2012,⁹ while in Jordan, Kuwait and Morocco, there is frustration amongst many that reforms have not gone far or deep enough. For example, in response to protest in Morocco, a new constitution placed some



limits on the king's powers and improved the conditions for elections, but still renders the king 'inviolable' and gives him power to dissolve parliament.¹⁰

This is not to play down the significance of the Arab Spring by assessing its results as mixed today. Millions of people mobilised across an arc of countries on an unprecedented scale. Rather, the outcomes serve as a reminder that the struggle of brave people against dictatorship and corruption remains urgent and ongoing, and that protest and activism is a process rather than an event. Seeing the Arab Spring as a process rather than a spectacular collection of news stories encourages us not only to look before December 2010 to see where the stimulus to and foreshadowing of protest can be discerned, but also to consider what actions might best be taken now to strengthen the likelihood of success in the future, and also to think about how success might be defined.

The Outraged of Europe

The second headline wave of 2011 protests happened in a remarkably different context, in the mature democracies and developed economies of the European Union (EU). In **Spain** the protests went under the broad label of the *Indignados* – the outraged – who occupied the public squares of major cities to protest against unemployment, welfare cuts and the power of the banks, originally under such banners as Youth without Future in March and then the *Democracia Real Ya* (Real Democracy Now) movement. Tens of thousands of people occupied Puerta del Sol, the central square of Madrid, on 15 May, in what became known as the 15-M movement, with many staying on to occupy the square until August, and over 100,000 protested on 15 May around Spain.¹¹ An Ipsos Public Affairs study into the Spanish protests estimated that between 6m and 8.5m Spanish people claim to have participated in the Real Democracy Now protests, a staggering proportion of a population of around 46m people.¹²

“Between 6m and 8.5m Spanish people claim to have participated in the Real Democracy Now protests.”

This followed the *Geração à Rasca* 'desperate generation' protests in **Portugal**, in which 200,000 people marched in March against unemployment and the hardships facing young people.¹³ At the same time as the Spanish protests there were large scale protests throughout the year in **Greece**, which saw the long term occupation of public spaces, particularly Athens' Syngtama Square, and the instigation, as in Spain, of directly democratic people's assemblies.¹⁴ A focal point for the various movements was offered by the Global Day of Rage, in October 2011, in which people protested in almost 1,000 cities in over 80 countries.¹⁵

The **UK** riots of August 2011 were different, in that initial anger at police treatment careered into consumerist looting and nihilism, but they followed on from large scale student and public sector workers' protests at government cuts, and can also be understood as having a source in young people's alienation, lack of opportunity and highly visible economic inequality.¹⁶

While the protests of the Arab Spring can be seen, in some contexts, and with the continuing challenges described above, to have achieved genuine change, the European protests could be critiqued in conventional terms as having failed. The culmination of a year of anger in Spain was the election in November of a right of centre government committed to austerity measures insisted upon by the most powerful European governments.¹⁷ In that same month, in Greece, the land that gave the world the very word democracy, elected government was dispensed with without ceremony and an appointed, technocratic government installed in the name of economic rescue, without due deference to the Copenhagen Criteria that are supposed to set the rules for EU membership.¹⁸ In short order this was repeated in **Italy**, the only country which saw violence during the Global Day of Rage,¹⁹ where an economist was sworn in as a life senator and made Prime Minister within the space of a week.²⁰ If the protests demanded direct democracy and an end to capitalism as normal, they were met with the rollback of even conventional democracy and a commitment to increased austerity that will disproportionately penalise the poor. The challenges these movements now face include asserting their continued relevance as a source of alternatives amidst changed political realities, as the view that unelected leaders can do no worse than elected ones is seemingly common.



Occupy everywhere

Ultimately, however, there is more than one way of judging success. The success of the European protests may lie not in disputing power, but in galvanising citizens newly into activism, radicalising them, exposing them to the workings of dissent and the ways in which it is suppressed, and forging new connections. This could be said also of the Occupy movement, which rose to prominence in New York, **USA**. Originally inspired by the Canadian *Adbusters* magazine and promoted in a viral video by the online Anonymous collective,²¹ the movement saw the occupation of Zuccotti Park in central Manhattan from September to November, spreading to other places in the USA and then globally, notably in the UK.²²

Occupy explicitly acknowledged its sources of inspiration as the Arab Spring and the protests in Europe. The movement was originally largely downplayed by mainstream media and politicians as the work of eccentrics, but it made heavy use of social media to create its own headlines and generate momentum. A characteristic that the movement shared with the European protests was its attempts to apply direct democracy through peoples' assemblies in the making of decisions on a consensus basis. It also rejected figureheads, making it harder for conventional politicians and organisations to understand and engage with.

One way in which Occupy differs from the protests of the Arab Spring is the lack of clear demands it makes, or even, compared to the European protests, its lack of focus. If broadly, the protests of the Arab Spring were about demanding democracy, and the public square anger in Europe was about resisting the measures and impacts of austerity, then Occupy seems capable of being a vehicle for the articulation of any number of concerns. The protests' lack of concrete demands and coherent alternatives, with only some slowly emerging from the process of direct democracy, was criticised as a weakness, including by some people on the left,²³ while its attempts at reaching consensus were ridiculed. Yet this supposed weakness was also a strength: a commitment to consensus-based decision-making and new methods of collaboration, along with an emphasis on popular education, are arguably what the movement stood for.

Other highlights of the year of dissent

The three broad camps of protest described above commanded most international attention, and as such demand analysis, not least in order to explore the idea that protests inspired and imitated each other. But this is not all that happened in 2011. While it is impossible here to offer a comprehensive list, what was breathtaking was the abundance of places in which dissent broke through, and the variety of interests advanced. There is also a need to look beyond protest at participation in other forms, as in the radical example of direct democracy in Iceland, below.

“What was breathtaking was the abundance of places in which dissent broke through and the variety of interests advanced.”

There were protest attempts of varying degrees of success in a range of Sub-Saharan African countries, and in over a dozen capitals, including in those countries which were previously regarded as having achieved a measure of stability.²⁴ Actions included walk to work protests, against fuel prices, political corruption and single party dominance in **Uganda** in April,²⁵ and protests against economic hardship and authoritarian rule in **Malawi**, which resulted in 19 deaths due to heavy state response.²⁶ There was activism in **Senegal** against the president's attempts to tinker with the constitution in order to secure a third term for himself and to create the role of a vice presidency for his son as his potential successor. Ultimately, this was successfully resisted through a combination of street-based and online activism, which mobilised young people from low-income areas and the middle classes. A main component of civic action



in Senegal was a drive to register young voters led by popular rappers in advance of the 2012 elections.²⁷ There were also mass protests against economic hardship and absolute monarchical rule in **Swaziland**,²⁸ a long-term public sector strike and student protests in **Botswana**²⁹ and service delivery protests in **South Africa**,³⁰ one of the world's most unequal societies,³¹ while early 2012 saw protests against fuel price rises in **Nigeria**.³² There were other protests, and attempts to organise them, too numerous to mention, including in **Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon** and **Mozambique**.³³ Two key questions to ask about protests in Sub-Saharan Africa, to be considered further below, are why in the main they did not command the same level of international attention, and why in general they appear to have made less impact.

Then there were the student protests in **Chile**, which grew from dissent about how economic inequality is manifested in higher education through a two tier state and private provision system into a larger movement about public services, income redistribution and top down governance that involved 600,000 people in protests in August.³⁴ Latin America also saw protests in **Mexico** against the repressive tactics of the conflict between government and drug cartels³⁵ and an increase in workers' protests in **Venezuela**.³⁶

There was the anti-corruption movement in **India**, which commanded attention by combining classical Gandhian civil disobedience techniques with public demonstrations and the use of social media.³⁷ There were the tent city protests in **Israel**, which made visible the unaffordability of housing and saw more than 400,000 people demonstrating on the streets of Tel Aviv and other cities at its peak in August.³⁸ In December, citizens of **Russia** threw off accusations of apathy by challenging their flawed parliamentary election, causing the first cracks to show in Prime Minister-President Putin's armour,³⁹ with public expressions of dissent continuing in the early months of 2012. Then there were the controversial and provocative SlutWalks rallies protesting about sexual violence against women, which started in **Canada** and spread to **India, South Africa, the UK** and **USA**, amongst others.⁴⁰

There were the shadowy territories of the **Anonymous** collective and other hacktivist groups, which continued to carry out attacks on government and corporate websites.⁴¹ The continuing fall out of WikiLeaks' release of US State Department confidential information, which continued during 2011, arguably helped fuel dissent by shedding light on dubious state conduct and making explicit the connections between international governing elites.⁴² Then there were issue-based protest groups such as **UK Uncut**, which used direct action to draw attention to well-known companies that avoid paying tax, making a connection between this and economic inequality and the impact of austerity measures.⁴³

Not all new participation phenomena took the form of protest. There was the extraordinary response to the rare experience of domestic terrorism in **Norway** in July, which saw an estimated one-third of Oslo's 600,000 population take to the streets carrying roses insisting that no new restrictive laws be introduced as a result of the tragedy.⁴⁴ As a response to Iceland's own street protests in the face of economic meltdown in 2008, **Iceland**, remarkably, crowdsourced its new constitution. The process included selecting citizens at random for an initial forum, holding elections for a constitutional council, putting the draft constitution online and taking advantage of the heavy penetration of social media to allow people to participate.⁴⁵ The new constitution, which has more provisions on equality, freedom of information, the right to hold a referendum, the environment and public ownership of land, is expected to be put to referendum in mid-2012.



In summary, in terms of numbers, the variety of sites of protests, the range of imaginative tactics employed and the plethora of interests advanced, 2011 was a remarkable year of participation, activism, mobilisation and dissent, linked by common currents of inspiration and imitation. What needs to be considered next is what may have provoked this, what is new, and what this means for those with an interest in civil society.

CASE STUDY

Iceland: a radical exercise in democracy

*Berghildur Bernharðsdóttir is the Spokesperson for Stjornlagarad, Iceland's Constitutional Council. Here, she describes the process of direct democracy and widespread consultation used to develop Iceland's bill for a new constitution.*⁴⁶

In 2011 Iceland's Constitutional gave people an opportunity to participate in the formation of a bill for the new Constitution.

A 25 member Constitutional Council was appointed by *Althingi*, Iceland's parliament, in March 2011. Its task was to make recommendations about changes to the Constitution. The Council was informed by the report of the 2010 National Forum, a meeting where around 1,000 Icelanders discussed what they wanted to see in the new constitution. The Council started its work in April 2011 and delivered its recommendations to parliament, in a form of a bill on the Constitutional Law at the end of July 2011, completing its work in four months.

The motivation for reform stemmed from extensive social discourse about the need to review the basis of the Icelandic administration following the collapse of Iceland's banks and meltdown of its economy in 2008.

The Council aimed from the beginning to be as transparent in all its work as possible and to get the public involved. It used as many different interactive media as possible, including Facebook, YouTube, Flickr and Twitter.

Almost every day short interviews with the members of the Council about their work were made available on YouTube and Facebook.⁴⁷ There were weekly live broadcasts from the Council's meetings on its website and Facebook page, and a broadcast documentary was commissioned about the Council, titled *Rebirth of a Nation*. Advertisements were also published in the media encouraging the public to keep track of proceedings.

The Council was eager to make sure the public could be up to date while the work was in progress, but more importantly it also wanted the public to participate in the formation of a new Constitution. Each week all suggestions about changes in the Constitution were published, in a *Constitutional Draft* on the Council's website, and the public was able to comment on each proposition through Facebook, taking advantage of the fact that 83% of the Icelandic population is on Facebook, one of the highest rates in the world. The public took advantage this opportunity. The Council received around 3,600 comments, most of them very objective and useful. Council members also responded to the public, ensuring a lively discussion about the proposals. Members of the Council reported that many comments had been valuable and influenced their work. In addition, the Council made it possible for the public to send formal propositions, and it received around 380 of these. These were published on the Council's website and people could comment on each of them, creating further discussion. This was also helpful for the Council's work, and some of the proposals went straight into the final bill, as was the case with a proposal on children's rights.

The process demonstrated the willingness of the public to take part in real, open democracy. This was a method that proved to work, and gave people an opportunity to have their say about the new constitution.

The process also caught the imagination of international media, with coverage for example in the Guardian, BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera, all the main Nordic media and media in France, Germany and Spain.



The bill for the new constitution was unanimously approved by all delegates at the last meeting of the Council in July 2011. When the council delivered the bill to the Speaker of Althingi, the chair of the Council, Salvör Nordal, said:

“The main themes which the Constitutional Council has observed during its work have been these three: distribution of power, transparency and responsibility. We are a group of various people with diverse opinions, education and experience in life. Each and every one has taken a stance on matters based on their own beliefs and opinions. During the process, the Council has consulted the Report of the Constitutional Committee as well as the result of the National Forum 2010. The public has had wide access to the work of the Council, primarily by writing comments, as well as sending their suggestions to the Council’s website. The idea that the public had their say in the revision of the Constitution has thus been preserved. In that way, the bill of the Council has taken shape little by little during discussions between the delegates themselves, as well as through the open exchange of opinions and ideas with the public. The Constitutional Council now presents the bill to the Parliament and to the people and expects that the open discussion of recent months on constitutional matters will continue.”

WHY DID IT HAPPEN NOW?

The origins and motivations of dissent are complex, but from the narratives of many of those involved in the protests, three stand out to be investigated below: the economic crisis, inequality and the political response to these; changing demographic trends, particularly a growing proportion of young people and of people living in cities; and the increased use of social and mobile technology.

Economic crisis

It is clear from the content of protest that the global economic crisis is one powerful driver of what happened in 2011. How most people experience the economic crisis, itself a result of speculation, injudicious lending and the collapse of bubble financial products, has been through increased employment insecurity, unemployment, under-employment and informal working, and reduced income and the loss of financial buffers such as savings. Coupled with the rising prices of essential goods, for many it has become harder to make ends meet.

It is significant that the first wave of protests in Europe in 2011 came in Greece, where unemployment rose from 7.5% to 17.6% between July 2007 and July 2011, in Spain, where the rise over the same period was from 8.2% to 21.8%, and in Portugal, where it rose from 8.9% to 12.5%.⁴⁸ By January 2012 unemployment stood at 23.3% in Spain, 19.9% in Greece and 14.8% in Portugal, the top three in the EU (with Portugal level in third place with Ireland), and with Greece, Cyprus and Spain seeing the highest annual increases.⁴⁹ The Occupy Wall Street movement and its offspring around the USA can be seen to some extent as a response of the unemployed, with US unemployment almost doubling from 5% to 9.7% between January 2008 and January 2010.⁵⁰

Globally, the International Labour Organisation reported that unemployment stood at 200m at the start of 2012, with a sharp rise from 176m in 2008 to 198m in 2009, and with 75m young people unemployed.⁵¹

Worsened employment conditions met with rising costs of living. For essential foods, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation’s monthly food reports recorded the highest prices in two decades of data collection for five groups of basic foods - cereals, cooking oils, dairy, rice and sugar - between January and April 2011, a higher peak in prices even than that experienced during the 2007 to 2008 Global Food Crisis, and a rise of 37% by mid 2011 compared to mid 2010.⁵² The World Bank Global Food Price Index reported a drop in the latter months of 2011, but prices in 2011 still averaged 24% up from the 2010 average.⁵³

“Many of the protests of the global South explicitly drew attention to the rising prices of basic food and fuel.”

Rising food prices may have many causes, including growing populations, the rise of new middle classes in growing powers such as the BRICS countries, inefficient distribution, the switch to biofuel rather than food production, commodity market speculation, increasing transportation costs and the impact of climate change. But regardless of their causes, they bite hardest on the poorest, and can make the difference between relative affluence and a sense of creeping poverty. It is significant that Egypt is the world's number one importer of wheat⁵⁴ as the global wheat price more than doubled between June 2010 and 2011.⁵⁵ Many of the protests of the global South explicitly drew attention to the rising prices of basic food and fuel. As was seen in some of the poorest countries of the world, in Mozambique in 2010, Malawi and Uganda in 2011, and Nigeria in 2012, when the price of bread or petrol rises, people more readily take to the streets.⁵⁶

The price of fuel has also risen. International Monetary Fund (IMF) data on commodity prices sets the base for its index of petroleum prices at 100 in 2005; this had almost doubled to 195.9 in 2011, while the index for energy as a whole was closely matched at 193.8, with both spiking in the second quarter of 2011.⁵⁷ A recently launched 'Global Petrol Price Index' only covers some European countries and the USA, but each of these records a sharp rise in petrol prices at the pump between 2003 and 2011. Greece, for example, saw its prices more than double from 2007 to 2011.⁵⁸

Of course, in each context the interaction between the economic crisis, politics and state response is different. The quality of response to economic crisis arguably provides a key test of government efficiency and social responsibility. Further, the economic crisis, while global, exposed some countries more than others, depending on such factors as their level of indebtedness and the mix of their economies between sectors such as agriculture, extractive industries, manufacturing and services. It is striking in this regard that in countries which have experienced the effects of the economic crisis less, for example Germany and Canada as compared to Spain and the USA, protest was much more muted. The attempts at starting Occupy movements in Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore did not meet with the same enthusiasm.⁵⁹

Inequality and risk

The economic crisis, and many governments' reactions to it, can be characterised as the tipping point for many. One of the consequences of the economic crisis was to throw more people who had previously experienced relative security into financial insecurity. Middle class people felt squeezed and poorer people felt desperate. The movement of people from security to insecurity can be understood to have made some more likely to take on the additional risk of protest. They had less to lose. It has also shed light on problems that were always there, making at least some people question the governance and wealth distribution arrangements of their countries. The 'we

are the 99 percent' website, which tells the stories of 'ordinary Americans' experiencing financial difficulties, underemployment and unemployment, which run counter to the expectations they grew up with, is an example of the narratives around this discovery of insecurity.⁶⁰

A growing part of the dissent discourse, a common thread that ran through many protests, centred on inequality. In the main, the economic growth which preceded the economic crisis did not proportionately trickle down to the poorest. Many countries saw jobless growth and the creation of poor quality employment.⁶¹ For example, recent research on African countries suggests that, while many countries saw apparently impressive economic growth in the early 2000s, each 1% of growth in GDP corresponded with an increase in employment of only 0.036%.⁶² Further, a 2007 UN report, published on the cusp of the economic downturn, noted





that even at a time of economic growth, there was insufficient employment growth in developing countries, and apparent jobless growth in Africa and Asia.⁶³

Alongside this, the gap between the richest and the poorest was increased in many countries which, on the basis of mere GDP figures, might otherwise be considered more prosperous and economically stable. Magdalena Sepúlveda, UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, drew attention to growing inequalities exacerbated by austerity measures and their role in encouraging social unrest, noting that at the present rate it would take 800 years for the bottom billion of the earth's population to earn 10% of the global income.⁶⁴

For example, in the USA, the income of the wealthiest 1% grew by 275% between 1979 and 2007, while it grew by only 18% for the lowest 20%.⁶⁵ Research by the Institution for Social and Policy Studies at Yale University constructed a working definition of economic insecurity, and found the economically insecure population rose from 14.3% of the total population in 1986 to 18.8% in 2001 and to 20.5% in 2010.⁶⁶ Perhaps not coincidentally, data from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on income distribution inequality places Chile as the most unequal of its 34 members, with many other countries which were the sites of protest in 2011 also high on the income inequality table, including Mexico, USA, Israel, Portugal, UK and Italy.⁶⁷ The OECD also reported that the richest 10% had 14 times more income than the bottom 10% in Israel and the USA, and 27 more times in Chile and Mexico, and acknowledged that in a large majority of its member countries, 19 out of 27 for which data was available, the household income of the wealthiest 10% grew faster than those of the poorest 10%, pointing to widening income inequality. The Gini coefficient, which measures the distance from perfect income equality, also worsened by 10% for OECD members from the mid 1980s to the end of the 2000s.⁶⁸

“In the USA, the income of the wealthiest 1% grew by 275% between 1979 and 2007, while it grew by only 18% for the lowest 20%.”

It is not long either since Tunisia was praised as a model of high economic performance on the African continent.⁶⁹ As a poster child of economic growth, its democratic and human rights deficits were overlooked.⁷⁰ The problem with this picture was that high growth did not translate into high and sustainable employment levels, with youth unemployment estimated at 30%. Furthermore, an inequitable distribution of wealth made Tunisia vulnerable to any economic shocks.

In the global North, protests expressed public anger about the protection of financial industries, often the recipient of government bailouts and special measures, made still sourer by the continuation of a culture of very high pay and bonuses for those at the top of the financial sector and other large corporations, and expert tax avoidance by wealthy individuals and corporations. Where governments offered health and social safety nets, they reacted to the economic crisis by cutting these back, and cutting public sector pay and jobs. This was often combined with rising regressive taxes. The narrative became one of financial institutions causing the global economic mess, but the consequences being laid on the people.

In both the global North and South, the economic crisis made inequality more obvious and profound. It revealed serious structural political flaws that were always there. It made political corruption, and the personal enrichment of many politicians and their circles of family and cronies, harder to stomach. As a narrative of the 99% vs. the 1% took hold, most political leaders looked like members of a global 1% elite. The daily frustrations and inefficiencies of poor governance, distance from decision-making and corruption were exacerbated.⁷¹ Attention was called to the flaws in the 1990s orthodoxy of globalisation and economic liberalism: the lack of ability to exert democratic accountability, the vulnerability to speculation and the incompatibility with attempts to mitigate and prevent climate change.⁷²

In short, economic crisis, and the state's response to it, heaped indignity onto insecurity. It should be recalled that Mohamed Bouazizi's seminal act of self-immolation was sparked by repeated and vindictive petty officialdom that prevented him from doing something as simple as trying to make a living.⁷³



Changing populations

“ Many countries, particularly in the global South, are seeing a youth bulge, with their populations made up of large proportions of under 30s.”

The development of the economic crisis has of course been informed by other global trends. Many countries, particularly in the global South, are seeing a youth bulge, with their populations made up of large proportions of under 30s. Globally, United Nations Population Division data suggests around 3.6 billion of the world’s population, 52%, is aged 29 or under. In Egypt, this proportion was estimated at 60% in 2010, in Libya at 59%, in Senegal at 79%.⁷⁴ The Arab Human Development Report puts the median age of the Arab population at 22 years old, compared to a global median of 28.⁷⁵

The youth bulge, combined with the impact of the global economic crisis, implies youth unemployment. In Yemen, for example, the Yemen Education for Employment Foundation estimated youth unemployment to be at around 50%, which taken with a population growth rate of 3% implied that 2m new jobs would need to be created by 2020 just to maintain present levels of employment.⁷⁶ In the EU, 5.5m young people were unemployed in January 2012, up 269,000 from the year before, with the highest rates found in some of the sites of protest, with a staggeringly high 49.9% youth unemployment rate in Spain and 48.1% in Greece.⁷⁷ In Tunisia, graduate unemployment increased by a factor of 10 from 1990 to stand at 20% in 2010.⁷⁸

In the global North, a key public policy goal in many countries has been to increase the numbers of people receiving university education, to better position countries as service and knowledge economies. For example, Universities UK reports that over half a million more people a year were enrolled in university education in the UK in 2009/10 than in 2000/01.⁷⁹ The right of centre government’s steep raising of university tuition fees and abolition of the Educational Maintenance Allowance that was paid to students of poorer families remaining in further education were subsequently particular grievances in student dissent in the UK.⁸⁰ Similarly in the global South there has been some success in increasing the numbers of people experiencing and completing formal education.⁸¹

It can be assumed that young people who have been through higher education have been exposed to a wider range of viewpoints and have higher expectations of fulfilling work as a result of their education. In a more globalised world, it has also become more normal for students to study outside their own country. The implication of these trends combined is that there are now more young, educated and internationally connected people struggling to find a job in keeping with their talents, and therefore experiencing disillusionment with their lived experience as compared to their hopes and expectations. As Paul Mason summarised in his influential blog, *Twenty reasons why it’s kicking off everywhere*, and subsequent book, we have seen the rise of a “new sociological type: the graduate with no future.”⁸² New youth movements correspondingly played an important

role in the Middle East and North Africa uprisings. For example, the February 17 Movement, an important unifying force in the early days of the Libyan uprising, was characterised by young, urban citizens with degrees.⁸³

Other factors include urbanisation. The world’s estimated urban population exceeded the rural population for the first time in 2007,⁸⁴ with 55% of the world’s population expected to live in cities by 2020,⁸⁵ and with more of the populations of the global South now living in large cities.

Some of the sites of protest in 2011 were also spaces of large urban population growth, such as Benghazi, which saw a growth of 3.27% from 2000 to 2005 and 2.65% from 2005 to 2010, and Cairo, which saw a growth of 1.73% from 2000 to 2005 and 1.7% from 2005 to 2010, compared to the relatively static populations





of cities in developed countries such as Paris and Tokyo.⁸⁶ The urbanisation rate is now 78% in Libya, 67% in Tunisia and 56% in Syria.⁸⁷

This marks a profound global shift. From the point of view of protest and dissent, cities throw people on top of each other, and offer public spaces to gather and make dissent visible. Dependency on cash income as opposed to subsistence farming also sensitises people to economic shocks. In addition, cities offer the opportunity for people as migrants, whether rural to urban migrants or migrants from other countries, to be exposed to different ideas and identities. They are, in short, spaces of potential.

Many of the protests of 2011 involved cosmopolitan young people who are digitally well-connected but facing an economically uncertain future making use of public spaces in cities and utilising social and mobile technology to organise and promote protest. Paul Mason draws attention to the enabling of a mix and match approach to activism, with people picking and choosing issues, interventions and tactics as it suits them, and the growth of a class of young people who instinctively connect and share interests across borders, building on the greater international movement and corresponding multiple national identities of the educated young. He stated, “I was astonished to find people I had interviewed inside the UCL [University College London] occupation blogging from Tahrir Square.”⁸⁸ No longer can the young be called apathetic just because they spend a lot of their time on the internet or aren’t interested in the conventional party politics of the day.

“The trap of conflating protest only with youthfulness should of course be avoided.”

The trap of conflating protest only with youthfulness should of course be avoided. A survey of Occupy Wall Street participants revealed their average age to be 33.⁸⁹ *Indignez-vous!*, a pamphlet by Stéphane Hessel calling for peaceful revolt against erosion of democracy and the excessive economic power of corporations, proved an extraordinary word of mouth bestseller and call to arms, selling 600,000 copies in France alone between October and December 2010 and 3.5m in a number of translations by September 2011, suggesting a deep vein of dissatisfaction. Yet it was written by a 93 year-old hero of the French Resistance and co-drafter of the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights.⁹⁰

An alternative to the politics of flawed elections?

In certain circumstances, protest in 2011 was preceded by falling voter turnout, indicating perhaps in some quarters a rejection of the conventional forms of political participation. In many of the countries which experienced mass protest and dissent in 2011, the International IDEA voter turnout database reports falling voting patterns, for example in Israel, declining from 78.73% in 1999 to 64.72% in 2009, in Kuwait from a high of 91.92% in 2006 to just 59% in 2009, in the USA senate elections from 51.55% in 1998 to 41.59% in 2010, and in Uganda’s presidential elections from 70.31% in 2001 to 58.29% in 2011.⁹¹

This was not, of course, the only trend. 2011 also saw contestation and conflict sparked by flawed elections in weak democracies as people protested against the short-circuiting of their vote in, for example, Cote d’Ivoire, Haiti, Nicaragua and Uganda. Russia experienced protests in response to flawed elections combined with falling turnout, down 3.4% in 2011 even on official figures compared to the 2007 parliamentary election.⁹² At the same time Google trends show that search traffic for ‘elections’ (*выборы*) was much higher in 2011 than in 2007,⁹³ while several marches and rallies for free and fair elections gathered thousands of people. There was no loss of interest in politics in Russia, just in voting.

Indeed, dictators standing in elections tend to view turnout statistics as a vindication of their popularity. In such circumstances, not voting can be a positive political act, albeit one that can be mistaken for apathy. Such was the case in Mubarak’s Egypt.⁹⁴ Electoral turnout in 1995 was 48% and in 2010 merely 27%, but more democratic elections in December 2011 to January 2012 were reflected in a turnout of 62%,⁹⁵ while Tunisia saw long queues to vote in its November elections.⁹⁶

In the countries of the global North, withdrawal from an electoral politics which increasingly seems to consist of parties offering the same solutions to economic crisis and competing on the basis of which party can best manage austerity can hardly be surprising.

SNAPSHOT FROM TAHRIR SQUARE

Interview with two Egyptian activists⁹⁷

Ahmad Fathelbab is an activist who works for Qabila,⁹⁸ a crowdsourcing-based media production platform, and Ahmed Samih is an activist and a civil society freedom fighter, who works with the Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Non-violence Studies.⁹⁹ Both were involved in the uprising in Egypt, and here focus on what they think provoked protest and what they assess as its distinct features.

What do you think were the key drivers of the revolution in Egypt?

The escalating social and economic problems are two very pertinent key drivers of the revolution, which the country has been facing for the past 70 years. Economic and social deficiencies coupled with a lack of democratic freedoms and harsh military rule are ultimately what spurred the revolution in Egypt. These conditions were further compounded by a significant age gap in the country, with 50% of the population under the age of 25, and while people of all ages participated in the revolution, it was the Egyptian youth driving the protests.

Before the revolution, Egyptians felt they needed to do something to address the repressive state of society. There were two prior attempts at a revolution in Egypt, the first on 6 April 2008 when a call through Facebook prompted a strike and resulted in 70,000 Egyptians taking to the streets. The second call, one year later, was not as successful. The masses were becoming increasingly discontent and tensions between civil society and the regime intensified when Egyptians realised the security forces were fabricating convictions of civil society activists to maintain political control. By 2010 Egyptians felt they had the choice between two futures: Mubarak continuing in power or Mubarak handing power over to his son and his gang. There were no options for the youth of Egypt but when they witnessed the successful overthrow of Ben Ali in Tunisia, it gave Egyptians the motivation and precedent needed to overthrow Mubarak's regime.

The final key driver of the revolution was social media, and during the uprisings Facebook and Twitter served as catalysts for change as the Egyptians employed virtual tools in an effort to outsmart the military regime and connect with people who share the same ideas.

What was different about the revolution in Egypt?

The Egyptian revolution was very much value centred; the dismal economic conditions were a motivator, but the Egyptian people were really advocating for values they believe are necessary for the country they want to build. The most important thing about the revolution was that it had no leadership; everyone felt like the ruler or the king of the country and this was something unique, as it wasn't just a mobilisation of the mobs. Every Egyptian who gathered in the square was not there to gain something personally in the end, to gain a political position or to have a specific power. It was a gathering of people who shared specific values and who stand for certain political rights; people who have an understanding of how they want their country to operate. The old Athens democracy model was present and you'd find people discussing an issue in groups, with no political agenda, no political flag, no political colour, and if you had a very wise idea, it prevailed. Whatever discussion or argument you were having with other people, it was deeply discussed and also dispersed quickly to others – people you didn't even know, but you knew they shared the basic values, which are dignity and freedom. Throughout the revolution the Egyptian activists were solely focused on objectives and it was as if people were organising by sheer force. Aside from sharing information via social media, there were no planning meetings; people were just coming out into the streets with very focused demands, strong profound values and no formal leadership.

It took only 18 days to bring down Mubarak, and it happened very quickly because the strategy was designed on the basis that you counteract whatever act the system puts forth. We would wait until the security forces hit



and then we would counter their attacks. Contrary to what may have been perceived, we were not standing in Tahrir Square crying, we were in the square playing football, enjoying our time, having discussions with each other, making jokes, taking photos, talking to the international community, and sending a very good message that Egyptians are united.

Technology

Much has been made of technology's role in the events of 2011, but often quite imprecisely. Facebook and Twitter don't make a revolution, but they may help to make one easier. World Bank data demonstrates that internet and mobile phone access has spread from 6.7% of people having internet access in 2000 to 27.1% in 2009, and that mobile phone subscriptions have grown from around 738 million in 2000 to a staggering level of in excess of 4.5 billion in 2009, suggesting that well over half the world's population now has mobile phone access.¹⁰⁰ Mobile penetration in the African continent is reported to have grown by 45% in the last decade, and by 73% in North Africa, with recent advances in cable infrastructure suggesting that a broadband breakthrough is imminent.¹⁰¹ In the Middle East and North Africa, internet users stood at 33.5% of the population in 2011, with a Facebook penetration rate of 8.4%.¹⁰² Facebook usage grew by 29% in Egypt between the end of January and start of April 2011, by 17% in Tunisia and a massive 47% in Yemen, almost doubling across the region since April 2010. Indeed, sharp spikes in the usage of Twitter are recorded during key protest moments.¹⁰³ Not to be overlooked here either is the recent rise and important role of deregulated, independent and talkback radio in Sub-Saharan Africa,¹⁰⁴ and the heavy penetration of satellite TV as a means of communication and news broadcast in the Middle East and North Africa.¹⁰⁵

“Facebook and Twitter don't make a revolution, but they may help to make one easier.”

Given this widening access and multiplicity of evolving uses, it helps to break down the various ways in which dissent and technology interacted in 2011.

First, 2011 demonstrated the potential of new technology to offer multiple sources of rapid information and incredibly fast ways of sharing information, ideas and symbols. New technology therefore helped people organise and mobilise protest in real space in more nimble ways than they could before. Through using mobile phone technology, people on the ground were able to respond to and outwit police and army actions in real time, making the suppression of dissent harder. This was widely used in the Arab Spring, such as in Egypt when people used text messages and maps updated via mobile phones to alert protesters to sniper locations,¹⁰⁶ but it was also employed in the very different context of the UK riots, when instant messaging was used by rioters to stay ahead of the police.¹⁰⁷

Facebook was a key platform for instigating protest gatherings.¹⁰⁸ The Arab Social Media Report maps 10 initial calls for protest via Facebook in MENA countries, only one of which did not correspond with an actual demonstration.¹⁰⁹ A study by the Moroccan newspaper *Assabah*, meanwhile, draws a direct correlation between Facebook penetration and the relative success of movements in Egypt and Tunisia, compared to the much lower rates of Facebook usage in countries which experienced long struggles – Libya, Syria and Yemen.¹¹⁰

Further, because it shares information rapidly and from a multiplicity of sources, new technology enabled people to cut through constrained and untrusted public media and allowed the speedy propagation, adoption and mutation of ideas. In response initially to the use of mobile phone footage of natural disasters and terrorism events in news programmes, the key global media groups now routinely use citizen journalist footage of news events, and the watching public have become used to low quality but immediate footage. Watching short YouTube videos has also become an entrenched global habit.¹¹¹ For the Arab Spring protests, these channels offered new ways to get testimony to wider audiences quickly. The shooting and instant upload of videos by mobile phone was important in getting news out.¹¹² Existing restrictions on state media and secrecy are now easier to circumvent, and state media are no longer a trusted source. The Arab Social Media Report

states that around 55% of people in Egypt and around 65% in Tunisia used Facebook in early 2011 either to raise awareness within the country or spread information outside it on the protests, and that around 88% of people in Egypt and 94% in Tunisia obtained information and news from social media during protests, compared to only 36% and 40% who turned to state-sponsored media.¹¹³ New technology thus enabled views to be expressed, and also ramped up the pressure for governments to respond. In the context of the MENA region, it was also therefore interesting to see Al Jazeera launching a citizen journalism scheme in 2011.¹¹⁴

New technology also offered new ways of identifying with and expressing support for causes. In the case of the Arab Spring, protests were made real for many people outside the countries in which they were happening, and people were able to claim a stake in the protests, which they could quickly demonstrate on online and social media platforms. New media therefore was an enabler of solidarity beyond borders, and in turn this altered the political space for Northern governments, whose previous policies of quiet diplomacy and tacit support for continuing dictatorships in strategic countries became harder to maintain in the face of more informed domestic political pressure and a higher visibility of repression.¹¹⁵

“New technology has helped create online civic space as a new and evolving civil society formation in its own right.”

Finally, new technology has also helped create online civic space as a new and evolving civil society formation in its own right. People can feel involved in and supportive of a cause without leaving their bedrooms. They can volunteer online, or they can retweet or forward a link to a video, and in doing so they can be said to have contributed to a cause and identified with it, and gained a sense of personal satisfaction, without any physical participation or association.¹¹⁶ This is new civic space which is still emerging, and which needs to be understood more and allowed to evolve.

Avaaz is one successful example of a crowdsourcing protest platform, which rapidly aggregates large amounts of supporters for particular causes and offers a vehicle for online participation.¹¹⁷ Significantly, Avaaz also successfully connects this to real world techniques, such as buying public advertising space for causes which reach their target number of online supporters. And the relationship can work both ways, as in the case of the Movement for Fighting Electoral Corruption, a coalition of CSOs in Brazil which successfully lobbied for the introduction of the Ficha Limpa law, which disqualifies from Congress candidates convicted of corruption. They matched the physical collection of 1.6m signatures with a subsequent massive online campaign which added 3m supporters through Avaaz. Here, both online and offline campaigns were needed in order to effect change.¹¹⁸

There was also a generational edge to the way technology was used in protest in 2011. The political elite and state enforcement agencies struggle to keep up with the way young protesters instinctively use technology to outwit them. Technology helps its instinctive users keep a step ahead. For example, Libyan revolutionaries evaded police scrutiny by using online dating sites to communicate.¹¹⁹



Connected to this, 2011 demonstrated how technology enables horizontal rather than hierarchical organisation. It enables simultaneous conversations, more consensual decision-making and shared leadership. It therefore finds a mirror in the lack of leadership, the discursive, direct democracy and the focus on consensus building of many of the 2011 movements. Paul Mason argues that tented occupation communities grew naturally out of the shared and spontaneous experience of online communities, who organised themselves in the real world along the same lines that they had use online.¹²⁰

Some caveats need to be advanced about the use of technology, beyond the obvious matter of the continuing digital divide.¹²¹ One is that while social media makes protest more visible and easier



to organise, that visibility also makes bloggers a new target for repression, as is discussed further in this report's section on civil society space. Second, there is nothing inherently progressive in the tools of new technology, which are just as readily availed to propagate hate speech and organise regressive civil society forms.¹²² Rather, online space, and social and mobile media, can be viewed as arenas of contestation and tools to contest ideas.

Mobile and social media also do not necessarily address the challenge of the unevenness of solidarity, with some protest events and movements of 2011 having more profile than others. As this report's section on civil society and crisis suggests, there are some places which it is easier to get people to identify with than others. It can be suggested that for Western people, Egypt has more resonance, for example as a holiday destination, than Bahrain or Yemen, and so the events of Tahrir Square were particularly shocking and interesting.



This is not, of course, a sufficient explanation in itself: Bahrain's strategic importance to the USA, the West's concerns about Yemen as a source of terrorism and Saudi Arabia's paternalistic relationship with its neighbours and close petrochemical ties with the West offer reasons why revolt in those contexts did not achieve the same impact. Still, there is a need to be aware that one continuing constraint is that some causes are sexier than others. Indeed, it could even be argued that new technology can amplify inequalities between causes. Would the Occupy movement have succeeded if it had started in Angola?

Similarly, the under-representation of Africa in the media, and the lack of understanding of African realities even amongst educated people in the West, must also form part of the reason as to why Sub-Saharan African protest less often claimed the headlines and achieved momentum.¹²³

There are of course other factors to consider in the under-representation of Sub-Saharan Africa in 2011's narrative of protest. Perversely, it may be the case that because there is more of a history of mass protest in many Sub-Saharan African countries, there is also more of a tradition of being able to suppress those protests. Protests were less surprising and governments had a smooth machinery of repression to fall back on. People's understanding of the risks involved may also have played a part. Following the inspiration of the Arab Spring, the risks were different in Sub-Saharan Africa compared to the global North, with repressive governments newly aware of the value of a swift and heavy response, as this report's section on civil society space makes clear. The allegiance of the military, a powerful force in most countries of the Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, is also pivotal in times of crisis. Many of the countries in which protests took place in 2011 have bloated militaries, which enjoy political patronage, and elite corps closely aligned to the presidency and the president's family and cronies. Tipping points occurred in countries such as Egypt and Libya when the military refused commands to fire on protesters. More study is needed of the factors that influence the pivotal moments of revolutions in which armed forces decide to side with the people.¹²⁴

Higher levels of absolute poverty make sustained protest harder, while the digital divide and infrastructure challenges are still most pronounced in several Sub-Saharan African countries.

So for example, while there was excitement in February and March 2011 about a Facebook campaign under the banner of the Angolan People's Revolution, only 13 protesters came, and they were arrested, amidst doubts about the authenticity of the campaign.¹²⁵

Overall, the question online activism and the other protest movements of 2011 offer for pre-existing, organised forms of civil society, such as NGOs and other types of CSOs, is how CSOs can engage with people stood in squares and occupying spaces, confronting police and armies, or being active online. How can meaningful interactions and progressive collaborations be eventuated?¹²⁶

COMMENTARY

Accepting the gap between activism and traditional CSOs

Amanda Atwood is the Information and Communication Officer of Kubatana.net, which aims to promote email and web strategies in Zimbabwean CSOs and provides information on human rights and civic matters in Zimbabwe.¹²⁷ Here she talks about the challenges in bridging between established CSOs and new activist communities, and suggests some principles for more effective cooperation.

Events of 2011, such as the Occupy movement and the Arab Spring, have sparked discussion about the need to bridge the gap between 'traditional' CSOs and online activists. They have also promoted a number of conversations about the role of ICTs in encouraging civic participation and helping CSOs to build more activist memberships.

However, 'activism' is not inherently compatible with the work of traditional CSOs. And ICTs, whilst enormously useful in a number of ways, are not the magic bullet to transform this. So rather than looking at bridging the gap, it's important to appreciate the different roles activists and traditional CSOs play, and to support each separately, expecting from each what they are best placed to deliver.

A July 2011 paper by Evgeny Morozov¹²⁸ questions Google's sense of its own exceptionalism. "For all its uniqueness," Morozov observes, "Google is increasingly beset by the same boring problems that plague most other companies." I would argue that a similar pragmatic pessimism needs to be applied to the analysis of CSOs and their potential to learn from activism.

As Morozov states, organisations inherently become self-perpetuating by nature of their institutional inertia. So it is possible that the concept of 'traditional CSO' is actually antithetical to 'activism' as it is typically constructed. The point therefore is less about making CSOs more activist and more about encouraging, nurturing and supporting activism as separate from traditional CSOs. Certainly, new media can play a valuable role in this. But in many cases traditional CSOs are disconnected from the constituency they claim to serve, largely because of their own institutionalisation.

Another challenge in bridging the gap between traditional CSOs and activism is the question of donor funding. In an effort to secure donor funding CSOs find themselves in a challenging position. On the one hand CSOs want to remain light, agile and untraditional (in other words, potentially more 'activist') but donors put more confidence in organisations that are established, trusted and reliable. A discussion about how to help CSOs be more activist in their work would be naïve if it did not raise the role that donors play in keeping CSOs more laden rather than flexible.

A requirement for board meetings, organograms, five year strategic plans, line item budgets and monthly financial reporting certainly helps a donor assess an organisation's credibility and track its use of funds. But how does it add to the bureaucratisation of this organisation's functioning?

One could well ask why 'activist' initiatives are seeking funding in the first place – and use this question to draw a valuable distinction between traditional CSOs and more activist groupings. But in contexts of shrinking employment and reduced individual incomes and philanthropy, how realistic is it to expect anything more than occasional, ad hoc activism if would-be activists are also struggling to make a living? At the same time, how does the quest for donor funding contribute to an organisation or its staff shifting from being passionate about a cause to being more concerned about perpetuating their own financial survival? How does this undermine any organisation's commitment to 'working itself out of a job'?

In light of this where should we be focussing our attention? If we acknowledge that traditional CSOs differ from activist constructs, and that it's unrealistic, and possibly undesirable, to imagine the one becoming the other, what should we be encouraging traditional CSOs to do to better support activism? And if we acknowledge that ICTs are not the magic bullet to transform our communities or promote activism, what are they good for? How do we be proactive in using them to their best advantage?



Some ideas on both scores:

- Use traditional CSOs for what they're good at (report writing, data collection, verification, networking, lending credibility where appropriate);
- Promote activism through non-traditional structures, which can encourage flexibility, unconventional thinking and tactics, provoke excitement and participation;
- Bring activist thinking into traditional CSOs (campaign logic and strategising, focus on participation and two-way communications, building of contact databases);
- Bring traditional CSO thinking into activism (record keeping, accountability);
- Use ICTs for what they're good for (exploit efficiencies, encourage two-way communications, build participation via online forums where relevant);
- Use the 'buzz' around ICTs to the advantage of campaigns (draw attention, gather followers, crosslink to other issues and campaigns);
- Don't lose sight of what ICTs can't do (the importance of person-to-person interaction, postal materials, feedback channels, meetings, events, the building of 'strong ties').

WHAT WAS DIFFERENT ABOUT PROTEST IN 2011?

Protest as process, protest as a brand

While the protest phenomena are different, some commonalities emerge across many: they often use large public spaces, ideally iconic public spaces, and attempt to establish long term, visible, mass scale occupation of them; many of them offer an explicit challenge to the status quo in their particular contexts, and so are revolutionary in thought and rhetoric; many of them are challenging the economic orthodoxies of the 1990s era of economic globalisation; many of them differ from existing ways of doing politics as it has been practised in their particular contexts; and they generally make intensive use of social and mobile media.

Protests also used pioneering techniques to circumvent legal barriers, such as the 'human microphone' technique of Occupy Wall Street, in which waves of people pass on the content of a speech to the people behind them, which circumvented a ban on amplification, but also helped build a sense of community and mutual respect.¹²⁹ Protests were imaginative, they were often quirky and creative, they countered the challenges of mainstream media values and the politics of media ownership through social and mobile technology, they used arts, mash-ups and sloganeering. Technology enabled the rapid circulation of images; protests were very visual.

"On August 4, we came up with the 'We are the 99 percent' idea. I just threw it out there. I'm sure a lot of people were thinking it ..."

In short, protests became brands, and dissent became a global, viral brand. Indeed, the 99% brand was conceived as such. David Graeber of the University of London, cited as one of the intellectual leaders of the Occupy movement, recorded:

"On August 4, we came up with the 'We are the 99 percent' idea. I just threw it out there. I'm sure a lot of people were thinking it - I just suggested it to the group. It was a reference to all those people who were talking about the one percent."¹³⁰

It worked. The Arab Spring and the 99% became extraordinary, endlessly referenced brands. Arguably protest became a meme, a rapidly spreading and mutating idea.¹³¹ Popular and cult media provided cultural content and symbols. The Guy Fawkes mask originated in the *V for Vendetta* comic books series became a common symbol simultaneously of individual concealment and group identification, and became the top selling mask on Amazon.com.¹³² Comic books, graffiti and skateboard culture were all drawn upon, and not just in the West, as elements of a globalised



and youthful counterculture.¹³³ Nor were street theatre and drumming circles the preserve of the West: Tahrir Square had an open air cinema, face painting, fire eaters.¹³⁴ In Egypt the occupation of Tahrir Square encompassed fringe cultures, such as football ‘ultra’ culture.¹³⁵ A truly global musical form, rap music, became a vehicle for promoting protest, with many protest movements on the African continent adopting a particular rap as a national anthem of protest, and with rap music in Arabic spreading across borders.¹³⁶ Writers and other public intellectuals were also important as opinion leaders in Egypt.¹³⁷ 2011 has been described as a ‘cultural revolution’.¹³⁸

These cultural forms and acts of creation were no accidental add on. They challenged the politics of dour necessity and business as usual. They asserted there was value in idealism and imagination.

This was important because the battle in 2011 was partly one of narratives, and one of advancing alternative narratives that value emotion and pride in place of the politics of fear.¹³⁹

Camila Vallejo, President of the University of Chile Student Federation and figurehead of the protests in Chile, drew attention to the creativity of protests in her context: “There have been marches filled with colour, costumes and original music with really funny lyrics. There have been videos, flash mobs and Thriller protests...”¹⁴⁰

Of course, this reminds us that not all the 2011 protest movements were the same. While Occupy eschewed leadership, it’s unlikely the Chilean student protests would have achieved as much visibility without their young, charismatic and female firebrand figurehead.¹⁴¹ Similarly, many express unease about the prominent role played by the high profile leader of the Indian anti-corruption movement, Anna Hazare, and his methods,¹⁴² and the opinions and business interests of another prominent anti-corruption figurehead, Baba Ramdev.¹⁴³ Conventional media are challenged in applying their reporting methods; they need faces, back stories, quotes.

Self-organisation was something new, in at least some contexts: the November 2010 student protests in London, which were met with heavy police response and so predictably spilled into violence, can be seen to foreshadow many of the demonstrations of 2011. Here, as often happened in 2011, the existing grammar of demonstrations – apply for permission to hold a demo, agree a route with the police, march to a public space, listen to some speeches, disperse – began to be challenged. A refusal to stick to an agreed route by participants caught the leaders of the official student movements by surprise; they were seen as unable to control protesters, calling into question their legitimacy and relevance as spokespeople by many of the protesters.¹⁴⁴ Here, the protesters were ahead of the established, accepted organisation.

Nothing happened without some planning: the email that started Occupy Wall Street in September was sent in July.¹⁴⁵ But many protests were also somewhat spontaneous and unpredictable. And this meant that things could move incredibly quickly. It took 18 days to topple Mubarak, a dictator of 30 years; it took less than a month to oust Ben Ali.

What comes across from protester testimonies in 2011 is the flexibility of protest, how one thing led to another. People’s testimonies record going to Zuccotti Park on 17 September not knowing what to expect and how long it would last, and certainly not bringing tents and sleeping bags, expecting another generic, top-down protest of people making speeches. But the protest mushroomed. It was to some extent organic. David Graeber recalls:

“I came up to Bowling Green and there it is: a rally. They had megaphones and a stage. There were banners and a couple of TV cameras. There were maybe 120 people. It



was supposed to be a general assembly, but instead we had a top-down leadership group that was going to make all the decisions. They were going to make speeches, and then we were going to march under waving banners... I started tapping people on the shoulder who looked like they were as annoyed as I was and said, If we actually did a real general assembly, would you come? We ended up forming a circle, and at that point everyone defected from the rally. There were maybe 60 or 70 people.”¹⁴⁶

And the idea of occupying space, physically camping, became a central, powerful image of the protest brand. Protests grew and enlarged for key events. In large cities some of the events listed earlier involved hundreds of thousands of people, while smaller dedicated groups were capable of sustaining presence to enable the process of protest to continue between events.

A new emphasis on protest as process arguably learned lessons from the 2003 anti-war protests, when an estimated 10m people marched worldwide against the coming war in Iraq, but did not influence the politics of their governments. The lesson from this must be that one off events aren't enough: protest needs to be sustained, needs to be imaginative, needs to vary its tactics and goals and needs to offer different ways of mobilising people.

More profoundly, the process of many of the protests of 2011 was about modelling alternative ways of working. The point of many protests wasn't about articulating and advancing specific demands, so much as trying to live out in practice what democratic, consensual logic might look like. The camps of occupation were not only an intrinsic, visual part of the protest brand, they were also model villages, and as discussed above, mimicked in reality the flat, collaborative structures of social media.

“Our revolution is like Wikipedia, okay? Everyone is contributing content, [but] you don't know the names of the people contributing the content. This is exactly what happened.”

Wael Ghonim, for example, is one of Egypt's most prominent internet activists, founder of the We are all Khaled Saeed Facebook page and website in commemoration of the killing of Khaled Saeed by security forces in June 2010,¹⁴⁷ who took leave from a senior role in Google to join the Egyptian uprising and was detained.¹⁴⁸ In an interview in February 2011, he commented:

“Our revolution is like Wikipedia, okay? Everyone is contributing content, [but] you don't know the names of the people contributing the content. This is exactly what happened. Revolution 2.0 in Egypt was exactly the same. Everyone contributing small pieces, bits and pieces. We drew this whole picture of a revolution. And no one is the hero in that picture.”¹⁴⁹

Another feature of different protests, as diverse as the events in Egypt and the UK riots, was the spontaneous community response that formed to protect property from violence, whether in the form of the neighbourhood committees that grew up temporarily in Egypt or the unofficial watch groups of shop keepers defending their businesses in London.¹⁵⁰ The formation of groups of people to clean the spaces of protest, also in Egypt and the UK, was another example of spontaneous community and online-organised response.¹⁵¹ Similar to the community responses noted in this report's section on civil society and crisis, the neighbourhood committees can be seen as a brief, appropriate and mostly temporary civil society formation that grew spontaneously in response to an urgent need and stepped down when the need was past, while a few formalised into continuing movements where there was sustained demand.¹⁵²

The movements focused on here may be diverse, but they have also acknowledged their debts to each other. The Occupy movement and the Indignados protesters were explicit in citing the Arab Spring as a source of inspiration. “The struggles of young people in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya have helped open our eyes,” said a Portuguese activist in March 2011;¹⁵³ in the London Occupy protests, a temporary street sign rebranded the site as another Tahrir Square;¹⁵⁴ Adbusters magazine sought to channel the spirit of Egypt in calling for the occupation of Wall Street, asking, “Are you ready for a Tahrir moment?”¹⁵⁵

“Are you ready for a Tahrir moment?”

On 25 October 2011, the Occupy Oakland protest in the USA chanted the Egyptian slogan, “The people demand the fall of this regime” – in Arabic. On 27 October, Egyptians marched to the American embassy in Cairo to support Occupy Oakland.¹⁵⁶ Activists from the Egyptian 6 April Youth Movement addressed the Occupy Wall Street crowds and protesters from Syria linked up via video with Occupy London, while Chilean student leaders travelled to London to seek solidarity for their efforts.¹⁵⁷ Spanish protester Olmo Gálvez confirmed, “We’ve known since July that Occupy Wall Street was going to happen.”¹⁵⁸ Occupy people acknowledge that the idea of a general assembly was a direct import from Spain.¹⁵⁹

The Arab Spring generated excitement and raised expectation in Sub-Saharan Africa too, with several protests referencing North Africa. Slogans included ‘Burkina will have its Egypt’ and ‘In Tunisia, Ben Ali left, in Gabon [President] Ali Ben Out’. Several governments were sufficiently fearful to ban media and internet coverage of events in North Africa.¹⁶⁰

Many more examples could be cited, and the wheel of inspiration continued to turn. In January 2012, the Nigerian fuel protests saw the use of the #OccupyNigeria Twitter hashtag.¹⁶¹

This suggests that there is at least the beginning between people involved in different protests of a global consciousness and a connected emerging global alternative. And the exciting thing about protest as brand is it is capable of such leaps, borrowings and voluntary associations. Protest as a brand is easy to borrow; it is easy to self-brand.

The protest brand was scalable, capable of being scaled-up to large international movements, and simultaneously local and malleable, capable of speaking to and reflecting community concerns. For example, the focus of the Global Day of Rage shifted according to where you were: in Japan, it encompassed nuclear power concerns in the wake of the tsunami, in Chile education provision, in Brazil environmental degradation, in the Philippines, excessive American influence.¹⁶²

Another striking aspect of 2011 protests was some high levels of public support, as expressed for example in opinion polls, at least in the initial stages of protest, even if there was a tendency for support to fade as complex realities set in. For example, an October 2011 Time magazine poll showed that 79% believed that the gap between rich and poor was too wide, and 54% rated the Occupy protests positively, compared to only 27% who had a favourable opinion of the Tea Party movement.¹⁶³ Although other polls expressed confusion about the movement’s objectives, still there was more support for than opposition to the movement.¹⁶⁴ In August, the Israel tent city protests recorded 85% support.¹⁶⁵ Also in August, 76% of people in a poll in Spain believed the demands of the 15-M movement to be reasonable,¹⁶⁶ while a newspaper poll gave the Chile protest 76% support.¹⁶⁷ Even when there was disapproval of the activities and methods of protest, there was often been agreement on the issues raised.

In some, not all, settings, mainstream politicians, whose initial response was to try to ignore protests or stereotype and even demonise protesters, could be observed being forced eventually to take protests more seriously. Some of the potential American presidential candidates had to acknowledge that the Occupy movement had a point about unemployment or economic inefficiency, even if they disagreed with protest methods.¹⁶⁸ To ignore what was happening on the streets and on the internet was to look out of touch. This was one indicator, even when the response was one of hostility, that the protests were achieving impact and gaining in credibility.

How does this connect with organised civil society?

In many of the mass mobilisations that occurred in 2011, those types of CSOs in which many hopes have been placed by people





who want to promote democracy, realise human rights and encourage people's participation in governance were not highly involved. Put bluntly, if existing registered, managed and donor-funded CSOs represented a sufficient channel for activism, 2011 would have looked very different.

Jennifer Bremer of the American University in Cairo suggests that this points to a new development in civil society:

“Depending on your point of view, the way that the Tahrir Revolution played out can be seen either as a victory for a new form of civil society or proof that civil society had been largely sidelined by the Mubarak regime’s oppressive tactics, necessitating a new approach. The revolution was not led by any of the civil society groups supported by the donors, but by an informal group of highly committed young activists. Some, but by no means all, of the main organisers are affiliated to the 6 April Youth Movement, a band of young radicals formed to organise a day of protests on 6 April 2008. The movement had little official organisational presence beyond its Facebook page. The most promising development for civil society in Egypt to come out of Tahrir is not the formal dialogue but the new-found spirit of activism epitomised by the dozens of citizen watch groups that sprang up spontaneously to guard homes and families when the police melted away (seemingly under orders)... The teams of young volunteers who came together to clean Tahrir Square carried out a truly revolutionary act in the context of Egypt, asserting the public’s ownership of public space.”¹⁶⁹

Some leaders of protest also highlighted that the weakness of organised civil society in their contexts helped explain the rise of less formal movements. Camila Vallejo noted that “Chile has a very weak civil society in terms of social organisations and unions.”¹⁷⁰

Attempts at direct democracy and consensus-based decision-making imply a rejection of normal forms of organising civil society, as CSOs structured on the basis of direct internal democracy are few. Many CSO representatives expressed the view that they were behind the curve of protest in 2011, and the disconnect between established CSOs and citizens was a major point of discussion at CIVICUS’ 2011 World Assembly.¹⁷¹ In response to the Chile protests, former CIVICUS Chair Anabel Cruz noted that traditional civil society groups had been surprised and paralysed by the movement.¹⁷² Most international CSOs and donors did not see the Arab Spring coming. For example, writing for Human Rights Watch, Eric Goldstein commented:

“We failed to predict the Arab Spring... because we were more focused on supply than demand when it came to human rights; that is, we were more attuned to the extent to which governments supplied (or did not supply) the chance to exercise basic rights than we were with the pent-up demand of people to exercise those rights, despite the risks involved.”¹⁷³

It was therefore not just global institutions such as the World Bank which had to admit that they didn’t see the Arab Spring coming.¹⁷⁴ Many of the institutions of civil society were also wrong footed. In trying to predict the capacity for revolt, people were looking in the wrong places. They were assuming, because organised civil society was operating under heavy restrictions and in limited space, because advocacy and human rights CSOs were limited and weak, that the conditions were not ripe for political change.

Behind much of the support for CSOs, there is an implied theory that says civil society starts out as common action and gradually formalises, acquiring boards, offices, directors, annual reports and other trappings. Civil society formations that rely on external funding have to follow this trajectory in order to satisfy the reporting requirements of their funders under the rubric of accountability. As pointed out by Amanda Atwood in her contribution above, the danger is that funded CSOs become preoccupied with upward accountability to their donors rather than downward accountability to their constituents. This is a common critique captured in the findings of CIVICUS’ Civil Society Index (CSI) project, discussed further below.

The resourcing of dissent is a connected issue. Organisations need money. They need offices, wages, equipment and money to travel to meetings for advocacy and the exchange of ideas. Organisations that do unpopular things, such as promoting human rights, need external funding, generally from foreign donors, because in most countries it is not possible to raise sufficient domestic funding for human rights work, but as this report's section on civil society space records, CSO receipt of international funding is contested by many governments, while domestic political space for CSOs to undertake advocacy is more volatile and pressured.

The dissent expressed in 2011 not only took place largely without a central role for established CSOs, but also substantially without conventional donor funding. Instead there were many small voluntary gifts and non-financial contributions, whether that be the emergency supplies brought to Tahrir Square, including when the second wave of protest, against the provisional military government, began in November,¹⁷⁵ or the pizzas ordered for protesters in New York.¹⁷⁶

“The dissent that happened in 2011 not only took place largely without a central role for established CSOs, but also substantially without conventional donor funding.”

Just as activism can be crowdsourced, so can its financing, with the donation of small amounts of money or other resources from large amounts of people. Research shows that the median donation to Occupy Wall Street was US\$22, with very few large donations.¹⁷⁷ Financial support for Occupy also came from far beyond the United States: people from 37 countries donated to Occupy groups, including from Canada, Finland (which had the highest number of donations per capita) and Mexico. Mass arrests and alleged police brutality tended to generate spike in donations: on the day 141 demonstrators were arrested in Boston, WePay saw a rise of more than 400% in donations in Massachusetts.¹⁷⁸ Between October 2011 and January 2012, Occupy Wall Street was reported as having raised more than US\$700,000, suggesting over 10,000 people had donated, with US\$300,000 of this still unspent.¹⁷⁹ In Russia meanwhile, a call to generate US\$100,000 for facilities for a large rally in December raised the money in under two weeks, largely used web-based fundraising.¹⁸⁰ The protests of 2011 were characterised by people donating their time and skills, contributing their expertise, whether as a medic or a blogger. Many CSOs would wish to have such widespread support.

These two matters are connected: perhaps a civil society movement that needs much less external funding, or does not rely on the time-honoured funding models, also does not need the trappings of respectability and upward accountability, and so does not need to formalise itself. There are challenges to donors in the protests of 2011: these movements did not need their funding, and change happened without donor intervention. This makes clear that the donor-funded model of change is not the only game, and it also raises questions of how in future donors can support new types of movements that are not the same as conventional organisations. It must be hoped that the answer will be more imaginative than to support the creation of new conventional organisational types, or the accelerated mutation of groupings that already work well already into forms that have the more conventional, reassuring trappings but that might hamper the flexibility, creativity and vibrancy they currently enjoy.

This is not to play down the roles organised civil society played in some contexts. Similarly, while it's tempting to see the protests as spontaneous, they did not come without preparation, planning and previous attempts by dedicated people, including as mentioned above from groupings such as the 6 April Youth Movement, which had existed since 2008.¹⁸¹

Labour activists were important in Egypt, for example, as were faith-based groupings connected to mosques.

One of the interesting connections made in many contexts was between traditional, long established trade unions and the newly mobilised. The attempted textile workers' strikes of 2008, one of over 3,000 Egyptian labour actions since 2004, were key forerunners of the uprising.¹⁸² The Tunisian General Union of Labour offered a rare arena where dissent was possible in pre-revolutionary Tunisia, and its protest actions of 2008 and 2010 could be seen as a precursor to the revolution.¹⁸³



There was initial suspicion of union connections by some of those involved in Occupy Wall Street,¹⁸⁴ but by October, labour unions and community groups were publically aligning with and participating in the protests.¹⁸⁵ In New York, Transport Workers' Union President John Samuelson commented, "We're down with these protesters. We support the notion that rich folk are not paying their share."¹⁸⁶ On 14 October, union members turned up in significant numbers at Zuccotti Park to help resist eviction of Occupy.¹⁸⁷

While it's possible to bemoan the lack of romanticism of French students marching alongside unions to demand the pension rights they hope to enjoy 40 years from now, it also underlines again this surprising connection.¹⁸⁸ Student protests have always existed, but what happened in 2011, as in the case of the Chile protests, demonstrated new possibility to form larger coalitions and to identify student protests with broader concerns.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISED CIVIL SOCIETY?

As mentioned earlier in this report, the CIVICUS CSI project, from 2008 to 2011, took the views of around 50,000 members of the public, 5,000 CSO representatives and over 1,500 experts on the state of civil society in 35 countries, and the synthesis of the findings, presented in CIVICUS' 2011 report, *Bridging the Gaps*, offers a gloomy biopsy of the current health of organised civil society.¹⁸⁹

The findings indicate that CSOs faced a series of connected crises in 2011, with difficult conditions including: volatile and ever contested space for CSO operations; limited and constrained relationships between CSOs and the state, and little in the way of CSO-private sector relations; a difficult and in some cases declining funding environment, compounding profound human resource deficits; insufficient networking, particularly between different types of CSOs or CSOs working on different issues; a gap between CSOs' articulation of progressive values and their internal modelling of them; limited policy impact, when compared to social impact, and with much policy-related activity generating relatively little change; and low levels of public involvement in the activities of CSOs, as characterised by CSO membership and volunteering for CSOs.

The picture that emerged, in short, was one of disconnects: disconnects between CSOs and other sectors of society; disconnects between CSOs of different types, such as NGOs, faith groups and trade unions, and between service delivery and advocacy CSOs; and disconnects between CSOs and citizens.

The implications of this analysis for those with an interest in civil society are worrying. The majority of people have no association with civil society in its institutionalised form. On average in the CSI countries, 27% of people are active members of a socially-oriented CSO, broadly defined as those CSOs which are principally oriented around association for its own sake, such as cultural, religious or sports associations. Only 14% are active members of politically-oriented CSOs, understood to mean those organisations which seek to achieve change or advance shared viewpoints and interests, such as advocacy groups, environmental and human rights CSOs, and trade unions. CSOs are therefore vulnerable to questioning over their legitimacy and representativeness, given that they could be said to represent only a minority of citizens in many contexts.

"The majority of people have no association with civil society in its institutionalised form."

The CSI surveys also found that globally, around half of people associate in less organised forms, in more organic structures. The conclusion to draw from this is that people want to associate and participate, but that they want to do so on their own terms. There are several studies that show that association is a powerful human need.¹⁹⁰ But many people are most comfortable in associating close to home – with extended family, circles of friends, in their immediate surroundings, and in activities that have local relevance and immediate practical value, or which they can combine easily with other facets of their lives, such as episodic or online volunteering.¹⁹¹

The CSI findings tell us that on its own, the level of CSO involvement is a pretty poor barometer of the potential for activism. The CSI region that recorded the lowest level of participation in formal CSOs was MENA.

As set out in this report's section on civil society and crisis, trust tends to be higher in civil society than in other parts of the public sphere, thereby forming a vital part of civil society's asset base. The fact that disaggregated data shows most trust resides in religious and charitable CSOs suggests we need to spend more time trying to understand the different sources and motivations for, and locales of, participation, which are more diverse than we might suppose. Under looked sources of quiet participation and voluntary action, including informal neighbourhood groups, clubs and faith structures are an important arena of participation. Many of these are quite traditional, and while they may not necessarily serve causes of more than the immediate interest of their participants, they should all be regarded as potential sources of social capital, sites of potential for increased participation and potential schools of activism. In politically constrained environments, cultural and faith structures can offer relatively safer spaces for participation.

For example, research by the American University in Cairo notes that the numerical strength of the Egyptian protests was not predicted, and most research beforehand had concluded that there was limited participation and widespread apathy, but this was because research had discounted charitable work motivated by ideas of religious service as insufficiently activist. But the research concluded that in repressive context, non-political, service-oriented arenas offered safe spaces in which to practise citizenship. One organisation, Resala, has around 90,000 young volunteers engaged in community service. Interviewers found that these volunteers tended to have the same concerns about Egypt as other groups that became engaged in protest, but they felt other avenues had been closed to them. When Tahrir Square came, hundreds of these volunteers were active. They reported that the skills they had developed in community service were transferable in this new setting. Participation in the overlooked area of community service had prepared them to take an interest and a stake in civic matters and therefore they were quick to mobilise for public demonstrations.¹⁹²

Another recent study suggests the same applies to online participation: that youth engagement in non-political, online participatory cultures can also act as gateways into civic and political participation, volunteering and protest and political action.¹⁹³ This suggests there is a need to look further in understanding the potential for online activism as well.

The CSI findings, together with what we know of what happened in 2011, suggest that we may have too narrowly defined civil society and underestimated potential for protest in places where there were few freely operating NGOs or few young people expressing interest in party politics. They suggest that we need to take a broader, more inclusive view of what civil society is, how it works and how to support it. They also suggest that a new area of focus should be on enabling connections and collaborations between different, disconnected points of civil society, particularly in transitional contexts.

SNAPSHOT FROM THE JASMINE REVOLUTION

Interview with two Tunisian Activists¹⁹⁴

Menel ben Nasr and Mhamed Bousbih are founders of the new Tunisian CSO Youth and Skills. Here they talk about the impact of the Tunisian revolution, the need to develop a new generation of leadership and of the connections that now need to be made with organised civil society.

What did the revolution in Tunisia actually change? How is life different in Tunisia?

Everything about life in Tunisia is different and we feel like we are breathing new air. Since the fall of Ben Ali, we are allowed to express, we are allowed to manifest, we are allowed to say yes or no, to choose.



We celebrated the most significant day in Tunisian history last year, 23 October 2011, when we elected the parliament and ushered in a new constitution. Our revolution proved that Tunisians have strong values and want to work to change our country. Many organisations have been founded in the past year, including our organisation, Youth and Skills, and we now see a trend where CSOs are training Tunisian youth how to be leaders and participate in their society.

The Tunisian revolution had no leader, and this is dangerous because we need to protect the principle goals and values and ensure our dissent is sustained. However, we don't want one icon or one leader, because the power will corrupt. Instead, we want a generation of leaders that will make better decisions and help foster a better life for Tunisians. We also need strong ideas to move this country forward; we don't want one person to have the power, we want the people to have the power. We no longer want to be dominated and treated as slaves of a regime or political party – that was the struggle in our country before the revolution and Tunisians will no longer accept this, as we are now active citizens. The Tunisian revolution showed just how much power, creativity and love youth in this country have. It's clear that Tunisian youth want to work, want to express, and want to participate in making their country better, and we didn't know that this passion existed before.

Do you feel there is a disconnect between organised civil society and organic social movements and if so, what is that disconnect attributed to?

We actually do feel that disconnect between organic social movements and CSOs, but that's what is changing in Tunisia. Many youth have joined CSOs and we are trying to help the greater population understand that they have to participate and seize the opportunity to input into the decisions and policies that will ultimately affect their lives. Many organisations are working to raise awareness, and the reality is that if you don't get involved and choose now, you will never have another chance. We are working to change the complacent mentality in Tunisia, to get people to participate and influence decisions, as Tunisians can no longer let others decide for us. Youth were the drivers of the revolution, but when you look at the make-up of parliament you do not see any youth representation. The revolution proved that the youth are the hope of the country and they need to be involved in the decision making as well.

When comparing civil society before and after the revolution, you do see that many youth have now turned to organised civil society as a way of continuing the transition towards democracy. People who never considered themselves activists are participating in civic life and people are invested in changing the social conditions in the country. The revolution isn't finished yet, we may have brought down Ben Ali, but we have a lot of work to do to see Tunisia transition into a just and democratic society. The biggest challenge in this transitional period is that we are still struggling with the economic issues and impacts. We're working with activists all over the world to learn how to move on, but economic development is going to remain a challenge.

SO WHERE MIGHT WE GO FROM HERE?

One year on from the first heady moments of the year of dissent, discourse centred on the extent to which the various protests could be regarded as successful. In North Africa, for all the complexity and continuing contestation, it is hard to doubt, as the above interviews with activists from Egypt and Tunisia show, that for many people there is at least an opportunity to believe their lives could be different. There is possibility that wasn't there one year before. Some countries have extended freedoms, and vigilance now needs to be exercised to ensure that these are not rolled back. Contestation will remain in post-revolutionary and non-revolutionary sites of protest, as is the case in Egypt at present, and progressive voices will need to remain organised, engaged and imaginative in order to take part in and influence that contestation.

A corresponding danger in North Africa is the disappointment of post-revolutionary frustration. All revolutions fail to meet expectations. None can deliver on all the agendas loaded onto them or sustain the unity of the alliances made to make the revolution.

“All revolutions fail to meet expectations. None can deliver on all the agendas loaded onto them or sustain the unity of the alliances made to make the revolution.”

Elsewhere, for example in considering the protests in Europe and North America, it has become a commonplace observation that not only did the Indignados and Occupy not achieve much, but further that they did not have any clear agenda or aims to achieve. These movements’ lack of alignment with conventional party politics, one of the things that attracted many of their previously disengaged followers, seemed to confuse conventional commentators, who were puzzled, for example, on how to fit Occupy Wall Street into an increasingly polarised and dysfunctional paradigm of Democrat v. Republican politics.¹⁹⁵

This critique misses the point. It is not entirely true to say that no demands were made; rather conventional political commentators struggled to get to grips with the time lag between a protest event and the articulation of consensually determined aims. In the USA, a particular campaign arose from Occupy around political party campaign financing;¹⁹⁶ in the UK, specific proposals were made to reform the antiquated governance systems of the area of London in which many financial institutions are based.¹⁹⁷ But the challenge of asserting these emerging demands was that a dominant media narrative of confusion and lack of focus had already been established, and for all the value of mobile and social media, mainstream media are still important influencers of opinions.

Further, it is possible to trace impact from the Indignados and Occupy on discourse around greed in the financial sector and in the corresponding calculations of political leaders. In February 2012, the Spanish government introduced limits on pay for board members and executives in banks receiving state aid;¹⁹⁸ caps on bonuses, and salary cuts, were announced in Wall Street institutions;¹⁹⁹ and both the main left and right candidates in the 2012 French presidential elections stood on platforms of tax increases for the very rich.²⁰⁰ Further, in the UK, when the #occupytesco hashtag became popular in the wake of the supermarket giant’s involvement in a government scheme to place unemployed people into unpaid positions, companies hastily manoeuvred to end their policy of unpaid work.²⁰¹

A curious criticism mounted against the Occupy movement was that the camps became awash with homeless people, people with problems, those on the fringes of society. Giles Fraser, who resigned from his role at St Paul’s Cathedral in London in protest at the church authorities’ uncharitable attitude towards protesters, offered a riposte to this critique, by contrasting Occupy’s concern with the vulnerable with the indifference of the surrounding financial institutions as a valuable action and message in its own right.²⁰² Katie Davidson, involved in Occupy Wall Street since its early days, commented, “We decided we couldn’t marginalise these people like the rest of society does... We’ve created our own welfare state.”²⁰³

Another of the ways in which the events of 2011 can be challenged is to state that nothing really new happened: that we have been here before. Indeed, apart from the use of social and mobile media, perhaps the characteristics of the protest brand in 2011 were not so new: commonalities can be seen with earlier great epochs of protest, such as the collapse of European communism in 1989, the protests in Europe and the Americas of 1968 and, some have added, the revolutionary moment of the Paris Commune of 1871.²⁰⁴ Each of these used the latest technologies at hand.

Protesters were certainly aware of 1968, and of the theory and tactics of situationism, particularly in the European protests, self-consciously quoting from it, and in doing so acknowledging it as a source of inspiration. For example, protesters in Athens offered a teasing banner in the direction of the French embassy that read, “The French are sleeping – they’re dreaming of ‘68,”²⁰⁵ while editor of Adbusters magazine Kalle Lasn said:

“We are not just inspired by what happened in the Arab Spring recently. We are students of the situationist movement. Those are the people who gave birth to what many people think was the first global revolution back in 1968 when some uprisings in Paris suddenly inspired uprisings all over the world.”²⁰⁶



But then, is the question of whether 2011 was anything new really such an interesting question to ask? If 2011 was the latest in an occasional cycle of protest that includes 1968 and 1989, perhaps that helps us to locate it and make sense of it, and learn from past experiences. And perhaps the notion that we are currently faced with an occasional generational opportunity helps spur action.

But momentum fades. There is no question of that. News media move on. Activism fatigue sets in. The physical spaces have largely been cleared and cleaned, and that is seen as a sign of failure, even though these were never intended to be sites of long-term occupation. It should be recalled that the viral Anonymous video promoting Occupy Wall Street only ever said, “Anonymous will flood into Lower Manhattan, set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades, and occupy Wall Street for a few months.”²⁰⁷



Beyond this, at least some of the people brought into dissent and activism in 2011, having experienced profound disillusion with the status quo and ways of doing politics in their contexts, and having experienced state violence and mainstream media spin, will retain that scepticism, and their practice of doing things differently. Some people, having experienced direct democracy, will find anything else a poor approximation. This change in individuals may be one of the most important impacts of 2011. One activist commented:

“The Occupy Wall Street movement is not just about demanding change. It is also transforming how we, the 99%, see ourselves. The shame many of us felt when we couldn’t find a job, pay our debts or keep our home is being replaced by a political awakening.”²⁰⁸

Some will remain activists, and now they will remain activists with diffuse international networks of solidarity and support. This could be one of the points of difference with the wave of activism experienced in Europe and elsewhere in 1968: international networks have become more instinctive and are easier to sustain, and so are more likely to endure.

COMMENTARY

The occupations of 2011 precede greater resistance

David Ferreira is a Portuguese-American blogger who contributes to the Occupied Times²⁰⁹ and maintains a blog covering the ongoing social movements around the world, particularly those in Portugal and Spain.²¹⁰

From Athens to Lisbon, Madrid to London, Frankfurt to New York, a much delayed popular response to the 2008 financial crash took shape in 2011.

Assurances by politicians of a much promised recovery rang hollow, and a rally in the stock markets left almost all of society behind, provoking enormous crowds to fill squares and plazas, occupying them for weeks in continuous protest. In 2011, we saw the victims turn to the streets and to each other to struggle against their precarious situations, disregarding the old politics which insisted on an age of austerity amid boundless wealth held by the one percent.

It would be easy for one to immediately question what this year of protest has achieved. No neo-liberal governments were brought down to be replaced by a government willing to ask the weakest to sacrifice last, not first. Rather, across Europe, governments are composed almost exclusively from centre-right parties

enacting austerity at an escalating pace. The assumption could easily be made that ground was lost, not gained, by the movements challenging the neo-liberal model.

The assumption would be critically wrong on two fronts. First, the neo-liberal economic model is more entrenched, but this is far different from it being at its greatest strength. Unable to realise the reigning economic model doesn't work, the consensus in circles of power is that the model hasn't been implemented militantly enough, and extremists lurch to inject fresh energy into their ideology. But it is a model making its last stand, a last defence in which it has shed any trace of democratic legitimacy. Where it hasn't effectively suspended representative democracy, as it has in Greece and Italy, it has won elections by abandoning any sort of concept of a political mandate. In Portugal and the UK, centre right governments have simply radicalised their neo-liberal policies once in power, after concealing their intentions from the public during elections.

The assumption breaks down on a second front, where it underestimates the impact and legacy of the occupations. It was never to be a movement of steadfast occupation, eviction and continuous escalation. It was, instead, about the construction of a more permanent movement, and its constituent ideas, that we entirely lacked in 2008 when the only plans laying around were to recapitalise the banks at the expense of the victims of the crisis. For months, the expressions of fear by politicians and bankers of another 'Lehman moment' have been palpable. But what may not be as clear to them is the rise of a social movement capable of responding to such a moment and of blocking a repeat performance of the hurried passage of bailouts under threats of calamity.

Another flashpoint and a greater conflagration between the system and the indignant masses awaits us. The occupations, the massive protests of Spain and Portugal, sprung out of built up frustration following the 2008 crash and the recovery exclusively for the wealthy. Yet, despite no single provocative legislation, hundreds of thousands took to the streets of Portugal in March 2011, and in similar or greater numbers later in the year in Spain, Greece and Italy.

These protests, and the occupations in the US and UK soon after, have demonstrated the scale of resentment both inside each country and across the developed world. They have left physical organisations of activists in large numbers who themselves are connected to broader movements that have an ever increasing following on social media. This activist infrastructure, in both the physical general assemblies and the online networking, are the means by which a mobilisation of equal or greater scale will be deployed on shorter notice when they attempt the next bank bailout or the next austerity programme of privatisations and benefit cuts.

In this period between mass mobilisations, the movement is proving its worth to some of the few people it needs approval from. The occupations of abandoned homes, the defence of families facing eviction, are the movement's frontline at the point of greatest friction between the financial system and its immediate victims. The long awaited alternative will materialise with these sharp and local actions. It is with this alternative that the crowds of 2011 will be mobilised again: not just against neo-liberalism, but for moving past it.

There is however a challenge in proving that direct democracy can enable something that does not otherwise occur, in proving its value and that of broad-based participation and consensus-based decision making to a wider community, and conquering the scepticism about whether the experience of an occupied square can be sustained, or whether indeed the radical exercise of Iceland could be repeated in a different context and on a larger scale. If such exercises are seen to fail, the danger is that disillusionment will set in and the protest brand could then become a toxic one. Part of the response to this challenge may of course lie in redefining what success means, to define success in the endurance of protest and as a process for the articulation of alternatives. This may be a crucial moment to build sustained activism and civic participation, but the opportunity will not last for long.

There are lessons that people in and of organised civil society need to learn from 2011. Not only were the movements of 2011 part of civil society, but also in many cases, they are new and exciting aspects of civil society that those who were already in the civil society terrain must consider how



to engage with. For many of those involved, these movements will have been a truer and more meaningful form of civil society than anything a traditionally structured and constituted CSO offers. They have experienced the ethos of civil society – participation, activism, collective action, self-help, empowerment – in the raw. How can this energy and commitment help renew the broader arena of civil society? How can organised civil society offer enduring pathways for continued activism and participation for the newly mobilised?

Part of the solution, CIVICUS would suggest, is to build new alliances and coalitions, looser than existing networks and organisations, but more inclusive, alliances of different parts of civil society that reflect the unique roles, strengths and contributions of each. Alliances may best be shifting, somewhat temporary, based around particular interests, opportunities and moments. They should combine the institutionalised strengths of CSOs with the flexibility, creativity and mobilising power of the new movements.

The challenges for CSOs outlined above can in part be responded to by making more of their coalition-building and convening functions, including exploring more the ways in which new technology enables them to do so. There may be a corresponding challenge for new movements to make compromises too, to form coalitions with other parts of civil society; the stakes must be considered too high to retreat into alternative lifestyle niches, and the energy that went into sustaining sites of occupation may now need to be redirected.²¹¹ An acknowledgement that different actors have different strengths to bring to the table should be a starting point for collaboration, and coalitions should ideally seek to combine such diverse strengths as the radical modelling of alternatives of Occupy, the policy analysis and expertise of many advocacy CSOs and the strong social impact and reach of many traditional CSOs. Collaboration implies a respectful dialogue between the social and political; as Amanda Atwood suggests above, exploring such differences is how coalition-building can begin.

Further, it is in the context of seeking progressive outcomes from revolutionary shifts, that some of the classic CSO roles – of acting as a watchdog on the state, of proposing policy change, of defending the rights of protesters and, indeed, of delivering services in sites of state failure – are most needed. The legitimacy, accountability and transparency hoops that some types of CSOs must jump through can also confer an air of respectability and legitimacy. CSOs sometimes have a seat at the table and are sometimes consulted. They still have something to offer this changed terrain.

PERSPECTIVE

Connecting CSOs to citizen outreach and social movements

Lysa John is the Campaign Director of GCAP, the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, the largest civil society movement calling for an end to poverty and inequality.²¹² Here, she suggests what CSOs could learn from the new protest movements.

One area where CSOs need to change in the future is harnessing citizen outreach and social movements at the local level. From the Arab Spring uprisings to Occupy, CSOs largely played the role of a bystander and had no idea how to effectively engage with citizen movements. This is a topic that is coming up at every forum and it's been interesting, because traditional CSOs which typically lead said that when they are not leading and setting the agenda they don't know what role to play.

CSOs globally and nationally should be able to support and adapt to spontaneous action from the grassroots level. CSOs should have the capacity to turn outrage into ongoing, constructive, long-term dialogue that points towards meaningful solutions. CSOs were struggling to find ways to intervene and engage in leaderless movements and grappled with the concept of being in that kind of mass action where you don't have control of the outcome. Globally there was a trend where CSOs were analysing the situation and could not come up

with a solution as to where they fit in. The big gap is in determining what CSOs are willing to do and where they fit in this changing environment.

CSO tactics have not been enough and we have much to learn from recent citizen movements as they have stood up for issues that are much deeper and more complex than the issues CSOs typically focus on. CSOs need to think deeper about how to work with partners and create stronger institutions that influence governance, instead of ad hoc groups that are here today and gone tomorrow.

Participation and activism need to be understood as a spectrum, on which different people and different movements may be at different points and have different support needs. Intervention should focus on helping people who are already participating in some ways to be supported to participate more intensively, more deeply and more frequently, to encourage schools of participation that renew and refresh the pool of activism.

This also calls on those with an interest in civil society to update their working definitions of civil society. While those who support civil society may be good at acknowledging that it encompasses a variety of forms and movements, the theory often doesn't translate into practice, and the civil society which gets the invitation and which gets the grant is often the established civil society formation. This implies there is a need for a greater range of more subtle tools for finding, researching, understanding and convening civil society in its diversity in any specific context. There is a parallel need to frame a new research agenda to better understand a wider range of sources, locations and motivations of participation, and how different kinds of movements of people come together. CIVICUS aims to contribute towards addressing these needs with its new, adaptable civil society self-assessment, the Civil Society Index Rapid Assessment.²¹³

2011 saw a response to a ratcheting up of repression, humiliation and relative impoverishment, and so the creation of the perfect storm conditions for dissent. 2011 was a year of moments, a year of spectacular events, which we have argued are connected, that created new, volatile space, vacuum, crisis, drama and opportunity. Protest as a brand in 2011 was diffuse, mutating, open-ended. Protest proceeded in a succession of big events, shifting alliances and also enduring commitment. But if we understand protest as process, both movements and moments matter. As the moments of protest fade, the movements around them and created by them come to the fore. Movements which have prioritised direct democracy and consensus have long term potential to sustain, evolve and combine, just as they have potential to organically end, drift and divide. And if protest is a brand, then the need now is to prevent the brand becoming sterile, to evolve and extend the brand.

In short, the opportunity has been created. The question remains, can it be seized in the longer term? And by whom can it be seized? For now, the game is on.

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**A DISENABLING ENVIRONMENT
FOR CIVIL SOCIETY:**

**PUSHBACK, PERSECUTION AND
PROTECTION STRATEGIES**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While 2011 was a year of mass civic action and unprecedented civil society gains, it was also a year in which the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association and expression, which are fundamental to citizen action, were widely violated. A massive increase in protest action saw a corresponding rise in state pushback, in both democratic and authoritarian states. One factor behind this was the fear of a repetition of Arab Spring moments in other contexts, while geopolitical shifts, such as the rise of China as an emerging donor, had an impact on the attitude of other states towards civil society. Legal and extralegal measures were employed by both state and non-state actors to intimidate or cause harm to civil society members. 2011 also witnessed a number of assassinations, false prosecutions and attacks on bloggers and journalists. Women human rights defenders were more vulnerable to targeting, intimidation and harassment than their male counterparts. There were also several attempts to introduce repressive laws to regulate CSOs, while the key role played by the internet and mobile and social media in civic action in 2011 brought fresh attempts to place technical and legal restrictions on this evolving space. In light of this, there is a need to invest in and strengthen protection strategies for human rights defenders and civil society activists who come under attack. 2011 also offered some hope, largely due to a number of progressive multilateral measures. After a tumultuous year for civil society as a whole, at present there may be fresh opportunity to secure new space opened by civic action by pressuring states to create a more enabling environment for civil society.

ACTIVISM AND RESPONSE: LOOKING BACK ON 2011

As evidenced in this report's section on protest and activism, protest movements against the denial of democratic freedoms, inequality, corruption, poverty and poor services – in short, against the breach of the fundamental social contract - gathered momentum and spread from the Arab region to the rest of the world, including Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, the Americas and Asia.

Mass protests, heavy pushback

However, even amidst the euphoria of protest, governments' response in many cases was repressive, indicating a global tendency of intolerance and nervousness by authorities of mass citizen action and dissent. For example, in February 2011, in response to attacks by security forces on people protesting in Algeria, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Libya and Yemen, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said:

“The nature and scope of the human rights violations taking place in several countries in the region in response to those who are largely demonstrating peacefully for their fundamental human rights and freedoms is alarming. Particularly egregious are the targeted attacks on journalists, lawyers, human rights defenders and even, in the case of Bahrain, doctors and medical personnel attending to injured protesters. The reported use of plainclothes security officials against opposition protesters is very worrying.”¹

Citizens, activists and civil society actors across a range of countries faced a barrage of illegal and brutal tactics to suppress public actions, as Mary Lawlor here makes clear.



COMMENTARY

2011 - A year of hope and disillusion for human rights defenders around the world

Mary Lawlor is the Founder and Executive Director of Front Line Defenders, an international organisation based in Dublin, Ireland, which focuses on protecting human rights defenders at risk around the world. In this contribution, she outlines the threats civil society activists faced in 2011 as a result of their demands for better governance and that their governments protect, respect and fulfil human rights.

If each year could be associated with a right, 2011 was undoubtedly the year of freedom of assembly and protest. The uprisings now collectively referred to as the Arab Spring began in North Africa in late 2010, spread throughout the region, and well beyond it. Protests erupted in all regions of the world, demonstrating the inspirational and contagious power of revolutions. They were prompted by economic reasons, high unemployment and high commodity prices, by demands for good governance and democracy, or in response to rigged elections. Sadly, across all regions, events elicited the same response: repression. Human rights defenders, civil society activists and ordinary citizens taking part in protests paid a high price for daring to voice their concerns and demand change. While governments are happy to sign up to international human rights conventions in principle, when their own power or privileges are threatened they feel free to ignore them and use any force required to maintain the status quo.

In the Middle East and North Africa, well after the dramatic regime changes in Tunisia and Egypt, mass protests continued in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen. In Syria, the extremely brutal repression of protests by the regime left thousands of civilians dead, attracting widespread international condemnation and sanctions from the Arab League. In parallel to repression, some governments made political concessions in the hope that demonstrations would subside. This eventually proved a successful strategy in Algeria, for example, where demonstrations continued on a lesser scale.

Inspired by the Arab Spring and exasperated by decades of corrupt and authoritarian government, mass protests erupted in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Malawi, Senegal, Swaziland and Uganda. Some governments, mindful of events in North Africa, adopted a pre-emptive strategy and started arresting activists before protests erupted, as in Zimbabwe. In Uganda, a peaceful walk to work protest was brutally suppressed, which caused events to escalate into clashes and riots, which left at least five people dead. In Malawi, the repression, which resulted in the death of 19 protesters, was accompanied by public statement by the highest political authorities inciting violence against frontline human rights defenders and civil society leaders. Groups affiliated to the ruling party took to the streets waving machetes, threatening members of the public against participating in the demonstrations.

Similar events occurred in Europe and Central Asia, including in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Uzbekistan. An original strategy was adopted by civil society in Belarus. Faced with the systematic denial of permission to hold public meetings, civil society engaged in so-called silent demonstrations, spontaneous gatherings often organised through social networking sites, which did not qualify as demonstrations. This took the authorities by surprise and resulted in only minor administrative sentences as no other criminal offence was applicable. However, the regime was quick to amend the law so that criminal charges could be brought.

Latin America was not immune. In Cuba in particular, the authorities launched a crackdown on democracy and political activists. In stark contrast to the media attention given to the uprisings in North Africa, the Cuban reality remained virtually unreported. Threats, violent beatings, arrests, arbitrary detentions, house arrests and the use of tear gas against peaceful gatherings were observed.

In Asia, protests did not develop as intensely as in other regions, but regimes were nevertheless worried enough to restrict their laws and regulations. Bangladesh, Cambodia and Malaysia began the process of introducing restrictive new legislation on freedom of association and assembly. In China, the Arab Spring

provided the government with both the motive and the opportunity to launch a crackdown on human rights defenders, partly in response to online calls for a 'Jasmine Revolution'.

Human rights defenders played an essential role in the global protest movement, either by leading civil society mobilisation as in Malawi, or by documenting abuses and brutal repression. As a result, they were directly targeted. Throughout the world, human rights defenders and their families received serious threats, were arrested, beaten, had their homes raided and burnt down or were disappeared.

Sadly the promise of reform generated by the Arab Spring shows signs of fading in the very countries where protest was most successful. In Egypt we see a brutal clampdown on the activities of human rights defenders and civil society activists by the Military Council, while in Tunisia human rights defenders demanding action against officials of the former government for their involvement in human rights abuses have been targeted.

Around the world it is clear that the priority of many governments is the maintenance of their power and privileges rather than creating societies rooted firmly in the protection of human rights. It remains to be seen whether the Arab Spring will live up to the hopes of millions or whether we will see one form of repression replaced by another.

2011 was a year that demonstrated governments' intolerance of protests was wide-ranging, not only restricted to countries with authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes, but also occurring in those with established traditions and institutions of democratic culture. The risks to protesters and the brutality of techniques used were of course much higher in authoritarian or less democratic regimes, where the simple act of peaceful protest could be a life threatening activity. But even in the United States, where the right to protest is firmly established in law, those participating in Occupy movement protests were subjected to mass arrests, arbitrary evictions and police brutality.² The casual pepper spraying of passively protesting students in Davis and the chaotic police raid in Oakland that hospitalised a war veteran became viral, iconic images of 2011.

A connected tendency in 2011, as highlighted by Doug Rutzen below, was that a number of governments either introduced restrictive legal measures or misused the law to pre-empt or crackdown on protests. Again, the use of the courts and legal manoeuvres to limit dissent was not a preserve of countries with questionable democratic practices. In the US and Europe, novel use was made of health, safety and sanitation legislation to evict Occupy protesters.³

Mass arrest was one widely used strategy, as in the case of different Occupy actions and the protests in Greece. In response to protests or the threat of protests in other countries, such as Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Russia, Senegal, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe, often the leaders of the movements were detained, as an apparent leadership decapitation strategy.

Activists and journalists: the targets of persecution

While many public demonstrations were met with excessive repression, hundreds of reported cases in 2011 demonstrate that state and non-state actors, in a sign of growing nervousness about the power of citizen action, also chose to go after individual civil society activists. Persecution of civil society actors, including human rights defenders, trade unionists, campaigners, journalists and bloggers remained rife throughout 2011, and showed a marked increase in some contexts.

Murders and physical attacks on civil society activists were pronounced in some countries and often inadequately investigated. Latin America remained one of the deadliest regions for civil society activists, particularly for union leaders, indigenous rights activists and environmental campaigners. In Brazil, local activists and their family members engaged in highlighting the degradation of the Amazon rainforest and the activities of the timber mafia paid the ultimate price for their work and beliefs.⁴ A similar case of murder of a local environmental activist was reported in El Salvador.⁵



In Colombia, killings of human rights defenders by suspected members of militia groups showed an increase in 2011.⁶ Many of those killed were fighting for the land rights of indigenous communities against powerful landowners.⁷ In Guatemala, a local community leader⁸ and trade union activists were reportedly murdered as a result of their activism.⁹ In Bolivia, police used force against indigenous protesters demonstrating against a proposed highway through forest areas.¹⁰

Two apparent trends can be discerned from the above examples: local, grassroots activists, particularly those working on environmental and indigenous issues, seemed to be at particular risk of assassination; and the risk often came from the nexus of vested economic interests, powerful landowners and organised crime, closely linked to local and national economic and political leaders.



Assassination of activists was also witnessed in other parts of the world, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, Uganda and Yemen. The Philippines remained one of the most dangerous countries for activists as the signature style of assassinations by killers astride motorcycles continued in 2011 with frightening regularity. The murder of an Italian priest advocating for indigenous people's land rights in the North Cotabato region of the Philippines offered a powerful reminder of ongoing persecution.¹¹ In India, there were multiple murders of activists exposing corruption and the link between government officials and mafia groups.¹²

In addition a frequent and growing tactic to silence civil society activists in 2011 was criminalisation through false prosecution. A number of activists were jailed during the year on the basis of ill-founded accusations and manipulation of the criminal justice system. This phenomenon was particularly pronounced in countries ruled by long-standing despotic regimes or monarchies, which became increasingly nervous about being overthrown by popular movements taking inspiration from the Arab Spring.

In Bahrain, military courts were used to hand out draconian sentences ranging from two years to life in prison to 21 activists, including health professionals who treated injured protesters, for their role in highlighting repression by security forces during the widespread protests of early 2011.¹³ In the United Arab Emirates, five activists for greater political freedoms were imprisoned and charged with insulting public officials and conspiring against the safety and security of the state in the run up to the country's elections.¹⁴

In Zimbabwe, trade unionists, students, lawyers and workers were arrested on suspicion of committing treason merely for watching televised recordings of the protests in North Africa.¹⁵ In the Gambia, Moses Richard, a former High Court Judge and lawyer active in defending victims of human rights violations, was handed a two and half year sentence for 'giving false information' to a police officer and 'sedition'. His arrest came amidst intensification of repression of civil society activists in the Gambia in the run up to the November 2011 presidential elections.¹⁶ In Ethiopia, catch-all provisions of the anti-terrorism law were used to prosecute 24 people, 16 of them in absentia. Those charged with terrorism included six journalists and two members of the opposition Unity for Democracy and Justice Party.¹⁷

In Belarus, eminent human rights defender Ales Bialiatski was sentenced to four and a half years imprisonment on trumped up charges of tax evasion. His real crime was to highlight the erosion of democratic freedoms in Belarus.¹⁸

In China, Nobel Peace Prize awardee Liu Xiaobo remained in prison throughout 2011 despite calls for his release.¹⁹ In Vietnam, two pro-democracy activists were rounded up and detained for a week

“Local, grassroots activists, particularly those working on environmental and indigenous issues, seemed to be at particular risk of assassination.”

because they attended the trial of political activist Cu Huy Ha Vu, who was charged with distributing propaganda materials against the single party communist government by calling for a multi-party system.²⁰

Again, excessive uses of the law were not confined to straightforwardly repressive regimes. The perceived threat of hacktivism resulted in a wave of arrests, often of young people, in Australia, the Netherlands and Turkey, amongst other places.²¹ The UK also responded to its riots by suspending normal sentencing practises and convening emergency overnight courts to impose excessively harsh penalties, such as jailing a first time offender for six months for stealing a bottle of water and sentencing two teenagers to three years imprisonment for calling for a riot on Facebook.²²

Journalists also came under the spotlight themselves as a number of governments sought to prevent neutral reporting and the release of information likely to provoke citizen action. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reported that there was a 20% increase in the imprisonment of reporters, editors and photojournalists over 2010 figures, the highest level since the mid-1990s. On 1 December 2011, CPJ recorded that there were 179 writers, editors and photojournalists behind bars, 34 up on the total at the same time the year before. The sharp rise was mostly due to a rise in actions against journalists in the Middle East and North Africa. Iran was cited as being the worst offender, with 42 journalists behind bars.²³

Rwandan journalist, Charles Ingabire, a vocal critic of President Paul Kagame and editor of an online magazine on human rights concerns, was shot dead in Uganda, where he was living in exile. Prior to his death, Ingabire had stated that he had been warned to discontinue his work several times.²⁴ In Burundi, journalists were subjected to harassment by state prosecuting agencies who summoned them for repeated questioning after radio broadcasts implicated government officials in human rights abuses.²⁵ Chinese authorities, in the wake of the Middle East protests, assaulted over a dozen foreign journalists who came to cover organised protests in Beijing.²⁶ In Venezuela, a fine of roughly US\$2.1m was imposed on a television station for reporting prison riots in alleged violation of a broadcasting statute.²⁷ In Thailand, where criticism of the monarchy remains an emotive and highly sensitive issue, the editor of progressive newspaper Voice of the Oppressed was arrested and denied bail for allegedly allowing two articles to be published that made negative references to the monarchy.²⁸

COMMENTARY

Protection strategies to safeguard civil society activists and human rights defenders

Hassan Shire Sheikh is a Pan-African human rights defender who has been forced to flee his homeland of Somalia. He played a key role in founding the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project and the Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network. His commentary outlines techniques and tactics for protecting human rights defenders.

Different protection strategies have been utilised to respond to the challenges facing human rights defenders (HRDs). Protection strategies are mainly informed by the particular environment that HRDs work under and include prevention, response and intervention strategies. Security for HRDs and civil society activists entails understanding one's working environment and conducting a thorough risk assessment that includes an analysis of the feasibility of the threats and their vulnerabilities and capacities as HRDs and civil society activists. Vulnerability is the degree to which people are susceptible to loss, damage, suffering and death in the event of an attack. This varies for each defender or group, and changes with time.

Following a risk assessment, HRDs and civil society activists should develop clear response protocols to the risks they have identified, e.g. what to do in case of arbitrary detention or an office raid, and who must be



informed in the case of an emergency, and how and when? The preventive and response strategies should be contained in a security plan which is a set of day-to-day policies, measures and protocols for managing specific situations.

Direct protection assistance usually involves a financial outlay as well as hands-on and urgent logistical support to an HRD or civil society activist. There is often the need for psycho-social counselling to enable an HRD to overcome the emotional aspects of coping with the difficulties that she/he has faced. In cases where an HRD has been injured in the course of her/his work there is the need for quick medical assistance. Intervention strategies also include access to funding for housing, feeding, communication and transport as well as funding for family support, as often HRDs at risk are the sole providers for their families.

Access to legal support is needed in cases where an HRD is facing charges as a result of her/his human rights work. Trial observation missions by human rights organisations and the attendance of court hearings by diplomatic mission officials, for instance, can promote adherence to international fair trial guarantees under international law.

Emergency evacuation and relocation is appropriate only in cases where an activist is absolutely not able to stay in her/his work location for security reasons. As a long-term support strategy, the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project opened a resource centre in 2010 to allow HRDs to continue their work from a safe space, and regularly facilitates the participation of HRDs at regional and international human rights forums.

There are many obstacles to the application of these strategies, including: human and financial resource constraints; extended approval processes by donor organisations and hence delays in implementing activities; insufficient information dissemination on the situation facing HRDs, especially those at risk; insufficient collaboration among like-minded organisations; under-utilisation of available communication channels, such as the internet; insecurity and increased restrictions making it even more difficult for HRDs to operate in some countries; and legal restrictions contained in national laws that criminalise the activities of HRDs (e.g. sexual minority defenders).

Bearing in mind the important work that HRDs engage in, protection efforts must be broad-based and address the challenges that HRDs face, if the human rights movement is to survive these difficult times.

Women human rights defenders and LGBTI activists: increased risks

Women human rights defenders remained particularly vulnerable to targeting in 2011. The Nobel Committee sought to highlight this reality when awarding the 2011 Peace Prize to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkul Karman for their “non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women’s rights to full participation in peace-building work.”²⁹

In Egypt, women protesters were singled out by the security forces, with those detained being forced to undergo ‘virginity’ tests. Another defining image of 2011 was that of a brutal physical assault of a woman protester by military men in Egypt.³⁰ In Yemen, President Saleh denounced women protesters as ‘un-Islamic’, indicating to security forces that they could be targeted.³¹ The activists of Women of Zimbabwe Arise continued to be beaten and jailed for carrying out peaceful protests against official repression.³² In Cambodia, women activists opposed to forcible evictions in the name of urban development around Boeung Kak Lake in the capital Phnom Penh were subjected to criminal charges despite their protests being peaceful.³³

While Ugandan gay rights defender Kasha Jacqueline Nabagasera was honoured with the Martin Ennals award for human rights in 2011,³⁴ the situation for LGBTI activists in many countries remained dire. The Nigerian Senate passed a law banning gay marriages and imposing a 10-year prison sentence for those who help them, in a bid to bring LGBTI activists within its ambit.³⁵ Although, in 2011 the European Court of Human Rights dismissed an appeal by the Russian government against

its decision that banning Moscow Pride gay rights marches in 2006, 2007 and 2008 breached the European Convention on Human Rights, nonetheless the legislative assembly of St Petersburg approved a bill that penalises public activities that promote gay rights in the presence of minors. If passed, the bill will put in jeopardy the activities of LGBTI groups.³⁶

A report published by CIVICUS in 2011 on the challenges faced by women human rights defenders in civil society in Africa pointed out that they face more intimidation and harassment due to the nature of their work than their male colleagues.³⁷ This is corroborated by the contribution of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.

COMMENTARY

Challenges faced by women human rights defenders in 2011

Margaret Sekaggya is a prominent Ugandan magistrate who served as the Chairperson of the Ugandan Human Rights Commission before being appointed to the role of UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in 2008. In late 2010, her office produced a report on the difficulties that women human rights defenders encounter.³⁸ Her contribution summarises some of the report's key findings.

Since its inception in 2000, the UN mandate on human rights defenders has addressed the specificities of the situation of women human rights defenders and the particular challenges they face. Women human rights defenders are exposed and subjected to gender-based violence and gender-specific violations, such as verbal and sexual harassment, rape, prejudice, exclusion and repudiation. This is often due to the fact that women human rights defenders are perceived as challenging accepted socio-cultural norms, traditions, perceptions and stereotypes about femininity, sexual orientation, and the role and status of women in society, which often serve to normalise and perpetuate forms of violence and discrimination against women.

In 2011, I presented a thematic report to the 16th session of the UN Human Rights Council that focused on the risks and challenges faced by women human rights defenders and those working on women's rights and gender issues. Information received throughout 2011 indicate that women human rights defenders, and those working on women's rights and gender issues, continue to be threatened, harassed, attacked, killed, disappeared, arbitrarily arrested and detained, ill-treated or subjected to different forms of judicial harassment to prevent them from doing their work.

Another trend that seems to persist, and which seriously concerns the security and protection of women human rights defenders and those working on women's rights and gender issues, is the stigmatisation and criminalisation of their work and the consequent climate of impunity which prevails in many countries. The obligation to provide defenders with effective protection and adequate remedy for violations suffered requires authorities to ensure prompt and impartial investigations into alleged human rights violations, prosecution of perpetrators, provision of reparations, and enforcement of decisions or judgments.

Respecting the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and protest involves the responsibility of states to take concrete steps to build, maintain and strengthen pluralism, tolerance and an open attitude to the expression of dissent in society.

There is a lot still to do to ensure that the principles of participation, security and access to justice become an integral part of the framework where women human rights defenders operate.

THE LEGAL AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY OPERATIONS

In addition to the outright repression of dissent, 2011 also saw the continuation of more sophisticated measures to restrict civil society's and citizens' engagement through the use of law.



Although there were some positive reforms, the regulatory environment for civil society is also deteriorating in a number of countries.

This trend was not limited to authoritarian countries such as Saudi Arabia, where an anti-terror bill, leaked to civil society, made mere questioning of the integrity of the king an offence punishable by 10 years imprisonment.³⁹ Democratic South Africa's National Assembly passed the so called 'secrecy bill', which places hurdles against CSOs and journalists obtaining information to expose official wrongdoing, despite fierce civil society resistance.⁴⁰

“The regulatory environment for civil society is deteriorating in a number of countries..”

Such laws are brought in and applied under a number of guises. Commonly, rhetoric around national security and controlling terrorist activities was used to justify new restrictions on fundamental freedoms in the years following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001. This tendency has been exacerbated by the subsequent global Financial Action Task Force (FATF) initiative to counter terrorist financing, which has seen the imposition or proposal of rules which restrict key civil society freedoms in repressive contexts, with FATF endorsement or encouragement.⁴¹ Other proffered justifications include enhancing accountability and transparency of CSOs, harmonising or coordinating CSOs' activities with national development priorities, and defence of national sovereignty against foreign influence in domestic affairs.⁴²

As evidenced in the restrictive legal measures introduced in a number of countries such as Algeria, Egypt and Israel, 2011 saw a number of applications of rhetoric around national sovereignty and protection from foreign influences as a stated motive of governments restricting civil society freedoms. This dangerous tendency could be noted at the UN Human Rights Council in September 2011, when China presented a joint statement at the Panel on Peaceful Protests, on behalf of Bahrain, Yemen and 30 other states, underscoring the sovereignty of states, and emphasising that the international community must not intervene in matters that are within the domestic jurisdiction of states.⁴³ As this report's section on the key global civil society events of 2011 makes clear, the issue of external intervention to prevent domestic repression, as for example in relation to the question of the application of the responsibility to protect, remains a matter of fierce controversy and contest.

The global context for such contestation is one of geopolitical shift towards a multi-polar world where the influence of Western democracies has been counterbalanced by the growing economic and political clout of new power centres such as the BRICS countries. While imperfectly and with many deficits, Western donors have in recent times used development interventions to promote rights-based approaches and civil society voices, but most of the newer donors do not have the same focus. As new major providers of foreign aid and investment, they provide alternative options that are welcomed by governments facing sanctions or censure for human rights abuses from the donors of Western democracies.

It can be inferred that there is a connection between the increasing role of China as an economic investor in Sub-Saharan Africa and the weakening of Sub-Saharan African states' willingness to uphold democracy and human rights. The government of China's first ever published report on its foreign aid policy, issued in April 2011, reports that by far the largest part of its aid, 45.7%, goes to countries in Africa.⁴⁴

A particularly egregious case is that of Malawi. Following President Bingu wa Mutharika's crackdown on demonstrators in July, development aid was suspended by key Western donors.⁴⁵ Malawi was kept afloat due to private sector investment from China, which far exceeded the conditional aid it receives from Western governments.⁴⁶



A source of hope here comes by way of the Arab Spring. The second largest source of intra-African foreign direct investment is Northern Africa.⁴⁷ The impact of the unseating of Gaddafi in Libya will surely erode the power base of long-standing dictators that benefited from his financial and military support, such as Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso and Idriss Déby of Chad, and open space for civil society activists to champion reform.

Further, civil society has arguably become a victim of its own success, given the enhanced ability CSOs have developed to represent human rights concerns internationally. Globalisation and technological advances have increased civil society's ability to organise beyond borders and influence decisions at multilateral forums including UN bodies, while CSOs have developed specialist capacity to scrutinise and hold to account, for example, by developing legal expertise. In response, a number of governments have become more nervous about CSOs' influence. This has helped drive legislation to subject civil society groups to increased scrutiny, exhaustive registration requirements and most notably limitations on their ability to access funding from abroad.

With these various motivations, as described below by Doug Rutzen, a slew of new and proposed legislation was drawn up in 2011 to restrict the independence of civil society groups.

COMMENTARY

The legal and policy environment for civil society - Global trends 2011

*Douglas Rutzen is the President and CEO of the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL). Under his leadership, ICNL has worked in over 100 countries on the legal framework for civil society, philanthropy and civic participation. Doug is also an adjunct professor at Georgetown University Law Center, where he teaches the only course on international civil society law. He examines three global trends that the ICNL team observed in 2011.*⁴⁸

Foreign funding restrictions

In 2011, a number of countries targeted the foreign funding of CSOs. Examples include:

In Egypt, CSOs must obtain the government's approval to receive foreign funding. This Mubarak-era rule was briefly unenforced after the transition, but the interim government applied the law with vigour. Among other measures, the government instructed banks to notify the government of transactions involving CSOs, and the government investigated a number of CSOs for receiving foreign funding without the government's permission.

In 2011 in Israel, members of the Knesset – Israel's parliament - proposed legislation to restrict the foreign funding of Israeli associations. One bill would have limited foreign governments from providing more than NIS 20,000 (approximately US\$5,300) to certain associations seeking to influence Israel's political agenda. Another bill would have subjected various human rights groups to a 45% tax on funding from foreign governments. These initiatives are on hold at time of writing, but they exemplify a deep-seated concern among some political leaders about the foreign funding of Israeli CSOs.

In December 2011, members of the Kyrgyz parliament introduced a draft law to give the government unbridled discretion to establish procedures governing foreign aid and humanitarian assistance. In October, a court in Ethiopia upheld the decision of the Ethiopian Charities and Societies Agency Board to block a human rights organisation from accessing eight million Birr (approx. US\$467,000) of its funds. In July, the President of Ecuador added a new component to foreign funding constraints. Instead of focussing on domestic CSOs, the President issued a decree prohibiting foreign CSOs from implementing "plans, programmes, or projects" with funding provided by bilateral or multilateral donors.



Constraints on protests and dissent

Second, governments have imposed measures restricting the ability of individuals to dissent, demonstrate and exercise their freedoms of assembly, association, and expression. Such measures include the following:

Concerned about creative, non-violent protests, the government of Belarus enacted legislation restricting the ability of citizens to undertake any action or inaction organised “for the public expression of their social and political interests...” In addition, individuals can now be imprisoned for up to three years for “calling for a meeting, rally, street procession, demonstration or picketing” in violation of Belarusian law.

The government of Uganda tabled a bill for the Management of Public Order. The bill would, in effect, require government approval for a gathering or demonstration of three or more people “at which principles, policy actions or failures of any government are discussed.” Anyone who holds a public meeting and fails to comply with notice requirements (at least seven days in advance) would be subject to criminal sanctions.

In December, the government of Malaysia approved a ban on street protests that imposes fines of up to 20,000 Ringgit (US\$6,200) for violations of the law. Violations include holding demonstrations other than in stadiums and public halls, failing to give 10-day advance notification to police before a protest, or simply being under 15 or a non-citizen while attending a rally.

In various countries in the Middle East and North Africa, governments banned protests, arrested demonstrators, used excessive force against protesters, impeded internet access, and undertook other measures to block dissent and demonstrations.⁴⁹

Civil society ‘lifecycle’ legislation

Third, in 2011 a number of governments proposed or enacted legislation affecting the formation, registration and general lifecycle of CSOs.

In December, the National People’s Assembly of Algeria passed a draft Law on Associations. Among other problematic provisions, the draft allows the government to deny registration if an association’s activities are not in the “general interest,” provides the government with broad discretion to suspend an association that interferes with the “internal business” of Algeria, restricts foreign funding, and establishes fines and imprisonment for any member of an unregistered association.

The Government of Cambodia produced various iterations of a draft Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organisations. Among other issues, the draft, issued in December 2011, prohibited non-citizens from founding organisations, lacked clear criteria to guide the CSO registration process, and provided the government with broad discretion to dissolve CSOs.

In May, Iran issued a draft Bill on the Establishment and Supervision of Non-Governmental Organisations which required all organisations to re-register. It also created an unaccountable body, the Supreme Committee Supervising NGO Activities, with the power to issue and revoke registration permits for organisations.

In terms of more enabling and positive reforms, the following were highlights of the year:

The Kurdistan regional government enacted a new Law on Non-Governmental Organisations. Among other reforms, the law improves the registration process, allows organisations to receive foreign and domestic funding, removes all restrictions on associational rights of foreign residents in Kurdistan, and removes harsh criminal penalties that previously chilled associational life in Kurdistan.

Montenegro enacted new legislation reducing the number of founders required to start a CSO, liberalising the ability of foreigners to found associations, and enabling young people to play a more active role in Montenegrin civil society. The law also eliminated fines on informal associations. Rwanda adopted new laws facilitating the registration and operation of national and international CSOs, while in North Africa, Tunisia adopted new framework legislation, and Libya is beginning the process of developing new CSO legislation.

In summary, we are in the midst of a global contest over civic space. In many countries, 2011 marked a continuation of the 'associational counter-revolution' that began in the last decade. At the same time, 2011 witnessed the emergence of the citizen protester, the empowerment of the oppressed, and the unshackling of civil society around the world. Outcomes remain uncertain, and courageous colleagues continue to work hard to consolidate recent gains for civil society. As we enter a new year, the words of Walt Kelly come to mind: "We are confronted with insurmountable opportunities."

Although, in some instances, and following intensive campaigning from domestic and international civil society, plans were shelved or delayed to introduce restrictive civil society laws, as in Cambodia, Iran and Israel,⁵⁰ the threat of legislation remained a potent weapon for governments to subdue civil society voices from raising difficult issues, such as corruption and human rights violations.

Towards a more enabling environment for civil society

An enabling environment for civil society, as the term is used in this report, refers to the guarantee of minimum conditions for citizens and their formations to associate, assemble, organise and express their views freely, as well as their ability to hold governments accountable without fear of persecution or attack. This analytical framework is based on fundamental rights and freedoms, as guaranteed under international law and jurisprudence, on the state's obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights, including freedom of association, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, and CSOs' rights such as the right to operate free from unwarranted state interference, the right to communicate and cooperate and the right to seek and secure funding.

"A truly enabling environment requires legislation, backed by policy and implementation, that underpin the importance of CSOs."

A truly enabling environment requires legislation, backed by policy and implementation, that recognise the importance of CSOs and acknowledge the role they have in contributing to national policy. CSO framework laws and access to information laws, amongst others, should not impede the work of CSOs but rather form the basis for frequent, transparent, consistent and institutionalised high-quality engagement between CSOs and the state.

The gap between this ideal model and reality is marked in many contexts. CIVICUS' 2008 to 2011 Civil Society Index (CSI) project found that across CSOs in 33 countries, only 8% believe that the legal and policy environment for civil society is fully enabling for their operations, and a higher amount (47%) find it either quite limiting or highly restrictive than find it moderately enabling (45%). Further, 21% of all CSOs surveyed reported that they had experienced illegitimate attacks of some kind from central or local government.

The 30 civil society profiles in this report also offer at best a mixed picture. While some countries, notably in Europe, have experienced an expansion of civil society opportunities as a result of EU accession and candidacy processes mandating greater civil society inclusion, such as Albania, Croatia and Cyprus, or as a result of the election of more supportive governments as Uruguay, others, such as Nicaragua and Venezuela, report a profoundly disenabled and polarised environment. Often, as most of the profiles indicate, the environment for civil society is also distorted by corruption and worsens at times of political contestation, such as in the run up to elections.

The CSI research sheds light on laws covering aspects of civil society that are outdated (Madagascar, Zambia), fragmented and contradictory (Mexico, Tanzania) or assessed by CSOs as disenabling (Albania, Jordan, Kazakhstan). A concern that arose in many countries (for example, Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy, Madagascar, the Philippines, Senegal and Turkey) is that laws that are on the books are not always translated into effective policy and implementation.

In many contexts, relationships between civil society and the state are accordingly clouded by lack of transparency (Argentina, Morocco), and key issues are not open for discussion (Georgia, Russia). Common complaints are of a pro forma approach to civil society consultation (Philippines,



Rwanda, Slovenia), or of limited or discontinuous dialogue (Bulgaria, Macedonia, Tanzania), and of relationships where the government exercises favouritism towards some CSOs (Kazakhstan, Morocco, Senegal) or where there is excessive government interference (Croatia, Guinea). Lack of government capacity to engage in constructive dialogue also emerges as an issue (Albania, Kosovo).

When measured against hopes to make states commit to the guarantee of an enabling environment for civil society, mixed results emerged from the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, covered in more detail in this report's section on the key global civil society events of 2011. The HLF4 outcomes failed to articulate explicit principles to protect civil society, although there were encouraging provisions in the Busan Outcome Document, such as its paragraph 22(a), which calls on governments to implement fully "respective commitments to enable CSOs to exercise their roles as independent development actors, with a particular focus on an enabling environment, consistent with agreed international rights, that maximises the contributions of CSOs to development."⁵¹

However, it is also notable that the outcome document stipulates that all development actors, including CSOs, should "align their efforts with the priorities and policies set out by developing countries." It is important to remain vigilant that this sentiment is not used as an excuse to encroach on the independence of civil society groups.

COMMENTARY

'Rule of law' or 'dictatorship of law'? Towards an enabling legal framework for human rights defenders and civil society

Gerald Staberock was appointed Secretary General of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) in 2011. The OMCT is a coalition of international NGOs that fight against torture, summary executions, enforced disappearances and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. In his contribution, he looks at the relationship between the use and abuse of the law and the legal framework for civil society.

The rule of law and the protection of civil society

The reality for CSOs and human rights defenders remains dire in many parts of the world. If further proof was needed, the global report on the situation of human rights defenders by the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (a joint programme of the OMCT and FIDH), provides compelling evidence on the threats to human rights defenders and civil society around the world.⁵² The notion of rights and judicial protection as a 'Leitmotiv' (guiding motif) of the international framework is often thwarted on the ground by repressive legal frameworks and a denial of judicial protection of human rights defenders. In fact, 2011 was replete with examples in which the law was actively used as a tool of repression. In few other areas is the law so easily susceptible to abuse and the 'dictatorship of law' - to use the words of Vladimir Putin when assuming his first presidency - in which the law secures power or is used selectively when convenient for those in power.

Controlling versus enabling civil society

Multiple laws can in practice unduly impede freedom of expression, association and assembly of civil society, and legitimate human rights work. These may include NGO laws, assembly and association laws, media or internet laws, tax legislation and, increasingly since 9/11, counter-terrorism, extremism or other national security legislations. They range from undue limitations or prohibitions on these three freedoms, undue requirements of formal authorisation rather than mere notifications for peaceful assemblies, deliberately ambiguous legal frameworks and the excessive bureaucratisation of civil society activities, all lending themselves to the arbitrary application and selective enforcement of such rules depending on the needs of the executive. The law can in such circumstances provide a disguised perception of neutrality and objectivity, allowing authorities to pretend that they are 'just upholding the law' while in fact selectively impeding legitimate social dissent. The lack of an independent judiciary or positivist applications of the law common to authoritarian regimes often compound such effects.

Importantly, legislation does not necessarily need to be systematically abused to have a chilling factor on civil society. Abuse in a selected individual case or even the mere threat of using the law in a high profile case can carry the ‘shadow of the law’, intimidating civil society at large.

Accountability and the judicial community

International human rights law defines the role of the legal and judicial community as a protective function. Lawyers, judges and prosecutors have not only a legal but also a professional and ethical responsibility to uphold human rights. Yet judiciaries often fail in this responsibility. The conviction in December 2011 of a leading human rights defender in Kyrgyzstan who had documented gross violations of human rights such as torture and enforced disappearances is but one striking injustice in which the judiciary of a country has become a willing executioner of the executive. The arbitrary arrest of a judge in Venezuela who had implemented a decision of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention is a telling example of the need to protect judges and lawyers when they are threatened because of the exercise of their functions.

The impact on the overall rule of law is immense when the judiciary is abused as it undermines confidence in the legal and judicial system at large. The systemic lack of accountability for attacks, disappearances, and murders of human rights defenders reinforces the chilling effect on civil society and the deterioration of the rule of law. The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders report highlights the persistent lack of accountability for attacks on human rights defenders and civil society activists.

Towards a process of stocktaking

The experiences of 2011 indicate a need for a fundamental change in many parts of the world to construct an enabling rather than controlling legal framework. Needed now is a process of stocktaking to review and reform systematically laws that restrict civil society space. In addition, thought needs to be given on how to work with the legal community, bar associations and others to strengthen the response by professional groups to situations in which the judiciary comes under threat and becomes a willing executioner of the executive.

Perhaps most importantly civil society has to continue to speak out and insist on accountability for attacks on human rights defenders and civil society activists. Only then can civil society assume its role as an agent of change.

TECHNICAL AND LEGAL RESTRICTIONS ON INTERNET FREEDOM

ICTs are a key instrument in promoting government transparency, with potential to facilitate public access to information and thereby enable active citizens to monitor and influence government policy. The advent of the internet age and the development of social media represent a paradigm shift in the concept of civic space. As Egyptian blogger Ramy Raouf states:

“Many taboos and ‘red lines’ are imposed on offline spaces like newspapers and TV channels in several states in North Africa, as well as many limits on freedom of expression and the right to assembly. It is not easy to establish a newspaper in Libya or a human rights organisation in Algeria or to call for a march in Bahrain. Cyberspace is almost the only free space for many groups and individuals to practise not only their right to freedom of expression and speech but also their right to assembly and to form associations and groups with common interests.”⁵³

The vital role the internet, mobile technology and social media played in catalysing and channelling civic resentment into revolt and the articulation of alternatives in 2011, as discussed in this report’s section on protest and activism, brought corresponding attempts to restrict internet freedom. The much reported internet and mobile network shutdowns in Egypt, Libya and Syria demonstrate that



the tendency of states to clampdown on civic and social space at critical political junctures such as elections, uprisings and times of political crisis, applies also to the online arena.

In his 2011 Report, Frank La Rue, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, affirmed:

“The vast potential and benefits of the internet are rooted in its unique characteristics, such as its speed, worldwide reach and relative anonymity. At the same time, these distinctive features of the internet that enable individuals to disseminate information in ‘real time’ and to mobilise people has also created fear amongst governments and the powerful. This has led to increased restrictions on the internet through the use of increasingly sophisticated technologies to block content, monitor and identify activists and critics, criminalisation of legitimate expression, and adoption of restrictive legislation to justify such measures.”⁵⁴

Restrictions on internet freedom can be classed into three broad categories: technical and legal obstacles to access; limits on content; and violations of user rights.

Technical and legal obstacles to access

The dangers posed by a centralised infrastructure for a country’s access to international internet traffic were illustrated by mobile and internet network shutdowns orchestrated by various states during periods of political instability in 2011.

State control can easily be asserted through state-run monopolies on internet access provision (Cuba, Ethiopia), and virtual monopolies (Kazakhstan, Venezuela), or by state companies controlling networks of fibre optic cables and copper wires (Belarus, Egypt). In 2011 a number of governments abused their control of infrastructure to limit access to controversial content, institute countrywide filtering and surveillance systems or in times of turmoil to intentionally reduce the speed of connection or even shut down the internet.⁵⁵

Other countries assessed to have at least partially centralised internet connections and exerted government control include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Burma/Myanmar, China, Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Vietnam and Zimbabwe.⁵⁶

Spotlight on Africa: restrictions on mobile technology

Africa has by far the smallest rate of internet penetration in the world.⁵⁷ However, the rate of mobile phone penetration on the continent is growing rapidly: every one out of two persons in Africa now has a mobile phone.⁵⁸ Mobile phone-based innovations such as mobile banking, and low-bandwidth applications such as those giving daily market prices for commodities and weather patterns, are fast redefining the face and shape of Africa. Worrying anecdotal evidence suggests, however, that there is also a trend of interrupting mobile phone service during periods of political unrest in Sub-Saharan Africa. There were reports that during periods of protest and political instability in Swaziland in 2011, the state-owned mobile phone network was shut down to prevent citizens from organising political action. Mozambique also experienced service suspensions during the September 2010 food riots. During the February 2011 elections in Uganda, text messages including the words “Mubarak”, “bullet”, “Tunisia”, “people power”, “dictator”, “teargas”, “army”, “police”, “gun”, “Ben Ali” and “UPDF” (the Ugandan military) were banned, demonstrating also that the government feared the inspiration of the Arab Spring in sparking protests.⁵⁹ During the Cameroon election in March 2011, SMS access to Twitter was banned. Given the vital role of mobile technology in development in Africa, deliberate disruptions of service are particularly disturbing.

“Given the vital role of mobile technology in development in Africa, deliberate disruptions of service are particularly disturbing.”

Limits on content

There are a number of documented cases of both authoritarian and democratic states in 2011 blocking access to information concerning social and political issues, in particular on democracy and human rights, by preventing access to specific URLs, domain name extensions and Internet Protocol (IP) addresses, and removing websites from host web servers. During the Arab Spring, there were reports of the blocking of websites of independent news sources, political opponents and social networking platforms, including Twitter and Facebook, across a range of countries. While the infamous Great Firewall of China, which blocks access to a wide spread of websites, continues to capture international headlines, of late sophisticated filtering mechanisms which prevent access to URLs containing particular keywords have been noted in Iran and Tunisia. Other countries outside the MENA region that are assessed to have considerable politically-motivated censorship include Burma/Myanmar, Cuba, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.⁶⁰

In the revolutionary contexts of North Africa, there were also some encouraging signs that state responses tended to be counter-productive, drawing greater international attention to restrictions on freedom of expression. There is also evidence that internet shutdown drew more people into protest in Egypt and Tunisia.⁶¹ However, more subtle means are also available. Governments seeking to control information via the internet are dedicating resources to manipulating and fabricating online content to paint themselves in a more favourable light. There were reports that in 2011 citizens from China, Iran and Russia were recruited and paid to post pro-government opinions in cyberspace. In Burma/Myanmar it is alleged that each ministry has an assigned blogging committee, and in Thailand there are accounts of military units that challenge anti-monarchy views on the internet.⁶²

“In the first half of 2011, five countries – India, Italy, Thailand, Turkey and the USA – requested the removal of content on the basis of it being critical of the government.”

Since 2009, Google has had a policy of publishing requests made to it by governments to remove content or to provide information about users. CIVICUS’ analysis of Google’s statistics for these requests between 2009 and mid 2011 shows that requests are growing. During the first six months of 2011 Google received more than 15,000 requests from 26 countries for personal users’ data, which exceeded the number of requests for the whole of 2009. Nor were these requests the preserve of autocratic governments: more than 1,000 requests each came from France, Germany, India, the UK, and USA, and they were closely followed by Brazil and Italy.

According to the same statistics, in the first half of 2011, five countries – India, Italy, Thailand, Turkey and the USA – requested the removal of content on the basis of it being critical of the government, with 498 items removed during this period on this basis, a sharp rise from the 75 items removed for the same reason during the whole of 2010. India and Thailand each required more than 200 items removed during this period due to government criticism. It is also noteworthy that in most cases

removal requests emanated not from court decisions, but from executive and police requests.

In contravention of the right to freedom of expression, many of the decisions to restrict particular content on the internet have also been arbitrary and shrouded in secrecy.

Attacks on bloggers and human rights defenders using the internet

As the parameters of what constitutes a journalist shifts with the rise of social media and citizen journalism, user-generated content and the activities of internet users have come under increasing scrutiny by governments. According to Reporters without Borders, in 2011, 120 people were in prison on charges related to the content of their online expression, more than half





of who were detained in China.⁶³ Bloggers, in addition to traditional journalists and human rights defenders that use the internet for their work, found themselves subject to surveillance, politically-motivated criminal prosecutions, stringent legal penalties, prohibitive fines, confiscation and destruction of property, threats, physical attacks and incarceration in Bahrain, Burma/Myanmar, China, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kuwait, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Vietnam.⁶⁴ 2011 also saw the death of Bahraini blogger Zakariya Rashia Hassan Al-Ashiri behind bars, shortly after his arrest. Another particularly tragic case was that of prominent columnist, Mona Eltahawy, who had her arms broken during an arrest to prevent her from blogging against the government.⁶⁵

Internet freedom: the need for vigilance

In the light of these challenges, CSOs should make internet freedom a mainstream advocacy issue. Any purported restriction on internet sites and free speech on the internet should be content-specific, and restrictions made should fall strictly within the parameters of international law. Central control over internet and telecommunications infrastructure by governments must be guarded against, as it permits the state to conduct illegitimate surveillance and arbitrarily control content and connectivity.

In 2012, civil society must continue to monitor the practice of states and strive to influence legal and policy developments to create a favourable regulatory framework to promote and protect this unique space for freedom of expression, assembly and association.

SUPPORT FROM THE UN AND OTHER MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES

Much needed support for civil society came from the UN and other multilateral bodies in 2011, as is covered in more depth in this report's section on the key global civil society events of 2011.

The UN Human Rights Committee, the expert body of jurists tasked with overseeing the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, delivered a landmark decision in favour of an Uzbek CSO that was repeatedly denied registration in the case of *Kungorov v Uzbekistan*. Notably, the Committee decided that the onerous substantive and technical requirements under Uzbek law for NGO registration, without which an organisation cannot operate legally, amounted to a violation of the freedom of association.⁶⁶ This decision establishes a precedent in Uzbekistan, and more generally offers encouragement for activists seeking to overturn legislation in countries that simultaneously criminalises unregistered CSO activity while creating elaborate requirements for CSO registration.

In another important development, the UN Human Rights Committee issued a General Comment on the scope of article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantees freedom of opinion and expression. Through its extensive new commentary (General Comment No. 34) the Committee outlined clearly narrow parameters under

SNAPSHOT

Feliciano Reyna, Founder of Accion Solidaria, Venezuela, on Freedom of Association and Assembly within the Organisation of American States (OAS)

In a welcome development in 2011, the General Assembly of the OAS adopted a Resolution on the 'Promotion of the Rights to Freedom of Assembly and Association in the Americas' in support of civil society and recognising its legitimate role. The first resolution called for support to human rights defenders in carrying out their work by ensuring a free, transparent and open political environment. The second resolution pledged renewed commitment to foster the engagement of citizens, communities and civil society in the design and execution of development policies and programmes. This signaled a recognition of civil society's contribution to democracy and human rights, and a commitment to protect and promote the rights of citizens to participate in public life. However, increased attempts by some OAS members to undermine the work of the Inter-American Human Rights Mechanisms highlight the need to guarantee the effective, real and balanced participation of CSOs.

which the freedoms of opinion and expression may be restricted. The Committee also exhorted states to encourage an independent and diverse media and to ensure that public broadcasting services operate in an independent manner. This clear reaffirmation of the freedoms of expression and opinion constitutes a substantial advancement in international law.⁶⁷

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was also steadfast in its opposition to killings of pro-democracy protesters in Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Uganda.

With a focus on civil society space, the UN Human Rights Council appointed a Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association. In a positive development, Maina Kiai, a Kenyan activist-jurist with a long history of taking up human rights causes, was selected for the position. The mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders was also extended for another three years.

Additionally, UN Special Rapporteurs issued a number of joint statements against threats to civil society, outlining violations of international law. For instance, in the case of Belarus, where the National Assembly introduced legislative amendments criminalising public assemblies without explicit prior consent of the authorities and mandating sanctions for distributing 'propaganda' materials, among other restrictions, UN Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, Freedom of Expression and on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders issued a joint statement condemning the actions.⁶⁸

The African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, on receiving an application from the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights that grave violations of human rights were being committed against protesters by the then government in Libya, issued a provisional order to the government to "immediately refrain from any action that would result in loss of life or violation of physical integrity of persons, which could be a breach of the provisions of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights or of other international human rights instruments to which it is a party."⁶⁹ Although compliance with decisions remains a tricky issue, the forthright decision by the court in this case could be a harbinger of a more active role by the court in highlighting and safeguarding civil society space.

A new lifeline for embattled CSOs

A further positive development in 2011 was the launch of the Embattled NGO Assistance Fund. The fund will be administered by a consortium of CSOs around the world, is supported by 12 governments and has the express aim of promoting and protecting civil society freedoms. The impetus behind the fund's creation is to provide emergency assistance to CSOs working on governance issues in instances of heightened risk to themselves or in situations where the civil society in a country faces an onslaught on its ability to operate independently. Governments of Australia, Benin, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, the UK and the USA have agreed to support the fund. Members of the CSO consortium administering the fund include CIVICUS, Freedom House, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, FrontLine Defenders, the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, People in Need and the Swedish International Liberal Center.⁷⁰

"Without doubt, 2011 will be remembered in history as a watershed year for civil society."

LOOKING AHEAD

Without doubt, 2011 will be remembered in history as a watershed year for civil society. The power of citizen action demonstrated that it was indeed possible to triumph against well-entrenched forces.

In 2012, civil society remains at the centre of struggles against authoritarian rule, humiliation, the consequences of skewed economic policies, and environmental degradation. As governments



struggle to demonstrate their legitimacy, it is likely that further restrictions will be attempted on civil society activities to prevent exposure of wrongdoing. Turbulent times are not conducive to measured advances in civil society space or democratic freedoms.

To counter repression, civil society will have to rely on the tremendous amount of cross border solidarity and support that was witnessed in 2011. The internet and mobile and social media, which emerged powerfully as channels in 2011 to resist human rights violations and denials of space, will continue to be a key location in 2012 for civil society to communicate and organise against any impending attempts at restriction.

One major source of optimism is that civil society concerns were increasingly visible at the UN, most notably at the UN Human Rights Council. In 2012, civil society will have to seize this momentum and ensure that democratic countries stand and speak out loudly, clearly and in a sustained way in support of civil society rights. In the past this support has mainly come from Western democracies, but present times demand that other democracies add their voice too on this crucial issue.

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THE CHALLENGE OF RESOURCES:

CHANGING FUNDING PROSPECTS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Perspectives from CIVICUS' Civil Society Index project findings and consultations with CSOs



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A key question for CSOs is whether they have sufficient resources to respond to the connected crises the world faces, and how those crises are affecting their funding position. The Busan Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness has helped push the question of the financing of development, and of civil society as part of this, higher up the global agenda. However the civil society perspective on the funding they receive from donors is quite pessimistic. Donor support to CSOs seems to have levelled at best, and there is a greater tendency to channel support through CSOs for the implementation of donor projects rather than to projects initiated by CSOs themselves. There also seems to be growing influence of domestic political concerns on donor agendas. Many CSOs report declining funding, volatility and changing prioritisation of donors, and in response are giving more attention to fundraising and diversification of funding sources, particularly non-donor sources. Different types of CSOs in different locations report varying experiences and responses, and Northern development CSOs are seeing changing roles, suggesting part of the solution lies in the formation of new coalitions and support networks between different types of CSOs. Difficulties in analysis however remain due to the lack of availability of comparable and up to date data from donors, which the growth of the International Aid Transparency Initiative may help address, while a further information challenge lies in gathering data across the diversity of civil society. As well as this need to improve the transparency and regularity of funding information, the role of CSOs as development actors in their own right needs to be asserted, and post-Busan, progress is still lacking on guaranteeing an enabling environment for civil society.

INTRODUCTION

The connected current economic, political, social and environmental crises, and the crisis of inequality, are not only bringing more people into protest and altering the space and external environment for civil society, as we have seen in earlier sections of this report. They are also posing questions about the capacity and ability of organised civil society to confront these huge challenges.

A key question here is whether CSOs have sufficient resources to respond to these challenges, or whether one of the consequences of combined crises is to reduce the capacity and sustainability of CSOs, ironically at the very time when these crises mean they are most needed to respond.

“One of multiple challenges faced by CSOs, is the highly limited, and in some cases, decreasing financial resources.”

This section will address in particular the fundamental issue of the financial resourcing of CSOs, drawing from two key evidence sources: the data gathered in the 2008 to 2011 CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project, and an additional survey of CIVICUS members and civil society partners on specific funding issues carried out in 2011.¹ In addition, the annual CIVICUS World Assembly, held in Montreal, Canada, September 2011, provided a further valuable sounding board for capturing emerging civil society concerns, including on the resourcing of CSOs, from which this analysis also draws.

As mentioned previously in this report, and as set out in CIVICUS’ 2011 CSI summary report *Bridging the Gaps*,² one of multiple challenges facing CSOs is the highly limited, and in some cases, decreasing financial resource position of many CSOs.

The aim below is to investigate more this headline finding and explore whether disaggregated trends in civil society funding can be discerned, whether and to what extent CSOs are experiencing shrinking financial resources, and whether the future direction of travel can be predicted with any confidence. It also tries to identify some of the adaptation strategies of CSOs to new developments.



OVERVIEW: WHAT CONCERNS EMERGED IN 2011?

As detailed principally in this report's section on the key global civil society events of 2011, the resourcing of civil society and the larger questions of fostering an enabling environment for civil society and the effectiveness of development were prominent issues in major international processes in 2011, and in particular at the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4). Reports and other evidence that surfaced during the year suggest that overall progress made by key donors in meeting their commitments to increase and reform their aid policies and practices towards CSOs was uneven, and in some cases minimal.³

“The picture that emerged in relation to donor practices and policies, particularly following the financial crisis, remained rather gloomy.”

Even though there seems to have been a small increase in the share of ODA (Official Development Assistance) allocated by key donors to national and international CSOs (i.e. for CSO-initiated programmes) and through CSOs (i.e. for CSOs to implement donor-initiated programmes) over the last decade, from a 5.5% average in 2001 to a 6% average in 2009,⁴ the picture that emerged in relation to donor practices and policies, particularly following the financial crisis, remained rather gloomy. A key concern of the multi-stakeholder group working on CSO effectiveness ahead of the Busan forum was that many donors, under pressure to demonstrate development results, become more cost efficient and work more strategically, have applied restrictive funding approaches that could have a negative effect on CSOs' ability to be effective development actors.⁵

There were other more visible recent policy and political shifts amongst many donors following the start of the economic crisis that raised deep concerns for CSOs. Various studies and projections indicate that the global financial crisis is expected to reduce capital inflows to developing countries through negative impacts on foreign direct investment (FDI), ODA and receipt of remittances from diaspora populations.⁶ Western governments and foundations were increasingly pulled inward, focussing more on addressing domestic challenges, such as rising unemployment.

Commercial interests also seem to be increasingly shaping the funding priorities of many donor countries. In recent years, and more so since the start of the economic crisis, development aid is increasingly seen as a catalyst for mobilising private capital flows into developing countries.⁷ In Europe for example, the centre-right governments that predominate seem to be actively promoting business-centred approaches to development cooperation, including the EC's new approach to 'inclusive growth',⁸ and the OECD's focus on the private sector as a development actor in the aid effectiveness process.⁹ Major bilateral donors such as Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden are increasing their share of ODA set aside for public-private partnerships (PPPs) or for full implementation of programmes through private actors.¹⁰

Voters of many European donor countries, struggling to cope with high levels of debt and rising domestic unemployment, have been electing more right of centre governments or, in the case of Greece and Italy, having unelected technocratic governments imposed. This political shift in Europe can be expected to impact upon development financing, including for CSOs. There is a clear risk of rollback by governments from their political commitments of the early 2000s to increase ODA, while there is a danger it will become harder politically in donor countries experiencing austerity to argue for ODA in support of progressive causes and decouple this from the service of national interests such as job creation for home suppliers and domestic agendas on anti-terrorism and immigration control.

As witnessed from Afghanistan to Somalia, the securitisation and politicisation of aid remains a worrying tendency.¹¹ While CSOs are often called upon to perform significant roles during conflicts and crisis situations, as discussed in this report's section on civil society and crisis, several instances of the use of aid to serve security interests could be observed during the year. A heavy focus on bilateral aid from Western governments to countries of strategic



importance such as Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq and Pakistan can be observed, suggesting politicised aid policies and practices that undermine international commitments on effective and needs based aid policies.¹² The OECD list of the top ten country recipients of ODA during the last 10 years shows the rise of these countries up the table.¹³ The danger of such aid is that it attempts to instrumentalise civil society around this particular agenda, or bypasses CSOs to support agencies of state control.

Another civil society concern that emerged around donor funding in 2011 came in response to the year's most inspirational civil society news, the mass protests that toppled leaders and forced political concessions in the Arab Spring. Yet even before the dust of revolutions had settled, donors were rushing in, doubtless with the best of intentions but also, it could be said, in some understandable fear that not to be seen to be involved in North Africa was to risk appearing irrelevant. In countries such as Libya and Tunisia, where before the uprisings there was a denial of opportunity to establish and operate CSOs, many new CSOs have appeared in the new space that has become available and to respond to the new realities and social needs of the population. For example, initial mappings of the emergent Tunisian civil society landscape by UNDP suggest that 4,000 new CSOs have been formed since the Jasmine Revolution of January 2011.¹⁴

“The securitisation and politicisation of aid remains a worrying tendency.”

However, there are dangers in this sudden growth of CSOs. CIVICUS' CSI findings from former Eastern Bloc countries, where the previous great wave of civic revolutions happened in the 1990s, suggest that a sudden influx of donors can harm the long term sustainability of CSOs. Common issues across former such countries that participated in the CSI project, as reflected in many of this report's civil society profiles, include the importation of civil society models from other contexts which often: (i) failed to resonate with local methods and modes; (ii) did not take root and did not become sustainable; (iii) were too easily dismissed both by state and citizens as vehicles for the pursuit of foreign interests; (iv) did not develop high levels of public participation and trust; and (v) remained dependent on donor funding and thereby vulnerable to donor withdrawal. Avoiding a repeat of these mistakes is the challenge to donors newly entering the Middle East and North Africa.

This must particularly be a concern now, given the new forms of self-organisation, new people brought into activism and light and horizontal organisational forms enabled by social media, as set out in this report's section on protest and activism. These forms would be little served by taking on the institutional trappings and formalised internal structures of a standard CSO, which might however be expected to satisfy donor accountability requirements that come with funding. The circle to be squared for donors, as we will see below, is to be predictable and steady in their existing relationships, but flexible and respectful in response to new forms and movements.

CHALLENGES IN UNDERSTANDING FUNDING PATTERNS FOR CSOS

A major challenge in understanding civil society funding is the lack of standardised, disaggregated and timely data from many donors. While there have been improvements, it is difficult to obtain information on very recent patterns of funding, which in economically volatile times would be particularly desirable, and many donors do not adhere to a common standard to report their information, which makes it difficult to make comparisons. Donors may stress the need for accountability and transparency of civil society, but these aspirations are not always internalised.

Of the 24 members of the Organisation for Development Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), 15 have so far signed up to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), a multi-stakeholder initiative launched at the 2008 Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness with the aim of developing a common standard for the publication of aid information.¹⁵ IATI is clearly still a work in progress: the UK was the first to complete implementation, in January 2011, and in November 2011 Sweden was reported as the ninth donor to publish data in IATI's registry. The Busan process gave IATI some fresh momentum, and at the



time of writing some donors – Canada, USA – are listed as new signatories, but others – Norway, Spain – are posted as ‘awaiting response’.

Perhaps in time the IATI initiative will address the challenges which presently hinder analysis and the development of consensus, although how IATI could consistently cover donor flows to CSOs is yet to be determined.¹⁶ The same challenge of transparency also applies to philanthropic foundations and private and corporate institutions. The diversity and independence of such foundations are reflected in their varied reporting systems and the lack of disaggregated data they provide for civil society.

COMMENTARY

Aid transparency: A key issue in 2011

Karin Christiansen is the Founder and the Managing Director of Publish What You Fund,¹⁷ an organisation dedicated to campaigning for donors to disclose aid information regularly, promptly and in a standardised and accessible format. In 2011, she was named one of the ‘40 under 40’ global development leaders by Devex London. In her contribution she discusses advances in aid transparency in 2011.

Background

Aid transparency emerged as a major issue during 2011, and one with a number of implications for CSOs. Momentum around aid transparency culminated at the HLF4. Aid transparency was a hot topic during negotiations and in the final text of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.¹⁸ Transparency features as a ‘Shared Principle’ signed up to by even the newer donors such as China. There are also a series of specific clauses on aid transparency, including a commitment to implement a common standard for the publication of aid information by 2015. The focus on a common standard is an important one, as it is comparability that turns more information into better information, making data searchable, accessible and therefore useful.

During the Forum, the United States, Canada and a series of other donors also signed up to the IATI, strengthening its position as the common standard for the publication of aid information. The standard covers information from policy, allocations, spending, and audit and results, and includes very current information, making it the only systematic, timely information publication mechanism. By signing up, organisations commit to publishing information to the IATI Registry in a comparable format that is machine-readable. Post-Busan, 28 donor agencies are now signatories, representing collectively over three quarters of Official Development Finance (ODF).¹⁹ IATI has been a multi-stakeholder initiative from the outset, with 22 partner countries endorsing the need and usefulness of the standard and four CSOs on the IATI Steering Committee, as well as more active CSOs in the IATI Technical Advisory Group.

Despite these advances, recent research and monitoring work has highlighted a fundamental lack of aid transparency. The first Aid Transparency Index²⁰ was launched in November 2011, ranking organisations based on the amount of information they freely provide through the internet. The overall finding was that whilst some donors do well, all donors could do better. On average, just 34% of information surveyed was systematically available on donor websites. The Centre for Global Development’s Quality of ODA (QuODA) recent data release also highlighted that the ‘most positive change’²¹ has happened in the area of aid transparency, but that the improvements are ‘modest’ and need to be monitored over time. Recent work comparing the 2011 Aid Transparency Index with the 2011 QuODA Report also shows a strong correlation between aid effectiveness and aid transparency of donors²².

What might this mean for CSOs?

Greater aid transparency has potentially significant implications for CSOs both in their advocacy activities and funding. More real-time public information on donor spending means that CSOs are able to easily find out where donors are focussing their efforts. The ability to find funding sources both at the national (bilateral) and sectoral level is enhanced, as well as the ability to find out who else is funding at those levels.

In terms of advocacy, influencing donors' spending patterns in terms of volume, geographical regions, countries or sectors, is a challenge many of us grapple with. As so many CSOs working on the Middle East as the Arab Spring unfolded can vouch, it is simply not proving effective to advocate on what donors should be doing differently when you cannot work out how money is being spent.

As donors have pressure put on them to be more transparent, there will of course be more demand for CSOs to do so to. However, CSOs already tend to be much more transparent than businesses of the same size, if only because domestic charity legislation often demands it. Also, in June 2011, in the lead up to the HLF4, at the Second Global Assembly in Siem Reap, the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness was collectively adopted, in which CSOs committed to greater transparency and accountability.²³

There are of course important concerns that information that could potentially cause harm should not be disclosed. CSOs working in sensitive areas such as human rights or on issues that trigger repressive behaviour by governments have particular concerns, which require the development of procedures to ensure that aid transparency does not further expose these organisations to clampdown by their governments.

There is also a major opportunity in this area of financial and reporting transparency that CSOs could exploit. A common CSO reporting standard would massively reduce the amount of time currently spent producing time-consuming, costly and duplicative reporting by CSOs. IATI could serve as a central database for donors to see CSO financial information in a comparable format, rather than asking CSOs to report separately to each organisation that funds them. The challenge is to turn this potential into reality.

Of the 24 OECD DAC members, 21 have some kind of policy or strategy for working with CSOs, which are quite varied.²⁴ 19 of the 24 have some kind of multi-year partnership funding or core support available or have framework agreements, usually with national level CSOs. But some donors provide no information on their support to civil society at all.²⁵

With these caveats, it can be said that in 2009, the most recent year for which data is available, of ODA provided to and through CSOs, around one third could be classed as support to CSOs and two thirds as support through CSOs. The difference between these two can be a crucial one from the point of view of civil society independence, and it would seem that the balance has shifted from funding to CSOs to funding through CSOs. The level of support to CSOs was the same, US\$2.7bn, in 2009 as it was in 2001, while support through CSOs rose from US\$2bn in 2001 to US\$6.3bn in 2009.²⁶

The picture is also one of wide variation between donors: for example, according to the 2009 data, the range was from 1% of French ODA channelled to and through CSOs to 37% of ODA from Ireland.²⁷ Further, if data from 2008 to 2009 are set side by side, no clear pattern emerges, with some donors showing large rises and falls in support to and through CSOs from one year to the next.²⁸ This hints at volatility, which is challenging on the level of the civil society arena as a whole, even when individual CSOs enjoy regular funding relationships.

“The difference between aid to and through CSOs can be a crucial one from the point of view of civil society independence.”

Also rising up the political agenda are the ‘emerging donors’, i.e. donors from outside the classic European and North American countries of the global North, such as donors from the BRICs countries and the oil-rich Gulf states of the Middle East. South Korea is the only one of the donors which have started to give aid in recent years to have also joined the OECD DAC, in 2010. No new donor is a signatory to IATI.

Here, the challenge for analysis is the fact that data from such new donors is less available than that of DAC members, with a lack of disaggregated data. A recent study suggests that ODA from non-DAC members more than doubled between 2005 and 2009, with the Gulf donors of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates contributing almost half of the total amount from new donors. These donors give much more of their support to public sector institutions compared to DAC members,



and relatively little to civil society.²⁹ An assessment of published reports from new donors seems to show *prima facie* preference for large scale and prestige infrastructure projects, and direct support to governments, and little interest in CSOs. This could perhaps stem from a history in many of the new donor countries of top down development with minimal CSO participation in their own contexts, and indeed practices of the denial of civil society space domestically, which are hardly likely to nurture progressive attitudes towards civil society elsewhere.

The recently published 2011 Humanitarian Response Index groups donors into three distinct clusters, suggesting an alternate model of understanding and engaging with donor approaches to ODA: ‘principled partners’, which tend to be flexible in the way they support CSOs, mostly consisting of donors from smaller countries which are not seeking to advance strategic or military interests; ‘learning leaders’, which have size that enables them to influence the development agenda, but which also have less flexibility and more tendency to assert their national interests; and the ‘aspiring actors’, made up of smaller donors, many struggling in the face of domestic budget problems and lacking experience, but good at specialising.³⁰

Beyond a focus on ODA, so far no substantive study has been carried out to understand CSO funding patterns globally, partly due to the lack of data about aid and financial flows, but also partly because of the complex reality of civil society itself. In keeping with CIVICUS’ working definition of civil society, civil society needs to be understood not as a sector or a particular organisational type, but as a dynamic and changing arena that combines diverse people, structures, organisational forms, identities, motivations, interests, scopes of action, combinations and relationships. Civil society goes beyond formally organised structures; it encompasses multiple methods of informal participation, for example, in the shape of mutual aid societies, traditional self-help groups, faith-based groupings, community voluntary action and individual activism.

As such, the data below will have some areas of omission and likely biases that need to be acknowledged. Secondary data which has been drawn on for analysis is largely the available, time-lagged data on ODA. In using this data, it is also necessary to acknowledge that civil society encompasses more than groupings that address development, and the sources of funding for civil society cover more than that addressed to development issues, but consistent and comparable global data beyond these parameters is not available. Second, for the data drawn from the CIVICUS CSI project, while the CSI process aims to enable national partners and national advisory structures to convene and consult as broad a spectrum of civil society as possible, to encompass the informal, traditional and social forms of civil society, as well as the more organised and more visible, in terms of quantitative data in particular, this offers some challenges. A bias towards consulting the more organised forms of civil society through such actions as surveys, focus groups and workshops can be expected. It is particularly difficult to assess those aspects of civil society which, because they are informal and largely associational in nature, do not publish accounts or do not make public appeals for support.

CURRENT CIVIL SOCIETY FUNDING CONCERNS

An analysis of the content of the 30 CSI Analytical Country Reports published by CIVICUS in 2011 shows that the following challenges and concerns particularly emerge, as highlighted further in this report’s 30 civil society profiles:

- perceived visible recent decline in civil society support (Chile, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Philippines, Venezuela);
- a heavy reliance on external donors (Armenia, Georgia, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Madagascar, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia);
- a high dependency on domestic government support (Argentina, Chile, Japan, Uruguay);
- perception of donor withdrawal (Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Mexico, Nicaragua, Philippines);

- domestic government support limited to a small circle of CSOs (Armenia, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Russia, Turkey);
- a tendency to shift towards larger grants being given to a smaller number of CSOs (Chile, Georgia, Senegal);
- onerous funding application and reporting procedures, from external institutions or domestic agencies (Albania, Croatia, Kosovo, Mexico);
- project-based rather than longer term funding (Armenia, Kosovo, Liberia, Slovenia, Turkey);
- distortion of CSO priorities and agendas by donor conditions and priorities (Albania, Georgia, Kosovo, Morocco, Rwanda, Turkey, Zambia);
- funding competition making CSO cooperation more difficult (Chile, Slovenia, Zambia);
- funding privileging capital city rather than rural CSOs (Georgia, Uruguay);
- limited private sector giving and corporate social responsibility (Cyprus, Georgia, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Liberia, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Turkey, Uruguay);
- limited individual giving (Albania, Japan);
- an unsupportive taxation regime for CSO financing and individual giving (Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Cyprus, Guinea, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Macedonia, Mexico, Senegal, Slovenia, Tanzania, Turkey).

A total of 60% of CSOs consulted by CIVICUS in 2011 reported constraints in accessing funding before 2008, and this situation worsened after 2009, and especially during 2010 to 2011. Many responded that they have experienced a reduction in their income compared to their budget expectations for 2011. Most of these declare that limited funding is being reflected in programmatic shifts, a reduced number of projects and areas of intervention, and retrenchment and reduced pay for staff.

“ Limited funding is being reflected in programmatic shifts, a reduced number of projects and areas of intervention, retrenchment and reduced pay for staff.”

Looking at the data gathered through the CSI process, the financial situation in 2011 seems to have worsened, with more organisations reporting a reduced financial base. In data gathered during the period 2008 to 2010, 30% of CSOs reported that revenues had decreased when comparing one year to the next, compared to 40% that reported they had increased and 30% that they had stayed the same. This

might suggest a balanced picture, but it is outweighed by the fact that 55% reported increased expenditures over the same period, with 28% unchanged and only 17% with expenditure decreased, suggesting that for many organisations expenditure was rising faster than the income available.

In the consultations carried out by CIVICUS in 2011, 96% of consulted CSOs considered that their main vulnerability is to external factors, with the main concerns here being the global economic crisis affecting international donors and foundations, the misapplication of aid effectiveness principles to restrict CSO access to resources (as discussed further in this report’s section on key civil society global events in 2011), donors’ programmatic shifts and reduced interest in working with intermediary organisations.

In addition, national or internal factors were also identified by 87%; these include political uncertainty in CSOs’ home countries, lack of trust and civic support, and governmental restrictions on receiving international funding, particularly for those working on advocacy and human rights issues, as discussed in this report’s section on civil society space.

“97% of CSOs have experienced a change in their relationship with their financial supporters during the period of economic crisis.”

Other issues identified were limited human resources, lack of capacity to diversify sources of funding due to new donor requirements, organisational difficulties provoked by retrenchment processes, corruption, and poor organisational management.

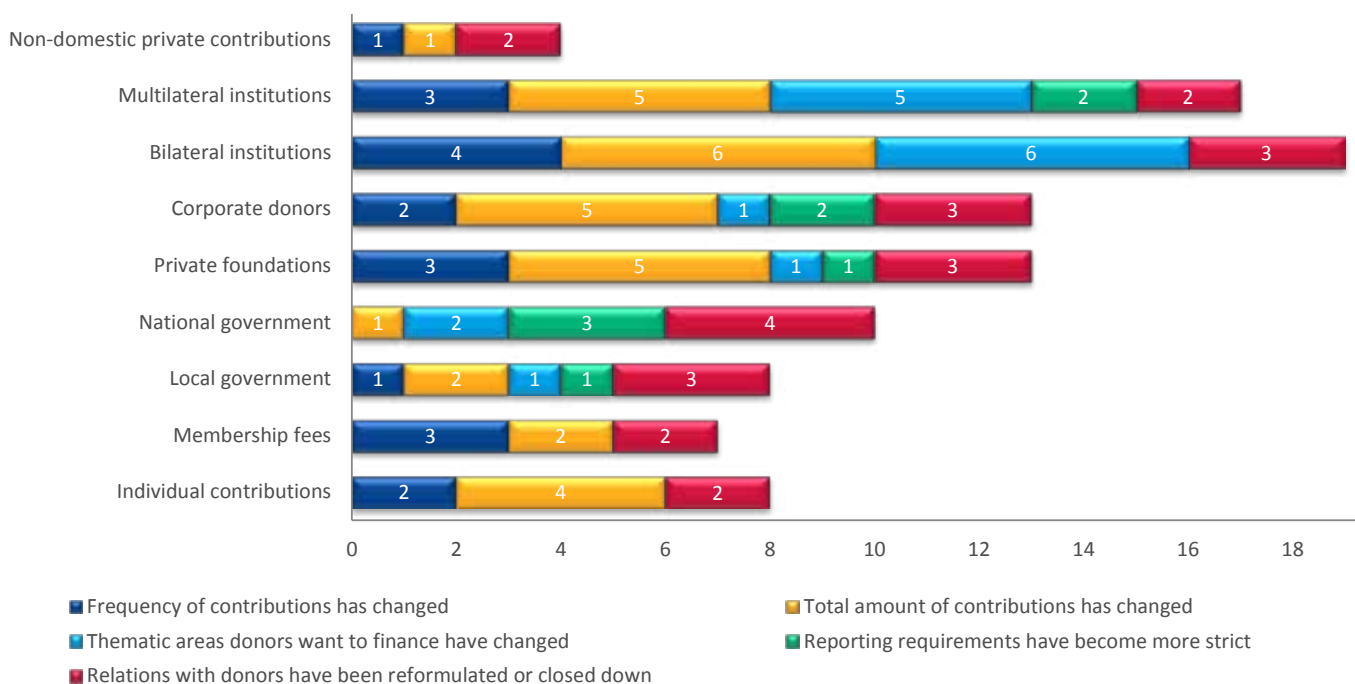


HOW HAS THE FUNDING REALITY CHANGED IN THE LAST TWO YEARS?

CIVICUS' 2011 consultation with CSOs shows that 97% have experienced a change in their relationship with their financial supporters during the period of economic crisis. The picture is therefore one of volatility and unpredictability.

The table below shows that, overall, the main change with multilateral donors is in the amount of contributions received by CSOs compared to the previous year, followed by changes in thematic areas of focus that donors wish to finance. Other changes are a reduction in the frequency of contributions, and stricter reporting requirements. There are similar patterns concerning funding received from bilateral institutions.

Recent changes in CSO funding sources



Source: CIVICUS consultation on funding patterns, 2011

Although, as discussed further below, the amount of funding received is less significant, CSOs perceive that corporate donors and private foundations also seem to have reduced the regularity and total amount of their contributions and reformulated funding agreements.

Contributions from domestic central and local governments seem to offer similar challenges, as there are reported to be a larger percentage of closures of projects and reformulations, followed by stricter reporting systems and reductions in contributions. Individual contributions and membership fees have also been affected, with reductions and unexpected changes in their regularity.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN SOURCES AND MODES OF CIVIL SOCIETY FUNDING?

Turning further to the question of the different sources of funding for CSOs, the table below shows that CSOs that rely mainly on one source of funding depend mostly on donors (57% of their budgets come from donor contributions), followed by membership fees (31%), service fees (28%), private foundations (23%), corporate donors and individual contributions (both 20%), government funding (14%) and non-domestic private contributions (3%).

For those CSOs that have more diversified sources of funding, membership fees are their main financial source, followed by bilateral donors and private foundations.

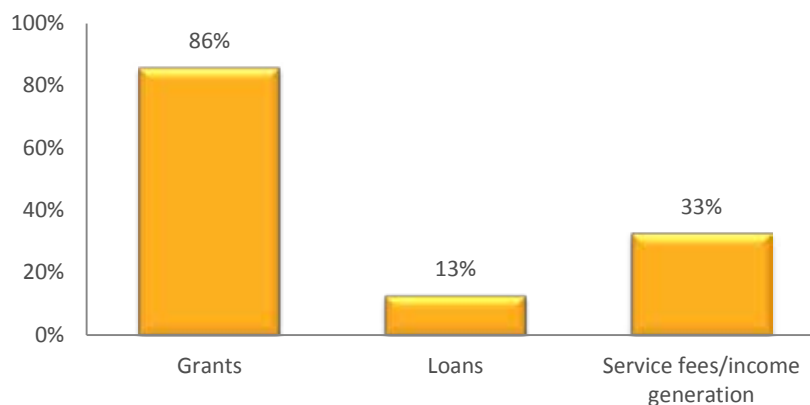
Type of funding sources for CSOs relying mostly on one donor

Sources of funding	Response
International institutions	57.1%
Membership fees	31.4%
Service fees/sales	28.6%
Private foundations	22.9%
Corporate donors	20.0%
Individual contributions	20.0%
Others	20.0%
Governmental contributions	14.3%
Non-domestic private contributions	2.9%

Source: CIVICUS CSI project 2008-2011

As shown in the table below, grants seem to be the main type of financial support, received by 86% of consulted CSOs; 33% also receive service fees and internally generated revenues and only 13% have loans. The average duration of funding received by CSOs seems to have experienced a shift towards longer-term commitments of more than a year's duration (60% of respondents) compared to the more short-term project-oriented support typical of the 1990s.

Main modes of financial support



Source: CIVICUS CSI project 2008-2011

Many respondents in the CIVICUS 2011 consultation receive funding through intermediary organisations such as INGOs (50% of respondents), umbrella organisations and UN country offices (27% each), the European Commission (20%), private organisations (17%) and governments (13%). Only 7% of consulted CSOs declared that they do not work with international organisations or intermediaries to receive funding.

The findings suggest heavy vulnerability for those CSOs that have been relying mostly on long-term non-domestic funding to any cuts in contributions from donors. Formally organised NGOs seem to be the ones most vulnerable to funding cuts, given their greater lack of diversified funding sources, particularly in developing countries, in which challenges of securing sufficient funding were often experienced even before the current economic crisis.

Further, while the quantitative data indicates some positive shifts towards longer term funding, many of the CSI country reports contain critiques of the continuing project-oriented, fixed-term



nature of much funding, and the lack of resources this implies for organisational development and core capacity, which makes it difficult for CSOs to build sustainable staff and organisational bases. This is one of the factors that make many CSOs vulnerable to high staff turnover, a challenge identified in the CSI research, in which only 19% of all CSOs consulted assessed themselves as having a sustainable staff base. One of the risks in high staff turnover is to the continuity and quality of operations. Analysis of the CSI data finds that one of the key indicators that correlates with CSO impact in advocacy is the sustainability of CSO human resources, suggesting that the retention of staff over time to build up expertise and key relationships required for successful advocacy.³¹

LEVELS OF DEPENDENCY ON DIFFERENT SOURCES OF FUNDING

The picture is of course not uniform across the wide spectrum of CSOs, as different types of CSOs display different funding patterns, and so have different levels of dependency and risk. The CSI research tells us that the CSO types that depend mainly on domestic funding are youth groups (25% of their budget), health groups and social service associations (18%), and cultural groups and associations (17%).

Dependency on membership fees is seen particularly in trade unions (75%) and small business associations (67%). Membership fees also make up a significant part of the budgets of cooperatives and credit and savings groups (31%), farmers' and fishers' groups (31%), neighbourhood committees (31%) and community groups (17%).

Those most reliant on international donors (bilateral and multilateral) are NGOs, human rights and advocacy groups (45%), women's groups (35%), and environmental associations (29%).

Service fees do not represent a large source of revenue for most groups, except for cooperatives and credit or savings groups, and farmers' and fishers' groups (both 30%).

Private donations are the main source of funding for political groups, movements or parties (35%), followed by religious or spiritual groups (29%). With regard to sports associations, private donations represent 18% of their funding, but only after membership fees (22%) and governmental funding (21%), while private donations provide 15% of the funding base of cultural groups and associations.

Corporate funding and foundations do not, in this analysis, represent a large proportion of the financial support of any specific group, although these sources direct their funding mainly towards service delivery organisations, youth groups and cultural and education groups.

Another factor to consider in assessing risk and exposure is the reliability or predictability of different sources of funding, i.e. the sources that CSOs can most count on to stand up from one year to the next. More than half of CSOs consulted by CIVICUS in 2011 state that membership fees are their most reliable source, followed by international donors and private foundations; the least reliable are individual and domestic governmental contributions.

However, when asked about the importance of these contributions for the sustainability of their organisations, international donors are placed first, followed by membership fees and then private foundations; assessed as the least important to sustainability are domestic governmental contributions and individual contributions.

This suggests trade offs between dependence, importance and predictability of funding, and hints at an ideal funding portfolio for CSOs: one that contains a mix of important sources and predictable sources.

“The least reliable sources of funding are individual and domestic governmental contributions.”

WHAT ARE THE REGIONAL PATTERNS?

Some regional patterns can also be discerned. Attending to the CSI data, CSOs in Sub-Saharan Africa have international institutions as their major source of funding, contributing an average of 51% of their budgets. Other important contributors to their budgets are membership fees (27%), service fees (17%) and individual contributions (15%). Domestic governments and the private sector do not seem important here.

CSOs in the former Soviet Union and CIS countries show a similar pattern, with international institutions as their most important source of funding (43%), followed by membership fees (25%), but here private donations (17%) are also important.

CSOs in European Union member and candidate countries also show a primacy of international institutions, but these are lower, at 29% of their budgets, followed by an equal level of government support and membership fees (22% each).

In East and South East Asia, CSOs show a different funding mix, receiving more resources from membership fees (33%) and service fees (20%), followed by private donations (14%) and governments (12%).

This is similar to the Middle East and North Africa, where membership fees also represent the main source of financial support (18%), followed by private donations (12%). It is important to note that this data was largely collected before the Arab Spring; there will be a need to monitor what changes may stem from donors' renewed interest in the region.

Latin America shows another distinct pattern; international donors are only the third most important source of funding (11%), after government contributions (21%) and private donors (18%).

Corporate funding does not feature as a major source of funding for CSOs in any region, representing an average of 6% of CSOs' budgets. Also noteworthy is the low level of support from domestic governments to CSOs in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa.

“Developing country CSOs depend for over 80% of their budgets on the contributions of international institutions, with bilateral donors being the principal source of income.”

Aggregating the developing countries from different regions shows that developing country CSOs depend for over 80% of their budgets on the contributions of international institutions, with bilateral donors being the principal source of income. In developed countries, individual contributions, corporate donations and government funds constitute the main part of CSOs' funding base.

As suggested earlier, there are regions in particular in which CSOs have been heavily supported by international donors to be involved more fully in the public sphere in attempts to redress governance

deficits. Such was the case in many Eastern European countries while undergoing the post-communism transition processes, and in many cases while moving towards European Union accession, or in countries undertaking reconciliation and reconstruction processes after conflicts and disasters. Once the driving motives of international support fade, or a country clears all the hurdles of becoming an EU member - at which point other donors tend to withdraw in favour of European funding, which brings challenges of bureaucracy and scale, with EU grants processes being too unwieldy and grant sizes too large for many smaller organisations to access - many CSOs find themselves lacking a broad portfolio of support.

Some of this report's civil society profiles, as highlighted above, give examples of such occurrences. Further, in Bulgaria, as in





several other countries in the Balkans, the 2010 NGO Sustainability Index 2010³² reflects that since 2009 CSOs in general have seen an overall deterioration of their sustainability, in part because the EU's Civil Society Facility did not issue tenders for two consecutive years and most structural funds were given to central and local governments, meaning that CSOs with mandates not considered to be in line with those of governments were unable to access funding.

Related issues here, as seen in several CSI partner countries, include the concern that larger and more established CSOs are more easily able to benefit from bilateral and multilateral donor funding, and that if anything there is a tendency towards giving larger grants to a smaller range of CSOs, thereby privileging larger, more established CSOs, and excluding newer, smaller or less obvious CSOs, or those based outside capital cities. This coincides oddly with the protest events of 2011 stretching our perceptions of what civil society is and how it works. Accompanying this is concern about the heavy influence of donors in shaping the priority areas on which CSOs work.

A further concern raised in several of the civil society profiles of this report is that domestic government funding empowers a small inner circle of CSOs, often through a social contracting or public bidding approach, which implies an element of compliance and self-censorship in return for continued funding, and fosters competition for resources between CSOs.

ARE THERE DIFFERENCES EXPERIENCES FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF CSOs?

In looking at organisational type and focus, the CSI research suggests that politically-oriented CSOs - those engaged in campaigning, advocacy, human rights work and policy level work – are the ones most highly dependent on donors and governments' funding, and as such are most exposed to any reductions in donor support.

Taken with the analysis set out in this report's sections on civil society space and protest, this suggests that campaigning CSOs, particularly in flawed democracies and repressive regimes, face a potential double bind: their international funding is becoming more precarious, at the same time that in many countries, governments are responding to the economic crisis and the protest this unlocks by becoming less tolerant of dissent and more inclined to repress civil society space. For example, political rights are becoming more contested in Venezuela, as the civil society profile in this report shows – yet more than half of Venezuelan CSOs surveyed saw their income reduce from one year to the next.

“Politically-oriented CSOs are the most exposed to any reductions in donor support.”

The changing prioritisation of donors identified earlier also seems to be reflected in a reduction in support to the delivery of basic services, if a close analysis is made of published data on amounts of aid per sector.³³ This can be assumed to be having greatest impact on formalised NGOs in developing countries, particularly those without a diversified financial base that are dependent on either bilateral or multilateral donors as one of their main sources of funding.

This also serves as a reminder of the need to take a disaggregated approach to civil society in understanding this area, as in any other. Faith-based organisations, for example, are unlikely to be facing the same resource challenges as NGOs working on policy issues, because of the more deep-rooted and enduring nature of individual faith-based giving. The same will apply to those CSOs with regular and substantial contributions from their members, such as some professional associations.

Essentially, it could be argued that those structures that are social, whether formal or informal, which have a broad and habitual membership, including membership on the basis of identity or a sense of belonging, are more likely to have a more stable financial base than those which relate to people more as beneficiaries or as clients of their services.

This also suggests that in looking for funding sources likely to be less vulnerable to crises and changes in fashion, there is a need to see what can be learned from the resource mobilisation

strategies of community-based organisations, such as self-help groups, or those that encourage small, regular and personal interest-oriented contributions, such as the susu clubs of Liberia or women's traditional sou sou banking in Nigeria, and those based on culturally and religiously-rooted constructions of responsibility, such as the longstanding traditions of al waqf endowments in many Islamic societies.³⁴ The longevity of such structures suggests sustainability.

And it further suggests that part of the response lies in the formation of new kinds of networks – not the networks of similar types of organisations or of CSOs working on similar issues, which the CSI research tells us are mostly common and strong - but rather the networks that are largely lacking: those comprised of different actors with different shapes and different strengths and weaknesses.

CHANGING ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS OF NORTHERN CSOs?

Changing funding patterns and geopolitical power shifts also imply changes in the roles of Northern and Southern CSOs and the ways in which they work together. Northern-based CSOs have traditionally had higher expectations of sustainability, partly because they have acted as conduits for development funding to flow from Northern governments to the South, but there seems to be some evidence that they are beginning to be bypassed by donors as part of a trend to fund Southern CSOs directly, for example by donors from EU, Germany, Ireland and the UK.³⁵

In addition, there is evidence that Northern CSOs traditionally supported as development partners by their governments are being subjected to closer scrutiny on their impact and effectiveness as a modality for channelling aid to the South, as was the case in the Netherlands in 2011.³⁶

“Northern CSOs traditionally supported as development partners by their governments are being subjected to closer scrutiny on their impact and effectiveness.”

Further, Northern donors are beginning to offer pooled funding approaches to directly contract work with Southern partners, examples of which include the basket funding approach to the Common Fund for Civil Society Support for Democratic Governance in Nicaragua, supported by Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland³⁷ and the Malawi Civil Society Governance Fund (Tilitonse) supported by Ireland, Norway, UK and the EU, announced in 2011.³⁸

These new ways of providing aid invite INGOs and Northern CSOs to redefine their scope of action and ways of working. If this trend grows it will surely have implications for their future roles in the development agenda, the distribution of funding and the power dynamics between Northern and Southern CSOs. New kinds of partnerships – and partnerships that are genuinely equal and that involve the real exchange of resources and power – should result.

One further response lies in what may be an emerging trend to track in the coming years, of geographical relocation of the offices and hubs of Northern CSOs and INGOs to the South, and indeed some merging with and rebranding of Southern CSOs by Northern CSOs and INGOs. While such moves may emanate from motives of transferring more ownership of Northern CSOs and of development to the global South, it also enables compliance with shifting donor priorities and access to different sources of funding. This is something to watch.

ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

As has been observed above, the CSO funding landscape is characterised by unpredictability and volatility, lack of funds for capacity development and organisational strengthening, limited support to long-term strategies and planning and declining support from a range of sources in the wake of the economic crisis.

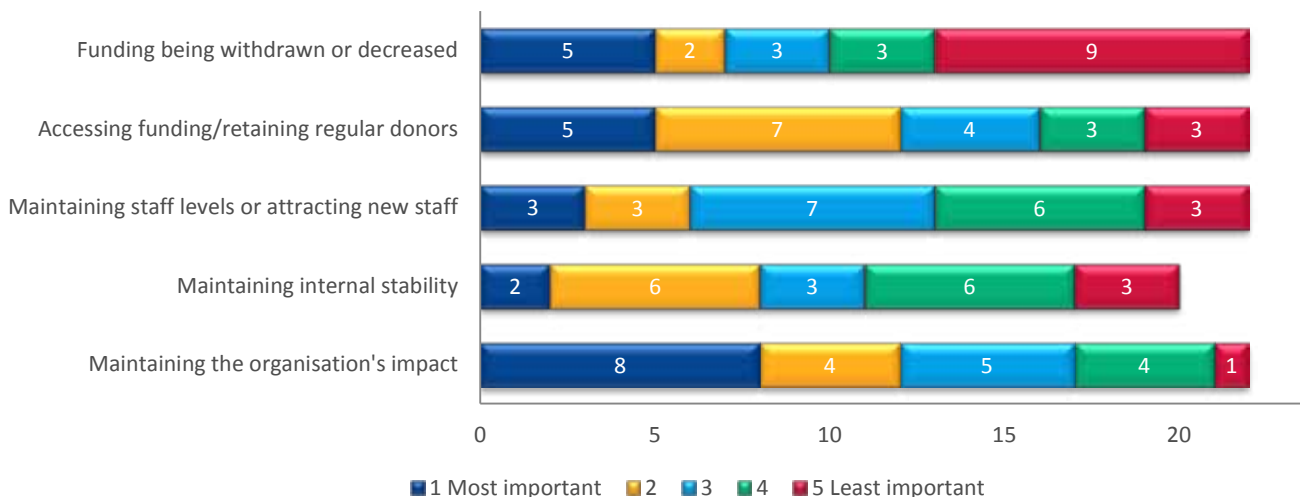
For most CSOs consulted, financial sustainability implies the availability of long-term programmatic funding, and a shift away from project-based support, which implies trying to influence funding bodies, mechanisms and policies to move more in this direction. In addition, many CSOs are trying



to move away from dependence on one or two funders. CSOs are adopting diverse strategies of survival that include shifts in programmatic and funding patterns, and strategies for stronger accountability and demonstration of impact.³⁹

In CIVICUS' consultation on funding patterns, CSOs responded that their main priorities in adapting to changing funding realities are, first, to maintain staff levels or attract staff in new ways, such as through volunteers; second, to maintain the internal stability of their organisation; third, to access new funding and find ways of retaining regular donors; and fourth, to maintain their organisation's impact and overall accountability mechanisms.

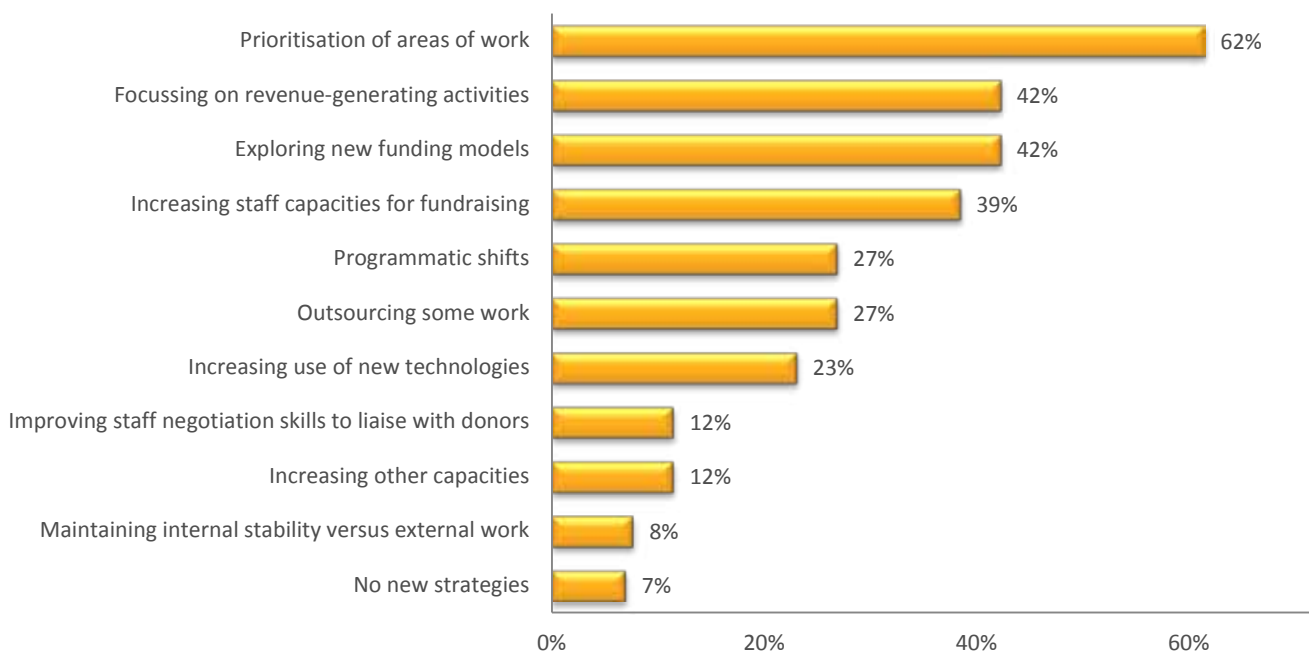
Main priorities and concerns of CSOs for the next few years



Source: CIVICUS consultation on funding patterns, 2011

Based on these concerns, CSOs have been adopting diverse mechanisms to cope with shrinking and unpredictable funding. As shown in the table below, most of the consulted CSOs (62%) opted for prioritising their work and becoming more specialised in order to be able to maximise the value of their funding. This specialisation can often be connected to the programmatic changes and greater prioritisation of areas of focus by donors.

Main strategies adopted to cope with funding challenges



Source: CIVICUS consultation on funding patterns, 2011

A move towards more revenue-generating activities, previously resisted by many CSOs due to concerns about for-profit connotations blurring lines with the private sector, appears to be one of the main strategies, adopted by 42% of consulted CSOs. Embracing and promoting this change of orientation implies a shift from traditional approaches to fundraising to new strategies such as using social media, developing social enterprises, targeting specific groups for giving, such as diaspora populations and creating civic-private partnerships at the local and national level.⁴⁰

Diaspora populations, for example, have in recent years finally become recognised as important in development. Remittances, while hard to estimate, are usually considered the second largest financial flow to developing countries after private capital flows.⁴¹ The Index of Global Philanthropy and Remittances assesses that in 2009, the total of remittances coming from DAC countries was 45% higher than total ODA; that same year, total world remittances to developing countries reached US\$307bn, and they were predicted to rise by 8% by 2012. In many Southern countries remittances are becoming the critical factor in sustaining communities and families, and on some occasions these adopt collective forms in which organised groups gather donations from members to finance community investments.

In recent years, the World Bank has been increasingly vocal in its campaign to institute diaspora bonds in developing countries, which would be issued by governments to diaspora populations to raise financing for development initiatives.⁴² However, fears of economic and political instability, as well as low levels of trust in particular state regimes, may be seen as barriers to investment by diasporas.

The challenge for CSOs in the South is how a wider range of organisations can benefit more from diaspora flows, which have been squeezed by economic downturn in countries in which diaspora communities live, and which often go along family, faith or local community lines. There is also a broader question of the extent to which flows of funding closely linked to identity belongings and groups can also reinforce narrow identity politics and serve uncivil causes.

“In 2009, the total of remittances coming from DAC countries was 45% higher than total ODA.”

The use of new technologies and internet and mobile media as methods to find alternative funding have been absorbed as a regular practice in 23% of CSOs consulted by CIVICUS. As discussed in this report’s section on protest and activism, the internet, mobile and social media open up potential for new forms of organisation, civic engagement and outreach. From the CSI research, Bulgaria offers a good example of how such technologies are also offering new fundraising tools, with the growth in recent years of text message-based fundraising, which stood at 6% of all public donations on recent figures, and rising. The research found that people not only saw donating through sending a text message as a valid form of participation, but they preferred it to other forms of participation in fundraising or charity. This in turn has

generated new challenges of accountability and transparency, and concerns relating to the taxation regime for text message-based donations.⁴³ Further, the diminishing but still real digital divide, along with the limited financial, human and time resources CSOs are able to invest in the time-consuming management of social and mobile media should caution us against seeing new media as a panacea.

High importance is also given by CSOs surveyed to the exploration of new funding sources and mechanisms such as crowdsourcing, a model by which a large group of people each donate a small amount of skills, ideas, time or finances. Crowdsourcing, usually through pledging websites, is being used more by individuals and small enterprises, often social enterprises and the creative industries, to generate support for an interest in an innovative product or project at launch stage, a model which could be





applicable more to CSOs. Crowdsourcing also helps facilitate trust and nurture a sense of community between individuals who share common interests in areas such as disaster and crisis response, political and advocacy campaigns and support for artists. In 2011, CSOs were doubtless also curious about the resourcing models of new movement such as Occupy, as discussed in this report's section on protest and activism.

In addition, CSOs looking for new sources of funding report that they are approaching alternative donors to bilateral and multilateral institutions, such as corporations, foundations and local authorities in the North.

However, internal capacities seem to be a problem for many CSOs when it comes to fundraising, and in response 39% of those consulted report they are investing in increasing their fundraising capacity. The improvement of other internal capacities is also being prioritised as a way of improving performance and demonstrating better results.

The consultation suggests that numerous CSOs are also adopting programmatic shifts and even outsourcing some areas of work, such as back office functions or research, to civil society partners. CSO platforms and networks are in addition seen as important in offering CSOs access to sources of funding and technical support from peers, and networks are often perceived by donors as more representative and legitimate voices than single CSOs, particularly in countries without a strong organised civil society sector amidst political constraints. Donors often prioritise network support or mandate the use of networks as part of the conditions of their funding, although the CSI findings also throw up concerns, reflected in several of the civil society profiles of this report, about competition between networks and individual CSOs, the tendency of networks to stay within sectoral silos, the need to preserve and promote the diversity of civil society as a key asset, and a high likelihood of networks themselves to depend on donor funding.

WHICH WAY IS THE FUTURE OF FUNDING?

As the above, and other sections of this report have shown, there are many elements that are converging to shape a complex environment for civil society. Within this, the unpredictable reality of funding is a common problem that many CSOs face.

Overall, many CSOs of different types have experienced shortages of funding in recent years. But there are different trends for different types of organisation and in different regions, and distinctions include those between Northern and Southern CSOs, socially and politically-oriented organisations, and organisational types such as trade unions and faith-based and community-based groups.

“The unpredictable reality of funding is a common problem that many CSOs face.”

The difficulty of mapping the complexity of civic spaces, especially in Southern countries, together with the lack of data about the nature of CSOs and interrelations between them in many contexts, particularly in repressive countries with sudden shifts in their political and economic climates, suggests that donors and INGOs should prioritise support for the development of rigorous and consistent tools that can allow us to better understand and strengthen the emergence of diverse forms of civic action. There is also a need to research trends in ODA in the coming years: for example, to analyse the data from 2010 and 2011 once this is eventually made available, to fully understand the impact of the economic crisis on funding patterns and trends.

Many CSOs in the North, and particularly in the South, are facing an era of heightened unpredictability and vulnerability that threatens their efficacy and existence. The question of how and indeed whether it is possible for CSOs to move on from donor-driven strategies to self-generated funds will remain an enduring, perhaps perennial one.

As a follow up to this initial analysis, CIVICUS suggests that it would be helpful to focus future analysis and actions on three specific areas. The first, as this report's sections on civil society space

and the key civil society global events of 2011 suggest, is to follow up on 2011's emphasis on development effectiveness to ensure that the understanding of CSOs as development actors in their own right is operationalised through actions to enhance an enabling environment for CSOs, and to assert the right of CSOs to act independently of their national governments. In terms of funding, a particular aspect of the enabling environment that emerges as needing particular attention, in the view of CSOs in many countries that participated in the CSI project, is the taxation regime for CSO financing and individual giving.

A second suggested area for further analysis and support is of strategies that promote innovation, growth and capacity development within CSOs, including perhaps by such means as promoting peer support and peer exchange networks amongst CSO personnel, improving information sharing channels and platforms for unusual collaborations, and enhancing understanding of underexplored aspects of funding such as those enabled by social and mobile media, social enterprises and traditional and community-based techniques.

The third suggested area for follow up is to focus on addressing some of the challenges of current donor approaches, such as unpredictability and volatility of funding, the difficulties for smaller and more local CSOs in accessing funding, and the quality of disaggregated and timely data on support to civil society as part of overall reporting on funding.

The future of CSO funding will inextricably be linked in the next few years with broader debates on development effectiveness, the changing roles of civil society and the new movements which became visible in 2011, and changing global politics and power relationships. In this context, the civil societies of the North and South need to make themselves co-responsible in the definition of local and global agendas that address the critical challenges of financing, accountability and partnerships for development.

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 6. See for example: After the fall: a New Deal is imperative, Social Watch, 2010. The text is available at <<http://www.socialwatch.org/node/12043>>; The global financial crisis and developing countries: synthesis of the findings of 10 country case studies, Overseas Development Institute, June 2009. The text is available at <<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/4468.pdf>>; Report and Recommendations of the Ad-Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Financing for Development and Fiscal Policy in Africa, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and Economic Community of West African States, 2009. The text is available at <http://www.uneca.org/trid/financing/reports/ECA_F4DFiscalPolicy_Report.pdf>.
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CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE GLOBAL ARENA:

**HIGHLIGHTS AND LESSONS FROM KEY
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS IN 2011**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The existing institutions of global governance have been found wanting in mounting a people-centred rather than private sector-focused response to the current global economic, social, political and environmental crises. Too often in the key multilateral meetings and processes the narrow national interests of states prevail. 2011 saw a mixed range of global responses to contemporary challenges: controversial multilateral action on Libya was followed by near paralysis on human rights violations in Syria. The Durban climate change summit fell short of the decisive action required, as did the G20 meeting of most of the world's most powerful economies. Grounds for more optimism came in the outcomes of the Busan summit on aid effectiveness, the advent of the new UN Women entity and some of the stances taken by the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. To address this requires global civil society coalitions to develop global solutions and advocate for improved multilateral arrangements, but civil society space in multilateral processes is itself mostly unsatisfactory, with the picture ranging from one of systematic exclusion to processes which place some value on the role of civil society. In Busan and at Geneva, the space guaranteed to civil society enhances the credibility and quality of the process, and these procedures should be regarded as minimal lines in the sand that cannot be pulled back from, and indeed should be expanded and extended to other arenas. A growing challenge is that of disconnected summits that cannot adequately address facets of problems that are in reality intertwined, and this is a challenge both for multilateral institutions and the civil society that follows their processes. CSOs have proved, by moving into economic issues once considered outside the scope of their concern, that they can extend their range and work across silos. The Rio+20 sustainable development summit, to be held in June 2012, calls for still closer joint working within civil society, and stronger connections between those who sit at the negotiating table and the movements of protest outside the formal arenas. It is also the moment at which the multilateral system needs to demonstrate that it has the reach to address connected challenges and the imagination to put global interests first.

OVERVIEW

In 2011, CSOs were active in calling for innovative financing for development, a coordinated and ambitious response to climate change, the recognition of civil society as an equal actor in development and accountability for states that violate human rights. The swift, harmonised response by states and multilateral bodies since the start of the global economic crisis in 2007 in coming to the aid of private corporations with public funds stands at odds with their impotence concerning other problems of international significance. Taken together, the case studies detailed below, and the evidence gathered in this report's section on protest and activism, point to the

failure of existing international governance mechanisms to exercise the oversight required to ensure that the global community of states is acting in accordance with the interests of citizens.

“The tension between international cooperation and national sovereignty remains a struggle.”

As global governance institutions strive to achieve cooperation amongst states, the tension between international cooperation and national sovereignty remains a struggle. In times of economic downturn, states tend to move away from multilateral action and adopt insular protectionist stances by focussing on national issues and pursuing less ambitious foreign policies. Fears by states of reducing their economic competitiveness lie at the heart of failures to commit to binding agreements to reduce carbon emissions and of several states' rejection of a proposed financial transaction tax. Furthermore, emerging donors, such as the government of China, have seemingly deemed the political cost of aid transparency too high. Held



back by both economic and political concerns, many countries have pursued a noninterventionist foreign policy approach with regard to pushing for further democratic reforms in the Middle East and North Africa, particularly after the botched NATO-led invasion of Libya.

The absence of a supranational agency with enforcement powers means that the solution to global problems often lies with international agreements between sovereign states - and of course concessions and compliance are contingent on the concessions of other sovereign co-signatories and their likelihood of compliance. Several states find themselves trapped in a classic “prisoners dilemma”, seeking change and understanding the value of cooperation, but fearful of the risk that comes with delving into an unfamiliar venture solo and of the comparative advantage gained by states that at best choose not to act and at worst do not play fair. Civil society advocates must push for global policy decisions on aid, development, finance, the structure of institutions and climate change to be in the best interest of the public, as opposed to being the product of interactions between power-holders behind closed doors seeking the advance of distinct interests.

“Several countries find themselves trapped in a classic ‘prisoners dilemma’.”

Correspondingly, there is a need to build stronger global civil society formations to overcome the weaknesses of nation-state perspectives on global problems. Organised civil society has a key role to play in demanding more just, equitable and effective decision-making at the global governance level. As the case studies below of civil society participation in global processes in 2011 illustrate, CSOs must fight against their systematic exclusion in arenas such as the 17th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP17); embrace new opportunities for effective engagement in realms that were once completely closed to them such as the Group of 20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meetings (G20); and participate in unique processes, such as the High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness and the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review, that value the role of civil society as a knowledge generator, norm-creator and guardian of the public interest. Even as they enjoy the benefits of participation in these more progressive forums that have a delineated role for CSOs, CSOs must be cognisant and critical of ongoing limitations on civil society engagement, access and impact in these existing institutions, and continue to push for ever more progressive outcomes and processes.

It is a role of CSOs to press these institutions to be receptive to the needs and demands of the public on issues of global importance and to call for reform of global decision-making arenas and institutions in order to enable them to fulfil their roles as defenders of citizen interests. Civil society needs to assert constantly not just the issues it wants to see progress on, but more broadly, the value of its inclusion in processes, and this remains an important area for action for CIVICUS. The case always needs to be restated for the value of consultation as a method of generating awareness and interest on pressing issues, and a mechanism for reaching out to marginalised communities and interests. Furthermore, high quality participation increases the legitimacy of, compliance with and accountability for agreements reached, while decisions and agreements made with civil society input are likely to be more aligned with the public interest.

“Civil society needs to assert constantly not just the issues it wants to see progress on, but the value of its inclusion in processes.”

However, the great outpouring of dissent and activism in 2011, as highlighted in this report’s section on protest and activism, makes it clear that CSOs that stake their legitimacy in claims to represent the voice of citizens at high level international meetings must endeavour to broker a strategic convergence of a diversity of ideas and a consensus on the mix of tactics to be employed by activists on the ‘outside’ of meetings and civil society representatives on the ‘inside’.²

As evidenced by the Busan Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4), and reinforced by the negative example of COP17, civil society is enabled to be at its most effective and influential when organised into coalitions, and processes allow for timely, well prepared inputs from CSOs and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Organised civil society has been increasingly recognised as an influential and powerful actor at venues such as the UN Human Rights Council and HLF4, and 2011 also saw new spaces for advocacy open, such as in the corridors of the G20

“The Occupy movement and the campaign to institute an FTT are both symptomatic of civil society’s foray into new arenas.”

meeting. One of the lessons for CSOs from mass civic action in 2011 is that protest movements have been driven by far-reaching and ambitious transformational agendas that place civil society firmly as an actor in the economic arena. The Occupy movement and the campaign to institute an FTT are both symptomatic of civil society’s foray into new arenas, in this case, that of demanding accountable, responsible behaviour from the financial sector.

The economic, political and environmental crises the world currently faces underscore the need for a radical rethinking, reinvention and renegotiation of governance paradigms. The mandates of separate institutions to foster economic growth and development effectiveness, promote and protect human rights and the environment do not correspond with an intertwined reality, and civil society must not allow these issues to be addressed in silos. The fragmented and dysfunctional way that these governance institutions currently operate resulted in their failure to prevent the current global crises, and the continuation of the silo mentality will only serve to hinder the resolution of these crises. Similarly, if CSOs continue to hop from one summit to another without a cohesive cross-cutting vision, then the possibility of sustainable, systemic change is impossible.

At present, in this period of economic turmoil, many CSOs are confronting existential crises, and the space for collective problem solving seems to be rapidly dwindling. Just as business as usual will not get the world out of the crises this mentality helped to cause, so too it is vital to resist CSO introspection in response to the challenges many CSOs currently face. Rather it is essential that CSOs build broad, ambitious alliances with interconnected and intersectional agendas that enable inter-disciplinary dialogue.

CIVIL SOCIETY, FINANCIAL REGULATION AND THE G20 IN 2011

The global context – the economic crisis

In a time of decreasing resources for CSOs, as illustrated in this report’s section on CSO funding, combined with an increasing need for CSOs to fight for social and economic justice, financing for development was placed high on the global governance agenda in 2011. Two major global events that took place in the second half of 2011 were the G20 (Group of 20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors) meeting in Cannes, France and the HLF4 in Busan, South Korea.

“The fact that governments used public funds to rescue private institutions while cutting public spending fuelled widespread discontent.”

The sharp end of the economic crisis has been felt by citizens experiencing unemployment and public-spending cuts. As indicated in this report’s section on protest and activism, the fact that governments used public funds to come to the rescue of private institutions while cutting public spending fuelled widespread discontent. Against this backdrop, CSOs have stepped up campaigns demanding responsible standards from the financial sector. For example, a statement was presented by over 190 CSOs at the 2011 G20 summit, calling for human rights to be embedded in financial regulation and climate change decisions. At contention was the need to: introduce reforms to prevent speculative activity in financial markets from undermining human rights; act to limit the damage to public funding of financial institutions that collapsed due to excessive risk-taking; regulate bank capital requirements consistent with human rights standards; increase fiscal pressure on the banking sector; increase transparency and mutual accountability in revenue mobilisation; and secure an agreement to drastically reduce greenhouse emissions which contribute to climate change. However, leaders present met this statement with disregard.³

In an interview with CIVICUS, Aldo Caliari, an expert on human rights and international finance noted:

“There has been a growing awareness that when there is a financial crisis those who benefit in the boom are not the ones paying in the bust. Many are now taking a



specific position in the debate to address how the financial sector can pay for what they were responsible for causing. Civil society handed over our tax dollars in a moment of crisis to bail out the banks when we couldn't afford it and could have used that money to support marginalised groups. Civil society now wants to know how they are going to pay that money back."

Below, he documents civil society's campaign to regulate the financial sector in the wake of the global economic crisis.

COMMENTARY

Civil society, financial regulation and the protection of human rights

Aldo Caliari is the Director of the Rethinking Bretton Woods Project at the Centre of Concern, a faith-based organisation headquartered in Washington DC, USA.⁴ In his commentary, he makes the case for embedding human rights principles in financial regulation.

The great recession of 2008 to 2009 was a pivotal moment for financial regulation all over the world. Financial reform processes, while resisted, and often successfully weakened, by the financial industry, are ongoing in major financial centres and in many countries.

Of course, the existence of corruption within private firms was not something new that came with the crisis. What post-crisis inquiries and investigations exposed is just how extended and deeply rooted in the culture of the sector these instances had become, uncovering examples of systematic corruption in the origination of loans, the management of hedge funds, banks' accounting practices and others.

But the great recession was more than that. It represented a pivotal moment for the relationship between society and the regulation of the financial sector. In this regard, the Occupy movement is one more example of citizens waking up to the realisation that the choices governments make on financial regulation bear implications for all of them, not just the few who enjoy a gamble on the stock exchange.

Before 2008, the human rights community's widespread perception that financial regulation was a field for financially-trained experts mirrored the perception that financial policy-makers and specialists tended to espouse when faced with inputs coming from the human rights sector. Human rights policy and concerns would be, under this approach, something that should either be addressed independently from financial regulatory issues or simply circumscribed by whatever approach financial experts decide to take on such issues.

This is no longer a tenable view. In 2009, more than 300 human rights organisations joined a call for a response to the financial crisis and economic recession to place human rights norms at the centre.⁵ They claimed that such a response was not only necessary as a matter of justice, but would also make the reforms of the financial and economic system more sustainable and resilient to future crises.

Shortly thereafter, the UN Human Rights Council called a Special Session on the Financial Crisis and Human Rights where it expressed concern about "the negative impacts of the global economic and financial crises on economic and social development and on the full enjoyment of all human rights in all countries." In that same resolution it mandated that the several existing human rights accountability mechanisms should keep a focus on such impacts in their work.⁶

The human rights toll of the crisis has been all too evident in widespread job losses, unaffordable prices for staple foods and social service budget cuts due to falls in revenue. However it would be a mistake to confine the application of a human rights framework to assessing the impacts of the crisis.

Human rights advocates have their work cut out. They need to become more concrete at spelling out what the human rights approach means practically for the state's decisions on key items in financial regulation,

such as bank capital requirements, credit rating agencies, hedge funds, commodity derivatives markets and taxation.

The outcomes are worth the effort. A society that is informed of the implications of finance for the rights of its citizens is more likely to be able to have an open debate on feasible alternatives and build broad-based consensus behind them. Such a society will be more capable of having political processes that can constructively arbitrate the conflicting interests at stake. It is also more likely to hold policy-makers and the financial industry effectively accountable for the role financial regulation plays in furthering or hindering progress towards fulfilling human rights for all.

G20 and the Financial Transaction Tax

Ensuring that the banks are accountable for the public funds they have received has been a crux of the campaign for a financial transaction tax (FTT). The idea of an FTT boasts mass support amongst social movements, having recently been taken up by many participants in the international Occupy movement. In the lead up to the G20 meeting, civil society ramped up efforts to rally support for the implementation of a global FTT. One of the main demands that brings CSOs into a common platform is that potential revenues should be used to finance development needs and not channelled to general national budgets. Organisations lobbying for the tax ranged from the High Level Advisory Group of the UN Secretary General on Climate Change Financing to coalitions of CSOs organised by the Robin Hood Tax platform and the ATTAC (Association pour la Taxation des Transactions Financières et pour l'Action Citoyenne) network.

In 2010 and 2011 the campaign for the FTT made significant progress in the international realm with CSO coalitions and the European Commission leading the way. At a side event at the UN MDG Summit in 2010 the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development, composed of authorities in the field of international finance, and supported by the governments of 60 countries, issued a declaration in support of the FTT. The declaration was based on a feasibility study commissioned by the governments of Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Senegal, South Korea, Spain and the UK. Experts found that a tax of 0.005% on foreign exchange transactions could generate revenue of approximately US\$33bn per year.⁷ As a result of a process led by the Halifax Initiative, a Canadian civil society coalition, civil society also introduced a statement to the G20 at its 2010 meeting in Seoul, South Korea, signed by 183 organisations from 42 countries, urging the G20 to make concrete progress towards the introduction of an internationally coordinated FTT.⁸



As the chair of the G20 in 2011, French President Nicolas Sarkozy assumed the mantle of leadership on advocating for the implementation of the FTT. Sarkozy met with heads of various CSOs and labour unions prior to the start of the summit. However, while many CSOs acknowledged that Sarkozy, together with Bill Gates, made a concerted effort to rally support for the FTT, there remains no formal avenue for civil society itself to participate in the summit.

At the G20 meeting, Bill Gates championed tax reform, financing for development and the FTT, and thereby prompted the most substantial discussion on human wellbeing at the summit. Reports from CIVICUS members present in the wings of G20 indicate that the Gates Foundation, which Bill Gates founded and co-chairs, was influential in positioning development on the agenda.



COMMENTARY

A new era in financing development

Mark Suzman is the Director of Policy, Advocacy and Special Initiatives, Global Development, at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.⁹ In his commentary, he highlights the key messages presented by Bill Gates at the G20 meeting.

Much of the public commentary and debate in 2011 focused, as it has for the last three years, on the global economic crisis. And there is real cause for concern: during the crisis the number of hungry people in the world hovered around 1 billion for the first time, the scourge of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases still kill millions, and the lack of education dooms the next generation to falling further behind.

More needs to be done, and can be done, despite our tough economic times. In November 2011, at the request of President Nicolas Sarkozy, Bill Gates prepared a report for the G20 titled Innovation with Impact: Financing 21st Century Development.¹⁰ This was a tremendous opportunity, not only because private citizens are not often given the opportunity to speak at a heads of state summit but also because the G20 is in a phenomenal position to help us all think about development in new ways. With its diverse and dynamic membership, it is perfectly poised to help shift how the world's total resources - public, private, rich, poor and in between - combine in ways that drive development forward.

The report puts forward a variety of ideas and proposals about how the G20 can bring resources, innovative ideas and leadership together to build on the unprecedented progress in health and development achieved in the last decade. It particularly stresses that: (1) innovation is paramount; (2) the spending by poor countries of domestic resources will be the largest source of funds for development; and (3) the private sector should be more involved in development.

The report also outlines some possible tax proposals including a global solidarity tobacco tax and a bunker fuel levy¹¹ that would help reduce carbon emissions, and also notes the technical feasibility of a modest financial transaction tax. These could help G20 countries meet their aid commitments and eventually expand them.

The coming year will have further great opportunities to move this agenda forward, particularly going into global events such as the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and the next G20 in Mexico. As always, civil society leadership and partnership with governments will be key to implementation of these ideas and real benefits that continue to improve the lives of the world's poor.

The outcome in Cannes

When the G20 met in Cannes the global economic crisis was at the forefront of the agenda and the Eurozone crisis – the sovereign debt crisis of several member countries of the single currency Eurozone – stole the stage. Although the governments of Argentina, Brazil, Ethiopia, France, Germany, South Africa and Spain all backed the FTT in Cannes and affirmed that revenues should be used for development, no consensus was reached. Some progress was made in Cannes by civil society placing development finance on the G20 agenda, but the G20 once again evaded responsibility to deliver substantive action on financial sector reform.

“The G20 once again evaded responsibility to deliver substantive action on financial sector reform.”

It is speculated that the extent of the application of any global FTT hinges on the cooperation of Germany as the most powerful Eurozone country, the domestic politics of France and whether a grouping of countries in the European Union, and other supportive nations such as Brazil and South Africa, are prepared to take a more active role in championing the FTT.



European governments for the FTT	European governments against the FTT
Austria	Bulgaria
Belgium	Cyprus
Denmark	Czech Republic
Finland	Hungary
France	Ireland
Germany	Latvia
Greece	Malta
Italy	The Netherlands
Luxembourg	Poland
Portugal	Sweden
Romania	UK
Slovenia	
Spain	

A European FTT?: An unlikely prospect

Although the United States government objected to a global FTT at the G20 meeting, it agreed in principle to a notion of a European FTT being introduced in EU member states in 2014. A European FTT is a proposal put forward by the European Commission to tax financial transactions in the EU’s financial sector in order to garner revenues for the EU. Though the governments of four of the five largest economies in Europe are in favour of a European FTT, there is opposition from key governments such as those of the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. For a European FTT to come into effect, it would need to be adopted unanimously by the European Council after passage through the European Parliament. Furthermore, under the European proposal there is no commitment that the money raised would be used for development and to tackle climate change.

Again here, an active promotion of a European FTT by the German government would seem to be essential to progress, given that the Eurozone crisis has strengthened Germany’s role in the EU, as demonstrated by its central role in pushing for an EU fiscal compact in early 2012. The fiscal compact also demonstrates the difficulties of achieving a pan-European agreement, with two of the EU’s 27 members, the Czech Republic and UK, withholding from the treaty on the grounds of national interests. The UK’s citing of the need to protect its large financial sector indicates the challenges of balancing national and supra-national interests.¹²

In a poll conducted by YouGov for Oxfam in 2011 in six European countries, including those with governments actively opposed to the FTT, 80% of people surveyed agreed that financial institutions have an obligation to remedy the financial crisis. The poll also indicated that in all six countries more people support the FTT than do not, and in five out of six more than half of people support it. CSOs and other civil society movements in these countries must continue to pressure their governments to adopt positions that are reflective of the demands of their citizenry.¹³

Emerging economics and global decision-making

Much of the lobbying to implement the FTT has however taken place in developed countries, with much energy invested in developing policy and advocacy initiatives. There has been little done to galvanise support in Africa, Asia and Latin America. According to a prominent anti-poverty campaigner:

“There was a successful global day of action around FTT in 2011, but all the actions targeted towards Africa were about popular mobilisation, with quick turnaround and actions for media promotion. It was good to have an entry point but there is a need for serious engagement with governments to pressure them to lead and take action on poverty and exclusion and to make concrete commitments to find new ways to use and optimise resources. Investment in creating that intellectual space to think about reform has not happened in the South.”¹⁴

Indeed, several CSOs based in the global North have the institutional capacity, technical and tactical expertise and experience of engaging with their states’ national agendas to influence public policy. While many CSOs in states such as Argentina, Brazil, India, Mexico, Russia and South Africa have a noteworthy tradition of pushing for progressive reforms in their countries, their experience of galvanising national coalitions for international lobbying and engagement is less extensive. Governments in many Northern countries also historically accept some role for civil society in dialogue on foreign policy issues and there is at least some discourse, however superficial, on the role of promoting human rights and democracy as a cornerstone of foreign policy.



In inter-state forums such as the G20, global campaigning takes on a distinctly national focus. As the BRICS countries and others become more influential due to changing global power balances, it is ever more important for civil society in these emerging powers to engage with their governments on national foreign policy and create national discourse on how governments can use their increased influence beyond the pursuit of national objectives.

Conclusion

The momentum and organisational structures formed by CSOs uniting to advocate for the FTT signalled the development of new capacity of global civil society to engage with new issues concerning the financial sector. There is an active G20 global civil society working group, chaired by American CSO network InterAction and UK network BOND, which strives to formulate global positions and put forward a common agenda from civil society. Furthermore, at the Cannes G20 meeting, the French government created an unprecedented opportunity for CSOs to engage with decision-makers; it is now up to this new and energised coalition of CSOs to advocate for this space to exist in future G20 meetings.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS: THE HIGH LEVEL FORUM IV ON AID EFFECTIVENESS (HLF4)

Introduction

From 29 November to 1 December 2011, over 2,500 world leaders and civil society representatives assembled in Busan, South Korea at the High Level Forum IV on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4) to review progress on previous commitments on aid effectiveness, to revise the architecture of international aid and to further development cooperation. Following the recognition of civil society as “an independent development actor in its own right”, at the previous High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF3) in Accra, Ghana in 2008, civil society was officially acknowledged as a negotiating partner in the high level dialogue in Busan.¹⁵

Accredited civil society representatives that attended the HLF4 were selected through a transparent process by a committee drawn from the steering groups of BetterAid and the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness, two large, open civil society platforms. A two-day preparatory and consultative forum was organised prior to HLF4. Ideas were shared, lobbying strategies were mapped out and attempts were made to filter key negotiating points for the forum. At HLF4, hundreds of CSOs participated in consultations, regional caucuses, and thematic workshops in an effort to push key demands and influence the final outcome of the forum.

For civil society, the HLF4 was the culmination of a year-long consultative process primarily coordinated through BetterAid and the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness. BetterAid has primarily led the policy dialogue on development/aid effectiveness with other stakeholders including donors since 2007, leading many of the civil society activities, including in-country consultations, conducting studies and monitoring progress on commitments. The Open Forum has focused on coordinating worldwide consultations amongst civil society groups to promote norms and practices that improve the impact of CSOs’ development work, and advocating for more favourable government policies for CSOs. These two initiatives have served as platforms

Key Paris and Accra Commitments

- Establish democratic ownership as the core aid and development effectiveness principle
- Give priority to inclusive multi-stakeholder policy dialogue
- Use country systems as the first option
- End policy conditionality
- Fully untie all forms of aid
- Implement demand-driven technical assistance
- Address the unpredictability of aid flows
- Orient private sector development for self-sustaining livelihoods

“The multi-stakeholder dialogue leading up to Busan was viewed as a pioneering model of civil society engagement.”

Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles

1. Respect and promote human rights and social justice
2. Embody gender equality and equity while promoting women and girls' rights
3. Focus on people's empowerment, democratic ownership and participation
4. Promote environmental sustainability
5. Practise transparency and accountability
6. Pursue equitable partnerships and solidarity
7. Create and share knowledge and commit to mutual learning
8. Commit to realising positive sustainable change

for thousands of CSOs to engage in national, regional and global discussions in over 90 countries in the past few years.

CSOs on the road to Busan: key messages and proposals was agreed and published in May 2011 as a common civil society position laying out the main demands from CSOs in the run up to Busan.¹⁶ By mid-2011, the output of these consultations was consolidated in a series of large global civil society assemblies. The Open Forum distilled these consultations into the Istanbul Principles on CSO Development Effectiveness and the Siem Reap Consensus on the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness in which CSOs took forward commitments made at the HLF3.¹⁷

The multi-stakeholder dialogue and process leading up to Busan was viewed by many as a pioneering model of civil society engagement at a multilateral forum. Since

2003, the High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness have been organised by the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF), a multilateral forum created in 2003 and hosted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Advisory Committee (OECD-DAC), which evolved into a multi-stakeholder forum in 2008 with the inclusion of civil society and other development actors. The WP-EFF is divided into five thematic clusters, each with its own work streams and task teams, mandated to perform separate but interlinked tasks in parallel in the lead up to HLF4.¹⁸

Civil society has been represented in the executive committee of the WP-EFF since 2008, The BetterAid network played a lead role in maximising this engagement opportunity by mobilising its members to take active membership in every task team, cluster and working group convened in the lead up to Busan. Moreover, BetterAid engaged in national outreach initiatives designed to build CSO capacity and engagement with States and local stakeholders on issues relating to development.

COMMENTARY

An insider's perspective from a CSO sherpa

Antonio Tujan Jr is the Co-Chair of Better Aid and a member of the Board of Directors of IBON International in the Philippines.¹⁹ At the HLF4, 18 'sherpas' were appointed to represent major groups of stakeholders, and civil society was formally represented by a sherpa. Antonio Tujan Jr was selected for this role, and here he describes his experience as a CSO sherpa.

The Busan forum was historic in many ways. With the expiration in 2010 of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Busan became the opportunity not only to continue commitments to improve the results of development cooperation but also to learn from five years' experience and strive for something more. Under the theme of development effectiveness initiated by CSOs, Busan deepened the understanding of effectiveness in development cooperation, broadened its scope to cover other aspects, and sought to be even more inclusive.

BetterAid was conscious of the strategic importance of Busan and the possibility of using it as an opportunity to move beyond the technical Paris and Accra agreements into a more holistic approach to development effectiveness.

Crafting an agreement that would satisfy the proposals and interests of more than a hundred members and interested parties was difficult, and a few twists and turns were encountered on the way. Early on, BetterAid



prepared a number of papers with the aim of influencing decision-making on such issues as moving from aid to development cooperation, moving from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness that focuses on human rights and development results for people, and crafting an inclusive equitable architecture. These papers, adopted in large measure, strengthened CSO advocacy in shaping what would be the Busan outcome document.

A combination of plenary meetings of the Working Party and meetings of the smaller Executive Committee developed the final working shape of the outcome document between late 2010 and mid 2011. It then prepared statements putting forward its proposals and submissions on key issues that helped shape the outcome document.

Once the general shape and content of the Busan outcome document had been presented and agreed upon at the Working Party meeting of 6 to 7 October, the process of finalising the document for the ministers to agree and sign in Busan was delegated to a group of sherpas representing different stakeholders.²⁰

BetterAid played a very active role as a co-equal party to these negotiations, using its role to promote paramount CSO concerns of democratisation and human rights in development cooperation, equality and mutuality in development partnerships, and principled inclusiveness in drawing in new actors such as the BRICS and the private sector. Its participation was a natural continuation of the role it played in the Working Party in the shaping of the outcome document.

The sherpas submitted editing proposals to the drafts and sat in negotiations to agree on the more contentious issues. Hundreds of CSOs participated electronically in reviewing drafts and submitting editing proposals, which were forwarded to the drafting secretariat for consideration. The Coordinating Group of BetterAid selected a negotiation team composed of the International Trade Union Council, Association of Women In Development, Open Forum, Eurodad and Reality of Aid Africa as well as the BetterAid chair, who was nominated as the CSO sherpa to work together to process CSO proposals and map out CSO negotiation positions.

This CSO negotiation team selected negotiation points for the two negotiation meetings of the sherpas and the final sherpas' meeting in Busan on 30 November. The CSO sherpa had to undertake tough negotiation tactics to push certain issues such as stronger rights-based language for the enabling environment for CSOs, rights-based approaches in general and stronger aid effectiveness commitments in the outcome document.

As a whole the Busan outcome document, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, represents a remarkable achievement in pushing forward the boundaries for effective development cooperation, in terms of standards and aspirations, coverage of concerns and inclusiveness of actors engaged. It redefines the principles of effectiveness in development cooperation along the lines of human rights and democratic ownership, development outcomes for people, transparency and accountability to rights holders and inclusiveness of partnerships, and strengthens efforts and goals to achieve meaningful development for everyone.

What was at stake?

As asserted in collated CSO key messages and proposals, CSOs came to Busan with a number of advocacy points including the need to:

- Redress the failure to make progress on Paris and Accra commitments by fully evaluating and deepening the commitments through reforms based on democratic ownership;
- Strengthen development effectiveness through development cooperation practices that promote human rights standards and focus on the eradication of the causes of poverty and inequality;
- Implement full transparency as the basis for strengthened accountability and good governance.
- Promote equitable and just development cooperation architecture by launching an inclusive

“A principal demand was for a firm, clear and explicit agreement on minimum standards for government and donor practices to create an enabling environment for CSOs.”

Busan Compact, bringing together specific time-bound commitments, initiating fundamental reforms in the global governance of development cooperation and creating an equitable and inclusive multilateral forum for policy dialogue and standard setting.²¹

Many CSOs involved in the Busan process had been hoping that given the limitations on CSO freedoms, as outlined in this report’s section on civil society space, government representatives would acknowledge negative trends and resolve to create a more enabling environment for civil society. A principal demand here was therefore for a firm, clear and explicit commitment to be made and agreement to be reached on minimum standards for government and donor policies, laws, regulations and practices to create an enabling environment for CSOs.

COMMENTARY

Minimum standards for an enabling environment for CSOs: The task team on CSO development effectiveness and enabling environment

Brian Tomlinson is the Executive Director of AidWatch Canada. He has served as co-chair of the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment on behalf of the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness and as a volunteer for the Canadian Council for International Cooperation.

In late 2008 a unique and important global space opened for CSOs. Along with parliamentarians and local government, CSOs became full members of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF), which has a mandate to monitor and advance commitments made in high-level forums to improve aid effectiveness. To monitor these commitments and prepare for HLF4, a number of Task Teams were created, including the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment.

The Task Team’s membership was deliberately multi-stakeholder. It brought together CSO representatives, including CIVICUS, the BetterAid Platform and the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness, over a dozen donor agencies and three developing country governments.

Three years before, the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), the outcome of the 2008 Accra Third High Level Forum (HLF3) called for donors and governments to “work with CSOs to provide an enabling environment that maximises their contributions to development.”²² Since Accra, however, CIVICUS and others have documented mounting evidence of an increasingly restrictive rather than enabling environment, with a narrowing of democratic, legal and financial support and policy space for CSOs in both developing and donor countries.²³ Equally worrying, case studies demonstrated that the very principles of aid effectiveness – alignment, harmonisation and ownership²⁴ – have been interpreted and misused by some governments to justify restrictions on access to funding and CSOs’ right to operate independently free of unwarranted interference, that is, as development actors in their own right.

Accordingly, the Task Team called upon all participants in HLF4 to:

1. Reaffirm CSOs as independent development actors in their own right and restate the importance of multi-stakeholder policy dialogue;
2. Provide, promote and monitor an enabling environment for CSOs that maximises their contribution to development. This means among other things at a minimum keeping with existing commitments in international and regional instruments, in law and in practice, that guarantee fundamental rights. These rights include freedom of association, freedom of expression, the right to operate free from unwarranted state interference, the right to communicate and cooperate, the right to seek and secure funding, and the state’s duty to protect;



3. Implement donor support models that contribute to CSO effectiveness, where among other things, the Task Team encourages the identification of good practices in donor support to CSOs and the development of guidelines for their application;
4. Support CSOs' efforts to enhance their own effectiveness and accountability, primarily by acknowledging and supporting existing efforts and progress by CSOs, such as the Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles;
5. Share responsibility for accountability and transparency on aid and development efforts.

In the lead-up to Busan, the Task Team worked closely with CSOs in BetterAid and the Open Forum to insert these messages in the various drafts of the final Busan outcome document (BOD) with some success. Taken together, paragraph 22 and its sub-paragraphs on CSOs represent a powerful endorsement of civil society as development actors in their own right. It reads:

"CSOs play a vital role in enabling people to claim their rights, in promoting rights-based approaches, in shaping development policies and partnerships, and in overseeing their implementation. They also provide services in areas that are complementary to those provided by states. Recognising this, we will: (a) implement fully our respective commitments to enable CSOs to exercise their roles as independent development actors, with a particular focus on an enabling environment, consistent with agreed international rights, that maximises the contributions of CSOs to development; (b) encourage CSOs to implement practices that strengthen their accountability and their contribution to development effectiveness, guided by the Istanbul Principles and the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness."

While paragraph 22a on CSOs is normatively strong, CSOs will find it difficult to be true partners in development in the absence of an overall human rights framework for development cooperation governing all development actors, and most particularly government duty-bearers. This concern was accentuated by the repeated refusal of negotiators to consider proposals to link enabling conditions for CSOs to their fundamental rights. Yet negotiators could quickly agree to robust language in the BOD assuring a legal and regulatory environment for the private sector (which was hardly present in Busan) as a development actor.

It was only in the final day of negotiations that the CSO negotiator managed to finesse a descriptor in paragraph 22a that a CSO enabling environment must be "consistent with agreed fundamental rights", but without an important elaboration of these rights or their reflection in other aspects of the BOD.

CSOs in the end welcomed the BOD, the Busan Partnership for Effective Development, with bittersweet enthusiasm. The outcome was clearly strengthened by direct CSO presence in the negotiations, and also by CSOs' strategic use of multi-stakeholder spaces such as the Task Team and the Working Party.

Going forward it will be essential to continue to monitor closely actual practices at country level, bringing to bear the full weight of various international initiatives.

The outcome

The efforts of CSOs in pressing for democratic ownership, transparency and accountability can be seen as meeting with some success, as the Busan outcome document can be seen as a victory, with these principles at the foundation of the document and deemed to apply to all development partners. The outcome document was welcomed as the first explicit acknowledgment of democratic ownership as one fundamental principle of development cooperation. A further significant advance is the fact that participants agreed to formulate "a common, open standard for electronic publication of timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information on resources provided through development co-operation [...] with the aim of implementing it fully by December 2015."²⁵ In addition, as highlighted in this report's section on CSO funding, key donor countries (such as Canada and the USA) and multilateral lenders signed on, in the run up to Busan, to the International Aid Transparency Initiative, which has as its objective improving access to information on aid spending.



The failure by states to make more progress on both the Paris and Accra agenda has been attributed to a lack of political will. A small victory though, is the fact that CSOs managed to ensure that governments do not relinquish their aid effectiveness commitments agreed upon in Accra and Paris. The Busan outcome document commits participants to a “new, inclusive and representative Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation to support and ensure accountability for the implementation of commitments at the political level.” Furthermore, as recorded by Brian Tomlinson above, civil society’s initiatives in 2011 to create normative standards on CSO conduct - the Siam Reap and Istanbul principles - were endorsed and recognised. Of great value too is also the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, which should help support inclusive country-led transitions with the support of international partners.²⁶

As the process has historically been driven by the OECD, a priority of HLF4 was to launch a Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation including Southern providers of development assistance and private sector actors. Although emerging donors such as Brazil, China and India endorsed the principles in the outcome document, they did not undertake any specific commitments. China is now a major donor of overseas development assistance, and as a result, in Busan much attention was devoted to trying to get China to adhere to the outcome document. Disappointingly, when China finally accepted the outcome document it was with the caveat of optional adherence, thereby diluting the outcome document by making its commitments voluntary.

Table: an analysis of the Busan outcome document

BETTERAID / OTHER PROGRESSIVE POSITION	COMMITMENT IN THE BUSAN OUTCOME DOCUMENT	NEXT STEPS FOR BETTERAID
FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING PARIS, ACCRA AND BUSAN COMMITMENTS		
The Paris and Accra commitments to be reaffirmed in full, including a deadline for full implementation.	Paris and Accra commitments reaffirmed in full, but no deadline for full implementation referenced. No monitoring framework yet agreed, so not clear which commitments to be formally monitored and what level of performance expected.	Work to develop monitoring framework proposals, including indicators and targets; lobby for proposals to be adopted; use leverage of Busan agreement to deepen and improve country level monitoring processes.
INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE OF AID		
Create an equitable and fully inclusive developing country-led multilateral forum for policy dialogue and standard setting, with a full role for the UN and all stakeholder groups.	Commitment to a) establish inclusive and representative Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) to support/ ensure accountability to implement commitments; b) agree by June 2012 working arrangements for the GPEDC, including ministerial engagement; c) for the WP-EFF to convene actors to agree details of the GPEDC and monitoring; d) UNDP to play a role.	Develop proposals for the GPEDC that meet standards CSOs demand, and lobby for these standards to be met.



DEMOCRATIC OWNERSHIP		
Establish democratic ownership as the core aid and development effectiveness principle.	The first common principle in the preamble states commitment to “ownership of development priorities by developing countries” and the first common action in the preamble is commitment to “deepen, extend and operationalise the democratic ownership of development policies and processes.”	Lobby for all donors to identify how they will promote the common principle and action relating to ownership (with maximum ambition) and begin to address this more fully in development cooperation.
CIVIL SOCIETY ENABLING ENVIRONMENT		
Implement minimum standards based on the Istanbul Principles and human rights standards to enable CSOs to reach their full potential as development actors.	Paragraph 22a states commitment to “implement fully our respective commitments to enable CSOs to exercise their roles as independent development actors, with a particular focus on an enabling environment, consistent with agreed international rights, that maximises the contributions of CSOs to development.” Though the language is stronger than that in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), which simply stated importance of promoting an enabling environment, this is a general commitment; it is not clear what action will be taken.	Lobby for donors and developing countries to identify (with maximum ambition) what steps they will take to implement this commitment; lobby for enabling environment to be addressed by the monitoring framework.
COMMITMENTS FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION		
In comments on draft texts there was strong support for strong principles and actions to be committed to by South-South donors, especially around rights, ownership and gender; support for their implementation to be monitored.	In the preamble, all actors – including Southern donors – committed to common principles on ownership, results, inclusive partnerships and transparency and accountability and to take actions on ownership, results, partnerships and mobilising development finance, but in the final phase of negotiations, China and India insisted on inserting a statement in the final agreement (in paragraph 2) that “the principles, commitments and actions agreed in the outcome document in Busan shall be the reference for South-South partners on a voluntary basis.”	Lobby for Southern donors to clarify which Busan commitments apply to them (promoting maximum ambitions), and outline their plans for implementing the Busan agreement; lobby for monitoring frameworks at country and international level to apply to Southern as well as Northern donors.
TRANSPARENCY		
Full transparency as a basis for accountability, with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) playing a key role.	In the preamble, common principles included transparency, which was promoted as a basis of accountability. In the main text (para 23), there is an agreement to set a standard on international development cooperation information and a schedule for publishing by December 2012, and aim to implement it by December 2015, to make the full range of information on publicly funded development activities available, subject to legitimate concerns about commercially sensitive information, and to improve performance and aid management systems, and strengthen capacities to use this information.	Lobby for all traditional donors to join IATI and meet the timelines set in the Busan agreement; lobby for South-South donors to clarify how they will meet their transparency commitments (with maximum ambitions); lobby for monitoring framework to address commitments on transparency.

UNTYING AID		
Better Aid asked to end all formal and informal tying of aid, including food aid and technical assistance; give preference to local and regional procurement; and ensure procurement practices address poverty, social exclusion, the environment and development work. Partner countries demanded all aid be untied by 2013.	There was no political will from donors to go beyond the weak Paris and Accra commitments on untying aid and address issue of local procurement. There was merely a commitment to “accelerate our efforts to untie aid”, to “review plans in 2012 to achieve this.”	Lobby donors to undertake reviews of their efforts to untie aid in 2012; lobby for monitoring framework to establish targets to take untying forward ambitiously; lobby for more official policy-oriented analysis on local procurement to be undertaken.
TECHNICAL COOPERATION		
Make technical assistance fully demand-driven, transparent, responsive to gender and other rights, and with a preference for the use of indigenous expertise.	Essentially a restatement of existing general commitments and no specific initiatives to take forward key principles for effective technical cooperation. Also, very general references to capacity-building efforts in a number of other sections of the BOD, including those on results, transparency, fragile states and disaster management.	Lobby for donors to identify concrete action to take forward the general commitments and principles they have agreed to on technical cooperation and for monitoring framework to address existing commitments.
CONDITIONALITY		
Donors and governments to share commitment to international rights obligations; end use of policy conditions, with the only conditions applied being fiduciary ones, monitored openly with the involvement of civil society.	Only reference includes conditions as key elements of aid information which are to be made publicly available. The language on conditionality does not go beyond Paris and Accra.	Lobby for AAA commitments on conditionality to be fully implemented and addressed by monitoring framework; lobby for more ambitious future commitments.
PRIVATE SECTOR		
Orient private sector development for self-sustaining livelihoods including: respect democratic ownership, support for internationally agreed development goals, decent work and human rights.	The Busan agreement only talks about promoting opportunities for private sector development (para 32). There is nothing about the private sector’s responsibilities with regard to development and human rights.	Lobby for the private sector to be made to identify commitments relating to their responsibilities for development effectiveness.

Source: Gideon Rabinowitz, UK Aid Network

The future

International mechanisms to execute and enforce the implementation of commitments in the Busan outcome document are the next priority after Busan. Post-Busan meetings are dealing with implementation as the new challenge, and the meeting of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness will decide how commitments will be monitored and evaluated internationally. It is expected that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms at the national level will be determined via national multi-stakeholder processes. Greater effort is needed to adapt the Busan principles and commitments to national contexts and to promote and monitor their implementation.

“HLF4 left a new line in the sand which must operate as a minimum standard for the inclusion of civil society in future processes.”

Overall the engagement of civil society at HLF4 can be said to have left a new line in the sand which must operate as a minimum standard for the inclusion of civil society in future processes, with civil society emerging as a prominent, equal and valuable actor with rights to influence decision-making. Although commitments to transform aid effectiveness and put human rights at the centre of delivery efforts remain elusive, compared to some of the other key multilateral events of 2011 profiled here, HLF4 offered a relatively inclusive process for civil society. The challenge now for civil society is to transfer its application and energy from advocacy for commitments to



monitoring progress and adherence to commitments. The next few years, as 2015 approaches and the MDGs come to an end, and as the ramifications of the economic crisis continue to work through, will be critical for this agenda.

CIVIL SOCIETY AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Introduction

Given the complex structure of the UN and the wide array of functions and objectives of its various institutions, it is evident that the level of access and influence which CSOs enjoy will vary amongst the six principal organs of the UN, its various commissions, separately-administered funds and programmes, research and training institutes, and other autonomous subsidiary bodies. Civil society's perspective on the quality and value of its engagement with the UN, as an umbrella body comprising the most significant and far-reaching multilateral institutions, will vary according to which part of the unwieldy, bureaucratic and poorly coordinated series of agencies it attempts to engage with. Indeed, a striking contrast can be drawn between the experience of CSOs engaging with the UN Security Council, which lacks a formal institutionalised role for CSOs, and the UN Human Rights Council, which explicitly recognises the value of CSOs.

It is beyond the current scope of this report to conduct an extensive review of CSO engagement in the multitude of multifaceted UN agencies, bodies and systems. Here, this report focuses on two agencies of significance to many CSOs: UN Women, which civil society has long campaigned for and in 2011 became a reality, and the UN Human Rights Council. Also, it considers the responsiveness of the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council to the Arab Spring.

A work in progress: UN Women

2011 saw the new United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) come into being. The establishment of UN Women came as part of a broader but slow process of UN reform, which stems from an acknowledgement of the need for better coordination in order to achieve greater impact. In the case of UN Women this coordination came by amalgamating the predecessor agencies UNIFEM, the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), UN INSTRAW (United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women), and DAW (Division for the Advancement of Women). The establishment of UN Women came after extensive civil society advocacy: Global Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR), an alliance of CSOs working for gender equality, led a five-year international campaign for an agency solely devoted to women's issues. Now that UN Women has been launched, GEAR has refocused its mission on ensuring that civil society participation in UN Women's work is formalised and that civil society is able to influence its future direction.²⁸

COMMENTARY

Spotlight on UN Women: Facilitate, resource, engage

Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda is the General Secretary of the World YWCA, a role that she has held since 2007. She is also the Vice Chair of the Board of CIVICUS. In her commentary, she welcomes the creation of UN Women and calls for civil society to engage with this new body.

The establishment of UN Women is the most important reform action that the UN has taken in the 20 years since the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference. As UN Women came into operation in January 2011, one could still feel the celebratory notes of the women of the world at that moment in 2009 when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Resolution establishing UN Women. The advocacy and negotiation for UN Women was steeped in the desire for greater coordination for effectiveness of the United Nations in delivering a gender agenda; to bring coherence between the operational and programmatic work of the UN

and its normative role in setting standards; and to ensure that the mechanisms for gender equality have the requisite policy and political level status and adequate resources to deliver such a transformative agenda.

Its mandate is far-reaching and universal in nature, combining the normative and programmatic aspects of its core work with an explicit support to gender mainstreaming within the UN system. The hybrid nature of this entity, with its large board, speaks to the broad range of issues of equity and politics associated with the gender agenda. However, women of the world are yet to find a space and a voice at the table of decision-making. The long held recommendation by concerned CSOs and women's groups was for UN Women's board to adopt the model of UNAIDS' Programme Coordinating Board, which gives recognised status, including as observers, for civil society in its governance structures. However, this did not come to fruition. It remains an important advocacy point and agenda for action that women must be at the table, with their own voice and for their own agency.

It is therefore clear that UN Women must continue to position itself as a facilitator for transformative change for gender equality, leveraging the power, voice, potential and resources of the women's movement. This demands quality partnership and not patronage that creates the space for women of the world to be in the spaces of decision-making. The campaign for gender equality requires creative partnerships that break the silos and build a solid global movement for change. Solidarity and collaborations with networks such as CIVICUS provide the platform for amplifying voices and leveraging greater possibilities.

The UN Human Rights Council

The UN Human Rights Council (HRC), located in Geneva, Switzerland, was launched in 2006 to replace the heavily politicised and discredited Commission on Human Rights. In 2008 it launched the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), a breakthrough mechanism of human rights promotion and protection. The UPR mechanism sees peer-reviewed appraisal of the human rights situation and application of international human rights laws in UN Member States, and recommendations on improvements, every four and a half years.²⁹ Three reports form the basis of the review – a national report produced by the state, a compilation of UN information produced by the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and a further OHCHR summary of information submitted by stakeholders including CSOs in a shadow report.

A highlight of the work of the HRC, in October 2011, was the completion of the first UPR cycle, with participation from every country under review.

CSO participation in the UPR

In 2011 CIVICUS analysed available data about CSO participation in eight sessions of the UPR (those which occurred from the ninth to 17th sessions of the HRC). In these sessions 318 different CSOs made submissions either individually or in conjunction with other organisations, with a total of 700 submissions made. Frequent submissions were made on issues relating to women's rights, children's rights, anti-racism, immigration, equality, justice, development, education and poverty.

In this period, CSOs based in Austria, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Italy, Palestine, the UK and the USA formed the bulk of the civil society participants in the UPR process. The majority of CSOs engaged in the UPR came from Europe and North America. Only 8% of participating organisations came from the Middle East, 6% from Asia, 5% from Sub-Saharan Africa and 3% from Latin America.

CIVICUS' analysis suggests that the issues brought forward by CSOs from developing countries often pertain to the regions in which they are based, as is particularly the case for CSOs from the MENA and Sub-Saharan Africa regions. CSOs based in Asia and Latin America show a relatively even split between submissions which focus on their respective regions and those that focus on other regions. In comparison, the majority of North American and European CSOs have an international focus.

“Smaller, less global CSOs are challenged by the heavy resource commitments that making a sustained input into the HRC entails.”



Although there are relatively equal levels of participation in informal meetings and written statement submissions, it is noteworthy that CSOs from different regions tend to participate in different ways. CIVICUS' analysis indicates that Asian and Latin American CSOs strongly prefer making submissions of written statements, while Sub-Saharan African CSOs favour participating via informal meetings. For CSOs from other regions there is a roughly equal level of participation between submission of written statements and participating in informal meetings.

Smaller, CSOs that are less global in their focus and structure are challenged by the heavy resource commitments that making a sustained input into the HRC entails, including financial, human and time resources; the system naturally privileges those CSOs which can afford to maintain a permanent presence in Geneva, which are the larger, international CSOs. While as the contribution from Conectas Human Rights makes clear below, it is important to look beyond Geneva to also see the value of the domestic side of the UPR process, the low participation rates of Southern CSOs in Geneva and the different participation methods employed are challenges. They suggest a need to emphasise the formation of broader coalitions that are able to bridge the gap between CSOs from different global regions and enable smaller and different kinds of CSOs to work with and benefit from the presence of larger CSOs in Geneva, and to enable virtual participation.



COMMENTARY

Civil society engagement at the UN Human Rights Council and its UPR in 2011

Conectas Human Rights is an international CSO based in Brazil. Its mission is to promote the realisation of human rights and consolidation of the rule of law, particularly in the global South. Camila Asano is the coordinator of the Foreign Policy and Human Rights Project at Conectas Human Rights. Lucia Nader is its Executive Director. Here they assess the positives and negatives of the UPR process in 2011.³⁰

In 2011, the HRC focused much of its efforts on reviewing its own working methods and functioning. This review was determined by the UN General Assembly resolution 60/251 that created the Council.³¹

The review process resulted in the creation of a task force drawn from the secretariat of the HRC to work on proposals to allow remote participation of civil society actors during HRC sessions, through the use of technology, particularly via videoconferencing. It is important that CSOs monitor and try to influence the work of the task force, in order that it enlarges and strengthens civil society participation and is not used opportunistically by some governments to further restrict existing channels of participation.

The UPR was also addressed by the review process. Some CSOs have tried to increase the participation of CSOs during the formal sessions in Geneva. In particular, there was an effort to allow oral statements by CSOs to be made during the working group sessions, and not to be limited as they are at present to the session that adopts the report and its recommendations. It sought, therefore, to enable CSOs to formally and orally question the content of states' reports and the recommendations before their adoption.

2011 was also the last year of the first cycle of the UPR. From 2008 to 2011, there were around 2,300 recommendations made to all 193 UN states. In recent years, Conectas accompanied and supported partner organisations to be active in the review of their countries, for example in the cases of Mozambique, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. In these cases, civil society has had a decisive role in influencing the quality of recommendations. In many Southern countries that Conectas worked with, the national aspect of the

UPR was of great importance for strengthening civil society demands for government accountability. The review session in Geneva, although important, is only one of the several stages of the UPR, and important achievements were obtained nationally. However, in countries such as Iran and Syria, the participation of civil society, for obvious reasons of domestic restriction, focused much more on the session in Geneva.

The second cycle of the UPR will be important for assessing if and how countries have implemented the many recommendations adopted in the first cycle. The participation of civil society has been and will continue to be crucial to demanding action, accountability and respect for human rights nationally and internationally.

Calls for UPR reform and the second UPR cycle

The second UPR cycle, beginning in 2012 and running until 2016, marks a critical moment for civil society engagement, as CSOs can play a vital role in reporting on state compliance with recommendations emanating from the first cycle. As the first cycle of the UPR came to an end, there were civil society groups calling for reform of the UPR process, led by the organisation UPR Info, which produced an influential report calling for reform to improve the efficiency of the UPR process.³²

Key weaknesses identified by CSOs include the privileging of states' own reports in the process as opposed to the other two reports, the lack of a mechanism for CSOs to question states during the critical working group sessions and the vagueness of many of the recommendations, which make it difficult to monitor state compliance. 37 CSOs therefore jointly called for:

- Well prepared national consultations with stakeholders;
- The stakeholders' summary and the UN information report to be introduced during the working group review by the state under review, instead of only the state's national report as at present;
- Focused, action-oriented recommendations;
- Responses to recommendation to be provided by the state under review in advance, and in writing, with the reasoning stipulated in cases of rejection of recommendations;
- Mechanisms and modalities for the assessment of the implementation of recommendations to be developed, with input from civil society;
- The second cycle to focus on assessment of the implementation of recommendations made in the previous review as well as an assessment of the current human rights situation in the state under review;
- CSOs without ECOSOC accreditation to be able to make comments on the UPR outcome at its plenary adoption.³³

Although the reformed UPR process now calls for the thematic clustering of recommendations, it fails to specify that they must be clear and action-oriented. Other recommendations highlighted above were not adopted. The consolidated stakeholder submissions and the UN compilation

of information will continue to have secondary status, as they will still not be introduced during the UPR working group sessions of states under review. Further, while in the HRC resolution adopting the reforms there are provisions that outline the need for stakeholder consultations in the follow-up procedure, there is no process by which national follow-up measures can be assessed. In order to render the UPR effective, the follow-up process must allow for the meaningful participation of CSOs, national human rights institutions and UN agencies.

“To render the UPR effective, the follow-up process must allow for the meaningful participation of CSOs, national human rights institutions and UN agencies.”

UN bodies and the uprisings in the MENA region

The Arab Spring came to define and shape the course of 2011. As detailed in this report's section on civil society space, ordinary citizens were targeted by their own states for daring to demand



better governance. While this provoked heavy condemnation from several UN bodies, particularly the HRC, the actions, and more often than not the inaction of these bodies in the face of human rights abuses came under criticism from CSOs, and can be seen in some respect as a measure of the inefficiency of the UN system. Below, the contribution of Laila Matar offers a critical eye on the measures taken by the HRC.

COMMENTARY

The Arab Spring at the Human Rights Council: Civil society participation

Laila Matar is the UN Advocacy Representative for the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS). The CIHRS is an independent regional CSO founded in 1993 that aims at promoting respect for the principles of human rights and democracy in the Arab Region.³⁴ In her contribution, she assesses the UN Human Rights Council's response to the Arab Spring.

2011 was a year of unexpected and unprecedented change for MENA. Events in the MENA region not only tested the relevance and efficiency of the HRC, but also the ability of CSOs and other civil society actors to influence its outcomes. In the year since the start of the Arab Spring, the HRC proved to be responsive to civil society demands and able to provide a potent, but selective, response.

In February 2011, the HRC held a special session to discuss the situation in Libya. At the session the HRC adopted by consensus a strong resolution, which fed into UN processes in New York, leading to the suspension of Libya from the HRC. In part as a response to consistent advocacy by CSOs and Syrian activists, the HRC also convened three special sessions on Syria, and established a fact-finding mission to report on the situation, followed by a Commission of Inquiry. Unfortunately, the resolutions adopted at these sessions were substantially weakened due to objections by governments opposed to international accountability, and specifically to references to the International Criminal Court.

Calls by national, regional, and international CSOs for the HRC to address quickly and strongly the crackdown on protesters in Bahrain, Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen fell on deaf ears. In the absence of decisive action, a panel on human rights in the context of peaceful protests was held at the HRC in September. While the panel was itself a success, a general thematic debate with no concrete outcome was an inadequate response to the widespread human rights violations taking place in these countries.

At its last session of 2011, the HRC once again failed to address adequately the ongoing violence in Yemen, adopting a resolution which merely asked Yemen to investigate its own crimes, ignoring a clear recommendation for international investigations by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In addition, the HRC remained silent while over 12,000 civilians were tried in military courts, more than 90 people killed in demonstrations, and unprecedented attacks against CSOs and human rights defenders took place in Egypt under military rule since the fall of Mubarak.

The degree of attention and action by the UN to promote and protect human rights and democracy within the Arab region during 2011 is historically unparalleled, and CSOs have been able to significantly contribute to the processes and outcomes of the HRC. However, the events of 2011 also emphasise the political limitations, selectivity and double standards associated with the protection and promotion of human rights within the region. Much more needs to be done before the HRC can truly be said to be responsive to the victims of human rights violations and civil society on the ground.

The UN Security Council and the Responsibility to Protect

In the absence of a system of global government endowed with the powers of legislature and enforcement, the UN Security Council (UNSC) is the primary body tasked with the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. It remains, of course, badly flawed by its unfair

composition, which privileges its five permanent members and excludes others, and the prevalence of national interests which often prevents decisive action on many issues.

The brutal government response to the uprising in Libya in 2011 helped bring the issue of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) to the UNSC, and demonstrated the complexity of applying it in practice. The R2P is conceived as the residual responsibility of the international community of states to use force if necessary to protect citizens from egregious human rights violations, if their government is unable or unwilling to do so.³⁵ In 2011, there was sustained civil society campaigning for its adoption and implementation.

In March 2011, following significant global advocacy, and the suspension of the Libyan government's HRC membership, the UNSC passed the controversial Resolution 1973, which for the first time employed the rationale of the R2P to authorise a military intervention in Libya, which resulted in the eventual collapse of the Gaddafi regime.³⁶ The UNSC resolution was embroiled in controversy and criticism, which grew as a result of NATO's broad interpretation of the mandate granted by Resolution 1973, and fed suspicions of national interests serving as the underlying rationale for military intervention.

“Sustained civil society efforts were not able to materially change the Syrian government's use of response tactics similar to those attempted in Libya.”

While the need for the protection of civilians facing a state response of maximum violence seems clear, the invasion of Libya enabled by the UNSC resolution can be seen as a pyrrhic victory for civil society campaigning on R2P: the ensuing war resulted in an estimated 30,000 deaths, and rampant human rights abuses by rebel as well as state forces.³⁷ Ultimately this can be seen to have encouraged a more conservative approach at the UNSC in response to the next major conflict in MENA, in Syria.

Civil society actors employed similar advocacy strategies over Syria as they did with Libya, and while these resulted in an HRC fact-finding mission, three special HRC sessions and the appointment of a country Special Rapporteur, a bid for withdrawal of Syria's seat in the HRC was unsuccessful, while UNSC action remained stymied by the vetoes of the Chinese and Russian governments. Sustained civil society efforts were not able to materially change the Syrian government's use of response tactics similar to those attempted in Libya. Motivating for a military intervention on the basis of R2P after NATO's disputed interpretation of its Libyan mandate was impossible, and the ad hoc application of the R2P in Libya can be judged to have set back R2P's cause.

As discussed in this report's section on protest and activism, the outcomes of the myriad of uprisings in the Middle East and the eventual legacy of the Arab Spring are incredibly uncertain. However, it is clear that the Arab Spring was a clarion call heard around the world from oppressed peoples for peace and prosperity, and fragmented world powers were unable to put their self-interests aside and respond to their demands for basic human rights in a principled and effective manner.

17TH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (COP17)

Introduction

Civil society representatives from international, regional, national and local CSOs, indigenous human rights defenders, scientists, academics, trade unionists and students converged on Durban, South Africa for COP17 in late November 2011 to demand the creation of a fair, ambitious and legally binding deal to prevent the catastrophic effects of unmitigated climate change. As discussed in this report's section on civil society and crisis, climate change affects weather patterns, and therefore can increase the impact and likelihood of natural disasters.



What was at stake at COP17?

The dismal COP15 in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2009, challenged belief in the value of the multilateral process. Civil society felt excluded from the process. As COP17 was touted by South Africa's government as 'Africa's COP' and 'the 'People's COP', expectations and hopes for COP17 were high.³⁸

The two key demands of the most prominent CSOs which participated in COP17, based on an analysis of official statements issued ahead of the meeting, were: (i) securing an agreement to negotiate a post-Kyoto Protocol climate regime; and (ii) the operationalisation of the Green Climate Fund, which it is envisaged would be used by developing countries to finance adaptation to climate change and low carbon development.³⁹

With the expiry date fast approaching in 2012 of the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment, which sets binding targets for 37 industrialised countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, an imperative at COP17 was to lay the foundation for a new agreement subscribed to by most governments, and in particular, governments of those countries primarily responsible for the bulk of greenhouse gas emissions. As such, there was an advocacy push to ensure a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol and to obtain the mandate to negotiate a legally binding instrument to replace it, and for this to be adopted by no later than 2015.

“As COP17 was touted by South Africa's government as 'Africa's COP' and 'the 'People's COP', expectations and hopes were high.”

Outcome and civil society reactions to COP17

After little initial progress in the first week of COP17, an agreement was eventually secured more than a day after the meeting was supposed to end. The two major advances made at COP17 were (i) an agreement to negotiate another, more inclusive treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocol, to take effect in 2020; and (ii) pledges to the Green Climate Fund by developed countries of up to US\$30bn in 2012 and US\$100bn per year until 2020.

As a stopgap measure, during the negotiation period for a new treaty, the Kyoto Protocol will continue to apply. It is hoped that the new treaty will include developing countries that are major emitters, have deeper emission reductions and be agreed by 2015.

After COP17 many CSOs condemned the agreement as postponing action until 2020. Heavily involved CSOs believe the extension of the Kyoto Protocol will have detrimental effects, as the targets and commitments agreed by governments do not meet what almost all climate scientists believe is necessary to prevent the onset of a climate crisis. Although the launch of the Green Climate Fund was applauded as a progressive measure, concern was expressed that no source of public funds has been identified.

Access and influence

CSOs' disappointment with the outcomes of COP17 seem to reflect the limited opportunities for CSOs to influence the process. The 7km distance between the civil society-led People's Space and the formal negotiation rooms is emblematic of the restriction of entry points for CSOs, which is characterised by tiered levels of access that make it harder to develop civil society consensus. CSOs granted the appropriate accreditation found themselves within the literal tent, while other CSOs found themselves on the wrong side of the barricade, outside at the People's Space.

“CSOs' disappointment with the outcomes of COP17 reflect the limited opportunities for CSOs to influence the process.”

Civil society participation in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process as a whole is extremely restricted. A UNFCCC civil participation workshop held in Bonn, Germany in June 2011 noted that the voices of traditionally marginalised groups, such as indigenous people, and gender, youth and faith-based organisations, have largely been ignored, censored and sidelined in negotiations.⁴⁰ It also noted that negotiations on key issues



are often held in closed sessions with no participation from civil society, and access to negotiation documents is restricted to state representatives. Opportunities for accredited CSOs to comment in negotiations are rare and frequently restricted to one minute.⁴¹

Accredited CSOs’ participation at COP meetings is confined mostly to side events, workshops, exhibits and observing negotiations. For an event with a huge amount of people present, as the table below shows, opportunities to engage in meaningful activities that achieve influence are very limited. In the numbers game of COP, with more observers than actors, most people will go home disappointed, and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that one of the main functions of such mass bystander participation is window-dressing.

Participation statistics of accredited parties and organisations at COP17		
	States/Organisations	Registered participants
Parties	192	6,164
Observer States	2	8
United Nations secretariat units and bodies	23	327
Specialised agencies and related organisations	20	278
Intergovernmental organisations	52	486
Non-governmental organisations	707	5,884
Total observer organisations	802	6,975
Media	545	1,423
Total participation	2343	21,545

The structure of the UNFCCC negotiations and the largely ceremonial and symbolic roles of CSOs beg the question of whether and how civil society can genuinely challenge and impact on states’ stance on issues amidst highly technical, intricate and drawn out diplomatic processes. A related question is the classic one of how civil society negotiates between rage and responsibility: how can CSOs that have observer status inside the negotiations offer a route to influence for the radical demands made at such venues as the People’s Space? How can both these civil society camps stay connected and feed off each others’ energies and analysis?⁴²

“A related question is the classic one of how civil society negotiates between rage and responsibility.”

Given the limits of what can be achieved at large, brief, formal meetings at which civil society most often does not have a seat at the table, investments in advocacy by CSOs towards their national governments to influence positions in advance of meetings may be more beneficial. Melita Steele from Greenpeace Africa said of her organisation’s efforts to engage with the South African government:

“Before a meeting such as COP17 is when different organisations need to be going to the Department of Environmental Affairs and asking what the negotiation position is, inquiring about how it’s developing and sharing their demands. It’s difficult because much of it is happening behind closed doors, but it is a dialogue. It’s the individual lobbying by organisations that the department needs to hear.”⁴³

Spotlight on South African civil society and COP17

Another way to assess international summits is to consider the impact they have on the civil society of their host countries. While environmental civil society in South Africa is still nascent, the hosting of COP17 offered an opportunity for environmental groups to bond and raise their profile, at least temporarily. Many in civil society in South Africa recognised the opportunity, which spurred the formation of the ad-hoc C17 Committee, through which a number of groups combined to promote the emergent voice of civil society as an alternative to the official climate change policies of South Africa both domestically and internationally.



C17 functioned as a platform from which different organisations could undertake their own strategies for participation at COP17. The C17 Committee organised the People's Space as an alternative space outside the official COP17 venues for open use by civil society. The People's Space played host to the Conference of Youth (COY7), panel discussions, art exhibitions, the global labour movement's Pavilion of Work and film festivals.

“Messages in the People's Space were contradictory and did not cohere as organisations pursued distinct agendas.”

According to first-hand accounts received by CIVICUS, messages in the People's Space were contradictory and did not cohere, as organisations pursued distinct agendas. Outside the International Convention Centre (ICC), where the negotiations were taking place, civil society was visible, but again did not achieve consensus on their messaging, demands and advocacy strategies. On the whole, CSOs outside the negotiations did not establish a united front and did not present tangible recommendations or targets to delegations.

A Global Day of Action, coordinated by C17, attracted over 12,000 people from a wide range of activist organisations. A 10,000 strong march from the People's Space to the ICC received strong media attention. The march was intended to end with the delivery of a memorandum of understanding to COP17 President Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko and UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christian Figueres. Shockingly, official COP17 volunteers wearing the uniforms of the host metropolitan authority, alleged to be aligned with the African National Congress Youth League, threatened and attacked a number of protesters, despite the heavy police presence.⁴⁴

Looking forward: Calls for reform for increased civil society participation in the UNFCCC

Other international processes such as the Aarhus Convention (on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters), the Convention on Biodiversity and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the UNHRC, entrench participation rights in various ways, and as such offer some models for replication.

“The opposition to reform rarely comes from the multilateral agencies that organise these large global meetings, as they are often ahead of their member governments.”

Even one of the Convention's permanent bodies, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice has called for democracy, full participation and transparency in monitoring and evaluating country commitments and actions in the UNFCCC process.⁴⁵ The opposition to reform rarely comes from the multilateral agencies that organise these large global meetings, as they are often ahead of their member governments. Privately, staff members of such organisations often express frustration at slow progress, bureaucratic and formalistic drags, and the lowest common denominator outcomes of achieving consensus amongst negotiating governments.

Areas where civil society might focus its advocacy efforts include asking for all UNFCCC documents and proposals to be made available to allow for submissions from civil society; and for negotiations that pertain to the creation of new UNFCCC processes, and in particular the institutional structure of the Green Climate Fund, to be open to input from civil society.

A further challenge is that the UN climate negotiations take place in isolation from discussions on other critical matters, such as economic issues and financial and trade arrangements more generally, and indeed processes which seek to reform multilateral institutions. CIVICUS maintains that the global crises the world is experiencing – economic, political, social and environmental – are connected, and so processes which seek to address aspects of these must also demonstrate awareness of connections and



attempt to address them. For example, a discussion on the Green Climate Fund is inextricably linked to the broader campaign for the FTT, as a plausible source of financing.

The key forthcoming multilateral meeting in this regard is the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, taking place in Brazil, June 2012. This is the arena in which the connections between the major challenges of the world today need to be understood and made explicit. A logical implication of attempting to make these connections, and of realising them in practice, is to model good practice in welcoming a diversity of voices into the heart of the negotiations.

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PART 2

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILES





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ABOUT THE CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILES

The 30 civil society profiles contained in this report are based on the research undertaken by CIVICUS and country partners as part of the 2008 to 2011 CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project.

The CSI builds indicators on a scale of 0-100 which assess the strength of civil society on the five key dimensions of: the levels of civic participation; the institutional arrangements of CSOs; the extent to which CSOs practise progressive values; the perceived impact of civil society; and the external environment in which civil society operates. It is from these percentage scales that CSI numerical values given in the text are drawn. When the text refers to percentages of CSOs, this implies percentages of CSOs surveyed. All such values have been rounded into whole numbers.

Sometimes, published information from the World Values Survey was substituted by country partners for the public opinion survey for reasons of cost. In addition, the CSI makes use of some available external indicators from other indices, such as those published by Freedom House, Transparency International and World Bank Governance Indicators. CIVICUS is grateful for usage of those indicators.

Beyond the surveys, the CSI is an inclusive process of convening and consultation. A broad-based national advisory committee, made up of people from different parts of civil society, and those outside civil society, is drawn together to oversee the project. The country partners and advisory committee are tasked with consulting as wide a range of civil society as possible, beyond formalised NGOs and other CSOs.

One of major outputs produced from this process by the country partners and CIVICUS is a comprehensive Analytical Country Report. The civil society profiles presented here are largely distilled from the material published in the Analytical Country Reports in 2011, which analysed information mostly gathered in 2010 and 2011. CIVICUS has worked with partners to update this information to take into account the significant developments that took place as 2011 progressed and to verify wherever possible that the information presented is accurate and in keeping with consensual civil society positions. CIVICUS is grateful to CSI country partners and, in some additional cases, the inputs of members of the Affinity Group of National Associations, a group of CIVICUS members which are national civil society umbrella networks.

Each national process is supplied with CIVICUS' working definition of civil society but is asked to adjust it according to national nuances. One area where countries vary is in the inclusion of political

parties as part of civil society. In some countries there was a clear view that political parties form part of civil society; in others there was certainty that they do not. In all cases CIVICUS has respected the decision that was arrived at nationally. It should also be noted here that the CSI methodology makes a distinction between socially-oriented CSOs (those which have an emphasis on association in its own right and do not exist to seek to advance a particular interest or change) and politically-oriented CSOs (those which combine explicitly to advance interests and positions and which seek some kind of policy or political change). Again, the classification of CSOs into these two groupings is determined at the national level.

The civil society profiles contain the following sections:

- **Context and environment for civil society:** the main influencers of the environment and space in which civil society works, including recent political events; economic, political and social power relations; experience of the legal and regulatory environment for civil society.
- **Make up of civil society:** what some of the common types of CSOs are in a country; what their strengths are in relation to each other; how they relate to other types of CSOs.
- **Participation:** to what extent people are members of and volunteer in CSOs; what other arenas people participate in, including informal associational activity and individual political action.
- **Public trust:** the trust in different types of institutions, and other indicators of social capital; the perception of corruption in society, and in CSOs.
- **Networks:** the extent to which CSOs join formal networks, and network informally with other CSOs.
- **Resources:** the financial and human resource conditions of CSOs.
- **Impact:** the perceived impact both CSOs representatives, and informed external stakeholders, believe CSOs are making, both on the social situation of citizens, and at the policy level.
- **Recommendations:** some of the key recommendations which emerged from the convening process of the CSI for improving the state of civil society in a particular context, which may be addressed either at people within civil society or those outside it, usually governments.

The civil society profiles contain a selection of indicators from the CSI and, where available, indicators from other sources relevant to assessing the environment for civil society. Four country partners – Guinea, Rwanda, Senegal and Tanzania – applied an earlier version of the CSI methodology that scored indicators on a scale of 0 to 3, and therefore their CSI numerical indicators are not comparable with those of the other 27 here. Similarly, some country partners completed their quantitative data sets but did not subsequently publish country reports, and CSI rankings for countries are therefore ranked on a scale of 1 to 33.

In addition, the civil society profiles provide a few web links to sites which may be of interest for people wanting to learn more about civil society in a particular country. These usually include the website of the CSI country partner and, when applicable, that of the member of the Affinity Group of National Associations. For reasons of space it is not possible to provide a comprehensive list of links, and listing of a website does not imply endorsement of its contents by CIVICUS. Similarly, flags and maps are provided for visual purposes only and do not imply any opinion concerning the legal status of any territory or its borders. Monetary figures are given in US\$ unless stated otherwise and conversions were correct at time of writing.



Basic facts	
Capital	Tirana
Official language	Albanian
Population	3.0m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$3,678

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: ALBANIA

Despite progress achieved towards political rights and freedoms since the end of communism, the political context in Albania remains challenged by a low level of state effectiveness, with corruption and the rule of law key areas where reform is still needed. It is difficult for CSOs to achieve influence, due to internal challenges, limited dialogue and inefficient interactions with the state, and a generally distrustful attitude of citizens towards key institutions and processes, including civil society itself. While the institutions of civil society are well established, very few CSOs have an active membership base, demonstrating a pattern of largely donor-driven CSOs. Low levels of civic participation represent a barrier to CSO success, while there is also lack of coordination, both within civil society and with other sectors.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Key contemporary issues are poverty, high unemployment, widespread corruption, organised crime, poor infrastructure, environmental pollution, human rights, the rule of law and the EU. The major pillars of the Albanian public sphere are the government, the two main competing political parties (the ruling centre-right Democratic Party and the opposition Socialist Party) and law enforcement agencies. Other important actors are universities, international donors and the media, which can all to some extent exert influence on the government.

Local elections were held in May 2011, according to the constitution and electoral code, which was agreed by the two main parties in 2008. However, the EU's assessment of the elections was negative, concluding that the electoral framework needs to be reformed. Albania is formally considered a 'potential candidate' for EU membership, but its hopes of progress have been disrupted by these events, as the local elections were considered key to moving on from a two-year political crisis caused by the Socialist Party's rejection of the 2009 parliamentary election results and resultant boycott of parliament. The July 2012 presidential elections will therefore prove a key test of the functioning of political competition. Albania's aspiration towards EU membership represents an opportunity for civil society to push for a more enabling environment, given that accession elsewhere has forced more inclusive civil society policy and opened new civil society space.

Some recent positive efforts by the government can be seen towards improving the situation for civil society. In October 2007, the Council of Ministers

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 55.1. Civic Engagement: 47.6; Level of Organisation: 58.1; Practice of Values: 58.6; Perception of Impact: 51.2; External Environment: 60.2. Ranked 9 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	7.5%
CSOs network membership	73.6%
Policy activity	78.5%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.739. Ranked 70 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 3
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3.1. Ranked 95 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.27. Percentile rank: 45.5. Rule of law: -0.44. Percentile rank: 40.8
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 34.4. Ranked 96 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: moderate. Score: 74 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 61. Ranked 121 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 5.81. Ranked 87 out of 167

established a separate budget line to support civil society, while in March 2009, parliament approved a law on the organisation and functioning of a civil society support agency. The objective of the agency is to encourage the sustainable development of CSOs through the provision of technical and financial assistance for capacity-building initiatives. Additionally, the Civil Society Charter – a non-legally binding framework for cooperation - was developed through a consultative process between government officials and civil society representatives. The Charter is viewed as a political commitment which underscores civil society's role as a key development partner. While a general upward trend in the willingness of state agencies to cooperate with civil society can be noted, it is often characterised by a pro forma approach. It is also noteworthy that the success of many of these reforms can be attributed to support from international donors and partners.

Despite these developments, there are still very few government ministries and departments that have established formal mechanisms for engaging with civil society, and their administrative capacity to do so is often inadequate. This is reflected in the fact that 56% of CSOs surveyed view civil society-state dialogue as limited. Further, only 41% of external stakeholders assess civil society's relations with parliament as effective, and only 43% view

relations with the government as effective, rising to 57% for relations with the judiciary and a more encouraging 77% for relations with local government.

Freedom House assesses Albania as a partly free country, and 28% of CSOs surveyed by CIVICUS state that they have experienced illegitimate restriction or attack from local or central government, while 39% believe that the legal framework for civil society is quite limiting. In July 2010, parliament enacted a law on 'financial inspection' that has potential impact on civil society, without a consultative process. In January 2011, a corruption scandal involving the Deputy Prime Minister resulted in public unrest, with tens of thousands of peaceful protesters taking to the streets of Tirana demanding early elections. Three protesters were killed in the ensuing clash between protesters and police.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Human rights organisations were among the first to be established following the end of communism, while the late 1990s economic crisis, caused by the collapse of pyramid schemes, and the Kosovan war that led to a large increase in refugees, saw a dramatic growth of CSOs, with almost 49% of registered NGOs established between 1997 and 2001. This period also saw the development of think tanks, conflict resolution and management organisations (especially following the revival of the Kanun – a body of traditional laws - and ensuing blood feuds), organisations dealing with landmines, and women's rights, environment, economic development, youth and media organisations. The business community, unions, CBOs and religious groups are all considered as important segments of society, but links between these are minimal.

Compared to the distribution of CSOs in most countries, where service-oriented organisations dominate, institutional civil society in Albania has a high representation of civic groups, human rights organisations, think tanks and local capacity development NGOs, along with a smaller number of women's groups. It can therefore be broadly characterised as an advocacy rather than service-oriented sector, reflecting a heavy donor role. CSOs are also concentrated in the capital, Tirana, with much fewer and weaker CSOs in rural communities, even though Albania remains a predominantly agriculture-based economy.



Civil society activity after 2005 saw a growing tendency of civil society leaders to transition into politics, blurring the boundaries between the two sectors in the public's opinion and fuelling disillusionment.

PARTICIPATION

Albanian citizens display little willingness to take part in civil activity, and there have been few initiatives that focus on developing an active citizenry, suggesting an enduring challenge to civil society success. A relatively small middle class and high levels of inequalities are also factors behind low rates of participation. Only 18% of people surveyed describe themselves as active members of social organisations such as sports clubs and voluntary or service organisations, with volunteering at the same level. Levels of participation in informal social associational activities are higher, but at around 29%, this is still low compared to other countries. Individual activism, such as signing a petition or taking part in a demonstration, is also low, at 28%.

Political engagement is slightly higher, with 24% membership in more politically-oriented CSOs, and 30% volunteering. Formal volunteering in organisations still has an image problem, given the compulsory voluntary service that existed under communism. The main motivations for participating are shared values (44%) and pursuit of personal interests (31%).

PUBLIC TRUST

A significant lack of public trust and interpersonal confidence, and high levels of intolerance towards distinct social groups, make the environment for CSO operations difficult. Low levels of participation go alongside low levels of public confidence in political organisations, with political parties and labour unions enjoying the lowest levels of confidence of citizens, and many types of CSOs and state organisations having the trust of only 40%. However, religious organisations, charitable and humanitarian organisations and women's organisations have public trust as high as 60%. Most trust is exercised in international bodies such as the EU, UN and NATO, where the average level of trust is 80%. It is also noteworthy that the private sector and media enjoy low confidence, as on average only 33% of people trust these institutions.

Albania is ranked 95th out of 183 on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, with slightly higher levels of perceived corruption than most other Balkan countries. Civil society is affected by this: 38% of CSOs surveyed believe corruption in the sector is frequent and 27% that it is occasional, while over half of external stakeholders consulted believe civil society lacks transparency.

NETWORKS

Albanian civil society considers itself as highly networked, with 73% of CSOs surveyed being members of at least one support network. A total of 92 different networks and umbrella organisations are identified, with 48 of these being national structures and 44 Balkans, European or global networks. In addition, substantial cooperation goes on outside formal networks: 88% CSOs have met with other CSOs and 89% exchanged information with them within a three month period.

High reliance on donor support has been identified as one of the weaknesses of networks; in the main networks deliver results and members remain active only for as long as there is donor funding.

RESOURCES

Having built up a good infrastructure in the past two decades of donor support, which saw a relatively stable financial support base, CSOs must now adapt to donor withdrawal. However, most

CSOs apparently do not have plans that go beyond the existing framework of opportunities and conditions. The majority of CSOs surveyed, 57%, report that foreign, non-EU donors are their main source of financial support, followed by government (18%) and Albanian corporations (10%). Only a minor portion of CSOs, 2% each, cite service fees, individual donations or membership fees as a significant funding source. Although the EU has allocated considerable funds for civil society, which are expected to grow, problems that have been experienced in other countries, where CSOs have to be of a large size to navigate bureaucratic application procedures and receive funding, mean that only around 8% of CSOs expect to take advantage of this. The government also seems unprepared to increase its support. 75% of surveyed CSOs believe that donor priorities are very influential in shaping civil society's agenda, although 72% also believe they have had some impact in influencing donor priorities.

The cost and sustainability of human resources is one of the most problematic issues for CSOs, which are predominantly project-based, receiving funding on an annual or grant basis. Only 16% of CSOs surveyed are assessed as having a sustainable human resource base, defined as having no more than 25% voluntary staff.

IMPACT

60% of CSOs surveyed believe civil society has tangible impact on transparent governance and 42% on tackling corruption. It can be noted that these are also key areas of donor focus. External stakeholders rate impact on governance as higher but only a quarter of them believe CSOs have tangible impact on another issue they identify as important, poverty reduction and economic development. 73% of CSO representatives and 60% of external stakeholders believe impact is tangible on the key issues of social development, education and support to vulnerable and marginalised groups.

When asked about the policy activity of their own organisation 74% of CSOs declared that they had pushed for a policy change in the past two years but only 38% of those that did so reported success in their advocacy, suggesting systemic barriers to advocacy or enduring capacity challenges. There are however some past examples of government consulting civil society in the preparation of public policies, for example, the national social and economic development policy, and more recently on the laws on domestic violence, legal aid and consumer protection, the first two of which emanated from draft laws proposed by CSOs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A key recommendation for Albanian CSOs is to initiate actions that expand and deepen people's participation in CSO actions and structures, including initiatives that increase public confidence in CSOs through enhancing internal transparency, accountability and democratic decision-making. There is also need to increase communication and outreach towards citizens and communities; improve advocacy efforts with government actors and the donor community; undertake campaigns

to promote values of non-discrimination, tolerance, and inclusion of marginalised groups, such as women, Roma, sexual minorities and people with disabilities; and intensify cooperation with Balkan and European networks and integrate with EU-based civil society. From the state, there is a need to introduce a new taxation and financial reporting legislative framework and to implement the Charter for Civil Society.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Institute for Democracy and Media - www.idmalbania.org

Albania Helsinki Committee - www.ahc.org.al

Citizen's Advocacy Office - www.cao.al

Institute for Development Research and Alternatives - www.idra-al.org

MJAFT! Movement - www.mjajt.org

Open Society Foundation Albania - www.soros.al



Basic facts	
Capital	Buenos Aires
Official language	Spanish
Population	41.8m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$9,124

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: ARGENTINA

Argentine civil society has earned higher public visibility and strengthened its capacity for dialogue with government and the private sector in recent years. A wider acknowledgement of the role of civil society by government can be seen in the creation of new areas within government which include in their mission the strengthening of civil society and CSOs, and the development of some formal consultation channels, such as consultative boards, participatory budgets and citizens' audits. Limiting factors, however, include a continuing low level of trust between civil society and state, a lack of continuity in government approaches to civil society consultation and a tendency to involve CSOs at the level of implementation and consultation, rather than in the real design of policies. CSOs believe that they are hindered through fragmentation and lack of coordination, and also face challenges of high state centralism, political favouritism and a welfarist culture.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Left of centre President Fernandez's power was consolidated in the general election of October 2011, in which she won an absolute majority of the popular vote (54%) with the highest winning margin (36%) since the restoration of democracy in 1983. The president's power is buttressed by supportive groupings, such as labour unions, human rights organisations and some grassroots organisations, which formed in response to the 2001-2002 financial crisis and which have now solidified into social movements associated with political parties. Also important for the governing coalition, which has a majority in both Chambers of Congress, are provincial and municipal governments, most of which support the current Presidency. Formal political opposition became fragmented after the election, with many other political parties and figures losing public support and visibility. Some political tension exists between government and the media and private sector. An open dispute began when the government tried to reduce the influence of some of the major media groups that take a persistently critical position on the government, while tensions are still unresolved with the private sector following the imposition of interventionist rural and industrial economic policies.

Argentina's recent socio-economic history is one of recovery from its 2001-2002 financial crisis, which saw 20% unemployment and 50% poverty in 2002. The following years witnessed a decade of economic expansion and the extension of the social safety net for low income

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 48.6. Civic Engagement: 38.8; Level of Organisation: 52.6; Practice of Values: 39.6; Perception of Impact: 47.6; External Environment: 64.6. Ranked 24 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	17.6%
CSOs network membership	46.5%
Policy activity	67.7%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.797. Ranked 45 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 2. Civil liberties score: 2
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3. Ranked 100 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.21. Percentile rank: 46.9. Rule of law: -0.58. Percentile rank: 32.7
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 14. Ranked 47 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: strong. Score: 87 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 41. Ranked 145 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 6.84. Ranked 51 out of 167

families. However, problems such as unemployment, poverty and inequality persist. Inflation remains a challenge: the rate is disputed, but on some rankings it was believed to be the third highest in the world in 2010, and is estimated as second in Latin America after Venezuela at the time of writing.

Electoral processes are deemed to be broadly free and fair and there are guarantees of political rights and freedoms. However, freedom of access to public information is restricted, media freedom has some limits and there are some abuses of political authority. Consequently, only 43% of CSO representatives surveyed believe the legal and political environment for CSOs is enabling and nearly a quarter report having experienced attacks or illegitimate restrictions on their operations from local or central government within the past 10 years. CSOs report particular grievances about access to and transparency of government funds, laws and policies on donations, tax exemptions and labour rules, and procedures for gaining legal entity status.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The period following the end of dictatorship in 1983 saw an unprecedented growth and increase in the diversity of civil society.

Emerging organisation types post-dictatorship included think tanks and research centres, community clubs and unions, cooperatives, cultural organisations, self-help groups, protest movements and corporate foundations. Particularly prominent newcomers on the scene were CSOs promoting and defending rights. Some of these surged during the dictatorship in pursuit of truth and justice for the state's crimes, but many others followed, broadening their objectives to other issues of rights. Examples include CSO related to environmental issues, women's rights, minority rights, citizenship participation and democracy promotion. Persistent socio-economic problems together with the decentralisation policies implemented in the 1990s saw the creation of new arenas of operation for CSOs at the local level such as education, nutrition, health, housing, and, especially after the 2001-2002 crisis, the growth of CSOs focussing on poverty with approaches such as microcredit and workers' management of enterprise. Protest movements also grew into a new actor in the political arena, using forms of dissent such as blocking streets and pot-banging. Some of these movements gradually turned into more formalised organisations and networks offering strong ties between local and political arenas. Alongside this growth in the last two decades, other important developments were the creation of organisations with a specific mission to try to strengthen civil society, the academic study of the sector, the development of corporate foundations, and increasing media coverage of civil society activities. Most recent developments include organisations for emerging social causes such as human trafficking, drug addictions, delinquency and traffic accidents.

In civil society, the most prominent actors are assessed as the ruling Justicialista Party, the unions belonging to the CGT (General Confederation of Labour), rural and industrial sector organisations, and the Catholic Church and its related organisations. NGOs constitute a wide range of organisations and networks with little internal coordination and wide differences in their relationships with other sectors such as media, donors, the state and private sector.

PARTICIPATION

Participation and membership in CSOs is low, with participation in socially-oriented CSOs higher than in politically-oriented ones: only 26% of Argentineans consider themselves an active member



of a social CSO and only 11% of a political CSO. Volunteering for such organisations is even lower than membership. Volunteering as a whole experienced a noticeable decline from 2002 (32%) to 2008 (19%), although it recovered a little in 2010 (22%). This remains, however, lower than world and regional averages. Regarding the diversity of civil society, while women are well represented – 57% of the CSO workforce is female - poor people and the rural population are not.

Informal participation is higher: around 43% of people report participating in informal associational activities, while 32% take part in individual acts of political activism.

PUBLIC TRUST

Only around one in four of the population trust civil society as a whole, when trust in different CSO types is averaged, which is much lower than the Latin American average. This result reflects particularly low levels of trust in political parties and unions, each with 8% trust, and there are also pervasive low levels of trust in other types of institutions, such as the public service (8%), Congress (14%), the justice system (20%), corporations (25%) and the press (36%). Amidst this general picture of distrust, particular sections of civil society occupy the four highest spots: 68% trust charitable or humanitarian organisations, 62% the environmental movement, 56% the church and 40% trust the women's movement. Perceptions that society is characterised by high levels of individualism and distrust also affect perceptions of civil society. More positively, levels of tolerance for minorities and marginalised groups, such as gay and lesbian people, immigrants and people with HIV/AIDS, are far higher in Argentina than regional and world averages.

Argentina is ranked at joint 100th out of 183 in the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, indicating much higher levels of perceived political corruption than in neighbouring Chile or Uruguay. Regarding corruption within civil society, over half of CSO representatives surveyed believe corruption cases are either frequent or very frequent, a perception likely to have been strengthened by a high profile embezzlement scandal in a CSO run by a close ally of the president in 2010.

NETWORKS

CSO networks are characterised by their diversity and differing levels of formality, with rising use of ICTs driving new forms of interaction. Argentina however scores below the Latin American average for CSO network membership, at 47% of CSOs compared to the average of 58%, although the Argentinean figure is assessed to have grown by 10% in the last ten years.

Large scale networks are seen as weak, particularly those which seek to promote the interests of the sector as a whole. Similarly the degree to which CSOs informally exchange information, while standing at just over 75%, is a little lower than the Latin American average. There is a low level of relationships between CSOs working on different issues, and clear gaps in exchange between different types of civil society actors, such as between NGOs and unions or business groupings, and also between political movements, religious organisations and sports clubs. Organisations linked to universities are also not seen as well connected to other CSO types. Civil society believes itself to have minimal international interaction, something reflected in low membership of international networks, few interactions with foreign CSOs, and very low levels of foreign aid.

“Civil society believes itself to have minimal international interaction.”

RESOURCES

Volunteers in CSOs outnumber paid employees by about four to one, with about 60% of CSOs relying on unpaid staff only. There is a high rotation of personnel, but about two thirds of CSOs

assess their human resources to be adequate. This can be compared to 40% which regard their technological resources as adequate and only 17% which think the same about their financial resources. CSOs in Argentina are highly dependent on government, with one in ten CSOs obtaining 90% of their funds from the state. 45% of CSOs have only one or two sources of funding, and for 33% of these, one of those two sources is the state. Membership fees and private donations are the other significant sources of funding, with 47% and 41% of CSOs having these sources.

IMPACT

CSOs assess themselves as having most impact on the promotion of rights (72% surveyed considered impact to be high or intermediate), education and culture (67%), and support to the poor and other vulnerable groups (65%). Lower impact is perceived on the promotion of good governmental (28%) and corporate (31%) practices, and tackling insecurity and delinquency (33%). External experts largely agree with this picture, but rate CSOs' ability to help protect the environment and natural resources more highly (63% vs. 57%), and their impact on unemployment lower (42% vs. 51%). Over half of CSOs surveyed assess that the sector has a high or medium impact on social issues, but there is also realism about their ability to tackle significant and complex social issues beyond their immediate capacity, and an acknowledgement that civil society's treatment of issues tends to be somewhat palliative and in response to immediate and specific needs, rather than as part of a medium or long term strategy.

68% of CSOs surveyed have made some attempt to influence public policies over the last two years, and 49% of these were able to cite at least one successful attempt. At the same time the picture is complex: CSOs assess their policy influence pessimistically, with 64% saying the sector makes none or a limited impact on policies. Among external stakeholders, over 70% of those surveyed could cite an example of civil society successfully influencing public policy within a two year period, but only 44% rate the overall policy impact of the sector highly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the strengthening of Argentine civil society include: promoting public figures as ambassadors for civil society and its organisations; creating public access resource centres on CSO strengthening; encouraging university programmes to place students in CSOs as part of their studies; and stimulating the creation of local level bodies with a mandate to promote civil society and its organisations.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Social and Institutional Analysis and Development Group – GADIS - www.gadis.org.ar

Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina - www.uca.edu.ar

Argentine Network for International Cooperation – RACI - www.raci.org.ar

Social Sector Forum - www.forodelsectorsocial.org.ar



Basic facts	
Capital	Yerevan
Official language	Armenian
Population	2.97m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$3,031

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: ARMENIA

Civil society in Armenia appears to have made some progress in indigenising itself and addressing sustainability issues, amidst criticisms that it has been a foreign-led, donor-funded phenomenon. Civil society identifies the most pressing issues in Armenia today as corruption, with its deep-rooted, and limited freedom of expression. One of the defining characteristics of Armenia is the strong role of its large diaspora, which has a potentially more significant role to play in the future support of civil society.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Armenia now ranks as a lower middle income country, having grown significantly economically since independence, with poverty levels having reduced from 55% to 25% in the first decade of the 2000s. Some progress was also made on tackling inequality levels, but significant urban-rural divides exist. The global economic crisis served to reverse this rapid growth, with Armenia experiencing one of the most severe recessions in the world. Another challenge is the high outward migration of educated people. Armenia is one of the world's top exporters of people per capita, and at least twice as many Armenians live in the diaspora as in the country itself, estimated at 6 million compared to 3 million in Armenia. Remittances are therefore important, and yet these dropped by 30% between at the height of the crisis between 2008 and 2009.

The Armenian diaspora is therefore an important actor in the economy, politics and civil society, having played a role in shaping both Armenian independence and its resulting civil society. Within this there are distinct sub-groups, such as the Russian diaspora, which tends to have heavy business interests in Armenia, and the American diaspora, which tends to be engaged in political issues, such as those resulting from the Armenian Genocide of the early 20th century and the Nagorno-Karabakh War of the 1990s.

The most powerful forces within society are the president's administration, the ruling coalition parties and oligarchs and large national and international corporations. The prime minister is appointed by the president and is less influential. Other significant forces include local government bodies, the Central Bank of Armenia and business associations. The most recent presidential election, in 2008, was seen as unfair, and marked by post-election violence. Party

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 46.54. Civic Engagement: 37.4; Level of Organisation: 54.9; Practice of Values: 51.1; Perception of Impact: 35.1; External Environment: 54.2. Ranked 28 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	17.8%
CSOs network membership	39.4%
Policy activity	35.2%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.716. Ranked 86 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 6. Civil liberties score: 4
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 2.6. Ranked 129 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.15. Percentile rank: 49.8. Rule of law: -0.47. Percentile rank: 39.8
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 27. Ranked 77 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: moderate. Score: 72 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 101 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 4.09. Ranked 111 out of 167

politics is characterised by patronage and the judicial system is widely viewed as compromised.

Recently, previously undeveloped state-civil society and private sector-civil society linkages have started to evolve. Two state institutions now have codes of participatory cooperation with public organisations, which entail the formal involvement of CSOs. There is advocacy around the adoption of such a code across the government. Most laws are in line with international standards, but enforcement is weak. Around two thirds of CSOs surveyed believe the legal and regulatory framework to be at least moderately enabling, and registration can be done locally. However, the Law on Public Organisations outlaws direct economic activities, inhibiting funding diversification, and the law does not provide tax benefits for CSOs, which are taxed as businesses. Legal and regulatory weaknesses are also believed to hinder people from volunteering.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

There are currently around 5,000 registered CSOs. While associational life has a long history in Armenia, civil society in its modern form emerged after the break up of the Soviet Union, and was predominantly shaped by foreign forces. The influx of donor

funds led to a large growth of organised and goal-oriented NGOs, formed largely to promote values of democracy and human rights. As a result, the civil society discourse in Armenia has generally had a quite narrow focus, equating civil society with professional advocacy or service delivery NGOs.

The most powerful forces within civil society are international NGOs and the local CSOs they support, and civic entities led by former politicians and state officials. Also significant are some national advocacy groups, the Armenian Apostolic Church and the mass media. Some non legitimate CSOs have been set up by authorities and political parties, and there is a lack of independence in broadcast media. Polarisation of some CSOs around governing or opposition political parties is also an issue, which reduces trust in civil society.

PARTICIPATION

Armenia records low levels of participation. Only around 12% of people are members of a socially-oriented CSO, and only around 8% volunteer for one, while rates of political membership, at 9%, are no higher. Most political parties do not seek broad-based membership and do not connect with CSOs, while religious and cultural organisations enjoy the highest rates of participation. There is a chilling effect of past mandatory participation under communism on the current willingness to participate. Financial conditions are also a constraint: the lowest socio-economic class is the one that participates least, which implies that economic downturn is likely to have influenced participation. Further, many CSOs are critiqued for insufficiently capitalising on potential volunteers, and for providing a poor experience for those who volunteer. Those who are engaged, however, participate frequently and extensively. Around two thirds of people who participate in community activities do so at least once a month. Women and ethnic minorities are assessed to participate strongly in civil society, and around 80% of CSOs are estimated to be led by women.

There seems to be low potential for individual activism: 72% would never sign a petition, 71% never attend a demonstration and 86% never join a boycott. Against this, community participation in rural Armenia is strong, often expressed in the contribution of voluntary labour for community



infrastructure and local environmental maintenance initiatives. Informal, unmanaged volunteering is the dominant form of volunteering. However, the weakness is that this does not translate into an ability to influence the design of local policies and decisions over resource allocation. This suggests there is a need for CSOs to better engage with and provide channels for this high level of non-formal activity to connect with CSO activities.

PUBLIC TRUST

Public trust in CSOs stands at around 40%, which is higher than a 2007 study that established a figure of 18%. There is a long standing perception of CSOs, particularly NGOs, as consumers of grants and servers of foreign interests, although this new level suggests this may be changing. The highest level of trust, 78%, is accorded to church CSOs, followed by charitable and humanitarian organisations at 59%, women's organisations at 49% and environmental organisations at 48%. Confidence in political parties and unions is low: over 80% do not trust them.

Over half of CSO representatives believe corrupt practices in civil society are frequent or very frequent, although this contrasts with public opinion, with over half of people believing corruption in civil society to be very rare. Corruption is an endemic problem, with Armenia ranked 129th out of 183 on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. Critical areas for corruption are the judiciary, tax and customs, health, education and law enforcement. Government attempts to combat corruption are inconsistent and are yet to be seen to meet with success.

“Over half of people believe corruption in civil society to be very rare.”

NETWORKS

39% of CSOs report being members of a network. However, this could represent an improvement from a low level, given a figure of only 20% in 2007. Increased networking may to some extent be donor-driven, as networking is often a requirement of funding, and there are concerns about the sustainability of networks if donor support is not forthcoming. At least eight coalitions formed as a result of USAID grants for work around elections, three of which subsequently continued as networks. Around 60 CSOs now also network to collaborate with the National Assembly, resulting in ongoing work with parliamentary committees. Beyond formal network membership, 71% of CSOs meet other CSOs, and 64% regularly exchange information. Organisations that represent people from ethnic minorities have weak coordination, which is seen to inhibit their impact. International participation is felt to go beyond formal involvement in international networks, but most international connections are maintained by larger, capital-city based CSOs.

RESOURCES

19% of CSOs are entirely reliant on external donor funding and a further 21% rely on this for the greatest part of their budget. A recent decrease in foreign funding has seen weaker organisations fold, but there is acknowledgement that this may have driven up the perception of the overall quality of organised civil society, and therefore trust in it. There are the beginnings of funding diversification strategies amongst Armenian CSOs, and a government commitment to expanding the system of social contracting for welfare services, which has fed CSO expectations of state funding, although a challenge here is existing practices of favouritism and patronage exercised through state funding. Diasporic foundations are also an important part of the funding picture.

Many CSOs exist on a grant to grant basis, making the retention of staff difficult. Volunteers make up the nucleus of most CSOs, with around 80% of CSOs surveyed assessed as being reliant on them.

IMPACT

47% of CSO representatives surveyed believe that the sector makes some impact on freedom of expression, but only 27% that it makes headway on corruption, and external stakeholders consider these assessments as overstating impact. However, 48% of external stakeholders believe civil society is making a discernible impact on social issues. Education, social development and support for the poor and the marginalised are assessed as the areas in which CSOs achieve most influence. Only around 35% of CSOs reported pushing for a policy change, but 64% of these state that their policy was subsequently approved, suggesting unrealised potential to influence policy if the level of activity could be increased, although there are also concerns about reliance on personal contacts for policy influence, rather than systematised relationships with the state. External stakeholders assess the policy impact of civil society higher than people working in civil society itself, with the highest areas of influence being election-related issues and human rights.

Communication of success seems to be an issue here, perhaps reflecting a culture of prioritising reporting to donors rather than to other CSOs and the public. The environmental movement is seen as a sector that can be learned from as it mounts imaginative and attention grabbing public campaigns, with key factors of success being identified as mobilising local support, involving the diaspora, and proposing alternative solutions rather than simply campaigning against an issue. Organisational capacity is a hindrance to impact, while CSOs are also critiqued as pursuing short term goals and offering ad hoc activities, rather than working strategically.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Among recommendations to strengthen civil society in Armenia are: reaching out to non-formal volunteers to bring them into formal volunteering; developing new cooperation mechanisms for civil society internally; involving the diaspora in structured and deeper ways; and strengthening civil society watchdog functions to address the lingering issues of political patronage, clientelism and corruption.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Counterpart International Armenia - www.counterpart.am

Civic Development and Partnership Foundation - <http://cdpf.am>

Professionals for Civil Society - www.ngo.am

Caucasus Research Resource Centre Armenia - www.crrc.am

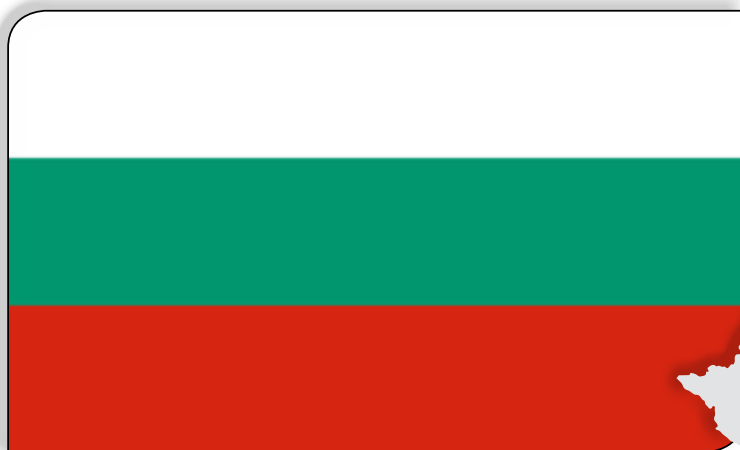
Open Society Foundations Armenia - www.osi.am

NGO Centre - www.ngoc.am

Eurasia Partnership Foundation Armenia - <http://epfound.am>

Civil Society Institute - www.csi.am

Centre for the Development of Civil Society - www.cdcs.am



Basic facts	
Capital	Sofia
Official language	Bulgarian
Population	7.1m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$6,325

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: BULGARIA

The context for civil society in Bulgaria has changed considerably since the country joined the EU in 2007. EU accession has altered the civil society context in four principal ways: it has shifted the locus of much decision-making from the national to the EU level; implied by this is a need for new partnerships, including in decision- and policy-making, thus shifting the advocacy targets and agendas of domestic CSOs; EU reforms have introduced different levers over the domestic policy agenda; and the funding pattern for CSOs has changed, with many established donors for CSOs reducing their financial commitment in acknowledgement of increased EU funding opportunities. Changes to EU funding processes have arguably created more difficulties than opportunities for CSOs, as the mechanisms and funding requirements are new, there is often a need for co-financing, and there have been problems with delays, management issues and misappropriation. Further, EU funding is channelled through inadequate, bureaucratic and non-transparent public administrative structures, which exclude CSOs from planning and programming.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Bulgaria is the poorest member country of the EU and most people report that the economic crisis has worsened their living conditions, with high levels of rural poverty and disproportionate poverty amongst marginalised groups, such as the Roma population.

The executive branch is the major power holder, compared to a weaker parliament. The presidential election of October 2011 means that the rightwing Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria party controls all major political positions. The Orthodox Church and other religious actors are seen as having very little power, compared to which CSOs have greater visibility. Reforms in areas such as healthcare, social policy and education are seen as unfinished. The political representation of women, while improving, is still low.

There is also concern about the rule of law and the functioning of the judiciary, which is understood to offer a particular corruption challenge. A July 2011 EU monitoring report expressed concern about the number of acquittals in trials involving organised crime, fraud and corruption, suggesting a gap between the formal existence of laws and concrete actions to enforce the laws.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 49.44. Civic Engagement: 39.6; Level of Organisation: 56.1; Practice of Values: 44.8; Perception of Impact: 43.6; External Environment: 63.2. Ranked 23 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	17.9%
CSOs network membership	54.9%
Policy activity	38.1%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.698. Ranked 95 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 2. Civil liberties score: 2
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3.3. Ranked 86 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.01. Percentile rank: 56.5. Rule of law: -0.08. Percentile rank: 53.1
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 29. Ranked: 80 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: strong. Score: 84 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 51. Ranked 130 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 6.78. Ranked 52 out of 167

The main law regulating civil society is the Non-Profit Legal Entities Act of 2001, which allows for non-profit entities to be identified as either associations or foundations, and to register as either organisations in pursuit of private benefit (the benefit of their members) or public benefit (the pursuit of broader social goals). Organisations registered as in public benefit face stricter transparency and accountability criteria and closer state scrutiny, which should also come with preferential access to governmental processes. While CSOs on the whole regard the regulatory environment for their work to be satisfactory, they believe that corruption and the functioning of the law limit the potential of civil society to achieve impact. Civil society government dialogue is not continuous and somewhat arbitrary.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The civil society sector grew considerably in Bulgaria since the passing of the 2001 Act. There are estimated to be over 30,000 registered CSOs in Bulgaria, but only about 6,000 are considered to be active. Organisations working for the public benefit make up the minority of registered CSOs, standing at under 7,000, with further

large concentrations of community centres, religious organisations and trade unions. CSOs in Bulgaria are found to be relatively well institutionalised, largely as a result of the foreign financial support for the development of the sector in the 1990s.

PARTICIPATION

Low rates of civic participation appear to be an enduring problem: over 80% of citizens do not take part in the activities of any organisation. Participation is low across the board, but slightly higher in educational, cultural and sporting associations, and slightly lower in human rights organisations. One of the major incentives for participation is when personal interest is at stake. Volunteering, however, seems to be on the increase, particularly among young people, and those who volunteer for one organisation are more likely to volunteer for a second, but this growth comes from a very low starting point, with a lack of a supportive legal framework for volunteering.

However, a new potential of informal civic groups to mobilise civic energy around particular causes is being seen. In recent surveys, students, pensioners and environmentalists have received greater public recognition as the legitimate representatives of Bulgarian civil society than NGOs. It is, however, also worth noting that around a third of people believe that there is no authentic civil society at all. This suggests that CSOs do not enjoy high public awareness, and also, if informal interest groups are seen as the true representatives of the sector, that civil society credibility in this context derives less from institutional trappings and the practice of formal accountability, and more from an ability to attract attention, to aim for specific targets (such as preventing a new development, in the context of the environmental movement) and to be seen to have the right to have voice on a particular concern.

Recent times have also seen the growth of new tools to promote civic engagement. The Bulgarian environmental movement is seen to have made good use of the full range of communication and participation methods, including blogs, social networks, flash mobs and online petitions, to reach principally young, educated and urban people who are unaccustomed to activism, and in doing so to have made these mainstream mechanisms to channel and stimulate civic energy. This



suggests that a prevailing tendency towards passivity can be reversed if there is a tangible and comprehensible cause and creative ways are employed to capture public attention. Other networks and NGO coalitions now employ these tools.

PUBLIC TRUST

Research identifies a lack of willingness to get involved and a low level of trust in other individuals, resulting in a tendency to stay within family structures, with weak and unsustainable social links between citizens. This is one of the key factors driving low rates of participation in CSO activities.

Trust in both public institutions and CSOs is low, with the majority of the public believing CSOs do not fully live up to their standards, and with higher levels of trust being awarded to supra-national institutions, such as the EU and UN. Very few members of the public can name a specific CSO that they trust. One of key reasons for the lack of trust in CSOs is because their development was seen largely as a result of foreign intervention and donor assistance, driven by external demand. Questions about CSO legitimacy and mandates are therefore frequent.

Perception of corruption is a major issue, and a challenge for CSOs, both in terms of how they address it in society, and how they counter concerns about their own ability to resist corruption. Around 57% of CSOs surveyed believe that corruption is either common or very common amongst CSOs. CSOs are concerned about the ways in which reliance on government structures, public procurement procedures and the management of the channels for EU funding can drive corruption of the sector, having recently observed a trend for the setting up of civil society arms of private companies and political parties to enable access to EU funds.

NETWORKS

While communication between CSOs has increased and various CSO networks exist, these are still not fully instrumentalised and institutionalised, hindering potential impact at the national level. There has been a recent growth of less structured joint advocacy campaigns, with the ForTheNature coalition of over 30 environmental CSOs seen as a success story, along with the National Network for Children and the Coalition for Sustainable EU funds. The newly launched Bulgarian Non-Governmental Organisations Information Portal is seen as another positive development here, while the sustainability of the recently initiated Civic Participation Forum, a non-institutionalised platform of 60 CSOs that convenes working groups on issues of consultation and participation, still needs to be proven. Participation in European networks is improving, although only around one fifth of CSO representatives report participating in EU level platforms, while international linkages for Bulgarian civil society remain low.

RESOURCES

The funding position for Bulgarian CSOs has worsened during the economic crisis, and financial unsustainability is also directly leading to human resource unsustainability, with a high use by CSOs of temporary or part time staff, and a loss of trained staff to consultancy, private sector or political parties. Corporate social responsibility has however emerged as a steady source of funding, constituting 70% of charitable donations, while text messaging based donation has blossomed, with 750,000 campaigning texts sent in 2010 compared to 250,000 in 2009.

“The funding position for Bulgarian CSOs has worsened during the economic crisis.”

IMPACT

CSOs are seen as most effective when working on issues of education, the environment and support to vulnerable groups. Yet while the public identify corruption, unemployment and income as their

primary concerns, both CSO representatives themselves and stakeholders from outside the sector believe the impact of CSOs on these issues to be limited. However, though limited, around one third of CSO representatives reported having recently undertaken advocacy for policy change, with most of those which had reporting a successful outcome of their advocacy. While impact on policy-making is limited, the situation has improved compared to the previous CSI research.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggested steps to strengthen civil society in Bulgaria include: reconnecting citizens with CSOs (for example, through public panels and interactive tools); increasing the visibility of CSOs by focussing on evidences of impact and developing links with media; developing representative CSO coalitions, based on the example of the environmental network; and instigating a database of potential partners for international partnerships.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Open Society Institute – Sofia – www.osi.bg

Bulgarian Non-Governmental Organisations Information Portal – www.ngobg.info

Balkan Assist Association - www.balkanassist.bg

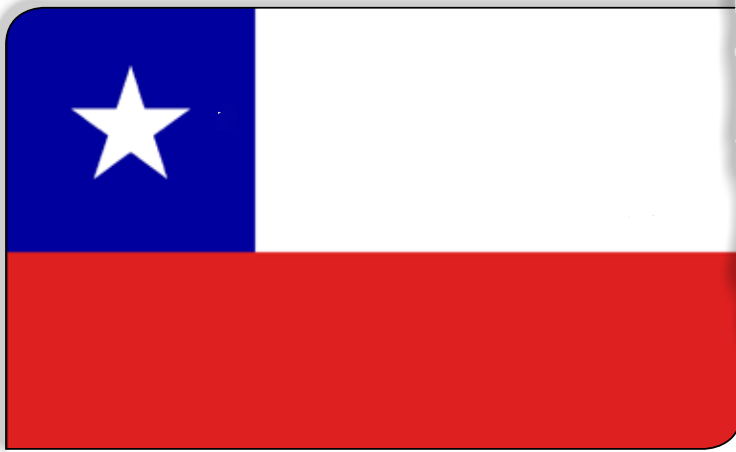
Bulgarian Centre for Non-Profit Law - www.bcnl.org

Agora Platform – Active Communities for Development Alternatives – <http://agora-bg.org/en>

Coalition for Sustainable Use of EU Funds - www.fesbg.org

National Network for Children - <http://nmd.bg>

For The Nature Coalition - <http://forthenature.org>



Basic facts	
Capital	Santiago
Official language	Spanish
Population	16.9m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$12,431

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: CHILE

Chilean civil society can be said to have reached a level of maturity since the country's transition to democracy from 1990, amidst recent conditions of relative economic prosperity. However, CSO challenges include an apparent decline in volunteering, and competition and a lack of cooperation amongst organisations, particularly between large, well-established CSOs and smaller, poorer ones, and between CSOs and communities, which creates difficulties in the public perception of CSOs. The absence of adequate regulations for transparency, as well as the limited institutional mechanisms for strengthening participation in and impact of organisations, fosters a negative outlook and lack of trust. The Chilean climate of dissent also changed dramatically in 2011, with large scale protests on student education and inequality amidst growing political and economic dissatisfaction.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

A little under half of Chile's 17 million population lives in the capital's metropolitan region, and the country's extreme, narrow and elongated geography contributes to significant levels of differentiation between populations in different locales. Chile has tended to be one of the wealthier countries in Latin America, ranked as the highest in the region in 44th place on the 2011 UNDP human development index, but the Latinbarometro annual opinion survey for 2011 has Chile showing the largest decline, of 26 percentage points from 2010, in the number of people who believe their country is making progress, and a fall of those who believe their economic situation is getting better from 48% in 2010 to 30% in 2011. Chile occupied first place in the Latin American Democratic Development Index in 2010 and 2011, but satisfaction with democracy, as assessed by Latinobarometro, stood at only 32% in 2011, down from 56% in 2010, and the same source showed a fall of 26 percentage points from 2010 to 2011, to only 29%, of people believing the country is governed for the common good of all. Chile is marked by entrenched income inequality, despite benefiting, as the world's largest producer, from a boom in copper prices in recent years, with one of the highest Gini coefficients in the world, and the highest such for countries classified as having very high development by UNDP, at 52.1. Inequality is buttressed by regressive taxation policies.

There is a complex set of conflicting and collaborative relations between the most influential actors of the state, market, and civil society spheres in Chile. As well as the presidency and key arms of government, such as the justice department, the central bank and municipal governments, large companies

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 52.1. Civic Engagement: 47.3; Level of Organisation: 52.3; Practice of Values: 42.6; Perception of Impact: 46.9; External Environment: 71.04. Ranked 15th out of 33
Interpersonal trust	12.4%
CSOs network membership	44.3%
Policy activity	45.3%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.805. Ranked 44 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 1. Civil liberties score: 1
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 7.2. Ranked 22 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +1.18. Percentile rank 83.7. Rule of law: +1.29. Percentile rank 87.7
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 29. Ranked 80 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2008	Status: moderate. Score: 77 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 41. Ranked 153 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 7.54. Ranked 35 out of 167

and financial institutions, and the media, are seen as having a high level of influence in society. Although Chilean civil society is diverse, the majority of organisations have a conflictive relationship with the state and the market. Many CSOs had built relationships with the centre-left coalition which governed Chile for 20 years, but the switch to a right of centre government in 2010 has challenged those existing relationships and called for the creation of new ones.

One in five CSOs report experiencing illegitimate attacks or restrictions from central or local government. The public bidding system, in which CSOs can bid for government contracts to carry out public work, also emerges as a system of control for CSOs, as well as a stimulus for CSO competition: CSOs, in contracting as implementers of programmes, effectively cede influence in policy formulation and design.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society in Chile is a very heterogeneous concept, defined by the experience of a long history of authoritarianism after the 1973 military coup, followed by transition to democracy in the 1990s. During military rule, restrictions on individual freedoms and the prohibition of political activity drastically undermined

the public sphere and severely worsened the conditions for civil society, while forcing civil society activism to reinvent itself in safe spaces offered by Catholic and other Christian churches. The return of democracy in 1990 brought important political and economic changes and civil society gradually expanded. Newer types of CSO initiative include those concerned with environmental and indigenous issues, and regional activities.

As a result of this, some CSOs have earned a position of influence, with enhanced access to the media and superior material and human resources which allow them primacy. However, this is not typical of the sector as a whole, and the difference in their positions of influence often generates difficult relationships between large, influential CSOs and grassroots organisations, worsening the reputation of civil society as a whole.

PARTICIPATION

Participation in socially-oriented CSOs is higher than in politically-oriented CSOs. Research shows that young people tend to believe that spaces for organisation are better in the social than the political sphere, and they have a higher sense of trust in spaces of horizontal association than in traditional, vertical structures of state participation. Volunteering is assessed as in decline, with rates of CSO volunteering lower than rates of CSO membership, and apparent little appetite for multiple civic commitment: only one third of people who are active in a CSO are members of more than one organisation, while only a quarter of volunteers volunteer for more than one organisation.

Informal associative life is more popular than formal participation, with around 48% of Chileans participating in informal activities at least once a month. Chile is also the Latin American country that most intensively uses online social networking. Concern is often expressed that an individualistic and materialistic environment may discourage people from associating and participating. In Chile's recent Democracy Audit project, only 1% believed that being active in social and political associations was one of the characteristics of a good citizen.



However, the picture changed during 2011 when large scale protests flared over persistent structural inequalities in university education. This was connected with a collapse in the government's popularity, and the protest soon broadened into one against economic inequality and the lack of redistributive structures for Chile's copper price gains, amongst popular feeling that the government favours the interests of business. A coalition of students and unions mobilised 600,000 people to take to the streets in a two day strike, the largest protest since the return of democracy. Student leaders made an explicit link from this to the international Occupy movement. This suggests that students and workers, taking inspiration from other protest movements in 2011, have started to apply new methods of activism and create new spaces for protest.

PUBLIC TRUST

Public trust is low in Chile, compared to other Latin American countries, with only around 12% of people stating that other people can be trusted. Trust in CSOs is generally higher, at 52%, than trust in other types of institution, such as media (48%), state bodies (43%) and companies (39%), while trust in unions (37%) and particularly political parties (19%) is low. Trust is higher in women's groups, humanitarian organisations, environmental groups and churches, being on average at 64%. Chilean society seems characterised by marked distrust for large organisations of any type, improving when it comes to smaller organisations. Tolerance of difference however seems stable and widespread, including towards indigenous communities.

In the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index Chile was ranked 22nd out of 183, the best assessed Latin American country.

NETWORKS

Only around 44% of CSOs report being members of a network, a globally low figure, reflecting some concerns by smaller organisations about potential for cooptation. The figures for informal collaboration are much higher, implying that participation in formal networks rather than collaboration is the fear: around 81% of CSOs recently held meetings with other CSOs, and 79% recently shared information. Smaller organisations report sometimes feeling forced to engage in alliances due to their inability to flourish by their own means. This situation turns critical when CSOs are obliged to compete with each other to gain funding from the state through public tenders. This not only diminishes technical cooperation, but also the sharing of good practice.

International linkages are assessed as low, and there are question marks over the desire of some Chilean CSOs to work regionally, given some public discourse about strengthening links with more developed countries rather than with neighbouring ones.

RESOURCES

The main resource challenge that Chilean organisations are facing is their capacity to access public funds. As Chile moved towards relative democratic and economic sustainability, international cooperation pulled away, making the government's role more important. The public tender system is critiqued as supporting and therefore strengthening already well-established and relatively well-resourced CSOs, with community-based organisations being the most impeded in accessing funding due to lower capacities to meet the numerous requirements. A handful of CSOs are seen to command resources, while most exist in a state of permanent financial crisis. Questions of transparency are also relevant here, with criticism that in several cases decisions on public funds have followed political interests rather than technical considerations, thereby increasing inequality and competition among civil society.

“The main resource challenge that Chilean organisations are facing is their capacity to access public funds..”

A connected issue is that most CSOs do not assess themselves as having sustainable human resource bases, and tend to depend on volunteers to achieve organisational objectives, with connected concerns about the turnover of volunteers and the quality of the volunteering experience. The lack of human resources can also force CSOs to rely on paid external consultants in order to design projects to compete for public funding.

IMPACT

The social impact of Chilean CSOs is assessed as positive, especially in interventions related to education, basic services, humanitarian assistance and local education programmes, with a high perception of impact at the local level. External stakeholders rate the impact of civil society more highly than internal stakeholders, suggesting a degree of pessimism amongst CSOs. Civil society's contribution and impact on policy related issues is perceived to be more limited – only 45% of CSOs report pushing for policies to be approved in the past two years, and only 28% of these succeeded. One of the factors behind this is the somewhat instrumental and contractual relationship created between the state and civil society through the public bidding system.

The 27 February 2010 earthquake in the south-central part of Chile was a catastrophic event, but provided an important test case of civil society impact, and of different actors working together. Civil society spearheaded assistance activities, and was seen as able to respond to the crisis in a rapid and decentralised manner. Many civil society responses formed spontaneously to assist affected communities, with an accompanying short term rise in civic mobilisation. Civil society was perceived to have a high level of impact in earthquake response, and to have been more adaptable and responsive than other sectors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for strengthening Chilean civil society include: renewing civic commitment at the social bases, which includes strengthening local unions, in order to ensure that CSO objectives are centred on the realisation of grassroots social concerns; opening spaces for the creation of alliances that include joint training of leaders and social activists; promoting CSO work amongst young professionals through alliances with universities; diversifying funding mechanisms to include more private financing; opening more spaces for CSOs to participate in the policy debate; modifying the public bidding system in order to reduce competition between CSOs; and promoting greater self-regulation and transparency initiatives in CSOs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Fundación Soles - www.fundacionsoles.cl

Asociación Chilena de ONGs (ACCIÓN) - www.accionag.cl

Genera - www.generaenlinea.cl/blog

Participa - www.participa.cl

Forja - www.forja.cl



Basic facts	
Capital	Zagreb
Official language	Croatian
Population	4.5m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$13,754

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: CROATIA

Croatian civil society, in common with the civil society of neighbouring countries, sprang to life in the early 1990s, which saw the break-up of Yugoslavia, war and independence, and the development of CSOs focused on humanitarian concerns and social problems in response. Generally, civil society sees itself as having developed in a largely top-down, donor-driven way, causing weaknesses such as financial instability, low membership, a poor public image, lack of professionalism, limited networking and underdeveloped advocacy activities. An improvement of the socio-political environment for civil society followed the 2000 elections, which led to the reform of Croatia into a more democratic system, and the establishment of various forms of institutionalised cooperation between government and civil society, such as governmental advisory bodies with CSO representation. The processes of bringing Croatia towards EU membership have also created new spaces and opportunities for civil society.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The forces in society assessed by CSOs as having the most importance are the central government, major political parties, large companies and their owners and the current mayor of Zagreb, the capital. Together with financial forces (banks and foreign investors) and the Catholic Church, they form the core of public life. Croatia is a wealthier country than many East European members of the EU, with a largely service-based economy, but this has been affected by the global economic downturn, which has brought a high rise in unemployment, estimated at 17.6% in 2010, compared to 11.8% in 2007. 2011 saw the election of a centre-left government for the first time, following a series of corruption scandals which saw the former Prime Minister charged with conspiracy to commit organised crime, and unpopularity at the austerity measures introduced by the centre-right party which had led the government since independence.

Croatia is in the processes of accession to the EU, and following a yes vote in a January 2012 referendum, is expected to join in 2013, having completed the legislative process to bring it in line with the EU *acquis communautaire*. EU accession is a reference point and source of justification for many political decisions, and the process has resulted in the Europeanisation of different policy areas regarding civil society, creating more formal space. The principles of openness, accountability, participation and consultation have become an integral part of the public discourse on civil society.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 49.6. Civic Engagement: 39.4; Level of Organisation: 59.9; Practice of Values: 41.1; Perception of Impact: 43.2; External Environment: 64.1. Ranked 21 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	20.1%
CSOs network membership	75.7%
Policy activity	45.9%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.796. Ranked 46 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 1. Civil liberties score: 1
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 4. Ranked 66 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.62. Percentile rank: 70.3. Rule of law: +0.19. Percentile rank: 60.7
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 23.33. Ranked 68 out of 178
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 51. Ranked 132 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 6.73. Ranked 53 out of 167

However, the institutional and legal frameworks are still felt to be inadequate. The implementation of policies such as the Strategy for Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development is not always effective. Only around 8% of CSOs surveyed believe the current laws and regulations for civil society to be fully enabling, and 21% of CSOs report illegitimate restriction or attack by central or local government. Around 75% think the state is inclined to overly interfere in the activities of CSOs, suggesting a paternalistic attitude by the government towards CSOs.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

According to the Register of Associations in Croatia there are currently 45,149 registered associations, with around a third of these being sporting associations, followed in number by cultural and business associations. Civil society actors assess the most influential CSOs to be some women's and human rights organisations, and the largest association of homeland war veterans. Other associations assessed in order of influence and public reputation are those for people with disabilities, health

groups and social service associations, NGOs and civic groups, environmental organisations, and youth groups.

The National Foundation for Civil Society Development, established in 2004 as a public, not for profit body with the aim of strengthening civil society, is also influential due to its important role in providing funding and the role it plays in developing cooperation with other organisations.

PARTICIPATION

Low levels of civic participation, connected to low levels of trust, present a serious constraint to strengthening civil society in Croatia. Around 21% of Croatians report being an active member of a socially-oriented CSO and 13% of a politically-oriented one. Sports and recreational organisations have most members, followed by religious organisations and then cultural ones. Meanwhile, formal volunteering levels are low, at only 9% in socially-oriented CSOs and 5% in politically-oriented ones, in part because volunteering is rarely regarded as a resource which can be used in public institutions, and partly because it does not tend to be seen as a civic virtue worth promoting. Consultations also highlighted the problem of limited capacity within CSOs to accommodate, manage and provide good quality and sustainable programmes for volunteers. There is however felt to be more of a tradition of informal community assistance. Similarly, ad hoc activism is thought to be on the rise, and 40% of people report that they have signed a petition.

PUBLIC TRUST

There are low levels of trust generally, with over 40% of people stating that it is acceptable to cheat on taxes and around 60% that it is acceptable to dodge fares on public transport. There is low trust in politics and organisations of a political nature. The level of trust in civil society is therefore rather low, at around only 14%. This lack of trust is fuelled by media stories which portray CSOs as seekers of privileges or unaccountable users of funds, and there is public suspicion about the transparency of CSOs, with a common impression being that CSOs are registered only to write project proposals and receive funds.



Not surprisingly, Croatia ranks a relatively low 66th on the 2011 Transparency International Global Corruption Perceptions Index, below neighbouring countries such as Slovenia, Austria and Hungary.

“The principles of openness, accountability, participation and consultation have become an integral part of the public discourse on civil society.”

NETWORKS

Around three quarters of CSOs surveyed are members of networks, with 44% members of two networks and 26% members of three. Those organisations which focus most on the promotion of the rights and interests of their members are most inclined to take part actively in networks. Some of the most widespread umbrella organisations are sectoral in nature, including the Croatian Union of Physically Disabled People, Croatian Women’s Network, Green Forum, Croatian Youth Network, and Coordination of NGOs for Children. Around 80% of CSOs hold meetings with other organisations working on similar issues, and around 85% regularly exchange information. However, cooperation between CSOs working in different areas seems more limited, while there are also examples of networking being hindered by low trust between CSOs, or being donor-driven as a result of funding policies that promote networking. Weak international connection seems to be a widespread challenge: only 24% of CSOs are members of a regional or international network or federation, a low figure given the current emphasis on EU integration.

RESOURCES

CSO revenues historically come mainly from government (40%) and donors (22%). Around 46% of government funds come from the lottery, while the largest government supporters of civil society are the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (31% of government support), the Ministry of Culture (18%), Ministry of the Family, Veterans’ Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity (13%), Ministry of Health and Social Care (12%) and the Council for National Minorities (8%). The National Foundation for Civil Society Development now provides 27% of CSO support, while EU pre-accession funds (30%) are a relatively new but important income source. For those organisations with the capacity to draw on and absorb this type of funding, they constitute a crucial source. However, a reduction in the number of calls for applications and complex procedures of applying for EU funds are challenges. Due to low levels of participation, membership fees are a very small source of CSO support, standing at only 3%. The economic crisis is thought to have led to a reduction in donations, while corporate philanthropy is little practised. There is some evidence of financial strain on CSOs: 45% reported that their income had increased from one year to the next, but this was outweighed by 61% that reported an increase in expenses.

Lack of financial sustainability hinders CSO employment, especially of young professionals and people with degrees, resulting in high fluctuations of staff, and thus loss of investment in human capital. 31% of CSOs surveyed have no paid staff, while three employees is the norm. Incentivising young, skilled, junior professionals to work in the sector is therefore a key development priority for civil society in Croatia.

“Volunteering does not tend to be seen as a civic virtue worth promoting.”

IMPACT

CSO representatives assess the impact of the sector on key issues of the day as limited. Only around half believe they are making tangible impact on strengthening people’s participation in public policies, and only 37% believe impact is being made on improving the work of public administration. External stakeholders rate impact in these areas as lower still. The fields where civil society believes it is achieving most impact are education and training, supporting the poor and marginalised, and social development in general. There is a disparity between the views of internal and external stakeholders on the social impact of civil society: 72% CSO representatives rate the impact of the sector as high or tangible, against only 40% of external stakeholders, although 85%

of external stakeholders also believe there is impact on selected fields such as supporting the poor and marginalised and humanitarian relief, suggesting that external stakeholders see CSOs most strongly as playing a classic social welfare role.

Under half of CSO representatives and less than 40% of external stakeholders see significant impact of civil society on policies. 46% of CSOs report advocating for policy change, and of these, 46% indicate a successful outcome. The policy areas which meet with most success are policies for young people, children and people with disabilities, with gender, environmental protection and human rights being other areas of advocacy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in Croatia include: enhancing policies for the transparent allocation of funds to CSOs; strengthening dialogue mechanisms between donors, media and civil society; fostering networking and collaboration between small and large organisations working on similar issues; improving civil society's capacity to participate and engage in the European regional civic space; and expanding efforts by CSOs to demonstrate transparency, and offer greater public promotion of their missions, activities and practice of values.

FURTHER INFORMATION

CERANEO – Centre for Development of Non-Profit Organisations - www.ceraneo.hr

National Foundation for Civil Society Development – <http://zaklada.civilnodrustvo.hr>

Croatian Legal Centre – HPC - www.hpc.hr

GONG - www.gong.hr

PSD - www.psd.hr

BABE - www.babe.hr



CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: CYPRUS

Cyprus is a divided island, partitioned in 1974 into its south, with a predominantly Greek Cypriot population, and its north, where the smaller Turkish Cypriot population largely live. The government of south Cyprus is internationally recognised as the government of Cyprus, whereas the north is recognised only by Turkey. The origins of the division are long and deep-rooted, and there has been little recent progress in resolving the dispute. The most recent attempt at a political solution was the Annan Plan for reunification, but in a parallel and simultaneous referendum in 2004, only approximately 24% of the Greek Cypriot Community voted for this, compared to approximately 65% of the Turkish Cypriot Community, which meant that the plan fell, and the country that joined the EU later that year remained a divided one.

CIVICUS' research on the state of civil society was carried out in both parts of the island simultaneously, with partners who worked together on the research design and on comparison of their findings. In the below text, reflecting this process, the two groupings are referred to as the Greek Cypriot Community (GCC) and Turkish Cypriot Community (TCC), and their findings are presented separately.

Looking at the island as a whole, the important and continuing role to people of the 'mother countries' of Greece and Turkey has arguably fuelled a weak sense of a pan-Cypriot citizenship and a lack of commitment to a united island, and can also be said to have inhibited a culture of dissent, with a sense amongst many CSOs that demands towards public institutions should be moderated for the sake of communal unity. The institutional make-up of civil society in the two sections of the island emerge as fairly similar, although participation appears to be more extensive in GCC – with more individuals participating – but deeper in TCC – with people participating more intensively.

There is more participation in bicomunal activities – activities that bring together people from both sides of the Green Line that divides Cyprus - in TCC than GCC, but since the failure of the referendum, bicomunal participation has declined in TCC and increased in GCC. Since restrictions on crossing the Green Line were lifted in 2003, people from TCC have more often visited the other side than people from GCC – but most people overall say they have never done so. CSOs in GCC are more optimistic about the value of bicomunal activities to reconciliation than in TCC, but overall, the findings suggest a lag between donor and civil society enthusiasm for bicomunal activities and people's willingness to participate, and therefore a need therefore to broaden participation and the range of activities on offer.

CYPRUS – GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY

Basic facts	
Capital	Nicosia
Official language	Greek
Population	800,000 (estimate)
GDP per capita 2010	US\$28,779

Ideas of advocacy, citizenship and social tolerance are still developing in GCC, given the experience of conflict and division, and enduring political impasse. CSOs function within a complex socio-political context, where unsupportive legislative and institutional frameworks, and limited funding sources, inhibit the growth and development of civil society. With Cyprus taking the rotating Presidency of the EU in the second half of 2012, the spotlight will again fall on the question of the island's division, suggesting an opportunity for renewed civil society mobilisation.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The UN 2011 Human Development Report assesses GCC as having very high human development, ranking 31 out of 187 countries. However, the global economic crisis has ended 30 years of economic growth and created uncertainty and anxiety. The Central Bank of Cyprus assesses that consumption and unemployment have worsened, and people's confidence in the economy has declined, while three major credit agencies downgraded GCC's credit rating in 2011. GCC has been heavily dependent on the banking sector, which has been hit hard by the collapse of the Greek economy, with Greece being a major trading partner and GCC the largest holder of Greek debt in Europe. Problems were exacerbated by a devastating power plant explosion in July 2011, which led to 13 deaths and daily blackouts, which challenged the financial sector and the crucial tourism industry. Soon after parliamentary elections in May 2011, the president's popularity nosedived, with regular protests demanding his departure from office. In mid 2011, the junior partner in the government, DIKO, left the coalition over disputes on measures to address economic difficulty and the peace talks. At the time of writing President Demetris Christofias' party has 19 out of 56 parliamentary seats and has been unable to attract the support required from other parties to enact austerity measures, including cutting public spending and increasing taxes. The economic and political future of GCC therefore looks volatile and uncertain.

The national question dominates the public sphere, political parties and most aspects of social interaction in GCC. Political power is highly concentrated in the state and leading political parties, which exert a high level of influence over education, the media, cultural production and even some volunteer organisations, which has resulted in the underdevelopment of institutions of civil society. It is common practice for political parties to create CSO-like structures such as youth and women's groups, while the president of the national Red Cross is always the spouse of the political leader. The Orthodox Church has long played a powerful role, while the banking sector and labour unions also have influence. The 2004 referendum provoked discussions in GCC regarding the influence of international donors on CSOs. Opinions were polarised between the authorities and many CSOs, which led to questions over the independence of CSOs, encouraging a view that CSOs are inordinately influenced by external forces.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 55.98. Civic Engagement: 43.6; Level of Organisation: 59.1; Practice of Values: 46.1; Perception of Impact: 53.3; External Environment: 77.1. Ranked 6 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	14.5%
CSOs network membership	80.7%
Policy activity	38.8%

The 2004 accession of Cyprus into the EU was an important milestone for GCC civil society, with CSOs now able to participate in a variety of EU projects and European networks. As a consequence of accession, GCC had to enact legislation to modernise the environment for the establishment, existence, internal governance and external supervision of CSOs and on their funding and fiscal treatment. This process is undergoing a review, in consultation with CSOs and the relevant authorities in GCC. A particular emphasis for advocacy is on updating the tax regime for CSOs, with a view to establishing taxation based upon activity rather than legal status and allowing CSOs to engage in economic activities. As such, the environment for CSOs is not at the same level as in established EU members, but progress is felt to have



been made. 39% of CSOs surveyed believe the environment for civil society is moderately enabling, with the same amount neutral, and only 4% report facing illegitimate attack from government.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

CSOs fall into two main areas: the longstanding social welfare oriented organisations and newer lobbying and advocacy organisations. Within civil society, professional associations, welfare organisations and cultural and sports groups are prominent, while trade unions have long been recognised as legitimate partners by government. Post-2004, advocacy and human rights emerged as areas of greater civil society concern, a number of advocacy organisations were established and peace-building and bicomunal organisations came to greater prominence. This resulted in open discussions on the structure and role of civil society, particularly for peace and reconciliation. However, very few CSOs focus on holding the state to account. In addition, organised civil society remains largely based in the capital, Nicosia.

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.840. Ranked 31 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 1. Civil liberties score: 1
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 6.3. Ranked 30 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +1.5. Percentile rank: 90.4. Rule of law: +1.19. Percentile rank: 86.3
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: -3. Ranked 16 out of 178
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 61. Ranked 116 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 7.29 Ranked 40 out of 167

PARTICIPATION

A large number of people engage in associational activities related to family, relatives and friends, and over half of people surveyed have no other forms of participation. In the small and medium sized communities that characterise much of GCC, a very small number of individuals organise and participate in civil society activities, and tend to hold leadership positions in multiple organisations.

Only 14% of people are active members of a CSO, and 80% of the public do not have any kind of involvement with a socially-oriented CSO. In the 2005 CIVICUS CSI research, 43% of people were reported to be members of at least one CSO, suggesting a drop in participation and possible growth in apathy. In consultations, civil society experts believe that in recent years it has become more difficult for CSOs to attract active members. Most also believe that ethnic and linguistic minorities, foreign workers, poorer people, women and young people are under-represented in CSOs.

Professional associations are the most popular vehicle for association, with 12% of people surveyed in membership, followed by unions, sports associations, political parties and cooperative/credit associations and savings groups. Many professions traditionally have strong unions with almost all employees members, including the construction industry, civil service, teaching and banking, while in many professions, such as law, accountancy and medicine, membership of a professional association is compulsory. Cooperative unions can be found in every community and have widespread respect, while sports associations and clubs have strong support.

Volunteering with CSOs is low, coming from a small number of individuals typically volunteering for short durations. Only 12-13% of people report that they volunteer for CSOs, with education groups and sports associations the most volunteered for. Almost all people who undertake voluntary work have at some point volunteered for the Red Cross. The average time spent on volunteer work is only a little over three hours per month, and this is down from the five hours per month recorded in 2005.

The most popular act of political activism is signing a petition (34%), followed by attendance at a demonstration (21%) and joining boycotts (6%). Again, this appears down from the 2005 study, when the same figures were 46% for signing a petition and 59% for participating in a demonstration. Individual activism therefore appears to be in decline, although there has been a recent rise in internet polling and petitioning.



PUBLIC TRUST

The most trusted institutions are charitable and humanitarian organisations, with 72% of people surveyed expressing trust, environmental organisations (71%), the church (69%) and the armed forces (67%). The least trusted institutions are television stations, with only 40% trust, the UN (39%), major companies (39%) and political parties (26%).

27% of active CSO members surveyed believe that most people can be trusted, compared to 12% of others, which suggests civil society is making a positive contribution to public trust. CSO members also show encouragingly higher levels of tolerance towards Turkish Cypriots and immigrants.

“In recent years, it has become more difficult for CSOs to attract active members.”

In recent years a range of social issues have moved up the agenda, including multiculturalism, racism, xenophobia, rights of minority groups, delinquency and the weakening of traditional family values. However, conservative values persist amongst most of the population, and EU accession and increasing foreign travel do not as yet seem to have driven a growth in more liberal attitudes on issues such as immigration, minority and immigrant rights and homosexuality, with the education system felt by many to be still quite conservative. CSOs are only recently beginning to work on such issues, and half of CSOs surveyed say they know several examples of discriminatory or intolerant forces within civil society itself.

Transparency International’s 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Cyprus at 30th out of 183 countries, indicating a relatively low level of perceived corruption. However, GCC CSO representatives are concerned about corruption in the sector: 43% believe it is frequent and 21% very frequent.

NETWORKS

81% of CSOs surveyed are members of a federation, umbrella or support network. There are also many examples of CSOs cooperating by forming unofficial networks and signing memoranda of understanding, with 72% of CSOs reporting holding recent meetings with other CSOs and 82% exchanging information. Some of the key networks are the Home for Cooperation – Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (a multi-functional research and educational centre), the Cyprus Community Media Centre and Cyprus Island-Wide NGO Development Platform (CYINDEP). CYINDEP brings together two member platforms from different sides of the divide, the Cyprus NGO Platform ‘The Development’ in GCC and the Cyprus NGO Network in TCC.

RESOURCES

The small size of most organisations and the lack of available funds mean that most CSOs do not employ paid staff. Most have a small group of active and experienced members that run them but find it hard to recruit or maintain new active members and volunteers. 42% of CSOs surveyed do not have paid staff, compared to 11% which do not have any volunteers. CSOs most commonly have between six and 20 volunteers, whilst paid staff most commonly number between none and five, and very few have more than five.

Many CSOs are seeing expenses rise faster than income: 25% of CSOs reported income had decreased and 23% that it increased from one year to the next, but 46% also reported an increase in expenditure and only 10% a decrease. There is also a lack of diversity in funding, with limited private sector and microfinance opportunities. One positive development in recent years has been the introduction of small grants programmes which help support CSOs to develop their internal capacities.



IMPACT

CSOs assess the two most important contemporary concerns in GCC as being the Cyprus question and the financial crisis, and around half of CSOs surveyed believe civil society achieves impact on these issues. However, on the Cyprus situation, a topic that has monopolised the Cypriot social and political scene for almost 50 years, only 20% of CSO representatives believe impact is high, compared to 32% who rate it limited. The ratings are similar for impact on the financial crisis. External stakeholders rate impact less optimistically.

CSO representatives perceive most impact on social issues, with education and social development most highly assessed. More generally, 40% of CSO representatives believe civil society plays a significant role in the promotion of peace and 22% a moderate role. In contrast, 82% feel that policy impact is very limited or moderate. Only 38% were active in advocating for policy change during the past two years, and less than half of these achieved success, with most effort being made in the fields of education, human rights and immigrants' rights issues and sports policies, and no efforts reported on social and environmental policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in GCC include organising a wide network to monitor legal reform for CSOs and develop civil society-led law reform proposals; promoting CSOs in rural areas and strengthening their capacities; increasing training for CSOs, including in accountability, improving volunteering and more effective project management; and using examples from other EU member countries to highlight the valuable roles of civil society.

FURTHER INFORMATION

NGO Support Centre - www.ngo-sc.org

Association for Historical Dialogue and Research - www.ahdr.info

Cyprus Community Media Centre - www.cypruscommunitymedia.org

Cyprus CSO Directory (in Greek) - www.ngosincyprus.org

CYPRUS – TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY

With the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus not having international recognition, and the government of Turkey playing a heavy role in the governance of the territory, civil society in TCC occupies an unusual position. On the one hand, without an independent, institutionalised government, the lines between civil society and the state in TCC have sometimes become blurred. On the other, civil society occupies a unique niche: given the absence of international recognition, the government is usually excluded from international processes, but civil society is often able to participate, meaning that it has become a bridge between TCC and the world. Civil society has also been playing an enduring role in the island's reconciliation process.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Standards of living are lower in TCC than GCC, with lower levels of economic and human development, but given the non-recognition of TCC, there is a lack of reliable comparative data.

Basic facts	
Capital	Nicosia
Official language	Turkish
Population	Approx 300,000 (estimate)
GDP per capita 2010	US\$11,700



The Turkish Embassy and the military and police, which are under the direct command of the armed forces of Turkey, are assessed by CSOs as the most influential social actors. Indeed, an ultra pro-Turkey coalition of high-level actors from intelligence, military, police, judiciary and mafia is seen as the deep state mechanism through which Turkey exerts influence on TCC. The EU is also assessed as an influential actor: in response to the rejection of the Annan Plan and the EU accession of a divided Cyprus, the EU instituted an aid programme for TCC, part of which is geared towards civil society, with the goal of promoting social and political development and fostering reconciliation. The EU can therefore be seen as recognising civil society as a key and legitimate actor in TCC, and promoting its development through financial and technical assistance. UNDP-ACT/USAID programmes also play a similar role for civil society, while the UN and GCC are additionally seen as having some influence.

A new draft Law on Associations was developed without consultation from civil society, and in response to this the Cyprus NGO Network, composed of 15 TCC CSOs, threatened to take legal action against the TCC authorities. The majority of CSOs surveyed, 58%, assess the regulatory environment as only moderately enabling, and 25% believe it is highly restrictive. The current Law on Associations bars non-citizens from becoming members of associations, which given a high level of immigration to TCC, reduces the inclusivity of civil society.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Key civil society actors include teachers' and civil servants' unions and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce, which acts as a highly-organised and prominent voice, not only for the particular interests of labour, but also for democratisation and peace. Public benefit CSOs, such as the Cyprus Turkish Chamber of Industry, the Farmers' Union, the Union of the Chambers for Cyprus Turkish Engineers and Architects, the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Shopkeepers and Artisans and bicommunal groups also play an important role.

Civil society in TCC further encompasses sports, cultural, educational and youth associations, neighbourhood/village committees, burial societies and religious/spiritual groups, other forms of membership-based interest groups such as cooperatives and savings groups, and rights-based advocacy organisations.

PARTICIPATION

10% of people surveyed are active members of a socially-oriented CSO and 12% of a politically-oriented one. The highest number of active members are in sports and cultural groups, followed by membership-based interest groups such as unions and professional/occupational organisations, partly because membership is compulsory for some professions. There is lower membership in rights-based advocacy organisations, reflecting the relatively recent history of such organisations

in TCC. Compared to the 2005 CSI research, membership appears to be falling, with membership of unions down from 17% to 6%, cooperatives from 11% to 6% and sports clubs from 9% to 7%, and only membership of human rights organisations rising from a low base, from 2% to 4%, most likely due to the increased visibility of advocacy CSOs receiving international funds in the post-Annan Plan period. However, those people who are active are highly so: 34% of active members of socially-oriented CSOs are involved in more than one, with this figure rising to 44% of those active in politically-oriented CSOs.

People in TCC continue to associate mostly through informal networks, with family and friends. Family remains at the heart of social support mechanisms and there are few moves towards developing more formal, institutionalised support networks, such as for child care and

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 53.04. Civic Engagement: 43.6; Level of Organisation: 50.5; Practice of Values: 50.9; Perception of Impact: 49.8; External Environment: 70.4. Ranked 13 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	8.2%
CSOs network membership	37.9%
Policy activity	60.3%



assistance for disadvantaged people. Historically, neighbours and local communities were an important part of the social safety net, but urbanisation, socio-economic development and lifestyle changes have weakened these support structures.

Low numbers of people, between 12% and 16%, say they have participated in individual acts of activism such as peaceful demonstrations and petitions, and over half of people say they would never do such things. This too appears to be down from the 2005 CSI findings, suggesting apathy following the rejection of the Annan Plan. Against this, 2011 saw the occurrence of mass demonstrations joined by tens of thousands of people - as much as a fifth of the population in many estimates - over austerity measures imposed by Turkish government, and demanding greater autonomy from Turkey, which were organised by the unions' Sendikal platform. Such methods for expressing dissent could indicate a lack of trust in institutionalised forms of civil society, or a lack of willingness to make long-term commitments compared to one-time articulations of interest at critical turning points.

Key indicators*	
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 2. Civil liberties score: 2
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 37.0. Ranked 102 out of 178
* Most international indices do not collect disaggregated data for TCC	

PUBLIC TRUST

92% of people believe other people cannot be trusted, and there are high levels of intolerance for diversity, which includes intolerance not only of Greek Cypriots, but also of people of a different race, religion or language, immigrants and foreign workers, and people wearing turbans or veils, which includes recent immigrants from Turkey. However institutional trust is quite high, and CSOs enjoy the confidence of most people. Environmental organisations and charitable organisations have more than 70% of people's trust, while women's organisations and churches score more than 65%. Most state structures are trusted by around half of people, with trust in government standing at 49%, parliament 46% and police 56%, while the armed forces and the judiciary have higher trust, at 67% and 63% respectively. Political parties have the least trust, at 26%.

An overwhelming majority of CSO representatives surveyed are highly pessimistic about the prevalence of corruption within civil society. 56% believe that corruption is very frequent, frequent or occasional in civil society, and only 9% believe that it is very rare. Further only 17% of CSO representatives believe there is no racism or discrimination in civil society, and only 36% believe civil society can play an important role in promoting non-violence and peace.

NETWORKS

A substantial improvement in cooperation and collective action among CSOs can be seen, as the number of CSOs that report belonging to a platform rose from around 20% in 2005 to 39% in 2010. This comes in the wake of visible successes by a number of collective movements in mobilising the masses, such as the Bu Memleket Bizim (This Country is Ours) platform in 2004, and in changing policies, as in the case of the Dumansız Ada (Smoke-free Island) platform in 2008. The emphasis made by international donors such as UNDP-ACT and the EU on the development of CSO networks has also contributed to this development. The Gender Equality Platform, for example, was created with technical assistance from the EU.

Nonetheless, the level of network membership is low compared to other countries. An important factor here is the law, which does not allow legal personalities to formally establish or be members of other legal entities. Further, contacts with INGOs, and in particular their presence in TCC, are severely limited due to the political situation.

RESOURCES

Only about 8% of CSOs surveyed were assessed as having a sustainable human resources base, calculated on the basis of voluntary staff constituting less than 25% of their staff. 36% of CSOs stated that they have paid staff, but the majority of CSOs with any paid staff also depend to a large extent on active volunteers. Most CSOs in TCC, particularly socially-oriented and advocacy CSOs, are run by volunteer boards and steering committees.

The post-referendum period brought in an influx of international funds for CSOs, particularly from the EU, but most CSOs still rely mainly on membership fees, service fees and private donations. 63% of CSOs obtain membership fees and 46% private donations, compared to only 21% receiving donor funding, 19% receiving funds from government and only 11% from private sector. Around 35% of CSOs surveyed obtain more than half their revenues from membership fees, while 21% rely exclusively on membership fees. Compared to this only 9% derive more than half of their financial resources from international donors and 3% rely exclusively on these funds, while a negligible 1% receive more than half their funding from government sources. 43% of CSOs had seen an increase in their funding from one year to the next, compared to 39% which saw a decrease. There is, however, a lack of specific CSO support organisations.

IMPACT

Civil society and external stakeholders have similar perceptions of civil society's impact on most issues. The top two issues of concern identified for TCC were economic issues and the Cyprus question. However, the most common response both from CSO representatives and external experts is that civil society's impact on these issues is limited. Only 24% of CSO representatives assess that civil society has a high impact on the economy, and only 21% perceive high impact on the Cyprus issue. External stakeholders assess CSO performance lower than this: only 13% perceive high impact on economic issues and 20% on the Cyprus issue. Civil society is assessed as having more impact on education and social development.

On civil society's impact on policy-making, perceptions of both CSOs and external stakeholders are more negative still. 46% of CSOs and 63% of external stakeholders assess impact on policy-making as very limited.

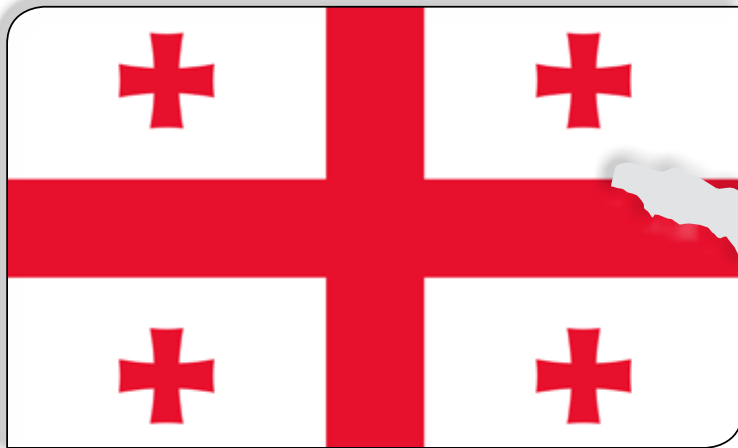
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in TCC include promoting networking and the formation of new civil society platforms; a greater focus on changing the way the state understands civil society; more emphasis on CSO communications, including with government, the public and other CSOs; enhanced attempts at policy-level engagements; and inculcating a human rights-based approach by CSOs to help address intolerance and discrimination.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Management Centre - www.mc-med.eu

Cyprus CSO Directory (in Turkish) - www.mc-siviltoplumrehberi.org



Basic facts	
Capital	Tbilisi
Official language	Georgian
Population	4.5m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$2,620

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: GEORGIA

The challenges Georgian civil society faces include low impact, low levels of organisation and a disabling external environment due to the concentration of government power. A further challenge is that CSOs are not in the main membership-based, but rather mostly exist as a detached, Western-funded class. Civil society's strengths include its organisational experience, the adherence to democratic values among CSOs and its potential for development, should other actors increase their engagement. A positive development to emerge recently in the wake of the government's diminishing credibility are the signals that the authorities would like to cooperate more with civil society groups on a range of issues. Unfortunately, civil society's capacity has been substantially weakened since the 2003 Rose Revolution, and CSOs are thus not usually able to respond adequately to opportunities.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Georgia is a politically polarised society with two distinct value groups: one which essentially orients towards Russia, and one towards Europe and the Atlantic. As a result of privatisation, most companies are now Russian owned, while this is partly counterbalanced by Western donor activity. The cluster of influential interest groups around Russian interests include the Russian government, the authorities of the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the Georgian Orthodox clergy, which is closely linked to the Russian Orthodox Church and oligarchs. The second group consists of the diplomatic corps and international and regional organisations (such as NATO, World Bank, IMF, EU, NATO and US State Department), although their influence in society is weaker. Most CSOs align with this second group, but there is also some CSO division along these lines. The civil society and business sectors are underdeveloped, allowing the executive, particularly the president, his immediate circle and closely connected state media to dominate, and to some extent negotiate between these two interest clusters. The state also has the largest purchasing power. Georgia's government is typically dominated by a single party, with the creation of pseudo opposition groups. Non-governing political parties are characterised by organisational weakness, patriarchy, under-representation of lower social classes and ethnic minorities, poor recruitment systems for new members and vague political programmes.

The Georgian government has adopted a policy of advocating for solidarity amongst the Caucasus, but the existence of self-declared

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 46.7. Civic Engagement: 17.6; Level of Organisation: 64.5; Practice of Values: 63.6; Perception of Impact: 28.8; External Environment: 59.0. Ranked 26 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	18.9%
CSOs network membership	32.2%
Policy activity	26.8%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.733. Ranked 75 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 4. Civil liberties score: 3
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: partly free. Score: 35
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 4.1. Ranked 64 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.29. Percentile rank: 64.1. Rule of law: -0.21. Percentile rank: 48.8
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 38. Ranked 104 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: moderate. Score: 73 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 86.4. Ranked 47 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 4.74. Ranked 102 out of 167

breakaway republics remains a significant political and diplomatic issue following Georgia's failed venture into war with Russia in 2008. The holding of elections in 2011 in Abkhazia and South Ossetia caused irritation for the Georgian government, which regards them as autonomous regions with governments in exile in Tbilisi, Georgia's capital. In 2011, the sour relations between Georgia and Russia centred on Georgia's attempt to block Russia's membership the World Trade Organisation, which was resolved after diplomatic intervention by Switzerland.

Levels of unemployment are high, but after a slump in Georgia's GDP growth rate to -3.8% in 2009, the economy appears to be picking up, with an average growth rate of 5.5% in 2011. Though Georgia is considered to have high human development, standing at 75 out of 187 countries on the 2011 UN Human Development Index, life expectancy has decreased, while maternal deaths and cases of TB and malaria have increased, suggesting a decline in living standards, exacerbated by the migration of health staff. Freedom House classifies Georgia as partly free, with media freedom having declined in particular since the Rose Revolution that brought the current regime to power. Other trends include high emigration, significant influence of law and security agencies and increased power of international criminal cartels engaged in drugs and weapons smuggling.

31% of CSOs surveyed believe that current legislation places too many restraints on civil society. The state does not recognise civil society as a serious partner and there is a lack of a structure to involve civil society in policy processes on a consistent basis. While there is some dialogue, with opportunities generally opened by donors, topics of political or economic power, such as civilian oversight of security and police structures, transparency of budgeting or decentralisation of government, are off the agenda. Engagement is allowed mostly on unimportant issues, and loyalty is expected in return. There is occasional debate about creating a governmental regulatory body to coordinate CSO activities, but this has so far been resisted by civil society.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

CSOs were one of the driving forces of the Rose Revolution, but after this saw a downturn, with many CSOs activists promoted to government and donors shifting towards direct financial support of government. There are estimated to be 10,000 CSOs in Georgia, with around 60% based in large cities. Some parts of civil society are not aligned to progressive values but remain important, such as the Orthodox Church, which is seen as a guardian of traditional values, and some newspapers and other church and ethnic groups. CSOs on the more progressive side include think tanks, watchdogs and professional and sectoral associations.

People in CSOs tend to define civil society as being characterised by active citizens uniting, representing public interest and defending democracy: there is therefore a strong values-based definition of civil society amongst its workers, given its emergence in opposition to communism, and this means that many people in CSOs would not consider trade unions as legitimate parts of civil society, given their past role in communism. Civil society therefore tends to be understood quite narrowly.



PARTICIPATION

The number of people active in CSOs in Georgia is very small, with only 1-2% of the population an active member of a socially-oriented CSO and less than 1% of a politically-oriented CSO. Volunteering also seems to be decline. The highest levels of membership are in organisations related to the Orthodox Church and other denominations, but this only stands at around 6% for active and passive members combined, and represents association in a relatively conservative milieu. Difficult economic conditions offer a barrier to participation, along with the dismal political situation and lack of trust in public institutions. The euphoria and enthusiasm of the Rose Revolution has given way to widespread public frustration at lack of change and disillusionment. It is possible that there is also some fear in admitting being engaged in political activity. The weaknesses of political parties, which rarely offer meaningful participation routes and do little to retain new recruits, and the lack of thematic diversity in the programmes of CSOs are identified as a further impediments to participation.

“The euphoria of revolution has given way to widespread frustration.”

Not surprisingly informal social engagement is higher, at around 44%. Only 15% of people report having taken part in a demonstration, but this is up from 8% in an earlier poll. A demonstration in Tbilisi of 10,000 people in May 2011 to demand the resignation of President Saakashvili was crushed by riot police using tear gas and rubber bullets, and led to the death of two people and the arrest of over 100. Strikes have gone down to almost zero, presumably as a result of fear of losing work in difficult economic times.

Older people are under-represented in CSOs and the middle classes over-represented, but over 60% of CSO members are women, and rural populations make up more than half of CSO membership. There is assessed to be more passivity about CSO participation in cities, partly because of the availability of other participation routes, but political activism is higher in urban areas. Members of non-mainstream religions and sexual minorities are little represented within civil society.

PUBLIC TRUST

Only the church enjoys widespread high public confidence, with 90% of people having very high or quite high confidence in it. This compares to 41% trust in charities, 35% in environmental organisations, 32% in women’s organisations, 18% in trade unions and only 16% trust in political parties. If anything, trust in the church seems to be going up while it is falling in political parties, but trust in CSOs is also improving.

Some progress can be assumed to have been made on corruption, with Georgia moving from a ranking of 133rd out of 146 countries on the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index in 2004 to 64th out of 184 in 2011, ahead of all CIS member countries. However, only 14% of CSOs believe the sector to be free of corruption, and there remains scepticism about the government’s commitment to anti-corruption.

NETWORKS

Around 70% of CSOs are members of networks, coalitions and associations, although there are only a few permanent CSO umbrella organisations. One of the networks with highest recognition is CENN, an environmental network. Other coalitions are created as part of funded projects, but their lifespan rarely extends beyond the duration of the project and they tend to focus on donor deliverables. There are also coalitions of CSOs created to support government initiatives, such as participation in elections, which do not enjoy high levels of trust from other CSOs, and there is a tendency for coalitions to polarise on pro or anti-government lines. 85% of CSOs hold meetings with other CSOs and 82% exchange information, and there is a perception that cooperation has increased in recent years. In international connections, Georgian CSOs are assessed as faring better

than other Caucasus countries, partly because of the high level of international interest in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but are less connected than Eastern European CSOs.

RESOURCES

Financial resources for CSOs seem to be in decline: 37% of CSOs reported that their budgets had shrunk compared to 26% that said they had increased from the previous year. Many CSOs report that their financial resources have steadily decreased since 2003, mainly because there are fewer donor organisations supporting fewer areas of work in Georgia. This is alarming because civil society is highly donor dependent. 37% of CSOs entirely rely on donor funds, and 59% of CSOs obtain half of their funding from donors. Since most donors favour stable and experienced CSOs, newly-established organisations have slim chances of survival, while established CSOs adapt their areas of work to meet shifting donor priorities. A trend therefore seems to be that there are a smaller number of surviving CSOs each receiving a larger share of donor funding. CSOs based outside the capital are particularly challenged as donors tend to prefer to direct funds through intermediary CSOs in Tbilisi. Other financial sources are much smaller in comparison: 88% of CSOs have never received any financial assistance from central or local government, 95% never from businesses, and 83% have never received individual donations.

Contrary to the pattern in most countries, volunteerism is less common than paid employment in CSOs: 33% of CSOs surveyed have no volunteers at all, while 38% have between two and 20. Further, most CSOs tend to recruit new staff through personal contacts, with formal recruitment rare. Loss of CSO leadership to other sectors without adequate replacement is a challenge, given that the balance of earning power has shifted from CSOs to government positions in recent years.

IMPACT

Only around a quarter of CSO representatives believe CSOs achieve impact on the pressing issues of the day, particularly poverty. CSOs tend to see their role on major issues such as poverty as mainly limited to humanitarian and civic education efforts, effectively admitting that they are not key players. In less sensitive areas CSOs offer a greater range of activities, suggesting unrealised potential for greater action. 70% of CSOs representatives believe their policy impact to be minimal, but perception of policy impact tends to divide between pro-government and other CSOs. Pro-government CSOs tend to have a higher perception of achievement in essentially promoting government programmes and policies, whereas other CSOs believe the government is unwilling to cooperate with them. Where CSOs perceive themselves as having success, it is not in areas that challenge political and economic power. External stakeholders are more pessimistic still about the impact of the sector.

One recent example of advocacy success came in June 2011, when four photographers arrested and accused of being Russian spies were later released, following intense pressure from the media.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FURTHER INFORMATION

Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development - www.cipdd.org

Caucasus Environmental NGO Network - www.cenn.org

Open Society Georgia Foundation - www.osgf.ge

Recommendations to strengthen Georgian civil society include: agreeing on some common values between different CSOs and other segments of civil society to enable greater unity of efforts; developing common frameworks, such as sector specific or regional focuses, across lines of polarisation; intensifying networking among CSOs; and communicating unified CSO views to the public to support greater demand for positive change.



Basic facts	
Capital	Conakry
Official language	French
Population	10.6m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$452

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: GUINEA

In November 2010 Guinea experienced what is widely perceived to have been the first credible election in its history, returning a civilian government, two years on from a military coup that established a government which committed horrendous human rights abuses against its citizens. With a history of one party and military rule, the country continues to face great uncertainty, as evidenced by a July 2011 assassination attempt on the current president, highlighting the urgent need for military reform. The progress of the much-postponed national assembly elections, originally scheduled for 2007 and postponed again in December 2011 for a potential 2012 date, will give a further indication of the health of restored democracy and the prospects for civil society space and influence.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Recent years were characterised by high inflation, slowing growth and declining foreign assets, with economic shocks triggering social unrest. A debt default in 2007 led to the suspension of cooperation between Guinea and international partners, which hit civil society funding hard. Guinea is still one of the lowest ranking countries on the UN Human Development Index, ranked 178th out of 187 in 2011, notwithstanding some improvements in education, infant mortality and water provision. In the most recent statistics over 40% of the population live on less than US\$2 a day, with more than 60% of the rural population assessed as poor. Literacy levels are low, particularly for women and rural people. Guinea manifests division between the main ethnic groups (Fula, Mandinka and Soussou) with each recent election marked by ethnic violence, and there are also land disputes and conflicts linked to the seasonal movement of people, in which civil society is seen as playing a strong role in promoting peace and non-violence.

The state is the most powerful social force, and is closely connected with some major private businesses. The state is also the largest employer. A decentralisation act is on the books, but has not been applied, so power remains highly centred in the capital, Conakry. The army and other security forces remain key players within the state. The commencement of legal proceedings in early 2012 against an army colonel accused of involvement in a particularly brutal action against civilians in 2009 was seen as breaking new ground, and a first sign that the army might no longer be able to act with impunity. International development partners also have influence, while religious groups

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Score: 1.8 out of 3. Structure 1.9. Environment 1.1. Impact 2.2. Values 2.1
Interpersonal trust	21.3%
CSOs network membership	Up to 60%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.344. Ranked 178 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 5. Civil liberties score: 5
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 2.1. Ranked 164 out of 182
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -1.15. Percentile rank: 11.5. Rule of law: -1.51. Percentile rank: 2.8
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 30. Ranked 86 out of 178
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 102.5. Ranked 11 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: authoritarian regime. Score: 2.79. Ranked 146 out of 167
Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2011	Score 37.8. Ranked 43 out of 53

and professions command people's respect. The private sector is also largely seen as indifferent or hostile to civil society, and the mining companies are felt to demonstrate poor corporate social responsibility practice towards the environment and their employees. 80% of CSO representatives consulted see the social and environmental role of companies as moderate or limited.

Political rights are still limited but have improved compared to the time of military rule. There are around 50 political parties, which tend to be structured around their founder or leader. Violations of freedom of the press have been frequent. State bureaucracy is cumbersome, and citizens have little faith in the ability of the state to respond to urgent needs. This may account for the growing importance of clan structures as alternatives.

The legal framework for associations and NGOs was set in 2005. The 2005 act is assessed to have made it easier to register CSOs, by simplifying procedures and decentralising the level at which applications are made and approvals given, although less than half of CSOs consulted believe that registration is fast, simple or equal. Registration brings some tax exemptions. The need to supply documentation is however felt to deter some grassroots groups. Not surprisingly given the historical political context, CSOs assess the conditions for their operations as difficult. Over half state that the government intervenes in an inappropriate way in the activities of civil society, while CSOs divide evenly in assessing

dialogue with the government as either limited or moderate. CSOs acknowledge that they are little able, given the context, to play the classical civil society role of holding the government to account.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The notion of civil society came to prominence in Guinea in the early 1990s, as the country took its first steps in moving on from a long term, dominant one party system, which was in place from independence in 1958 to 1984. Trade unions, women's and youth groups existed at this time, but were closely organised around the ruling party. NGOs first appeared as offices of international NGOs, or were started by prominent nationals or as offshoots of religious networks. These early CSOs had diverse evolutions, with some becoming political parties and others formalising into NGOs. CSOs tend to form to defend common interests, or to promote the interests of marginalised groups, while people working in the media also formed associations.

Civil society's make up includes human rights groups, HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB organisations, religious groups, trade unions, women and youth groups and independent media. Civil society activity in addressing poverty includes initiatives such as microfinance, entrepreneurship training, supporting women's empowerment and providing rural infrastructure.

PARTICIPATION

There is little practice of individual political action, and attempts are sometimes met with violence. There was little possibility to do this before 1984, and a culture of participation can be seen to have gradually grown from 1984 to 2008 before being interrupted by military coup, with political parties and CSOs representing two alternate platforms for participation. Six out of ten people surveyed report being a member of a CSO, and over half of members of one organisation are members of at least a second. Organisations with widespread membership occupy quite diverse points on the civil society spectrum, such as associations of parents and school supporters, environmental



organisations and organisations based on cultural and ethnic identity. Formal volunteering is rare, estimated at about 14% of the population, but it is understood there are much higher levels of local level informal volunteering, characterised by help for a neighbour or community member without expectation of payment. Active volunteers however commit highly, reporting that they volunteer for around 40 hours a month. Almost three quarters of people report being part of a collective community action, such as taking part in a community meeting, within the space of a year. There remains a tradition of common action in rural and agrarian communities, while charitable giving through mosque and church seems to be habitual.

“Almost three quarters of people report being part of a collective community action.”

Rural people, women, young people, people with disabilities and other marginalised groups are under-represented in CSO membership and leadership, with very few women leaders of CSOs.

PUBLIC TRUST

There is little public trust in the law and in the separation of state powers. Guinea is assessed as one of the most corrupt countries in the world, ranked at 164th out of 183 on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, and civil society is not perceived to play a strong role in combating corruption. However, civil society is highly trusted: 81% of people surveyed trust NGOs, 78% religious groups and 67% trade unions, compared to trust in the armed forces (21%), political parties (21%), the government (15%) and the police (13%). 85% of people report that they would approach a CSO first to help meet the needs of the marginalised, rather than government. There is, however, also critique of some CSOs as being elitist and questions over their claims to speak on behalf of communities, given that many are based in Conakry and some are viewed as being close to bureaucrats and international development partners.

NETWORKS

A minority of CSOs are thought to be members of CSO networks, although over half of CSOs consulted believe that networks are generally efficient. Compared to this, over 80% of CSO representatives believe CSO support infrastructure is inadequate. Only a few CSOs have international linkages.

“85% of people would approach a CSO first rather than government.”

RESOURCES

Under one in ten CSO representatives believe they have sufficient financial resources to do their work, with two in ten saying they are very short of resources. CSOs are highly dependent on external funding and only a handful are believed to receive state support. The tax system is not very supportive of philanthropy, and less than one in ten CSO receives private sector funding.

However, more than half of CSOs believe they have sufficient human resources. Yet the lack of formal skills and training is noteworthy, as are the limited opportunities for staff progression within domestic CSOs, with international CSOs being able to cherry pick and train the most talented staff. Technical resources, such as IT equipment and internet access, are also widely assessed as inadequate, with only 14% of CSO representatives believing that they are sufficient.

IMPACT

Civil society is seen as active in the social policy arena, but to have limited impact on improving human rights, due to the difficult political environment. It also recognises itself as active in trying to promote good governance, but to be achieving little impact in this area, and to have no influence on national budgetary processes. Over half the public report that CSOs have helped them take part in community activities, while around three quarters report they have participated in CSO activities

to address issues of marginalisation. Over half of people report that CSOs were most effective in helping them with an issue, compared to only 15% who rated the government as more effective. However, CSO representatives rate their organisations' impact more highly than members of the public, suggesting a gap between medium levels of impact and high levels of activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in Guinea include: developing citizenship education programmes; instigating a national communication and information network for CSOs; advocating for greater state decentralisation; and prioritising the strengthening of the institutional, financial and technical capacities of CSOs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Conseil National des Organisations de la Societe Civile Guineenne - <http://cnoscg.blogspot.com>

Programme concerté de Renforcement des Capacités des Organisations de la société civile et de la Jeunesse Guinéennes (PROJEG) - <http://info-projeg.over-blog.net>



Basic facts	
Capital	Rome
Official language	Italian
Population	61.0m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$33,917

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: ITALY

Civil society in Italy is now a mature and solid phenomenon, but its weaknesses lie in its limited ability to influence the attitudes and values of Italian society. Deficits include: low political impact, which research confirms to be far behind social impact; limitations in the international links needed to face the effects of globalisation; insufficient commitment to emerging problems in Italy, such as social mobility and the rule of law; and the lack of inclusion and management of diversity, which includes insufficient attention to the situation of immigrants and the potential for development of their citizenship through participation in CSOs. With Italy experiencing severe economic crisis and the installation of a technocratic, unelected government in late 2011, these identified weaknesses call into question civil society's ability to mount an adequate response.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

While a developed country, and a long established member of the EU and the G8, Italy has marked social and economic differences between its north and south, with higher levels of poverty and exclusion in the south, and this is reflected in the distribution of organised civil society, which is weaker in the south than the north, but also plays a significant role in the south in trying to address this challenge.

Former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi survived numerous trials and political crises, and was criticised for a high level of control of the media, including ownership of the country's largest media group, and for the apparent instigation of laws to protect personal interests. There is consequently a low level of freedom of the press, with a ranking of 61st on the Reporters Without Borders 2011-12 Press Freedom Index, which indicates that press freedom is falling, while Freedom House assesses the press as partly free. 2011 saw a high and growing level of international concern about Italy's economy, with public debt at 120% of GDP and soaring levels of interest on Italian bonds which threatened to destabilise the single currency Eurozone. The response to crisis saw the removal of Berlusconi and the installation of an unelected prime minister who formed a non-party government, offering a new and uncertain context for Italian civil society, while Rome was the only location in the Global Day of Rage protests in October which saw significant violence.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 54.4. Civic Engagement: 48.5; Level of Organisation: 63.2; Practice of Values: 45.8; Perception of Impact: 42.1; External Environment: 72.4. Ranked 10 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	29.2%
CSOs network membership	71.1%
Policy activity	68.9%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.874. Ranked 24 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 1. Civil liberties score: 1
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: free. Score: 26
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3.9. Ranked 69 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.52. Percentile rank: 67.9. Rule of law: +0.38. Percentile rank: 62.6
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 19.67. Ranked 61 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: moderate. Score: 78 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 41. Ranked 147 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 7.74. Ranked: 31 out of 167

Italy has a strong continuing culture of corporatism, which has existed since the 1930s, and which accords a special relationship in governance to business associations and trade unions. The state traditionally plays a strong and central role, with public affairs seen as its clear domain, although lately this has been challenged and is in decline. Political parties also traditionally play a central role, and for many years represented the only route for people's participation, while the Catholic Church and its various bodies tends to occupy positions and spaces which a greater diversity of actors might occupy in another setting.

A cornerstone for organised civil society was offered by the 2001 reform of the constitution, which recognised the role of citizens and their organisations at all levels of governance. However, not much more than half of Italian CSOs express satisfaction with the legal framework for civil society. There is widespread scepticism about the ability of the state to enforce laws. More broadly, the political system is critiqued as unstable and not able to adequately fulfil its role. The Economist Intelligence Unit assesses Italy as a 'flawed democracy'.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Key categories of CSOs are: organisations involved in civic activism – those active in the policy system and those defending citizenship rights; social and cultural organisations – those which are seeking to increase social capital in the community and in society; and professional associations and social partners – trade unions, labour organisations and organisations of workers, professionals and employers.

Because of Italy's corporatist history, trade unions do not tend to see themselves as CSOs and do not connect well with the rest of civil society, having effectively been used as the main proxy for civil society participation in the past. Some unions also closely align with political parties.

Civil society has also long worked within the supra-national framework offered by the EU, which implies both a need for civil society to work at the regional level and to take advantage of the domestic spaces created by regional decisions. The opportunities created for civil society by EU processes are acknowledged, but CSOs, particularly locally-based and oriented CSOs, report still feeling somewhat distant from the EU, and not having adequate information about how to use its opportunities for participation and influence, distinct from any engagement with the funding opportunities it may offer.

PARTICIPATION

Around one in three Italians is a member of a socially-oriented CSO, and one in five volunteer for such CSOs. Only one in five is a member of a politically-oriented CSO, and only one in ten volunteers for such an organisation. Another survey puts the total volunteer population at 8% of those over 14, which is over 3 million people. Around 2.5m people are members of volunteers' associations, while social promotion associations have a membership of 3.5m people. Political parties are estimated to have around 1.4m members and labour unions almost 14.5m. However, as much union membership can be seen as being an intrinsic part of many occupations, it cannot necessarily be read as a meaningful indicator of voluntary participation.



The leadership of civil society remains male dominated, with only 20% of organisations that are members of one key network, the Forum of the Third Sector, being led by women.

Outside of organisations, 40% of the population take part in less formal activities, and 60%, a high number globally, indicate a willingness to take part in individual acts of political activism such as boycotts and demonstrations.

PUBLIC TRUST

Under a third of people state that they can trust other people. Public trust in civil society institutions is around 43%, which is close to the global average score. Within these, the church and environmental organisations have the support of most people. Meanwhile, political parties and labour unions have less than 30% of public support, while political parties have the highest level of complete distrust, at almost 30%.

There is also a high level of perceived corruption, particularly for an economically developed EU member country, with Italy ranked the lowest in such countries on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index, at 67th out of 183 countries.

NETWORKS

Around 71% of CSOs are members of networks, but the extent to which these networks are substantive rather than merely formal is questioned. Whether members of networks or not, CSOs have a habit of meeting with other CSOs, which 85% report doing within a three month period, while 80% had exchanged information with other CSOs. On average both network members and non members held 13 to 14 meetings with other CSOs in a three month period, but network members are more active in information exchange, and on average exchanged information with 24 other CSOs, compared to 14 for non-network members. 41% of international NGOs are represented in Italy, a high figure compared to other countries

“CSOs have a habit of meeting with other CSOs.”

RESOURCES

In around two thirds of CSOs volunteers outnumber paid staff. Only 15% of CSOs do not have volunteers, compared to 38% which have no paid staff. The organisations that most rely on volunteers include cultural, health and social service groups and associations.

The funding mix for civil society is diverse, but there are few CSOs which can state they have assured multi-year funding. On average an Italian CSO obtains funding from two main sources. The most frequent and significant part of CSO revenues is membership fees, and one in five CSOs relies solely on this source. 40% of CSOs obtain funds from private donations and a third from service fees. Donor funding is the least frequent source.

IMPACT

CSOs assess themselves as having low or very low influence in the public arena. However, Italian CSOs tend to underestimate the impact they are able to have, suggesting an enduring self-image amongst the sector of being weak organisations with little potential to exert power in the face of strong government. Correspondingly, the perception of impact of the sector by external stakeholders is higher than the perception of the sector itself. Civil society is seen to have a limited ability to influence matters of social mobility, identified as a pressing issue in Italy, but more ability to influence respect for the law. Both internal and external stakeholders agree that civil society has strong social impact, with the key issues it addresses being housing, education, food and social development.

“Italian CSOs tend to underestimate the impact they are able to have.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

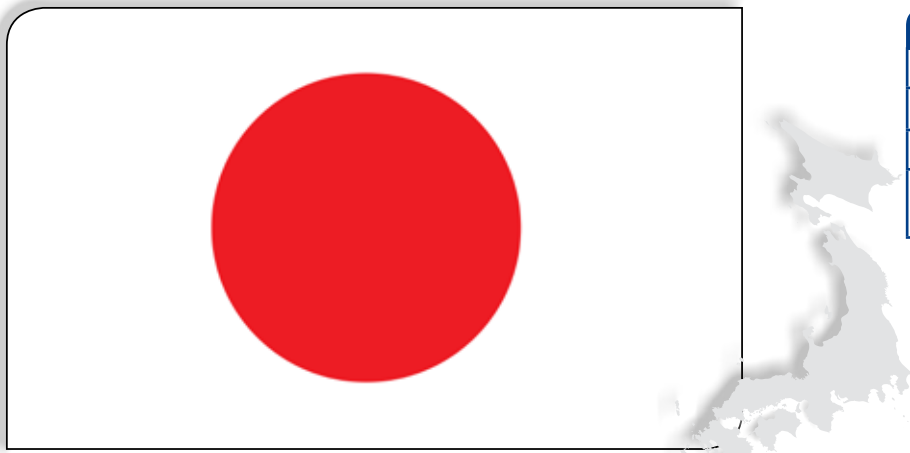
Recommendations for the development of civil society in Italy include: gathering more reliable statistical data on civil society in a broad and disaggregated sense, as opposed to the data that exists largely on non-profit organisations only at present, which groups together organisations which have little in common; improving media relations for civil society; and developing more structured ways of enabling civil society participation in policy processes.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Cittadinanzattiva (Active Citizenship) - www.cittadinanzattiva.it

Active Citizenship Foundation - www.fondaca.org

Forum Terzo Settore - www.forumterzosettore.it



Basic facts	
Capital	Tokyo
Official language	Japanese
Population	126.5m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$42,831

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: JAPAN

The year in Japan was dominated by the devastating March 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, tsunami and subsequent nuclear crisis, an emergency unprecedented in modern day Japan. Civil society was heavily involved in response, and a generation has now experienced public protest, against nuclear power, for the first time. New possibilities for civil society therefore seem to have emerged, but alongside this there is the potential for established political orders to reassert themselves. Japanese civil society therefore assesses itself as being at a defining crossroads, facing either stagnation or renewal as it attempts to overcome challenges of low rates of participation, trust and resources.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The March 2011 earthquake and its aftermath have brought new fluidity to the social and political arena in Japan. Commentators on civil society acknowledge new opportunity, particularly given the collapse in trust in government, which in September saw the resignation of the prime minister, and in the businesses most closely associated with the crisis, such as energy companies. This has brought about some new willingness to question ingrained patterns of state-centric social infrastructures and to re-consider civil society as vehicles for participation and partnerships, while new mobilisations of protest have been seen. What is not yet clear is whether the shift is a permanent one, or if the opportunity is temporary.

The state traditionally enjoys a strong role in Japan. Some CSOs are seen as closer to governments, such as former public benefit corporations and social public promotion corporations, due to movement of staff from government to such CSOs. World Bank Governance Indicators suggest an improvement in the quality of governance over the last decade, with progress in control of corruption, quality of regulation and effectiveness of government. Political stability is however assessed to have worsened, and public voice and the accountability of public agencies remain challenging area. A further challenge to public voice comes in the form of homogenous media coverage resulting from a press club system which maintains strong ties between media, senior government officials and politicians.

The shape of civil society in Japan changed substantially after the passing of the Law to Promote Specified Non-profit Activities (NPO Law) in 1998. This made it much easier for grassroots organisations to obtain corporate status as

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 56.3. Civic Engagement: 44.5; Level of Organisation: 62.3; Practice of Values: 41.3; Perception of Impact: 57.2; External Environment: 76.0. Ranked 5 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	39.1%
CSOs network membership	35.4%
Policy activity	40.0%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.901. Ranked 12 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 1. Civil liberties score: 2
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 8. Ranked 14 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +1.40. Percentile rank: 88.5. Rule of law: +1.31. Percentile rank: 88.2
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: -1. Ranked 22 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2008	Status: strong. Score: 83 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 31. Ranked 164 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: full democracy. Score: 8.08. Ranked 21 out of 167

specified non-profit corporations (SNACs). The NPO Law provides for minimum government supervision of SNACs. At the same time, even before the earthquake the political climate for such CSOs is seen to have experienced some improvement, with progress on discussion of the taxation system and the legal framework.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

While the concept of civil society is seen as arising in Japan after the end of the Second World War, the growth of a modern day civil society can be traced to the response to and aftermath of the Awaji Great Earthquake of 1995. The mass response to this was characterised as the Volunteer Revolution, which saw a significant shift in media coverage of CSOs and volunteering. This also drew attention to the outdated nature of the laws then in place for the sector, given that response came largely from grassroots CSOs with no legal status, rather than existing legally established CSOs. This led to the passing of the NPO Law, which brought about a boom in SNACs, of which there are now estimated to be over 40,000, exceeding the number of longer established CSO types. Indeed, while the number of SNACs has increased, the number of other CSOs has decreased, suggesting that these have become the predominant CSO form. Further, the economic scale of the non-profit sector was assessed to have doubled since 1990. However,

over a decade on from the passing of the law, there are now question marks over the quality and effectiveness of SNACs, about their ability to offer useful platforms for civic participation, and the financial and human resource challenges they face.

As well as SNACs, it is important to understand the many traditional associations and informal networks which exist in Japan, which can be seen as an important generator of social capital, but do not easily conform to Western models of what constitutes a CSO. For example, there are estimated to be almost 300,000 neighbourhood organisations, represented in all 47 prefectures of Japan, undertaking such activities as maintaining local residential environments and supporting local public service provision. On the whole, the service delivery role of CSOs is much stronger than their advocacy role. Social enterprises, meanwhile, are a relatively new phenomenon. There are also around 35,000 small business associations. Civil society in Japan can therefore be seen to be a blend of, and an evolving dialogue between, traditional and young organisations.

PARTICIPATION

27% of the Japanese population report being members of a socially-oriented CSO and 22% of a politically-oriented CSO, with sports and cultural organisations having the highest membership, but local community participation, for example in neighbourhood organisations, is much higher than participation in more formal organisations. Women participate at the same rate as men in socially-oriented organisations, but have much less involvement in the political sphere. Japan has lower levels of membership of and volunteering in CSOs than the global average in every category of organisation. There are also historically very low rates of participation in peaceful demonstrations, although September 2011 saw an estimated 60,000 people marching in anti-nuclear protest in Tokyo, following earlier protests in June.

While there are many universities and other higher education institutes which provide courses in understanding civil society, these are concentrated in the Tokyo and Osaka metropolitan areas, and are mostly offered by lecture, which entails a lack of opportunities for under-graduates and post-



graduates to gain hands on experience of civil society. This has the implication that membership and volunteering in CSOs amongst people who have completed tertiary education is low.

PUBLIC TRUST

Public trust in civil society is unusually low in Japan compared to most other countries. 36% of people express quite a lot of trust in large scale corporations, 29% in government and 21% in parliament and only 17% in CSOs, while trust in charitable and humanitarian organisations is even lower. The 2012 Edelman Trust Barometer shows major drops of trust in public actors following the March earthquake, with trust in government and the media falling significantly, but also trust in NGOs. A second distinguishing feature of Japan compared to most other countries is the low trust given to religious structures and the low influence they therefore have, even though there are a large number of faith-related organisations, estimated at over 180,000. Reaction to the cult-led poison gas attack on the Tokyo metro system of 1995 is believed to be one of the factors behind this.

Japan is ranked consistently highly on the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, placed 14th out of 183 in 2011. Despite this there is still widespread concern about corruption, including in civil society, with 95% of CSO representatives surveyed believing there are corrupt practices present within Japanese civil society. The long standing practice of placing retiring senior government professionals into well-paid positions in public benefit corporations, as mentioned above, can be seen to contribute towards this. There have also been some prominent corruption scandals involving such organisations, which have received heavy media coverage, such as those involving disability organisations and trade unions.

“Public trust in civil society is unusually low in Japan compared to most other countries.”

Around 40% of people say they trust other people, which is higher than in most other countries, but there is a perception that this is decreasing.

NETWORKS

Only about 35% of CSOs surveyed report being a member of a federation, umbrella group or support network. Around 45 different networks were identified, with about half of these being national level networks, followed by 13 provincial networks. Over half of CSOs which are members of one network are members of at least one more, implying that CSOs divide between those which prioritise formal association with other CSOs, and those which do not. Labour unions tend more to be members of networks, perhaps reflecting the fact that they have a longer history on the Japanese CSO landscape, compared to SNACS. However, it is assessed that there are also around 300 unofficial intermediary organisations that serve SNACS.

84% of CSOs surveyed exchange information with other CSOs and 82% report recent meetings, further suggesting that there is considerable informal networking. Communicating and cooperating with local government is also identified as an important connection for CSOs engaged in service delivery. Japan is however assessed as having weak international civil society connections for a country of its size and international influence, reflecting the fact that internationally oriented CSOs only started developing in Japan in the 1980s, and a continuing low awareness of international development issues amongst Japanese citizens.

RESOURCES

CSOs are seen to depend heavily on subsidy and outsourcing from the government and corporate donations, rather than on donations from the public and voluntary efforts. Individual donation to charitable causes is also very low – at under 0.1% of household spending on most recent

calculations. Taxation incentives for giving are viewed to be weak. There is however some evidence that reaction to the March earthquake saw a large spike in donations to CSOs.

Only 44% of CSOs surveyed assess themselves as having sustainable human resources. Half of CSOs report having five or fewer members of staff, and 45% report having no staff at all. Only 15% have more than 20 members of staff. 15% of SNACs report having no financial resources, and around half of SNACs do not have sufficient resources to employ one full time worker. The average salary of workers in the private sector is 2.3 times higher than the average salary of workers in SNACs, and funding received through outsourcing does not include provision for permanent salaries. In focus group discussions, SNACs have declared financial sustainability to be their biggest challenge.

IMPACT

External stakeholders assess the impact of CSOs more highly than those working in the sector themselves, both on social issues (70% of CSOs surveyed see tangible social impact compared to 77% of external stakeholders) and with regard to impact on policy (50% of CSOs and 55% of external stakeholders). Only a minority of CSOs interviewed have attempted policy influence within the past two years.

Systematic attempts to measure CSO impact are acknowledged as weak. One organisation, in response to this, has launched an assessment tool with 33 criteria which CSO can apply to be recognised as effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in Japan include promoting civic engagement through citizens' education, including in lifelong learning initiatives; modifying the taxation system to promote greater giving to CSOs; increasing connections between local CSOs and national ones, so that people volunteering on community issues can be encouraged into activism on national issues; and undertaking further research to understand the low level of trust in Japanese civil society and the ways of improving this.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Japan Centre for Nonprofit Research and Information - www.osipp.osaka-u.ac.jp/npocenter

Japan Association of Charitable Organisations - www.kohokyo.or.jp

CSO Network Japan - www.csonj.org

Japan NPO Centre - www.jnpoc.ne.jp

Japan NGO Centre for International Cooperation - www.janic.org

Japan Fundraising Association - <http://jfra.jp>



Basic facts	
Capital	Amman
Official language	Arabic
Population	6.4m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$4,560

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: JORDAN

CSOs in Jordan have long operated within a politically conservative environment with a tradition of heavy state intervention which compromises civil society independence. Recent years saw a gradual decline of the political freedoms and greater openness that developed after 1989, when public protests led to the first parliamentary elections in a generation and the loosening of some state control. The recent wave of protest throughout the Middle East and North Africa has, however, created fresh opportunity for civil society to push for electoral, political and legislative reform.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The king, as head of the executive and commander of the armed forces, enjoys a high level of power and official protection from public criticism. The power of the current king over other levels of government was demonstrated in February 2011, when he dismissed the government in response to popular protest and appointed a new prime minister to form a new cabinet. However, since then, political events have continued to move rapidly in response to popular protest. A broader range of political viewpoints was brought into the government, price cuts in basic goods were introduced and the law restricting public gatherings was relaxed, while the king announced there would be new election and party laws, and future prime ministers and governments would be formed by elected parliamentary majorities, rather than appointed by the king. However, dissatisfaction at the slow pace of reform led to the second prime minister resigning following a vote of confidence, and the appointment of Jordan's third prime minister of 2011, Prime Minister Al-Khasawneh, at the time a judge at the International Court of Justice, with a clear reform agenda. Public preference for multiparty democracy is high and rising, with 80% of people believing that a democratic political system would be good for Jordan.

Political reform needs to address a context in which the separation of powers has been compromised, and connected to the king's power are the security forces, the army and the institutions of government, with government believed to be Jordan's largest employer. The leaders of financial institutions, which are closely bound with kinship ties, religious leaders and the leaders of those tribes linked with the political regime are also assessed as having a high level of influence. Less powerful but still influential in Jordan are the media, parliament, the civil courts and the associations of the professional class, with political parties seen to have declining status and importance.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 50.7. Civic Engagement: 36.8; Level of Organisation: 55.3; Practice of Values: 57.2; Perception of Impact: 49.0; External Environment: 55.4. Ranked 18 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	31.3%
CSOs network membership	80.2%
Policy activity	18.6%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.698. Ranked 95 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: not free. Political rights score: 6. Civil liberties score: 5
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: partly free. Score: 42
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 4.5. Ranked 56 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.08. Percentile rank: 57.04. Rule of law: +0.22. Percentile rank: 61.1
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 56.8. Ranked 128 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: very weak. Score: 55 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 95 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: authoritarian regime. Score: 3.89. Ranked: 118 out of 167

Natural resources, particularly water, are scarce, and a heavily urbanised, service-based economy was hit by the global economic crisis. Unemployment, is high, estimated at 13% in 2010, with female unemployment higher, and more than half of the population believe their family's financial situation has worsened since the economic crisis. Previous high levels of economic growth were also seen to have led to high income inequality, and inflation rose steeply to around 6% by the end of 2010. Women are under-represented at every level, including in local and national politics, public sector leadership and civil society. In the 2011 Social Watch Gender Equality Index, Jordan was assessed as having achieved slight progress, but was still rated as one of the bottom 30 countries for gender equality globally.

Temporary laws introduced under the pretext of preventing extremism and terrorism restricted freedom of assembly and expression, with Freedom House changing Jordan's classification to not free from partly free in 2010. Until the February 2011 reforms, requests had to be made to hold any public gathering, and requests for gatherings by political parties, students and trade unions were usually refused. Government also controls the appointment of imams and the content of the Friday sermons. A key test will be the reform of electoral law, an area which has previously seen little progress, with the result that elections have not returned representative parliaments, partly because of boycotts by parties.

Pre-2011 changes in the law for civil society enabled the establishment of non-profit companies, a new form of civil society in Jordan, with 250 established in areas such as education and health. The 2008 Societies Act regulates charities and social organisations, and was made less restrictive through amendments in 2009, while each of the 12 professional associations has its own law. There is also no right in law to form new trade unions, and public sector employees are not permitted to unionise, although after a series of protests, in 2010 the teaching sector won the right to form the General Union of Teachers.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The period after 1989 saw the growth of CSOs and a broadening of the scope of their activities, including the development of CSOs working on issues such as human rights and gender. Such organisations are acknowledged as gaining some successes, particularly in enhancing the political representation of women. There are currently estimated to be around 5,700 CSOs, with over 1.5m members. Around one quarter of these are social and charitable societies, accounting for around half of CSO membership, and there are also a large number of cooperative societies. However, cooperative societies are weakened by a heavy level of state bureaucracy, while most charitable societies have a very local focus.

Within civil society, the most influential organisations have tended to be those associated with the royal family, international organisations and business and professional associations. However, the picture is one of disconnect between different parts of civil society: business societies tend to seek good relationships with government, while professional associations, although having strong membership and financial bases, are seen as somewhat outmoded and inward-looking. Looser kinship and tribal networks also offer unofficial social safety nets, which became particularly important in economic downturn.



Independent media organisations have grown since these were first allowed in 1993, but the government maintains tight control of major media sources, albeit this has been challenged by the growth in internet access to an estimated 27% and 90% access to satellite TV.

PARTICIPATION

There is a lack of concrete information on volunteering, but research conducted before the uprisings of 2011 suggest that the highest level of participation, of around 9% of people, is in family associations, with generally under 4% participating in any other form of civic grouping. Membership of political parties is estimated to be under 1%, while the volunteer base is around 35,000, which is 1% of the working age population. Volunteering often has motivations of national or religious duty, but many CSO leaders believe volunteering to be in decline from a low base. It is considered that people are more comfortable with participating in family, neighbourhood and community activities, while the lack of political participation has been attributed to a fear of government attitudes, along with a failure of political parties to show responsive leadership and ability to serve key sections of the population.

Protests that took place during 2011 typically involved several thousand people, a new phenomenon in Jordan, suggesting there was latency for activism that was previously overlooked.

“Protests that took place during 2011 typically involved several thousand people, a new phenomenon in Jordan, suggesting there was latency for activism that was previously overlooked.”

PUBLIC TRUST

Levels of public trust are much lower in Jordan than in neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Further, trust is lower amongst people who have progressed higher in education. Trust resides more in family and social clan, which implies negative consequences for social capital when this translates into support for narrow identity positions, for example in elections. Relations between the Muslim majority and Christian minority are generally positive, but there is high social intolerance of drug users, gay people and people with HIV/AIDS.

The highest levels of trust in civil society are enjoyed by religious institutions, trusted by more than two thirds of the population. Compared to this just over a quarter of the population trust environmental organisations, with slightly lower levels for charities and women’s organisations, but this is still around double the trust in government institutions. Jordan is ranked 56th out of 183 countries on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, and perception is that corruption is rising, particularly in the public sector, often expressed through nepotism, cronyism and other forms of favouritism.

NETWORKS

80% of CSOs surveyed belong to networks, with peak bodies including the General Union of Charitable Societies, with over 1,200 member organisations, the Council of Trade Unions and the General Federation of Trade Unions, and the National Committee for Women’s Affairs. There has also been a recent growth of less formal networks in fields such as environment, human rights and gender. An alliance was formed to monitor the 2010 election, while coalitions also developed to defend the right of access to information, and to successfully propose amendments to the Associations Law in 2009. However, while around 50 international NGOs have a presence in Jordan’s capital Amman, which hosts many regional offices, effective participation of local CSOs in international processes is felt to be limited.

RESOURCES

Overwhelmingly civil society is organised on a voluntary basis, with 94% of the members of governing bodies of CSOs working for no remuneration, and around half of CSO leaders committing three hours of voluntary work a day to their organisation. Foreign donors provide about 12% of total CSO funding and government support around 13%, with just under half of funding coming from membership fees, donations and other membership contributions. Many organisations, however, have barely adequate resources. There is some scepticism in civil society and the media about receiving foreign funding, which requires government permission, as it is argued that the lack of a coordinated strategy for civil society allows foreign donors to define the agenda by default. There are attempts to develop Islamic funding models, but moves towards developing a code of conduct have not achieved momentum.

IMPACT

CSOs, as surveyed before the 2011 protests, assessed themselves as having a limited to medium influence on democratisation, and a strong impact on support to poor and marginalised people and education. The major areas in which CSOs attempt policy influence are social policies and the laws of association, but CSOs assess their influence in these spheres as low. External stakeholders assess CSO impact more highly than CSO representatives themselves, suggesting a degree of pessimism about the potential of CSOs to operate in the policy sphere. This also suggests CSOs may need support to develop their capacity to contribute to political and legal reform.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to help strengthen civil society in Jordan include: developing incentives for volunteering, particularly for women and young people, and a legal framework for volunteering; establishing a leadership and good governance institute to focus on developing leadership and management skills for civil society; initiating an independent commission for Jordanian civil society; and instigating studies on the contribution of civil society to GDP.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre - www.ujrc-jordan.net

General Union of Voluntary Societies - www.guvs-jordan.com

National Centre for Human Rights - www.nchr.org.jo

National Society for Enhancement of Freedom and Democracy - www.democracyjund.com

Jordan Environmental Society - www.jes.org.jo

Jordanian Women's Union - www.jwu.itgo.com

Jordanian National Commission for Women - www.women.jo

Guide to Civil Society Organisations in Jordan - www.civilsociety-jo.net



Basic facts	
Capital	Astana
Official languages	Kazakh, Russian
Population	15.5m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$9,136

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan, as is the case with its neighbouring countries, is somewhat isolated and its civil society does not have prominence on the world stage, despite the fact that it is the ninth largest country in the world by geographical size, and the largest landlocked country. The environment in which CSOs operate is one characterised by corruption, limited political rights and freedoms and significant constraints on the rule of law.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The president, who has been in office since independence, is the single dominant political power in Kazakhstan; his family, the state executive, the ruling party, which dominates parliament, and connected financial and industrial groups command the power landscape. The situation can be characterised as a presidential monopoly of political space. The constitution as amended in 2007 gives the current president unlimited opportunities to stand for re-election. The president, while apparently continuing to enjoy popular support, took 95% of the vote in the April 2011 election, which was called at short notice and was widely criticised for not meeting international electoral standards, including apparent coercion to vote and lack of adequate electoral competition. Ruling political rhetoric explicitly puts economic progress ahead of democratic reform. In the light of this presidential dominance since independence, one challenge for the future is going to be the question of political succession.

A top 20 oil producing country with its economy stimulated by high commodity prices, Kazakhstan is ranked as a middle income country and so does not have a national focus on poverty reduction, yet there is high income inequality, large numbers of disadvantaged groups, and underdeveloped and poor small towns and rural areas. This includes poverty in oil rich areas, with 20% of the rural population below the poverty threshold.

Civil society was acknowledged in the 1995 Constitution, and in a presidential decree of 2006 which recognises civil society as an arena for social relations distinct from the state. Establishing a CSO is assessed as a relatively cheap and easy procedure, but the government is seen by many to distort the operating environment for civil society by exerting formidable powers of patronage to co-opt selected CSOs to help deliver its agenda, rewarding cooperative CSOs with funds and recognition, while portraying uncooperative CSOs as serving

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 46.1. Civic Engagement: 47.3; Level of Organisation: 48.4; Practice of Values: 47.4; Perception of Impact: 40.9; External Environment: 46.7. Ranked 30 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	18.5%
CSOs network membership	50.9%
Policy activity	39.2%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.745. Ranked 68 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: not free. Political rights score: 6. Civil liberties score: 5
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: partly free. Score: 55
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 2.7. Ranked 120 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.28. Percentile rank: 44.5. Rule of law: -0.62. Percentile rank: 31.8
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 77.5. Ranked 154 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2008	Status: moderate. Score: 76 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 107 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: authoritarian regime. Score: 3.24. Ranked 137 out of 167

external interests, disruptive or unconcerned with advancing development. Dialogue between state and civil society exists as largely a pro-forma exercise.

Amongst constraints on civil society, the right to hold meetings is carefully controlled. Ten days' notification is required for a demonstration, and a group of 20 or more needs advance permission from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to meet. 27% of CSOs surveyed report they have experienced illegitimate restriction or attack by local or central government. Against this, 63% believe the legal framework for CSOs is at least moderately enabling.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

In common with neighbouring countries, the term civil society became known with the introduction of donor support following the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. During this period around 400 CSOs were established, mostly based on human rights. Areas in which CSOs now operate as well as human rights include gender, the environment and youth. There are estimated by government sources to be 25,000 CSOs in Kazakhstan, employing over half a million people out of an estimated population of 16.5m, with 13,000 of these classed as NGOs. A different figure using Ministry of Justice data puts the number at closer to 53,000. Regardless, the overall picture has been one of growth, including in consumer cooperatives,

particularly in rural areas. For example, public associations have increased from under 5,000 in 2003 to over 8,000 in 2010, and foundations from under 3,000 to over 4,500, a growth of 69% and 77% respectively. However, most NGOs are still based in cities, and many are also considered dormant.

Against this, it must be noted that there are 21,000 apparent CSOs which are properly classed as state institutions, and these too have also grown in recent years. The presidential circle, the ruling party and oligarchs have shown a tendency in recent years to form pseudo CSOs.

Some NGOs and religious organisations are assessed as playing particularly significant roles within civil society, along with the media, business associations and international organisations.

PARTICIPATION

Just over a third of the population are active in socially-oriented organisations, which are often connected to mosques, churches and other religious structures. Under one in five of the population is a member of a politically-oriented CSO, with a similar level of volunteering in such CSOs. Low potential for individual activism is also reported: three quarters of the population say they would never take part in a boycott and over half that they would never join a peaceful demonstration. There is felt to be apathy towards volunteering, and a growth in individualistic, selfish attitudes. Formal mechanisms for volunteering are not well developed.

However, a further important factor in driving lack of participation would seem to be the legal constraints mentioned above. Without space for participation and competition, an active citizenry is unlikely to develop. The result of this is a democratic deficit that does not see people pushing for participation. A lack of education about democracy is also a factor.



PUBLIC TRUST

Trust in civil society is low, with only around one in five people expressing trust in the sector as a whole, but trust in different types of civil society actors is divergent. Mosque and church groups score highest, with about 65% of the population expressing either a great deal or quite a lot of trust, compared to 38% for charitable and humanitarian organisations, 37% for women's organisations and 31% for environmental organisations. Distrust of political parties and trade unions stands at around 80%.

Overall public trust is low, with less than one in five of people taking the view that other people can be trusted. While general social tolerance is quite high, there are also high levels of intolerance of gay people and people who have HIV/AIDS, and over half the population expresses intolerance about immigrants or foreign workers.

Corruption is a huge issue that is also widely seen to hinder the development of civil society. CSO representatives have a perception of high corruption in the sector, with around 65% believing that corruption is frequent or very frequent. While this is understood to be connected to the very high perception of corruption in general in Kazakhstan, with the country ranked 120th out of 183 on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index and its score consistently under 3 out of 10 (on a scale where 10 indicates the absence of corruption), it suggests a greater need to focus on CSO transparency and accountability.

“Trust in civil society is low, with only around one in five people expressing trust in the sector as a whole.”

NETWORKS

Only around half of CSOs are members of networks, a lower number than most countries, perhaps reflecting the challenges of geography. However one of the strengths of CSOs is seen as their flexibility and willingness to share information with each other, with around 70% reporting that they share information with other CSOs. Duplication of work is however felt to be an issue. International NGOs are felt to be a declining presence, with some having closed offices, and their activities are closely scrutinised.

RESOURCES

Over 40% of CSOs reported a decline in their organisation's revenue from one year to the next. The CSO resource situation is generally viewed as better in Kazakhstan than other neighbouring post-Soviet countries, but there are still concerns that most leading CSOs are dependent on international donor funding, which is in decline, given Kazakhstan's ranking as a middle income country. This opens up a risk of developing dependency on government funding in its place, given that since 2005 the government has made financial support available to CSOs, ostensibly as a way of countering international donor influence. However, competition for public funding is seen as unfair, with three quarters of government funding going to a small group of around 200 NGOs in 2009.

“Competition for public funding is seen as unfair.”

As well as concerns about the accountability and transparency of public funds, the fear of losing hard won funding sources essentially encourages CSOs to practice self-censorship, while the daily struggle for survival means that many CSOs do not pursue wider objectives. There is also an absence of a culture of philanthropy and corporate donation, with early efforts at these hampered by the economic crisis and an unsupportive taxation regime. There is also inadequate use of voluntary opportunities in staffing. Working in the sector is not seen as prestigious, and organisations face high turnover.

IMPACT

CSOs assess themselves as having most impact in supporting the poor and marginalised communities, with around 40% of CSOs surveyed believing that impact is achieved in this field, while other important areas identified are social development, education and health. Around 40% of CSOs had advocated for a particular policy, but only around 13% of these reported that their efforts at advocacy had met with success. Overall, external stakeholders' perceptions of impact are higher than CSOs' perceptions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

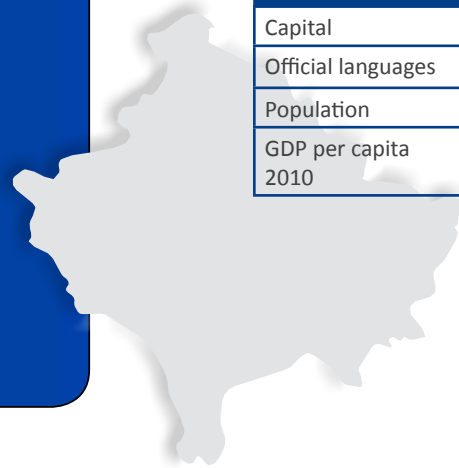
Recommendations to improve the health of civil society in Kazakhstan include: encouraging participation through citizenship education; improving opportunities to volunteer in CSOs; developing consultation mechanisms for CSOs with citizens; and improving the taxation regime to encourage more individual and corporate giving.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Public Policy Research Center - www.pprc.kz

Institute for Development Cooperation - www.ngoidc.kz

Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law - www.bureau.kz



Basic facts	
Capital	Pristina
Official languages	Albanian, Serbian
Population	1.8m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$3,059

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: KOSOVO

Kosovo is in an unusual position, having declared independence in 2008, but being recognised by only a minority of sovereign states (86 out of 193 UN members at time of writing), meaning that it is not a UN member and is not represented in many international platforms. Despite the 2010 International Court of Justice opinion that Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence did not breach international law, no resolution has been reached on the statehood of Kosovo, to which Serbia remains opposed. This means that often its civil society has more international exposure and participation than its government. However, there is an assessment that the recent history of Kosovo has not contributed to the development of a culture of critique, for the reasons that this would have been seen to damage the prospects of international recognition and the process of nation-building, and that international actors and donors have not supported critical voices, such that CSOs have applied self-censorship, which in turn risks their legitimacy with their constituencies. Civil society is adapting to its new role in state-building, while also having to adjust to the loss of donor support, reflecting a general pattern in the Balkans.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Kosovo is one of the poorest countries in Europe, with almost half of the population unemployed and 45% living below the national poverty line. The economy relies on a large informal sector, and depends on foreign aid and remittances from Kosovars in other countries, which are assessed as having declined due to the global economic crisis.

Freedom House categorises Kosovo as a partly free country, short of being an electoral democracy. The International Civilian Representative, which exists to ensure the implementation of Kosovo's status agreement, has the power to override some political decisions. The 2010 elections were marred by fraud, causing a slide in the popular legitimacy of the government, and came in the wake of a period of political crisis following the resignation of the president and government and what was seen as an opportunistic dissolution of parliament by the prime minister, who nevertheless was returned to power. In 2010 the prime minister also faced widespread allegations of past involvement in organised crime. A January 2012 European Parliament report criticised the EU police mission to Kosovo, Eulex, for the lack of action against top organised crime suspects, while

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 51.7. Civic Engagement: 44.04; Level of Organisation: 70.7; Practice of Values: 59.4; Perception of Impact: 32.9; External Environment: 51.3. Ranked 16 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	9.1%
CSOs network membership	69.7%
Policy activity	59.6%

Key indicators	
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 5. Civil liberties score: 4
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 2.9. Ranked 112 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.6. Percentile rank: 32.5. Rule of law: -0.64. Percentile rank: 30.8
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 30. Ranked 86 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: weak. Score: 67 out of 100

the judiciary is widely seen as weak. There is little tradition of investigative journalism.

The NGO Registration and Liaison Department is assessed to have very limited capacity, and around 35% of CSOs surveyed report having no engagement with it. Further, tax incentives for civil society are limited and there are very few benefits of registration. However, most CSOs see the law as allowing for quick and easy registration. Attempts were made in 2010 to introduce new restrictions in NGO Law, but these were resisted by a civil society coalition.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society has undergone several recent changes. In the 1990s it was a vital part of the parallel social provision system that grew in response to a boycott of Serbian institutions by the majority

ethnic Albanian population, and a source of civil resistance. Civil society's structure also mirrored the ethnic division of society. Civil society movements at this stage derived a mandate from grassroots support, and dealt with urgent survival issues such as humanitarian aid and human rights protection. For example, for 10 years the humanitarian organisation Mother Theresa delivered aid and health services to poor people, mobilising over 7,000 volunteers to do so. Following the end of the 1998-1999 war with Serbia, an influx of financial and technical support from donors vastly increased the size of civil society, but did not necessarily improve the quality of its work. At the same time Kosovo was effectively governed by the UN Mission in Kosovo, giving limited opportunities for domestic civil society to shape the agenda. This combination of circumstances can be seen to have moulded a sector that became characterised by donor dependence, inability to set its own agenda, opportunism and hibernation of CSOs when donor support did not eventuate. 6,000 registered NGOs existed in 2010, but only around 10% of these were considered to be active, with no provision in the NGO Law for defunct NGOs to fall off the registration list.

Organised civil society mostly consists of registered NGOs, with other types uncommon. For historical reasons trade unions are rarely seen as part of civil society, and seldom connect with civil society initiatives. Religious communities are also not considered by most as part of civil society, apart from some of their humanitarian and charitable aid initiatives, which are significant. International NGOs are important players, but those dealing with reconstruction and reconciliation have been replaced by a smaller number dealing with transparency, corruption and the rule of law.

PARTICIPATION

There is a high level of apathy towards public life, with low levels of CSO membership and volunteering. Less than one in five of people are an active member of a CSO, with an even lower rate of volunteering. Religious organisations have the highest membership, while organisations involved in transition have seen a subsequent decline in participation. For example, the Mother Theresa organisation now only has 4,200 registered volunteers compared to its 7,000 peak, most of whom are active sporadically. Other forms of participation have not filled the space. Almost half of CSOs believe volunteering in civil society to be in decline, and many attribute this partly to the lack of a proper legal framework to support volunteering. Yet more than one third of the public take part in informal community activities, and over a third involve themselves in individual acts of activism, such as taking part in demonstrations or signing a petition.

The recent roles of CSOs, and the ways in which they were supported and grown, seem to have fostered a view amongst people that CSOs are a source of benefits rather than a vehicle for participation to address problems. As well as poverty, one reason advanced for the low rate of



participation is disillusionment and activism fatigue, with the solidarity and momentum of the resistance and conflict period now having dissipated in the slow climb to international recognition, compounded by disappointment and low trust in political parties and institutions given experience since independence.

A higher proportion of Kosovo Serbs than Kosovo Albanians participate, both in organised activities and individual activism, suggesting that since national government was achieved, Kosovo Albanians now tend to see government bodies as the legitimate actors to deal with, while Kosovo Serbs may be participating more out of resistance to the Kosovo project than from a willingness to contribute to nation-building.

PUBLIC TRUST

There is varied trust in CSOs, with humanitarian and charitable organisations enjoying relatively high levels of trust, of over half the population, but advocacy and democratisation organisations low levels, at around 14%. Kosovo Serbs record more trust in CSOs than Kosovo Albanians, again perhaps reflecting a changed perception of the role of civil society by both groups following independence.

There is high religious tolerance, but high intolerance of drug users, people with HIV/AIDS and gay people, and CSOs are seen as reluctant to address these taboo subjects. There also remain high levels of intolerance between Kosovar Albanians and Kosovar Serbs, as exemplified by tension which flared in 2011 when a trade dispute over control of the border with Serbia, in areas of northern Kosovo with a high Serb population, led to the building of roadblocks by the local population.

Kosovo is rated as one of the most corrupt countries in Europe, ranked at 112th out of 183 on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, the lowest amongst all EU and potential EU states. While civil society representatives regard the sector as highly tolerant and non-violent, 70% also believe corruption within civil society to be occasional to frequent. As well as opportunism, many activists are viewed as using civil society as a springboard to a better job.

NETWORKS

Around 70% of CSOs report being members of networks, and given the small size of Kosovo and the relatively small number of active CSOs, communication within the sector is high, with 90% of CSOs reporting meeting with other CSOs and 87% reporting recent exchanges of information. However, few CSO networks have stood the test of time, the Kosovo Women Network and the election monitoring coalition Democracy in Action being two rare examples, and these have also experienced difficult moments. Networks created by donors are seen to have failed, while other reasons for network failures are competition for resources between CSOs and a lack of effective coordinating bodies. However, the loose coalition which fought the 2010 amendments to the NGO Law was seen as successful, suggesting that an urgent shared issue can enable CSOs overlook their individual interests.

RESOURCES

Most CSOs remain dependent on international funding, which provides around 70% of overall support, but the nature of this funding is changing, with some donors withdrawing and EU support contributing a larger proportion, which entails bureaucratic application procedures and minimum grant thresholds beyond the absorption capacity of smaller CSOs, thereby widening divides between smaller and larger CSOs. The corresponding loss of many smaller funders has seen an overall decline in the number of active CSOs. Local sources make up under 20% of CSO funding, with the corporate

The structure of civil society has changed to reflect shifting donor priorities."

sector and private donations providing less than 5% each, and membership fees only a little above 5%.

The structure of civil society has changed to reflect shifting donor priorities: minority and youth issues are no longer fields with high donor interest, and so the number of CSOs working on these issues has declined, while the transition to a national government has seen an increase in funding for, and therefore CSOs working on, the rule of law and attempting to perform watchdog functions over the state. The environmental movement remains particularly weak. The effect of donor dependence on the coherence of the sector is a worry of many: over 70% of CSO representatives believe CSOs apply for funds outside the field of their mission. The project-based nature of most support means that few CSOs can be considered to have a sustainable human resource base.

This leads to a sense that CSO priorities are set by donors rather than their constituencies, weakening the connection between CSOs and communities, damaging the perceived legitimacy of CSOs and hampering the public's understanding of civil society.

IMPACT

Civil society regards its impact as low, with around half of CSO representatives assessing that CSOs have very limited impact on what they see as the two key issues of the day, economic development and rule of law, and these views are echoed by external stakeholders. Civil society can claim greater success in improving the legal environment for some marginalised groups. Overall, public policy development is seen as complex and immature still in Kosovo and CSOs recognise they have little influence, with 70% of CSO representatives assessing their policy impact as limited; there is also scepticism that influencing a policy leads to changes on the ground, due to a lack of application of policies in practice and the rapid development of 'copy and paste' policies quickly adapted from other countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations to strengthen civil society in Kosovo include: increasing education about the concept of civil society and its role in society; developing a civil society led code of ethics for the sector; challenging CSOs' poor public image through promoting success stories and providing more information on civil society's role; and for the government to integrate civil society in national development strategy and allow it a role in oversight.

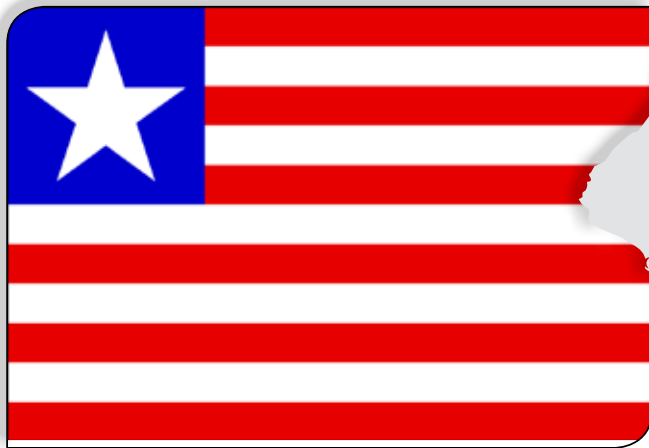
FURTHER INFORMATION

Kosovar Civil Society Foundation - www.kcsfoundation.org

Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development - www.kipred.net

Kosovo Foundation for Open Society - <http://kfos.org>

Kosova Women's Network - www.womensnetwork.org



Basic facts	
Capital	Monrovia
Official language	English
Population	3.8m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$247

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: LIBERIA

Civil society is acknowledged to have played a crucial role in helping to end civil war and grow conditions of peace in Liberia. However, the country continues to face multiple challenges in rebuilding itself, and crucially, civil society lacks the capacity, including in financial, human and technological resources, to adequately respond. One important step in 2011 was Liberia's entry into the Africa Peer Review Mechanism, implying greater oversight of its governance progress. A crucial test for the country was the legislative and presidential elections of October and November 2011, which were widely assessed by international observers as free and fair, but which were marked by occasional violence, and a boycott by the second placed candidate of the November 2011 run-off election which resulted in low turnout.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

While Liberia boasts the first female president in Africa in 2011 Nobel peace prize winner Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and moves further on from its civil wars of 1989-1996 and 1999-2003, there remain numerous challenges of state fragility. Poverty is a major problem, with 64% of the population defined as living beneath the poverty line and estimates of unemployment as high as 85%. Further, over half of Liberians are classed as illiterate, and 35% of the population (rising to 44% of women) have never attended school. The weakness of judicial capacity is a factor that challenges the application of the rule of law.

Civil society was given institutional recognition in the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which ended the second civil war and established the Liberia National Transitional Government, which saw civil society assigned seven seats in the National Assembly. While this representation was not assessed as particularly effective, it was considered to have established a useful precedent in the recognition of civil society by government as a legitimate partner. The term 'civil society' now has widespread public recognition and there is higher awareness of human rights issues. This can be seen in the increased calls for CSOs to be included on bodies such as boards and panels of investigation, with the sense that doing so will help serve the public interest, and in the occasional requests for civil society inclusion that come from the government. CSOs work with government agencies on key areas such as women's rights, corruption and development.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 53.7. Civic Engagement: 55.9; Level of Organisation: 50.5; Practice of Values: 54.1; Perception of Impact: 55.2; External Environment: 52.7. Ranked 12 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	27.9%
CSOs network membership	58.3%
Policy activity	42.3%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.329. Ranked 182 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 4
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3.2. Ranked 91 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -1.24. Percentile rank: 8.1. Rule of law: -1.01. Percentile rank: 17.1
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 40.5. Ranked: 110 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: very weak. Score: 54 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 94. Ranked 26 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 5.07. Ranked 98 out of 167
Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2011	Score 45.4. Ranked 36 out of 53

However, such partnerships are not well documented and may lack visibility.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

CSOs in Liberia can be clustered into three categories: interest and values groups, which generally have mass memberships, and include unions and youth federations; service and humanitarian oriented CSOs, which work to deliver services, particularly for poor and vulnerable people; and policy and advocacy oriented CSOs, such as human rights NGOs and research institutes and think tanks. The main organisational types seen are unincorporated associations (groups not officially certified by government but with some form of leadership and rules), trade and labour unions, cooperative societies and not-for-profit organisations.

Following the end of the second civil war it is estimated that 700 new associations were formed, including those of students, women, young people, people with disabilities, farmers, journalists and nurses. The ratio of international to national or local CSOs is one to four.

PARTICIPATION

Before the civil war, there was a culture of non-engagement, and civil society was characterised by its lack of power. New community development activities emerged as a response to war, which saw CSOs fulfilling the essential service functions of the collapsed state in some quarters, such as food distribution and education provision. Largely as a result of this active role, two thirds of Liberians now report being a member of a socially-oriented CSO, and the figure for volunteering in such organisations is even higher, at a remarkable 70%. A culture of volunteering is thought to be particularly strong in rural locales, while in cities sports and recreational clubs are strong, and thus may offer valuable alternate vehicles for civic participation. There is a continuing tradition of susu clubs, mostly informal structures which collect regular fees and give payouts to members on a rotating basis. The post war response also saw Liberian diaspora populations become more vocal and active.

Participation in politically-oriented CSOs is much lower, perhaps reflecting the fact that democratic pluralism and participatory democracy are still young concepts. Around 38% of people are members of a politically-oriented CSO, with volunteering in such organisations lower, at 30%. Only around 37% of people take part in individual acts of political activism, such as signing a petition or joining a boycott, and there is felt to be some fear about taking part in political demonstrations, given that these were violently suppressed under previous regimes. These lower rates may also reflect scepticism on the part of the public about formal politics, with political parties being heavily oriented around charismatic leaders and the resulting political practice being personalised.

PUBLIC TRUST

Not surprisingly, given the recent experience of civil war, inter-personal trust remains low, with only around 28% of people stating that they think other people can be trusted, although around half of people report that they are tolerant of visible minority groups. Around 70% of people report that they trust civil society in some form, a high figure reflecting the essential service roles of CSOs



during the war, and the perceptions among many that some types of groups, such as women's groups, played a crucial role in ending the civil war and in reconstruction.

Against this, there is a widespread public perception that CSOs, particularly those involved in service delivery, are corrupt, with health, education and children's CSOs being involved in recent corruption scandals. This reflects wider concerns about high levels of corruption in general, with Liberia ranked 91st out of 183 in the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, albeit that this indicates a lower level of perceived corruption than many of its bordering countries, and there is frequent media coverage of corruption. There are also cases of former officials forming pseudo CSOs as a front for continuing corruption. The high growth of private radio in recent years is seen to have encouraged greater public awareness and debate of such issues.

NETWORKS

Around 58% of CSOs belong to coalitions, of which there are several. An NGO Council was established in 2010, building on the former National Civil Society Advisory Committee. It brings together around 15 networks. It is assessed to have a great deal of influence in the sector, but has not yet won the confidence of all stakeholders. However, a key concern of some CSOs is that some coalitions are seen to compete with individual CSOs to win funding and implement projects, which causes tension within the sector. Almost 70% of CSOs report that they share information with other CSOs, but this is low compared to the situation in most countries. Further, the best-resourced CSOs tend to have the least interest in coalitions, unless they can assume leadership positions. Collaboration between CSOs tends to be donor-driven, as a condition of financial support, while competition for resources hinders cooperation.

“Two thirds of Liberians report being a member of a social CSO.”

There are weak links between CSOs in the capital, Monrovia, and those elsewhere in Liberia. Although there are estimated to be 57 international civil society groups represented in Liberia, grouped into the Management Steering Group network, international links for Liberian CSOs are weak, even with other West African countries. There are few funding opportunities for CSO staff to attend international conferences and trainings, and this area appears to be in decline.

RESOURCES

Poor human, financial and technological resources for CSOs result in a debilitating lack of capacity and a difficulty in sustaining operations. Funding tends to be project specific, with a lack of long term funds, and there are few partnerships with the private sector. Religious organisations are recognised as a success story in local fundraising, and closer connections here could benefit other CSOs. Electricity provision and internet access, and the absence of a national postal service, all make the working conditions of CSOs more difficult, particularly in rural areas.

Human resource challenges include low salary levels, lack of training, poor labour standards and difficult working conditions. Loss of staff to better funded organisations, such as the UN, international NGOs and the government is an issue, as is the movement of CSO leaders into political positions in government or political parties. It is estimated that 60% of qualified staff leave CSOs for other fields within 18 months of employment.

IMPACT

In terms of impact, two key processes which CSOs rate as important are the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It is notable however that CSO representatives rate their impact on these two key areas much more highly than external stakeholders – approximately 63% compared to 38%. Civil society was instrumental in mobilising for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and had such roles

“CSOs tend to respond to opportunities provided by government, rather than drive the policy agenda.”

as helping to vet potential commissioners and providing civic education about the commission, but concern now focuses on the lack of implementation of the commission's recommendations. CSOs, by comparison, found involvement in the Poverty Reduction Strategy process almost entirely frustrating, exacerbated by the fact that there was no civil society network specifically focused on this process.

Both internal and external stakeholders do however agree that CSOs achieve a high social impact, with just under 70% of both groups believing this. When it comes to the policy impact of civil society, external experts rate it much higher than CSO representatives themselves, at 75% compared to 39%, suggesting that CSO representatives are unduly pessimistic about their ability to influence state agendas. Recent advocacy successes of the sector include the establishment of a Governance Commission, the development of a national youth policy and the adoption of a law that 30% of electoral candidates should be women. A critique here however is that CSOs tend to respond to opportunities provided by government, rather than drive the policy agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in Liberia include: increased research and documentation of the contributions of citizens, and analysis of how and why people do or do not participate in debates and elections; greater training for CSO board members in their functions; closer collaboration between the NGO Council and private sector bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Liberia Business Association to build funding relationships; staff exchanges and mentoring between CSOs in Monrovia and those in rural locales; and advocacy for a freedom of information law.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Action for Genuine Development Alternatives (AGENDA) – www.freeagenda.org

Federation of Liberian Youth - www.flyliberia.org

Governance Commission of Liberia - www.goodgovernanceliberia.org



Basic facts	
Capital	Skopje
Official languages	Macedonian, Albanian
Population	2.1m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$4,460

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: MACEDONIA

Macedonia's new Law on Associations and Foundations, passed in 2010, is a key advance for civil society. It can be seen as the culmination of years of advocacy by CSOs for more enabling legislation, which now needs to be fully applied and tested within a context of limited political freedoms. Current EU accession processes also offer an opportunity for CSOs to expand their role, identify themselves as the leaders of key EU values such as participatory democracy, equality and inclusion, and benefit from new funding; at the same time there are also fears about increasing EU funding driving public sector corruption.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Income inequality is high in Macedonia and unemployment stood at around 30% in 2011. During 2011, the economy appeared to be slowly recovering from the effects of the global economic downturn, which were not experienced as severely as in some other countries. For example, real GDP grew by 0.7% in 2010 while core inflation remained low. However, the deepening of the Eurozone crisis raised uncertainty levels and increased economic risks.

There is a powerful intersection between the government, oligarchies, the media and political parties and their leaders, which includes corrupt relationships. The professionalism of civil servants is also an issue. Elections held in 2011, called early following a parliamentary boycott by the opposition, resulted in the re-election of the incumbent prime minister and right of centre government for a third term. The 2011 EU progress report on Macedonia found regressions on media freedoms, which included action by authorities, on tax evasion charges, against a television channel critical of the government, and insufficient progress on the rule of law. A 2011 report of the International Crisis Group also drew attention to declining judicial independence and rising ethnic nationalism. Freedom House classifies Macedonia as only a 'partly free country'.

This implies a relatively narrow political and civil space. Against this, 67% of CSOs surveyed believe the current legislation is enabling, and around 85% are satisfied with CSO registration processes, although 18% report experience of illegal restrictions, such as interference or oral threats from officials. Civic organisations were first defined by law in 1998, and continue to be defined in the 2010 law, as associations based on values and interests, which are positive, non-partisan and not for profit. The law takes, therefore, an explicitly values-

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 52.95. Civic Engagement: 45.0; Level of Organisation: 59.8; Practice of Values: 57.7; Perception of Impact: 45.7; External Environment: 56.5. Ranked 14 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	10.4%
CSOs network membership	67.5%
Policy activity	78.2%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.728. Ranked 78 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 3
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3.9. Ranked 68 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.18. Percentile rank: 48.3. Rule of law: -0.29. Percentile rank: 46.9
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 31.67. Ranked 94 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: moderate. Score: 77 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 106 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 6.16. Ranked 73 out of 167

based definition of CSOs. Separate laws cover other aspects of civil society such as trade unions and religious organisations, while there is a distinct law for the Red Cross. The 2010 law introduced the status of an organisation in the public benefit, while other main provisions expanded freedom of association, enabled a greater range of people to establish CSOs and allowed registered CSOs to undertake direct business activities.

54% of CSOs consider dialogue with government to be limited, while 46% say the same about dialogue with the private sector. The international community still has a prominent role and CSOs have some relationships with international actors and political parties.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Macedonia's independence in 1991 triggered a substantial growth in organised civil society, from 4,203 registered CSOs in 1990 to 11,326 in 2010, which would suggest there are 5.5 CSOs per 1,000 inhabitants. However, the 2010 law has required CSOs to pre-register, and in the space of a year and a half only around 3,500 CSOs have pre-registered, implying that this may be a more accurate indication of the number of active CSOs. The early growth of CSOs was largely supported by foreign donors, while

later growth has been assisted by easier registration and EU funding. There is however no common understanding of what civil society means in Macedonia. Following independence, civil society was assumed to mean largely foreign funded NGOs, and many institutions cling to assumptions that NGOs and civil society are synonymous. Not many institutions adopt a broad and inclusive definition of civil society.

Almost all CSOs registered under the previous law in Macedonia are categorised as associations and foundations (10,700), which includes social and political associations, and a large group (almost 3,000) of sports-oriented associations. Compared to this there are 126 registered political parties, 93 chambers of commerce and business associations and 48 trade unions. However the power of these different segments is somewhat inversely proportional: political parties and business associations have more influence than the large association and foundation sector. Due to a desire to separate religion and state, little information is gathered on the religious sector of civil society, although faith-based CSOs are thought to be on the increase.

PARTICIPATION

Individual membership forms the basis of around 80% of CSOs. However, only around 15% of people are members of socially-oriented CSOs and around 18% volunteer in them, compared to around 44% who take part in less formal activities, such as activities within religious structures, community meetings or sports club activities. Further, only around 6% of people invest more than ten hours a year in activities beneficial to their communities, implying that volunteering is sporadic rather than habitual. Unusually, compared to most countries, the rate of people's participation in the activities of politically-oriented CSOs is higher than in socially-oriented CSOs, with membership here at around 25%. This is influenced by membership of political parties (38%) and trade unions (24%).

Between 2005 and 2010, 49% of the population took part in a non-partisan political act, such as signing a petition, or joining a boycott or peaceful protest. Research suggests that people's participation grew from independence in 1991, but has started to decline in recent years; at the



same time the proportion of people who do not take part in protests but indicate they might in future has risen, suggesting some apathy and participation fatigue, but remaining latency for activism.

PUBLIC TRUST

Levels of public trust vary greatly, from 24% in political parties and 27% in unions to 65% in churches and religious communities, doctors and the army and 67% in educators. However, trust in the state is low at 40%, with people demonstrating greater confidence in municipalities or international bodies such as the EU, UN and NATO than in national government, parliament or president. Civil society in general is trusted by 50% of people. Only around one in ten people say they can trust other people. An earlier source reported public trust at more than double this figure, suggesting a decline.

Corruption is seen to be reducing on the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, with Macedonia having progressed from a ranking of 72nd in the world in 2008 to 62nd in 2010, before falling to 69th out of 183 in 2011, and according to this measure, levels of corruption tend to be lower in Macedonia than in bordering countries. Judicial corruption is a particular challenge, while civil society is seen as the least corrupt sector.

NETWORKS

68% of CSOs surveyed are members of national or international networks, and the majority are members of more than one network. CSOs report that their main reasons for participating in networks are strengthening capacity and improving lobbying. Over 90% of CSOs also regularly meet or exchange information with other CSOs. However, it is felt that structured opportunities to exchange information are in decline, and that databases and directories have fallen out of date.

“There is little connection between CSOs and trade unions.”

There is little connection between CSOs and trade unions, which tend to see each other as having different areas of interest. The establishment of the EU-Macedonia Civil Society Joint Consultative Committee in 2009 created a new forum to bring employers, trade unions and other aspects of civil society together.

RESOURCES

The largest hundred CSOs receive 59% of all CSO income, although this shows there has been some diversification since 2006, when this figure stood at 72%. The income of trade unions and chambers of commerce appears to have increased, while that of others has stayed stable. There are few organisations that are dependent upon a single funding source (assessed here as 80% of revenue coming from one type of funder), but foreign donations are the largest source of funding for CSOs. Membership fees are also a common source of income for more than half of CSOs, but generally they make up only 5% to 20% of CSO budgets. Most CSOs have a low funding base: 85% of CSOs operate on under US\$2,500 a year.

“Almost 90% of CSOs have fewer than ten paid staff.”

Almost 90% of CSOs have fewer than ten paid staff, and the entire employment base of CSOs is estimated to be only around 2,500 people, which amounts to 0.4% of the workforce in a country with a population of over 2m.

IMPACT

CSOs assess themselves as most active in influencing those policies related to the protection of human rights and security, decentralisation and the Ohrid Framework Agreement, which

guarantees rights for Macedonia's Albanian minority. External stakeholders judge the policy impact of CSOs much higher than those working in the sector themselves, suggesting a level of pessimism or unreasonably high expectations of impact on the part of CSOs. However, civil society influence on the main social challenges of poverty and unemployment, on national budgetary processes and on holding the government and private sector to account are all acknowledged as areas of weakness, compared to stronger impacts on empowering citizens and providing services to meet social needs. Around half of CSO-proposed amendments to three critical laws – on associations and foundations (passed in 2010), discrimination (2010) and access to public information (2006) – were successful, suggesting that civil society is able to exert some influence on core aspects of the enabling environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for strengthening civil society in Macedonia include building stronger partnerships, beyond formal partnerships, with other organisational types, including bridging the historical gap between political parties and CSOs, and further strengthening cooperation with business associations, trade unions and civic organisations. CSOs should also involve themselves more in parliamentary work, in the working groups of the government, in the work of municipalities and in processes of European integration, by using existing mechanisms more fully and encouraging their further development. In addition, new funding mechanisms need to be explored, such as direct government support, the instigation of tax benefits for public benefit associations and the development of public funds, including lotteries, to support CSOs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

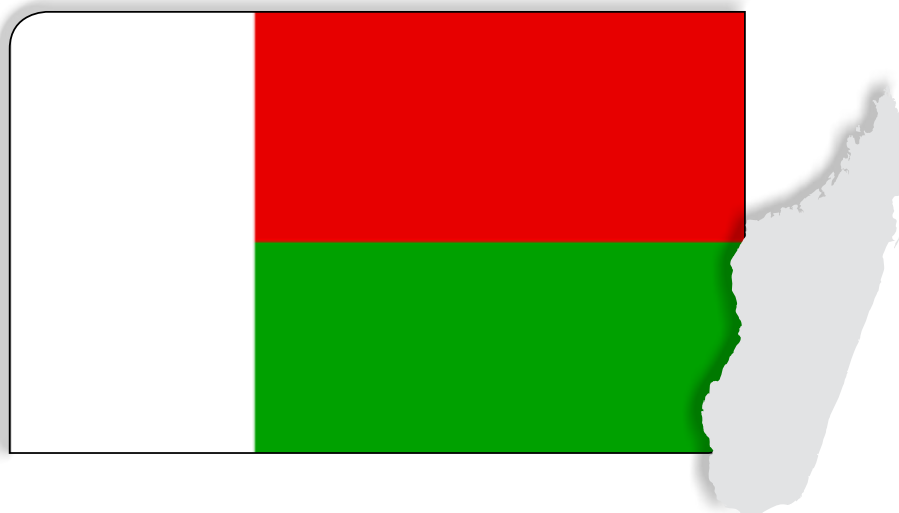
Macedonian Center for International Cooperation - www.mcms.org.mk

Foundation Open Society Macedonia - www.soros.org.mk

Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution - www.chrcr.org.mk

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia - www.mhc.org.mk

NGO Infocentre - www.nvoinfocentar.org.mk



Basic facts	
Capital	Antananarivo
Official languages	French, Malagasy
Population	21.9m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$421

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: MADAGASCAR

Since the overthrow of its president in 2009, Madagascar has seen a revival of civil society activity. CSOs have shown fresh determination to influence decision-making processes, and have made concerted efforts to organise nationally, but civil society still lacks political influence. The numerous popular protests, and the space that decentralisation processes have opened for civic participation at the local level, have not proved sufficient to successfully configure a stronger institutionalised civil society. Civil society remains highly compartmentalised and hierarchical, and civil society infrastructure is mostly absent outside the capital. A lack of institutional capacities and of a shared vision and identity mean that a disunited Malagasy civil society is not currently a sector with high influence on the definition of Madagascar's development and political agenda.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Malagasy civil society exists in a legally and politically volatile environment with multiple socio-political challenges. Madagascar has a recent political history of deposed leaders, with the current president having been handed the reigns of power by the military after the ousting of the previous president in 2009. The coup led to the suspension of Madagascar from the African Union and the Southern African Development Community, and the withholding of donor support. The holding of fair and peaceful presidential and parliamentary elections in 2012 will be critical, as the undemocratic transition has resulted in the restriction of political freedoms. Freedom House accordingly assesses Madagascar as partly free and its press as not free. The Democracy Index classes the current government as an authoritarian regime. These unfavourable conditions present multiple barriers to engagement and limit space for civil society, while historical and linguistic barriers between different ethnic and cultural identities also contribute to a citizenship that is not empowered to participate and has little capacity to raise its multiple voices.

Civil society is often used as a vehicle of political interests, and its autonomy and transparency are frequently disputed. Many CSOs are dependent, including financially, on the political connections of their leaders, resulting in a lack of representativeness and accountability to their constituencies and the public. The impact of economic crises on Madagascar has increased this financial dependency, thereby worsening the situation for CSOs.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 49.9. Civic Engagement: 48.9; Level of Organisation: 51.21; Practice of Values: 50.73; Perception of Impact: 43.4; External Environment: 55.38. Ranked 22 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	29.9%
CSOs network membership	61%
Policy activity	39.7%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.480. Ranked 151 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 6. Civil liberties score: 4
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3. Ranked 100 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.82. Percentile rank: 23.0. Rule of law: -0.84. Percentile rank: 23.7
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 29.5. Ranked 84 out of 178
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 83.2. Ranked 58 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: authoritarian regime. Score: 3.93. Ranked 116 out of 167

There is no unanimity on the concept and definition of civil society, and there are different types of legal recognition for different civil society forms and groups. The legal framework under the Law of NGOs of 1997 is outdated and applied selectively and inconsistently. This makes it impossible for many regional civic groups to gain access to the relevant registration information and to constitute themselves as formal CSOs, limiting their capacity to access already limited funding options. Accordingly, one in three of CSOs surveyed assess the regulations and laws for civil society as either highly restrictive or quite limiting, although only 7% of CSOs report having faced illegitimate restrictions or attacks from local or central government.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Religion plays a highly important role in Malagasy society, and faith-based organisations constitute the most influential part of civil society. Although around two fifths of the population practise traditional religion, churches have highly developed structures and networks which give them widespread social coverage and a key role in the delivery of basic services such as health and education. Madagascar has numerous CSOs created by Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran and Protestant churches, which

have an important influence in areas such as civic participation and education, the promotion of a democratic culture and conflict prevention.

CSOs assess that environmental and ethnic-based organisations also occupy strong positions in civil society, along with development NGOs and women's groups. Youth organisations have a significant number of members, but are assessed as relatively weak in their actions, as are trade unions and professional organisations. Cooperatives and neighbourhood associations continue to have traditional importance, linked to community development initiatives and strong mobilisation capacities.

Development CSOs grew in number after independence in 1960, influenced by the presence of multiple donors and INGOs, but they are characterised by relatively volatile agendas and membership bases, together with little willingness to collaborate on defining a clear agenda for social change. Extreme poverty and inequality is reflected in the distribution of CSOs, with 60% of NGOs based in Antananarivo and its environs, and a very unstructured civil society outside the capital. The fragility of the public sector has led to the formation of multiple forms of mutual help groups at the local level that have a stronger social base than many more formal CSOs, but capacity and financial resources remain the biggest challenges to the sustainability of these.

PARTICIPATION

Civic engagement and participation is quite substantial in Madagascar. 44% of the population is actively involved in a socially-oriented CSO. 41% of people under 25 are involved in such CSOs, compared to 34% of the population above the age of 25.

Participation in politically-oriented organisations such as trade unions, consumer organisations and political parties is much lower, at only around 7%. Women are also an underrepresented group here: only 36% of women participate in politically-oriented CSOs, compared to 48% of women who are involved in socially-oriented ones.



CSOs with the highest number of active members and volunteers are faith-based organisations, indigenous associations, sports and cultural groups, women's groups and youth and students' associations. Community life remains highly important in many parts of Madagascar, although it is in urban areas where there are the highest number of active members and volunteers in CSOs, especially in the case of young and educated people: 27% of people who have completed secondary education are active members or volunteers compared to 6% of those who did not.

A history of military rule and overthrow of governments has left its mark in some fear of the consequences of protest and belief in the inefficacy of political actions. 32% of people say they have been involved in some kind of individual political action in the past five years, with more men (37%) than women (27%) having done so. Since 2009, public acts of protest have been subject to strict vigilance by the government. However, in September and October 2011, there was a wave of student protests against maladministration in public universities.

PUBLIC TRUST

Malagasy citizens demonstrate a very high level of trust in CSOs, which stands at 84% for CSOs in general. Churches (91%), women's organisations (84%) and environmental organisations (84%) enjoy the most public trust. Trust in charitable organisations (63%) and labour unions (58%) is lower, but still stands at more than half the population. This can be compared to the levels of trust in government (55%) and political parties (29%). Lack of trust between CSOs is however one of the major barriers against collaboration, with a range of political and interpersonal conflicts between CSO leaders and members.

Perceived corruption is high, with Madagascar ranked joint 100th out of 183 on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. 25% of surveyed CSOs believe that the level of corruption inside civil society is frequent. Some CSOs also declare that corruption is part of the game which CSOs are forced to play, particularly in Analamanga, the region that includes the capital. There is an all-round lack of accountability and transparency practices in civil society.

“Malagasy citizens demonstrate a very high level of trust in CSOs, which stands at 84% for CSOs in general.”

NETWORKS

More than 60% of CSOs surveyed belong to networks or federations, but levels of active participation are low due to a lack of common interests and of a shared vision on the main social priorities and methods of intervening. The highest number of networks is concentrated in Analamanga, where information and opportunities for affiliation are more abundant than elsewhere.

There have been several attempts, supported in many cases by donors, to create national networks of CSOs, as in the case of the National Committee for Citizen Participation, but due to the political crisis it is too early to assess whether any national networks and platforms have gained real legitimacy, as there are state elements that undermine any effort to develop a stronger structure of civil society. The lack of networking within the sector is echoed in the lack of networking between CSOs and other actors, such as the private sector.

RESOURCES

67% of CSOs surveyed report that their finances stayed stable from one year to the next, although looking at the change from 2010 to 2011, only 10% declare that their income has increased compared to 33% which report it has gone down. A high dependence on international donors makes Malagasy CSOs vulnerable to fluctuations in Overseas Development Assistance, and the political crisis of 2009 had an impact, as many governments and agencies did not recognise the new leadership and some suspended aid, such as the United States and the European Union, which suspended non-humanitarian aid to Madagascar. CSOs focussing on humanitarian activities were consequently the only ones to experience a higher level of financial support from donors at this

time. CSOs without political ties to the government receive virtually no state funding, while the contribution of membership fees is very low compared to other African countries.

Malagasy civil society includes numerous small organisations with limited human resources. Only 18% of CSOs surveyed assess that they have a stable human resource base, defined as having no more than 25% voluntary staff, and most of them strongly depend on volunteers and staff with limited capacities.

IMPACT

The overall perception of CSO impact on the main issues of concern to the population is quite low, although it differs from region to region, and depends on the proximity that CSOs have to the public. In general, CSOs assess they have limited impact on public policies, although they are convinced about the relevance of their actions in responding to people's needs, especially in such key service areas as social development (29%), education (28%) and health (10%). Networks of churches are assessed as more effective than other types of CSO alliances, with stronger impact in advocacy interventions and as watchdogs of human rights issues.

Only 29% of CSOs believe they achieve impact on the practices of the government, although this too varies by region, as there are areas in which the influence of CSOs on the development agenda of public authorities is more notable, such as in the Vatovavy Fitovinany region, where 39% of CSOs report having impact.

Only 40% of CSOs, but a higher 51% of external stakeholders, believe that CSO impact is significant in advocating for the implementation of programmes and the promotion of rights. 71% of CSOs and 67% of external stakeholders believe impact on policy change is limited or nil. Attempts to exert pressure for the creation or reform of laws or regulations are challenged by government restrictions. Only 40% of CSOs in the past two years pushed for policies to be approved, and only half of these attempts saw a successful policy change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Madagascar needs to develop a stronger sense of politics and participation. CSO technical and institutional capacities need to be strengthened, and access to state resources needs to be decoupled from political linkages. Above all, there is a need to create legitimate and representative national platforms of CSOs to avoid polarisation and consolidate an active and independent civic space. Reaching consensus within civil society is a key element in the larger fight for democracy and good governance in Madagascar.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Collectif des Citoyens et des Organisations Citoyennes - <http://ccoc-mag.fisema.org>

National Committee for the Observation of Elections - www.kmfcnoe.mg

ONG Madagascar portal - www.ong-madagascar.org

L'Homme et l'Environnement - www.madagascar-environnement.com



Basic facts	
Capital	Mexico City
Official language	Spanish
Population	113.7m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$9,123

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: MEXICO

This is a difficult time for Mexican society, not only because of the effects of the global economic crisis but also because drug trafficking and violence continue to increase, placing the issue of security at the top of public and government agendas. President Felipe Calderón's hardline and militarised approach to drugs adopted in 2006, using public security forces including the army, has seen more than 45,000 people killed. November 2011 saw an appeal to the International Criminal Court signed by 23,000 people to investigate civilian deaths as war crimes, a move which was met with the threat from government of legal action against the activists. The drug conflict consequently defines significantly the context and scope of CSO activities and people's participation, and the actions of CSOs engaged in defending human rights and promoting security have become more prominent. Civil society has also mobilised in the scrutiny of and campaigning against the systematic murder of women in the border zone, especially in the city of Juárez. More than ever, organised citizen participation in public issues is fundamental in building the necessary social capital to face these political, economic and social challenges.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) dominated Mexican politics for over seven decades, and favoured corporatist organisations closely linked to the state, until its defeat by the National Action Party (PAN) in 2000, which brought improvements in civil society-government relations. This led to the legal and institutional recognition of the right to information, a new legal framework for civil society and an increase of social responsibility by business. However, current inequality, violence and insecurity erode the social fabric, while corruption and impunity corrode the administration of justice.

Mexico is considered to have high human development, ranked at 57 of 187 countries in the 2011 UN Human Development Index (HDI), but according to this index, in the past two years extreme poverty has increased by almost 4%, partly due to the impact of natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes and floods. 47.4% of people fall below the national poverty line according to the 2011 Multidimensional Poverty Index, and income inequality is a problem, with the Gini coefficient standing at a high 51.7. Further, there is significant inequality between women and men in social, political and economic life, with Mexico ranked far below the Gender Equality Index average for countries at the same level of development.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 50.7. Civic Engagement: 44.9; Level of Organisation: 46.2; Practice of Values: 50.6; Perception of Impact: 46.3; External Environment: 65.7. Ranked 19 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	22.9%
CSOs network membership	41.1%
Policy activity	42.2%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.770. Ranked 57 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 3
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: partly free. Score: 32
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3. Ranked 100 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.17. Percentile rank: 61.7. Rule of law: -0.56. Percentile rank: 33.6
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 72.67. Ranked 149 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: moderate. Score: 72 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 94 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 6.93. Ranked: 50 out of 167

The 2004 Federal Law Promoting CSO Activities was a significant development in acknowledging the social relevance of CSO work. It created the Federal Registry of CSOs headed by the National Social Development Institute. Each CSO is given a Unique Registry Code, which is essential for obtaining public resources. However, the judicial framework for CSOs offers a heterogeneous and contradictory set of regulations, particularly within the context of Mexico's federal system. 44% of CSOs surveyed believe the legal framework is somewhat restrictive, 38% assess tax and social policies as limiting, and 12% of CSOs have faced illegitimate restriction or attack by state or federal government.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The exact number of CSOs in Mexico is not known, with estimates ranging from 20,000 to 35,000. This is small in terms of the population size of over 113m, although it is felt to reflect substantial growth and greater visibility in recent decades. Around 55% of CSOs are set up to help others, 24% are mutual benefit associations and 21% are religious, mostly connected to the Catholic Church. 45% of CSOs concentrate on social support and assistance services, 18% on community development and 8% on health. There are also areas of non-organised civil society, which entails spontaneous or issue-specific movements or mobilisations which tend to disappear quickly.

The increased professionalisation of some CSOs has resulted in the widening of the gaps between CSOs, grassroots organisations and social movements. Three quarters of CSOs registered to receive funding are concentrated in the 20 largest cities, particularly the capital.

PARTICIPATION

People in Mexico participate more in socially-oriented CSOs than in politically-oriented ones, with participation evenly divided between women and men. CSOs with the highest active participation are sports and recreation related, followed by religious CSOs. Only around 5% of people participate in more than one CSO, and active membership in environmental and humanitarian organisations, and trade unions, all stand at under 5%. Volunteer work is highest in sports and recreation organisations, at 12%, followed by 10% in religious organisations and 8% in cultural or education organisations. 36% of people surveyed do not dedicate any time to volunteer work, and most volunteers contribute ten or fewer hours a month.

“In May 2011, tens of thousands of people took to the streets of over 40 cities to protest against violence.”

41% of people have signed a petition in the past five years, 24% attended a public demonstration but only 8% have participated in a boycott. There have been some recent large events with mass participation, particularly in marches against violence and insecurity. In May 2011, tens of thousands of people took to the streets of over 40 cities to protest against violence.

PUBLIC TRUST

The Mexican public is characterised by a high level of distrust, both of other people and of public institutions, with a climate of violence and insecurity contributing to this. 70% of people state that they have no trust in political parties or the Mexican National Congress. Only 5% of people



trust large companies, only 6% unions and only 11% television. The lack of legitimacy of political institutions has not, however, translated into rejection of democracy, despite Mexican citizens' strong disappointment. The church is the institution trusted most by citizens (67%), while CSOs as a whole have 59% trust, with little variation in trust in environmental organisations, human rights organisations, women's organisations and humanitarian and charitable organisations.

The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index indicates that Mexico has regressed on corruption, despite it being a core item of the 2006-2012 National Development Plan. Mexico in 2011 has virtually the same score as in 2001, while many countries have overtaken it: in 2001 Mexico ranked 51st out of 91 with a score of 3.3, while in 2011 it ranked joint 100th out of 183 with a 3 score (a score of 10 would indicate no corruption). Reflecting this, 38% of CSOs surveyed believe that corruption in civil society is frequent.

NETWORKS

Most CSOs surveyed, 57%, do not belong to a network or federation. Those that do named membership of 119 different groups, but only two were mentioned more than twice, the Mexican Centre for Philanthropy and the Private Assistance Council, suggesting a lack of well-known and wide-ranging national networks. Networks also record trends of loss of active members and resources. 67% of CSOs reported having meetings with other CSOs in a three month period, and 58% exchanging information, low levels in comparison with other countries. In general, CSOs state that the alliances they currently have respond to circumstantial or specific needs, and that political polarisation has eroded previous capacity to form alliances.

Only 7% of CSOs surveyed report working at an international level and only 4% belong to an international network or federation. While Mexico houses multiple international organisations, these seem to provide few opportunities for domestic CSOs.

RESOURCES

The funding climate for CSOs seems to be worsening, with 61% of CSOs surveyed reporting an increase in expenditure from one year to the next compared to only 23% reporting an increase in income. Only around a quarter of CSOs believe their financial resources can meet their needs. Of CSOs surveyed, 23% obtain funding from individual donations and 22% from government, followed by national donors (12%) and businesses (10%). The fact that individual donors are a major source of financing may imply greater autonomy and a significant investment in outreach. The legal and regulatory framework means that access to public funds involves meeting onerous terms and conditions, and dealing with short project execution timeframes, extremely rigorous methods for reporting expenses and delays in receiving funds. These issues make it difficult for public funders to adapt to the pace and dynamics of CSOs. There are also parallel and disjointed federal and state support policies, which create confusion and duplication. International cooperation has declined as a source of funding, with few donor organisations in Mexico.

35% of CSOs surveyed have no paid staff, while 26% have been one and five. Only around 9% do not make use of volunteers.

IMPACT

47% of surveyed CSOs consider insecurity to be a pressing issue with high civil society impact while 38% perceive there is high impact on providing support to poor people. Civil society is also perceived to make impact on education, housing and health. External stakeholders assess the impact as more limited, particularly on pressing issues, such as insecurity. A possible explanation here is the lack of visibility of CSOs' actions and of mechanisms to promote their work.

“47% of surveyed CSOs consider insecurity to be a pressing issue with high civil society impact.”

CSO policy impact is low. Within the cycle of policy formation, CSOs and external stakeholders believe strongest CSO involvement is in policy diagnosis, but their involvement in policy approval and implementation is particularly limited. 42% of CSOs surveyed have tried to influence policy, with the most common methods being direct petition to the president or state governor, and outreach to parliamentarians and officials, indicating that personal relations are needed and formal mechanisms are lacking. Only 29% of CSOs that attempted policy influence report success, while 27% say that their proposal was not listened to at all.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in Mexico include: establishing a tax and legal framework to facilitate the work of CSOs; increasing visibility of CSOs' work; working more within CSO networks to strengthen the sector and increase impact on other strategic actors; and promoting tolerance and democratic values in society, including through citizen participation projects.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Mexican Centre for Philanthropy – CEMEFI - www.cemefi.org

Citizens' Initiative for the Promotion of a Culture of Dialogue - www.iniciativaciudadana.org.mx

Social Administration and Cooperation – GESOC - www.gesoc.org.mx



Basic facts	
Capital	Rabat
Official language	Arabic
Population	31.97m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$2,796

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: MOROCCO

The protests which swept the Middle East and North Africa in 2011 took hold in Morocco on 20 February, when people marched to demand greater limitations on the king's powers, with protest fuelled by the rising cost of living and economic difficulties, as well as demands for public service reform. Protests, spearheaded by the 20 February Movement, continued throughout the year in Morocco's major cities, with a pattern of Sunday demonstrations, even after changes were made to the constitution in July and elections under the new constitution brought forward to November 2011. The challenge for CSOs in Morocco is to take advantage of, and help shape, the changing political landscape in the wake of the concessions made by the king.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The monarchy has long been identified as the most powerful institution in Morocco, sitting at the top of the social and political structure. There is a highly diverse web of consultative councils and advisers underneath this, but all to a large extent have derived their strength and legitimacy from their relationship with and dependency on the monarchy. Following the protests in 2011, a new constitution was introduced in July, passed by an overwhelming majority in a referendum, which curbs the king's powers and gives more power to the prime minister, for example, to dissolve parliament and preside over the council of government. The constitution also shares power between king and prime minister on the appointment of diplomats, obliges the king to appoint the leader of the party with most seats as prime minister, and formally guarantees freedom of thought, ideas, artistic expression and creation, alongside freedom of speech, movement and association. In the subsequent elections held under this revised constitution, the Justice and Development Party, commonly described as moderately Islamist, saw a sharp rise in its vote to become the largest party. The new constitution was committed to by the king in an address in response to the protests in March 2011, but many of the leaders of the 20 February Movement criticise it for being insufficiently far-reaching. Believing the reforms were not radical enough, a further wave of protests erupted in September 2011.

In the 2011 UN Human Development Index, Morocco ranks 130 of 187 countries for state progress in the fields of health, education and income. Income inequality remains a pressing problem, with a high number of low income households and a concentration of wealth in

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 53.7. Civic Engagement: 39.9; Level of Organisation: 50.5; Practice of Values: 59.2; Perception of Impact: 61.8; External Environment: 57.0. Ranked 11 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	20.9%
CSOs network membership	50.7%
Policy activity	65.4%



Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.582. Ranked 130 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 5. Civil liberties score: 4
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3.4. Ranked 80 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.17. Percentile rank: 48.8. Rule of law: -0.19. Percentile rank: 50.2
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 63.29. Ranked 138 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: very weak. Score: 56 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 87 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: authoritarian regime. Score: 3.83. Ranked 119 out of 167

the hands of a few, and education deficits are widespread, with over half of people surveyed reporting that they had experienced no education, or had not completed primary level education.

Judicial independence is challenged, given the excessive role of the monarchy and executive in the appointment of judges and management of their careers. Some of the larger business groupings, in the areas of investment and banking, are influential due to their connections with the ruling elite, but smaller businesses have little influence. Political parties and labour unions are seen to have lost popular support.

CSOs see themselves held back by a lack of real commitment from government to dialogue and participation, which is made visible by the absence of state funding for civil society and the continuation of laws that restrict civil liberties. The National Human Development Initiative, launched by the government in 2005 to take a participative approach to local development, is criticised for having flawed governance, weak decision-making and consultation deficiencies at each stage of its process. At the political level, while there was some opening up of Moroccan society since the 1980s, which civil society took advantage of to give rise to a new generation of CSOs, in the years up to 2011 CSOs reported trends of a decline in liberties and the effectiveness of laws. This was accompanied by a reversal of trends towards an

independent media, through trials, increasingly high fines and closures, as well as through selective financing. Red lines remain on raising issues to do with the king, Islam and the Moroccan-occupied disputed territory of Western Sahara, accompanied by much civil society scepticism about official media.

Over 40% of CSOs surveyed found the legal environment for their operations unduly restrictive, and this figure rises to almost half for human rights and women’s organisations. Processes around the granting of public utility status, required to qualify for state funding, are felt to be opaque and distorted by favouritism.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Depending on sources, there are estimated to be between 30,000 and 50,000 CSOs in Morocco. The range of this estimate suggests the challenges of defining and measuring civil society in Morocco, and also its diversity, with many CSOs having developed for localised response, often in reaction to government disengagement from public services, and organised around voluntary work and participation.

PARTICIPATION

People’s participation in the activities of organised civil society is not widespread. People express a preference to spend time with family and friends, while the most common organisational vehicles for membership and volunteering are offered by sports, educational and cultural CSOs, but even these have less than 10% of the population in membership. Volunteering, particularly in rural areas, is associated with traditional forms of solidarity, such as *twiza*, the communal cultivation of land. CSO membership is lower amongst women, but young people have higher rates, and there is some evidence that membership is higher in rural than urban areas. Only a little over 1% of people are members of a human rights CSO.



Comparing data from 2005 to 2010, the most recent date available, shows an apparent decline in CSO membership. Reasons for decreasing involvement have been suggested to include the lack of transparency and accountability of CSOs, frustrations at low efficiency and barriers to women's participation, along with the challenges of widespread illiteracy and poverty. The lack of mechanisms to bring students and graduates into CSOs has also been noted. It can be argued that these deficits have encouraged participation in the form of protest as an alternative.

Under 2% of the population reported being a member of a political party, and only around a quarter of the population reported taking an interest in party politics, with the figure even lower among city dwellers. One of the reasons behind this was thought to be the lack of representative democracy, with an opaque and unaccountable electoral system. Turnout in the 2007 election was only 37%, although official estimates for the 2011 election suggest it increased to 45%.

In figures gathered before the protests, small numbers of people reported that they had taken parts in acts of individual activism, such as signing a petition (24%) or joining a peaceful demonstration (22%), but interestingly in view of subsequent events, the survey revealed high potential for people to do so in future – a further 45% said that they would join a demonstration and 55% would take part in a boycott. This can be seen to have translated into action during 2011, with the mobilisations of tens of thousands of people in Casablanca and Rabat in particular. There were also less well reported protests in Western Sahara. Even before 2011 there was a rise of protest movements, such as the Tansikiyat movement, which protests against the high costs of living, and some spontaneous movements in towns and villages, suggesting a loss of credibility of traditional political forms. There are also religious movements associated with the ruling powers, such as Tijania and Boutchichiya, and those that oppose them, such as Adl Wal Al Ihssane. They are understood to exert a strong influence on people's lives, but such movements are opaque and it is hard to gather knowledge on them.

“45% said that they would join a demonstration and 55% would take part in a boycott. This can be seen to have translated into action during 2011.”

At the end of 2011, there were just under 4 million Facebook users in Morocco, more than double the number of users of a year before. In conjunction with mobilisations of protest, web-based campaigns have successfully brought about the release of civil society activists who were imprisoned for infringing 'sacred values'.

PUBLIC TRUST

Civil society enjoys relatively high public trust, particularly religious leaders, trusted by around 72%, charities (74%), community environmental and local development organisations (72%) and women's organisations (62%), compared to low levels of trust in political parties, parliament and international institutions such as the UN and the EU. The army and the police force have traditionally also received high levels of trust. Around three quarters of people surveyed believe that CSOs are important and useful, but only around a third when asked can name a CSO, and this is skewed towards local CSOs. Only around a quarter of people have knowledge of national CSOs, and only around 5% international ones.

Morocco stands in 80th place out of 183 in the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, with slightly lower levels of perceived corruption than most North African countries, Tunisia aside. Around three quarters of people are also concerned about corruption in CSOs.

NETWORKS

Only around half of CSOs surveyed are members of a network, with the figure being 31% for labour unions or professional associations, and only 42% of human rights and women's organisations. However, 69% of CSOs reported recently holding meetings with other CSOs and 59% exchanging

information with them, with meetings involving an average of around six CSOs, suggesting that there is additional networking going on outside formal networks. Around 80% of human rights and women's organisations regularly meet, with the most common reason for meeting being involvement in joint projects. However, 80% of CSOs are also reported to have no partnership strategy. There are also fears amongst two thirds of CSOs surveyed that partnership can jeopardise identity and autonomy.

RESOURCES

CSOs regard themselves as underdeveloped, due to lack of finance and staff, which in turn impact on their autonomy and professionalism, identified as key weaknesses of the sector. 62% of CSOs do not have any paid employees, and only 8% of CSOs have more than 10. Volunteering remains essential to sustaining CSOs, with an average of over 20 volunteers per CSO. A concern of CSOs in general is that funding seems to be confined to a small circle of CSOs, with 90% of CSOs not receiving funding from foreign donors and half not receiving funding from the state. Almost 90% also do not receive private sector funding, suggesting a very limited local CSR approach. CSO expenditure appears to be rising faster than income, with almost 70% of CSOs reporting that their general expenditure had increased from one year to the next, and there is a related concern that the need to seek funding is distorting the missions of some CSOs.

IMPACT

CSOs assess relatively high and localised impact on the areas of education, social development and assistance to poor people, with human rights and women's organisations estimated as having the highest impact, but this does not translate into influence on the national policy level. 65% of CSOs surveyed report pushing for the adoption of policies, and 77% of these report success, but an analysis of the policy initiatives shows that many of these are small scale, and around 51% of CSOs judge policy impact as limited or nil.

CSOs working in the sphere of advocacy, human rights and the reporting of abuses have more national level visibility. Visibility and attribution is sometimes an issue, which concern for example that CSOs did not receive credit for their success in a long campaign to reform the family code.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations to improve the state of civil society in Morocco include developing regulations and mechanisms to institutionalise partnership and consultation into decision-making processes for public projects, and to bring greater transparency to decisions on resource allocations; increasing the role of CSOs in defence of citizens and consumers; diversifying civil society funding, including through lobbying for a fund for the promotion of civil society; and introducing schemes to promote greater volunteering in CSOs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Espace Associatif - www.espace-associatif.ma

Tanmia - www.tanmia.ma

Moroccans for Change - moroccansforchange.com

20th of February Movement -

www.facebook.com/pages/The-20th-of-february-movement/194559543895241



Basic facts	
Capital	Managua
Official language	Spanish
Population	5.7m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$1,132

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: NICARAGUA

Civil society in Nicaragua exists in a context of polarisation and politicisation. Following the presidential victory of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in 2006, which remained in power in 2011, the government introduced a new citizen participation system called Civic Power Councils and Cabinets (CPCs). These limit the participation of voices not aligned to the ruling party, and promote the control and intimidation of some CSOs, causing discord within civil society. Civil society groups can be classified into three camps: CSOs allied with the FSLN; CSOs that are autonomous from the government and that campaign against public policies that restrict free participation and citizen organisation, access to public information and electoral observance; and a considerable number of CSOs that seek to work locally according to the interests of their members and avoid taking any positions towards the government.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Compared to other countries in Latin America, Nicaragua has one of the most unequal distributions of income and wealth: the richest 20% of the population hold 47.2% of the total wealth, while the poorest 20% have 6.2%. The deterioration of education, health and income indicators have meant that Nicaragua's ranking in the UN Human Development Index has gone down from 116th in 2000 to 129th in 2011. Unemployment accounts for 12% of the working age population, in addition to 36% who are in not in full-time formal employment. Overall, half the population lacks stable, full-time employment with a fair income.

Since the change of government in early 2007 the situation has become more difficult for that part of civil society that does not align with the government, with the promotion of an exclusive system of social organisations and the limitation of rights of association, expression and cooperation of CSOs. 36% of CSOs surveyed report experiencing aggression from national or local government in the past ten years. Amongst limiting actions towards civil society noted are abuses of power by authorities, restrictions on strikes and mobilisations, deprivations of liberty, fiscal retaliations and discriminatory controls by state organisations, the use of insults and slanders, exclusion from processes due to political motives, closure of legal spaces of participation, impositions of organisational forms, and violations of human and civil rights. Judicial independence is compromised: the

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 58.98. Civic Engagement: 53.4; Level of Organisation: 67.2; Practice of Values: 60.6; Perception of Impact: 59.95; External Environment: 52.9. Ranked 3 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	3.0%
CSOs network membership	76.6%
Policy activity	77.0%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.589. Ranked 129 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 5. Civil liberties score: 4
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 2.5. Ranked 134 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.96. Percentile rank: 15.8. Rule of law: -0.83. Percentile rank: 24.2
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 24.3. Ranked 72 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2008	Status: very weak. Score: 58 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 81. Ranked 67 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 5.56. Ranked 91 out of 167

Constitution was reinterpreted by the Supreme Court in order to let incumbent President Ortega run for a third term in spite of the two term limit, raising questions about the separation of powers and legitimacy of the decision.

A political pact between the two main parties is seen to prevent the exercise of political choice, and the municipal elections of 2008 were widely seen as unfair. Ortega won the election in November 2011, polling twice as many votes as the second candidate. This brought allegations of voter fraud, intimidation and refusal to collect and count votes, along with post-electoral violence in which at least four people died. Freedom House classes Nicaragua as partly free.

Under these circumstances, Nicaragua has an unfavourable context for the functioning and development of civil society, assessed as below the Latin American average, which prevents civil society from the fulfilment of its social and political roles. However, CSOs continue to implement programmes focussing on overcoming poverty, making the political system more democratic and promoting human rights.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The civil society panorama in Nicaragua includes labour unions (21 major unions), cooperatives (6,600 cooperatives, encompassing more than 500,000 members), social movements, religious organisations, philanthropic organisations, communal associations, indigenous communities and towns, interest groups (4,130 associations and foundations), development organisations (around 700), education and research centres, environmental organisations, human rights organisations and organisations for women, children and youth.

The concept of civil society gained momentum in the 1990s at the end of the military conflict and the state of emergency, which had restricted citizens' rights of association, information and expression. The FSLN's electoral defeat in 1990 led to a period of liberal governments that implemented profound neo-liberal changes in the state and in society, leading to strong responses from CSOs and social movements. A noteworthy development at this time was the emergence of new CSOs focused on the rights of excluded groups, such as children, women, indigenous people and people with disabilities, and on basic services, with the support of international cooperation efforts. Such CSOs implemented local development projects and facilitated the organisation of thematic networks nationally to exchange experiences and affect public policies.

Most CSOs are not legally registered, whether as non-profit associations or foundations, cooperatives, labour unions or resident associations. Moreover, a good proportion of legally registered CSOs do not maintain updated information on their organisations at the relevant agencies.

PARTICIPATION

There is significant participation by the public in social organisations, community actions and volunteering, particularly by social groups that are traditionally excluded (women, indigenous communities and rural people). Around 38% of people are members of a socially-oriented CSO and around 27% volunteer for one. A very high 94% of people say that they participate in some kind of informal associational activity at least once a month, which is much higher than the Latin American average of 63%. Church or religious organisations are by far the dominant sphere of participation,



with over 30% of the population being a member of such an organisation, as compared to membership in political parties (10%) and trade unions (3%)

Electoral participation since 1990 has been high, particularly in national elections, but a downward trend is observed, especially in municipal and regional elections, due to a decrease in the legitimacy of political parties, the non-fulfilment of pre-electoral promises and the lack of voter registration cards. For example, turnout in presidential elections declined from 86% in 1990 to 70% in 2011.

With regard to citizen participation in various individual acts of activism, just 29% of people have signed a petition addressed at municipal, regional or national government authorities, 13% have filed a complaint against a private or public company and 24% participated in peaceful protests to claim their rights. The figures are lower for women than men.

PUBLIC TRUST

There is a very low level of interpersonal trust, with only 3% of Nicaraguans expressing the belief that other people can be trusted, making communication between people and their association in CSOs difficult. Additionally, there is a low level of tolerance of other ideas, beliefs or ways of life, seen in discrimination and rejection towards visible minorities and people with other political party affiliations. In addition, Nicaragua has an extreme level of corruption, which is perceived as the main problem by around 69% of the population. Nicaragua ranks 134th out of 183 in the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. Around 40% of CSO representatives also believe there is frequent corruption within civil society.

There is, however, a high degree of trust in CSOs, with church organisations, women's organisations and environmental organisations scoring as the top three most trusted organisations. The three least trusted are political parties, the civil service and parliament.

NETWORKS

Over the last two decades, several national networks of CSOs have organised in an effort to overcome the dispersion and isolation of the thousands of small CSOs that exist throughout Nicaragua. 77% of CSOs are members of networks, and 88% report recently meeting with another CSO. Nevertheless, CSO representatives also criticise the lack of coordination between some organisations due to their different motivations.

Major CSO networks, in addition to union and church networks, include: Civil Coordinator of Nicaragua, Social Coordinator of Nicaragua, Nicaraguan Network for Democracy and Local Development, Network of Women Against Violence, Coordinator of Organisations that Work for Children and Adolescents, National Commission for the Struggle Against AIDS, Federation of NGOs of Nicaragua, Nicaraguan Health Network Federation, Network of Water and Sewage of Nicaragua, Federation of Rehabilitation and Integration Organisations, Network of Civil Organisations for Migration and National Network of Potable Water Committees.

“Over the last two decades, several national networks of CSOs have organised in an effort to overcome the isolation of the thousands of small CSOs in Nicaragua.”

RESOURCES

CSOs rely on modest funds for the implementation of their activities and their operations. The most important financial resources come from external cooperation agencies, from which more than half of CSOs surveyed receive funds, and, to a lesser degree, from the contributions of members (23%), individual donations (15%), government funds (14%) and service fees and the sale of services (10%). 31% of CSOs report an increase in their income from one year to the next, but this was outweighed by 46% that reported an increase in expenses.

Most CSOs consider that their financial resources are inadequate to carry out their programmes and efficiently respond to demands. Most operate on a low turnover, with 38% of CSOs receiving under US\$10,000 a year. Human resources are also scarce. 59% of CSOs surveyed have fewer than 10 paid staff, and 57% rely on the voluntary efforts of between one and 35 people. 40% of CSOs also lack a regular internet connection.

Financial sustainability could be a growing challenge soon for many CSOs, due to a decrease in external cooperation with Nicaragua as a result of the global economic crisis, changing cooperation policies in European countries, and the lack of democratic governance in Nicaragua.

IMPACT

CSOs assess themselves as having reached a significant level of impact in activities on education, health, the protection of natural resources and agriculture. CSOs gained in profile following response to the 1997 Hurricane Mitch, when the immediate reaction of CSOs demonstrated their ability to respond to people's needs in a more efficient and faster way than the government. Overall, around 70% of both CSO representatives and external stakeholders believe civil society responds well to pressing contemporary concerns, albeit more so on matters of strengthening democracy than alleviating poverty.

74% of CSOs surveyed have tried to influence policy, but only 22% report being successful. One particular impact has been achieved in the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean, where specific forms of participation and organisation of the indigenous and Afro-descendent communities have been legally recognised and enabled.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggested steps to strengthen civil society in Nicaragua include: promoting the notion of the public sphere and participation as a space underpinned by principles of tolerance, respect and peace, beyond the domain of political parties; opening spaces for different CSOs to work jointly on policy issues, and on social auditing and public performance; establishing observatories for monitoring public policies from a human rights perspective; and promoting spaces of dialogue between CSOs, state institutions, political parties, business and external sources of cooperation on problems of national interest.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Federación Red Nicaragüense por la Democracia y el Desarrollo Local - www.redlocalnicaragua.org

Coordinadora Civil - www.ccer.org.ni

Federación de Asociaciones Profesionales de Nicaragua - www.conapro.org

Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas - www.ieepp.org



Basic facts	
Capital	Manila
Official languages	Filipino, English
Population	101.8m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$2,140

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: PHILIPPINES

Civil society in the Philippines flourished after the People Power Revolution brought about the end of dictatorship in 1986, with civil society recognised as a key player in subsequent democratisation processes. However, major challenges remain: it can be said that there is a tradition of extrajudicial killings and disappearances of activists, particularly during the previous presidential administration, when estimates of killings range between 100 and 800, while 2010 saw the widely publicised detention of the Morong 43, health workers illegally detained for ten months.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Within society, the president and the party the president heads occupy the apex of power, along with the congress, legislature and supreme court. The 1987 constitution gives the president extensive powers to oversee and intervene, and checks and balances are weak. The mass media and entertainment industries, which are mostly privately owned, are seen as able to strongly influence views, particularly of young people and lower income groups, while big business – oil companies, semiconductor manufacturers, and food, telecoms and pharmaceutical companies – and the landed elite, who often hold political positions, are seen as key groups within the market sector. The military still remain important and to some extent independent of government, while major external influencers are the USA and the World Bank.

Government spending on social services per capita shows a decline since the early 2000s, and inequality is high compared to surrounding countries, with an absence of public mechanisms for wealth redistribution. The government's fight against communist forces can be understood to have coloured its stance more generally towards organisations that advocate for change: one CSO, Karapatan, reports that extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances of civil society leaders, human rights defenders, trade unionists and land reform advocates averaged more than one a week in 2011. Freedom House awards the Philippines a below average score for political rights and average for the rule of law.

Formally, the state is mandated to provide adequate consultation mechanisms. The 1987 constitution contains clauses that recognise the role of non-governmental, community-based and sectoral

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 55.1. Civic Engagement: 54.7; Level of Organisation: 57.9; Practice of Values: 48.1; Perception of Impact: 62.0; External Environment: 53.1. Ranked 8 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	4.8%
CSOs network membership	63.3%
Policy activity	46.7%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.644. Ranked 112 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 3
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 2.6. Ranked 129 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.1. Percentile rank: 51.7. Rule of law: -0.54. Percentile rank: 34.6
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 64.5. Ranked 140 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: very weak. Score: 57 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 85.0. Ranked 50 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 6.12. Ranked 75 out of 167

organisations, and independent people's organisations. A number of bodies at the local level, such as local health boards and development councils, are therefore required to involve civil society representatives. However, there is a gap in the realisation of this, and many bodies have a formal consultative role only, while a further issue is favouritism in personnel selection.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Filipino civil society is seen as being made up of a range of typical organisational types, including established, professionalised NGOs; people's organisations, including trade unions and workers' associations; cooperatives; and homeowners' associations. NGOs and related organisations register under Filipino law as non-stock, non-profit organisations, exempt from income tax, and organisations of this type also include religious orders and associations, political parties, foundations, civic organisations, trade, industry and professional associations, and mutual benefit associations.

The most powerful CSOs are those rooted in the Catholic Church, while academic institutions and overseas Filipino

workers, who remain unorganised, offer other centres of gravity. In 60 of the Philippines' 79 provinces, the Communist Party, which is banned, and its armed wing, the New People's Army, are still present, and there are 5,000 armed members, albeit down from a peak of 25,000 in the mid 1980s. In some isolated locales they provide an alternative to the state. There are also Islamist armed groups, such as the Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which fight for the independence of the Mindanao region, a particularly poor and neglected region in which much of the Philippines' Muslim population is located.

PARTICIPATION

The Philippines has a high level of people's participation, comparable with neighbouring countries such as Indonesia and South Korea, with around 83% of people categorising themselves as members of CSOs, and 46% saying they are active. The highest levels of membership are in religious organisations, with 55% of the population being a member and 31% volunteering for them. Around 12% of the population are members of a cooperative society or a sports or recreational organisation. 47% of Filipinos volunteer in a socially oriented CSO, and 33% in more than one. Participation in CSOs with political or advocacy concerns is however limited to 26% of people, with 28% volunteering in these. There are also low levels of individual political activism, such as joining a demonstration (10%) or signing a petition (7%). Participation also appears as relatively inclusive of people from minority groups, including from Mindanao, suggesting that civil society plays a role as a channel for the inclusion of otherwise marginalised communities.

“83% of people categorise themselves as members of CSOs, and 46% say they are active.”

It is suggested that one of the reasons for the difference between high levels of social participation and much lower levels of political participation is that Filipino values imply a natural tendency to take an interest in the affairs of other people, particularly at the village level, but CSOs are not providing clear participation routes for citizens, who have also become more aware of CSO corruption, which has fed cynicism about participation. This implies that closer connections need to be made between social activity and advocacy for political change.



PUBLIC TRUST

Overall trust in civil society institutions stands at a high 85%. The highest level of public trust is held in the church, at 93%, but even the CSO types that have the lowest level of public trust, labour unions and cooperatives, are trusted by the majority, at almost 60%. Of all civil society forms, only political parties are trusted by less than half, at 38%. Somewhat surprisingly, CSO members are less tolerant of diversity than people who are not CSO members, something which may be explained by the heavy role of socially conservative Catholic Church groups in civil society, but which challenges the notion of civil society as a generator of progressive social capital.

There is a high public perception of corruption, fed by several high profile scandals in the 2000s, with 2011 seeing the commencement of congressional hearings to investigate the diversion of military funds. The Philippines ranks at a low 129th out of 183 in the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. As part of this, there is quite a high perception of CSO corruption: only about 30% of CSO representatives believe corruption in the sector to be rare.

“Overall trust in civil society institutions stands at a high 85%.”

NETWORKS

The Caucus of Development NGO Networks acts as a network of CSO networks, having amongst its members the Association of Foundations, the National Federation of Cooperatives, the National Council for Social Development and the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas. There are also large federations of trade unions, such as the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines and the Alliance of Progressive Labour, and religious networks, including the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, the National Council of Churches and the National Ulama Conference for Muslim groups, while the National Council for Social Development has existed for over 60 years. Around 63% of CSOs are members of networks, while 71% have recently held a meeting with another CSO and 64% have exchanged information, but these are globally low figures, perhaps reflecting the challenges of networking in a country of over 7,000 islands. Networking rates are lower for farmers' and fishers' groups, which are the least resourced groups on the CSO spectrum. There has in addition been government intervention to support networks, in the form of area-based standards networks, which bring together different groups working with the socially marginalised.

RESOURCES

CSOs rely mostly on membership dues and service fees for their funding, with limited funding from other sources. No type of CSO is heavily reliant on government or corporate funding, but advocacy NGOs depend on foreign support, while trade unions and homeowners' associations are highly dependent on membership fees, and religious groups derive about half their funding base from individual donations. One potentially worrying trend is that around a third of CSOs are assessed as being in financial decline, and the main source of income of groups experiencing decline is membership fees, followed by individual donations, suggesting that economic downturn is challenging individual giving to CSOs. Foreign grants, meanwhile, have consistently declined, more than halving over a 15 year period, reflecting the relative political stability of the Philippines compared to others in the region and corresponding shifts of donor attention elsewhere. In response to this, some networks have initiated local funding programmes.

Farmers' and fishers' groups have the highest ratio of volunteers to paid staff, at about eleven to one, much higher than the average for the sector as a whole of between two and three to one. A human resource concern is the apparent lack of a successor generation to replace those civil society leaders that emerged following the end of martial law, with fewer young people seeking to work in CSOs.

A self-regulation initiative, the Philippine Council for NGO Certification, has so far certified around 1,000 CSOs in its eight years of existence. One of the benefits of this is to make donations to certified CSOs tax deductible. However, those registered are only a small proportion of the estimated total of CSOs, partly because the certification process is seen as laborious and expensive. Intriguingly, smaller CSOs more often publish their financial information than larger ones, while CSOs which receive a high level of foreign funding do this less often.

IMPACT

CSOs are seen to achieve a high level of impact in the areas of poverty reduction, environmental protection and anti-corruption, with stakeholders external to the sector tending to rate CSO performance more highly than those in the sector themselves. Only around 45% of CSOs had lobbied for policy change within a two year period, but 61% of these reported a successful outcome. Lobbying to pass a law on agrarian reform was seen as a particular success story in recent years, with success resting on the development of civil society technical capacity, the establishment of good networks with legislators and the church, and the ability to organise campaigns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in the Philippines include: supporting greater take up of CSO certification; developing guidelines on the roles of CSO boards; improving taxation regimes to encourage public giving; and enhancing CSO networking to enable greater representation in existing multi-sectoral bodies.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) - www.code-ngo.org

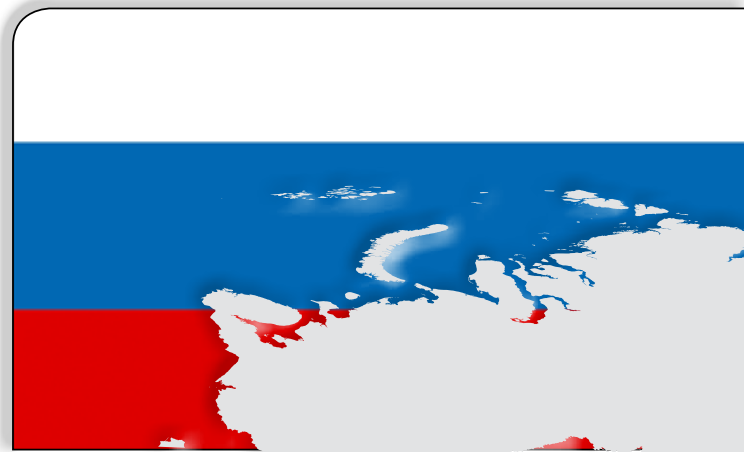
Karapatan – Alliance for the Advancement of People’s Rights - www.karapatan.org

Philippine Council for NGO Certification - www.pcnc.com.ph

Association of Foundations - <http://af.afonline.org>

Institute for Popular Democracy - <http://ipd.org.ph>

Social Watch Philippines - www.socialwatchphilippines.org



Basic facts	
Capital	Moscow
Official language	Russian
Population	142.9m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$10,440

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: RUSSIA

Civil society gained prominence in Russia as the country moved along the path of post-communist transition. For example, CSOs play an increasing role in modernising the provision of social services. This expanding role led the state from 2009 to 2011 to introduce a number of laws which open new possibilities for government funding of the activities of socially-oriented CSOs and partnership with the state in providing social services. Against this, the context for CSO growth remained difficult because the level of public trust in CSOs is low. But in a new development, when doubts arose in late 2011 about the counting of votes in the parliamentary elections, civic activity moved into the arena of public policy. Protest rallies in Moscow and other large cities demonstrated a new demand for higher standards of governance and more dialogue with the authorities. Priorities of Russian civil society can now be said to include the rule of law and basic civil rights. The establishment of the League of Voters, a new grassroots group connecting activists for free and fair elections, possibly marks the beginning of mass self-organisation on these concerns. Russian political structures and bodies of state power are challenged to assess these developments and to seek new methods of communication with civil society to build trust between civil society and the state.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Russia is considered to have a high level of human development, ranked 66th in the 2011 UN Human Development Index. As one of the world's largest oil and natural gas holders, high fuel prices have propelled economic growth. However, inequality, as expressed in the gap between the richest 20% and the poorest, remains pressing. Inequality increasingly affects access to quality education and medical care, while there are high levels of drug and alcohol addiction. Nevertheless, a generally high educational level and growing urbanisation suggest assets that could be used to build civil society.

In contrast to the powerful oligarchy, civil society has weak relationships with government, which means that politicians more often consult business interests than those of citizens. There has been some recent establishment of state-civil society dialogue bodies, such as the President of the Russian Federation's Council for the Development of Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights and a Public Chamber at the federal level, along with forums in individual ministries and regional and municipal level civic councils. Consultation and support is however characterised by selectivity, while attempts to raise political or human

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 42.5. Civic Engagement: 33.7; Level of Organisation: 51.4; Practice of Values: 39.8; Perception of Impact: 34.4; External Environment: 53.3. Ranked 33 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	18.9%
CSOs network membership	32.2%
Policy activity	26.8%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.698. Ranked 95 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: not free. Political rights score: 6. Civil liberties score: 5
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: partly free. Score: 52
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 2.4. Ranked 143 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.39. Percentile rank: 41.6. Rule of law: -0.78. Percentile rank: 26.1
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 66. Ranked 142 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: moderate. Score: 71 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 82 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: authoritarian regime. Score: 3.92. Ranked 117 out of 167

rights issues remain controversial. Russia's Basic Law offers ample political and human rights and democratic institutions on paper, but the rule of law is weak. There is a marked lack of separation of governmental powers, with the judiciary subject to undue influence from the legislature and executive, and a general lack of accountability and transparency in the public sector. CSOs which could contribute to the enforcement of the Basic Law and to civic oversight of the public sector are weak. Some political parties critical of the status quo are banned, while some that are allowed to practice are pseudo opposition parties intended to offer the semblance of democratic choice without challenging the regime. The European Court of High Rights in April 2011 condemned Russia's law on political parties as draconian, affirming that the condition on minimum membership numbers was the most prohibitive in Europe. Restrictions on civil and political rights have led Freedom House to classify Russia as 'not free', although it should be said that many Russian analysts express doubts about the Freedom House methods. Research conducted by the Centre for the Study of Civil Society and the Not-for-Profit Sector at the National Research University Higher School of Economics (CSCSNS) in 2009 revealed a gap between the rights and freedoms that people hold important and an assessment of possession of these rights. Political rights and freedoms rated much lower than social rights in importance for Russians, but the enforcement of rights and freedoms as a whole was assessed by Russian citizens as low.

Conflict continues in the Caucasus region, and the fear remains that this could be used to justify heavy-handed government across the country. 2011 saw an interdepartmental commission established, headed by the interior minister, on combating extremism in Russia. Stringent anti-terrorism laws introduced in 2002 and amended in 2006 cast a potentially wide net, but so far this body of legislation has not been used on a large scale.

The Russian Civil Code and the Federal Law on Non-commercial Organisations (NCO Law) regulate public associations, foundations, institutions, non-commercial partnerships and autonomous non-commercial organisations. Public associations are further sub-divided by the Federal Law on Public Associations and are considered to encompass public organisations, mass movements, public foundations and public institutions.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

According to the Russian Statistics Committee, the total number of non-governmental, non-commercial organisations is about 360,000, but the research by CSCSNS indicates that only around 136,000 of these are active. The main types of legally registered CSOs are religious organisations (44%), gardening associations (14%), residents' associations (13%), funds (9%) and non-commercial partnerships (8%).

In the 1990s CSOs were a largely western-supported phenomenon, and tended to be based on western models. More recent years have seen the development of more indigenous models and a greater role for domestic funding. However, while research shows a sufficiently high level of organisation of CSOs, it also highlights that non-institutionalised spontaneous self-organisation to date is weak, situation-specific, not sustainable and not always constructive. A gap is observed between rather safe, but quantitatively rather limited institutionalised development, and relatively rare broad public initiatives.



PARTICIPATION

Analysis of the Russian population suggests there is a middle ground of people ripe for recruitment into civil society. People who are active in CSOs (8%) and people who are assessed as never likely to be involved in CSOs (9%) are the smallest population groups, but the middle ground includes 27% assessed as involved in charity in some way or well-informed about CSOs, but not currently active, and a further 27% assessed as potentially ready to unite for joint action, but not yet engaged in civic work and not well-informed about the work of existing organisations.

As it stands, participation is low across the board. The share of the population participating in the activities of socially-oriented CSOs is 9%, and for politically-oriented CSOs 8%, with volunteering levels even lower. The main vehicles for participation are sports and recreational organisations, involving 65% of those who take part in socially-oriented activities, with much lower percentages involved in cultural and educational organisations (22%) and religious organisations (21%). Only 6% participate in the activities of charitable organisations or foundations. Three quarters of those participating in politically-oriented CSOs do so through trade unions, 15% in political parties and 10% in professional associations. Less than 3% participate in environmental or consumer rights organisations.

Only around 10% of respondents reported taking part in individual political activity, such as signing a petition or joining a demonstration, in the past five years. There were however no discernible social and demographic differences between these and the other 90%, implying that there is potential to scale up the level of political activism. Heavy social media use by young people also suggests potential for activism, as was demonstrated in the December protests.

The percentage involved in local community activities is a higher 28%, but still a globally low figure, although three quarters of these participate at least once a month. The core civil society constituency tend to live in large cities, have a high educational level and reasonable income levels. On average people volunteer for 26 hours a week. The level of volunteering rises to a third of people when non-formal volunteering is taken into account, and there is felt to be latency for self-mobilisation demonstrated by the rapid civic response to the wildfires experienced in Russia in 2010.

PUBLIC TRUST

Only around 9% of the public report that they trust CSOs, a globally low figure. While faith organisations register 43% trust, other civil society actors have trust ratings between 1% and 15%. Political parties have a negative rating: the share of those who do not trust them exceeds the share of those who do by 16%. Russians lack confidence in most public institutions, including state bodies and business. Only armed forces have more than 30% trust, while parliament and civil servants record under 10%. The picture is the same for the media, with the press trusted by 8% and television by 14%, and worse for major companies, trusted by only 1%. No are international structures looked on as the answer: the EU has only 8% trust, the UN 12%.

The Transparency International 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index shows Russia as amongst the most corrupt countries, ranked 134th out of 183, corresponding with a visible increase in the levels of corruption in the last decade. Popular perception is that corruption is most common in law enforcement, healthcare and education. People also deem corruption severe in registration bodies, including those responsible for land and property regulation. The number of people paying a bribe to get a service is growing, and 63% of people believe there is little point in pursuing corrupt officials. Only a minority of CSO representatives say they have never encountered corruption within civil society. More encouragingly, the number of people who say they are prepared to help fight corruption appears to be increasing, but the level of civil society-government cooperation here is low.

NETWORKS

Just under a third of CSOs surveyed are members of an umbrella organisation or network, a low result compared to other countries. However, those which are members value them highly: 87% consider them effective to some degree. Only just over half of CSOs regularly exchange information with others. Public and religious organisations are most commonly involved in interaction with other CSOs. The number of international CSOs involved in Russia is thought to have decreased, due to expanding internal resources, the perceived greater challenges of neighbouring countries and legal restrictions on their activities.

RESOURCES

For most CSOs, their financial base stayed stable over a two year period, although only 4% said that their financial situation had improved. The most financially stable organisations are trade unions, religious organisations and professional and business associations. 32% of CSOs have just one source of funding, 42% have two or three and only 21% have more than four. Most organisations cite membership fees as their main funding source, but these are generally insufficient to cover project activities, and few have a diversified funding strategy. Government funds are not widely distributed. There seems to be some recent growth in philanthropy, but many CSOs do not approach the funding bodies that award grants. The main reason for this is a lack of training of CSO employees and a shortage of volunteers in fundraising. More positively, a ruling by the Russian Supreme Arbitration Court in 2011 overturned a decision to levy a 24% tax on donations from foreign foundations, thereby preventing many CSOs from bankruptcy.

CSOs in Russia tend to have a small permanent staff. 40% surveyed have no permanent employees, 28% between one and four, and 14% between five and ten. 76% use volunteers in some capacity. Organisations with the heaviest reliance on volunteers are those in the fields of philanthropy, public health and environmental protection. Business and professional organisations, unions, sports and educational organisations are generally less reliant on volunteers.

IMPACT

CSOs representatives judge their impact highest in the areas of aid to the poor and underprivileged (36%), education (36%), social development (22%), employment (12%) and health protection (11%). However, 76% of external stakeholders assess the responsiveness of CSOs to acute social issues, such as alcoholism and drug addiction, as weak to non-existent.

48% of CSOs feel civil society's impact on political decision-making is low, and only 17% of external stakeholders rate it as significant. Only 26% of CSOs reported advocating for policy change, but 80% of those that did reported success. CSOs concerned with international issues and human rights are most likely to attempt policy change.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Centre for the Study of Civil Society and the Non-for-Profit Sector at the National Research University Higher School of Economics - <http://grans.hse.ru>

Civic Chamber of Russian Federation - www.oprf.ru

Agency of Social Information - www.asi.org.ru

Lawyers for Civil Society - www.lawcs.org

Siberian Civic Initiatives Support Centre - www.cip.nsk.su

Centre for NGOs development - www.crno.ru

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthening civil society in Russia requires expanding the state's interaction with a wider range of CSOs through clear frameworks and cooperation mechanisms, legislating to improve the enabling environment for civil society and offering competitive grants lines. CSOs need to improve their networking and use modern methods for encouraging participation, promoting their work more widely, and raising awareness of best practices.



Basic facts	
Capital	Kigali
Official languages	Kinyarwanda, French, English, Kiswahili
Population	11.4m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$530

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: RWANDA

Rwanda remains marked by its still recent experience of genocide, and avoiding a return to ethnic conflict remains a preoccupation for a country which is rebuilding itself with a heavy emphasis on promoting economic growth and stability, and prioritising education and new technology. The challenge lies in the toleration of dissent and opposing voices in a system which is heavily centred on the president and ruling party. Rwandan CSOs have long since been characterised by heavy state dependency and lack of independence, and assess themselves as not having the capacity to play a strong advocacy role, being mostly limited to service delivery.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

While President Kagame undoubtedly continues to have widespread public support, the 93% of the vote he received in the 2010 election indicates a lack of political competition and a difficulty in developing credible opposition. Rwanda is often portrayed as pursuing a Singapore model of development, prioritising economic growth and technocratic management, with significant progress made in building an effective state, meeting the MDGs, tackling corruption and promoting women's empowerment, but arguably at the expense of political freedoms, such as freedom of speech and freedom of organisation. The president and government, which remains dependent on overseas aid for around 50% of its budget, have come in for increasing international criticism over the lack of space to express alternative viewpoints. January saw the handing out of severe sentences in absentia on the grounds of threatening state security to former close colleagues of the president now in exile, while there have been a number of suspicious deaths of critics of the government, such as the shooting to death of the editor of a critical website in Uganda in November. There are also occasional violations of information rights and media freedoms. In the run up to the 2010 election, an estimated 30 media houses were closed, while in March 2011 the Rwanda Media High Council released a list of allowed media organs, omitting the most controversial critics.

The issue of free speech is highly complex in Rwanda, given the experience of genocide, which means there are strict restrictions on hate speech and denial of the official narrative of genocide, and a practice of downplaying ethnic identity. 2011 saw several of the trials of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda coming to completion, which resulted in some prominent leaders of the genocide being sentenced. Rwanda has also seen widespread application of community gacaca courts as a form of transitional justice.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Score: 2.1 out of 3. Structure 1.7. Environment 2.1. Impact 1.9. Values 2.6
Interpersonal trust	High level of trust, more than 50%
CSOs network membership	20-60%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.429. Ranked 165 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: not free. Political rights score: 6. Civil liberties score: 5
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: partly free. Score: 50
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 5. Ranked 49 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.05. Percentile rank: 54.1; Rule of law: -0.31. Percentile rank: 46.0
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 81. Ranked 156 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: moderate. Score: 71 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 91. Ranked 34 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: authoritarian regime. Score: 3.25. Ranked 136 out of 167
Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2011	Score 51.7. Ranked 25 out of 53

Civil society cooperates with government through the Rwanda Economic and Social Development Council, which also includes private sector representatives, and at a district level in the Joint Action Development Forum. However, CSOs assess their dialogue with government as moderate and limited. While around 88% of CSOs consulted believe there are few formal government restrictions on CSO activity, it is acknowledged that government keeps a close eye on civil society actions, and CSOs effectively self-police in the light of this. The government has also largely established control over the churches, as was the practice in the past. In the main, CSOs recognise these limitations, which include government power over authorisation and access to resources, and rarely attempt to influence government policy, even in areas of direct concern. Their main role essentially consists of assistance in implementing initiatives on which the government has led. There are some hopes about the potential for political decentralisation, with elected local government established for the first time, but strong question marks over the availability of resources at the local level to make it work and the adequacy of CSO organisation at this level to take advantage of this space. People at the local level lack knowledge on how to engage the administration, and tend to be mobilised by state structures rather than organise themselves. Over half of CSO representatives feel the private sector is not interested in CSO activities, and only around 7% of CSOs have a partnership with the private sector.

96% of CSOs consulted say that registration is inexpensive, 89% that there is no favouritism in registration, and 61% that it is simple. However, only 32% say registration is quick. The need to register annually is a hindrance.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The post-genocide period was characterised by an influx of CSOs engaged in activities such as rebuilding infrastructure, resettling returning populations and promoting peace and reconciliation. These were mostly international CSOs, although this period also saw a growth of women's groups at national and regional levels. Activities undertaken by women's groups include the application of gacaca mechanisms, lobbying for assistance for widows, orphans and other vulnerable groups, and providing credit for women to take part in economic activities. Post-genocide civil society is seen as more complex and diverse, encompassing cooperatives, peasant associations, informal associations and microfinance groupings, foreign and local NGOs, churches, women's and youth groups, human rights organisations, trade unions and the non-state media. Distinct organisations of survivors and widows of the genocide are also a new formation.

“CSOs assess their dialogue with government as moderate and limited.”

There is concern that CSOs are concentrated in urban locations, and also that most CSOs are not organised to work on the lowest levels of government, such as district and sub-district levels, with churches offering most of the local level work.

PARTICIPATION

Only a little over one in five of people surveyed report that they regularly volunteer. There is, however, a Rwandan tradition of community service, umuganda, which means that on the last Saturday morning of each month people are expected to take part in activities that benefit the



community, such as clearing land, helping build houses or digging ditches, and this tradition remains strong in rural populations. 80% of people surveyed state that they have attended a community meeting, participated in a community-organised event or taken part in a collective community effort, with over 70% saying that they participated in several of these. However, there is some scepticism about the dependency of these actions on a coordinator to organise them.

There are also concerns about the levels of participation of women and rural populations in CSOs, and about the exclusion of rural populations in particular from CSO leadership.

PUBLIC TRUST

The highest levels of public trust are, unusually compared to most countries, expressed in the president, the government and the armed forces. Around 75% of people have high trust in the church, and around 60% in the best known CSOs. The lowest levels of trust are in the press and major companies. Around 60% of people believe that it is naïve to trust others. There are predictably high levels of distrust between genocide survivors and those accused of crimes of genocide. There is, however, evidence that respect for the rule of law has increased, and there is widespread condemnation of anti-social acts and free riding behaviours.

“The highest levels of public trust are, unusually compared to most countries, expressed in the president, the government and the armed forces.”

The government has placed a particular emphasis on tackling corruption and there is evidence that this strategy is succeeding, with Rwanda moving from a ranking of 102nd out of 180 countries in the 2008 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index to 49th out of 183 in the 2011 index, with much lower levels of perceived corruption than all other East and Central African countries.

NETWORKS

There are many civil society networks, and national level NGOs tend to join larger umbrella groups that cater to their sectors, including umbrella groups for human rights organisations and media associations, and networks for trade unions and private sector associations. Around half of CSOs are thought to be network members, and over half of CSO representatives assess networks as effective. However, inter-communication between individual CSOs is thought to be ineffective. The Rwandan Civil Society Platform was recently launched to bring together 15 umbrella groups to help address this. However, many associations, cooperatives and religious charities do not necessarily see themselves as part of civil society, and so do not take part in networks, implying that efforts are needed to sensitise them and bring them in.

RESOURCES

There are concerns about the dependency of Rwandan CSOs on INGOs, and the influence this gives INGOs over the domestic agenda. Nine out of ten CSO representatives consulted believe that CSOs have serious financial sustainability challenges, with lack of resources contributing to high staff turnover, as seen by many CSO leaders moving into international CSOs or government positions. Only one in ten of CSOs consulted believe there is significant corporate philanthropy, and a lack of legal and regulatory framework to encourage corporate social responsibility is acknowledged.

Around 85% of people surveyed report that they contribute to charity, but it is not clear whether these contributions are monetary or take other forms.

IMPACT

There is assessed to be a lack of CSO capacity for policy analysis and dialogue. Very few CSO representatives feel equipped to play a role in making the government more transparent and there

is very little involvement in budgeting. Most CSOs are also seen to play little role in the promotion of tolerance, this being seen viewed as the purview of government initiatives and some specialist CSOs. CSOs tend to overstate their impact on matters such as holding the state and private corporations to account. Outside of national elections, CSOs are not widely perceived as promoting democracy. An exception is seen in the form of the women's movement, which is assessed to have effectively worked with the relevant ministry and the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

CSOs' overall strengths are seen as lying in promoting grassroots poverty reduction and in encouraging women's empowerment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in Rwanda include: instituting closer joint working between different CSOs to develop a collective voice and shared advocacy approaches to improve policy impact on government; diversifying funding strategies, including income-generating schemes, to reduce dependence on foreign funding; and strengthening CSO participation in the Joint Action Development Forum.

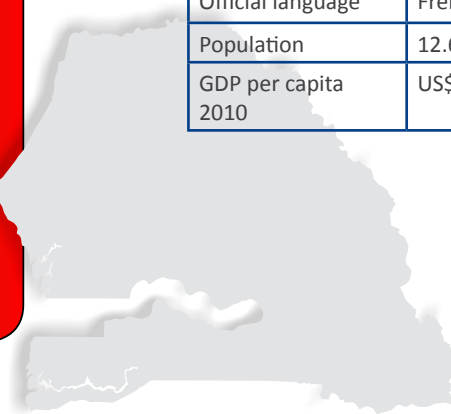
FURTHER INFORMATION

Conseil de Concertation des Organisations d'Appui aux Initiatives de Base (CCOAIB) - www.ccoaib.org.rw

Rwanda Civil Society Platform - www.rcsprwanda.org

Ligue Rwandaise pour la Promotion et la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (LIPRODHOR) - www.liprodhor.org

Rwanda NGOs database - www.rwandagateway.org/ngos



Basic facts	
Capital	Dakar
Official language	French
Population	12.6m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$1,042

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: SENEGAL

Senegal's 2012 presidential elections, which are heading for a run-off vote at the time of going to print, have been marred by controversy ever since the incumbent president declared an intention to serve a third term. In a bid to retain power, in June 2011 the increasingly unpopular President Wade also sought to change the constitution to lower the percentage of votes required for a first-round electoral victory from 50% to 25% and introduce a vice presidency – a role many observers believe was intended for his son. Popular protest forced the president to pull back from his plans. The run-up to the election in Senegal has provoked a spurt of civic participation from a wide cross-section of society, ranging from nonpartisan rappers driving youth vote registration to service delivery protests that united the irate middle classes, opposition forces and young people. As the only country in West Africa never to experience a coup, there remains a sense however amongst civil society that Senegal fares better than its neighbouring, less democratic countries, such as the Gambia and Mauritania.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Senegal is assessed as a country with low human development, amongst the lowest 40 on the 2011 UN Human Development Index. Over 40% of the Senegalese population lives on less than US\$2 a day and about the same number is illiterate. Socio-economic inequality is serious and unemployment remains high.

Genuine party political competition is lacking, with most parties dormant and voters identifying on personal and geographical lines, rather than on the basis of party manifestoes. Public powers tend to see CSOs as part of political opposition forces, while opposition parties often fear CSOs becoming competitors. The approach to the presidential elections made for a more tense atmosphere in this relatively stable country. For example, at time of writing a leading opposition figure is on a murder charge after video footage caught him allegedly firing on Wade supporters attacking the town hall in his district in December.

In the Casamance region there are restrictions on political freedom due to the low level conflict between the state and an independence movement that has been taking place for almost 30 years. In December 2011, after a period of relative calm, Senegalese soldiers were attacked and 16 people killed by rebel forces. This spike in violence, which continued into 2012, was attributed to the upcoming elections.

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 1.67 out of 3. Structure 1.47. Environment 1.17. Values 1.93. Impact 2.1
Interpersonal trust	10-30%
CSOs network membership	Less than 30%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.459. Ranked 155 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 3
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 2.9. Ranked 112 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.51. Percentile rank: 37.3. Rule of law: -0.41. Percentile rank: 41.7
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 26. Ranked 75 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2006	Status: weak
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 85 out of 177
Democracy Index, EIU 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 5.51. Ranked 93 out of 167
Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2011	Score 57.5. Ranked 15 out of 53

Although the Senegalese press is assessed as having the best infrastructure in Francophone Africa, investigative journalists can face trials because of stories they have covered, newsrooms have been vandalised and threats of financial asphyxiation have tended to foster a certain amount of self-censorship. In 2011 an editor of a reputable weekly was charged with criminal defamation for reporting on state corruption, and employees of the national radio and television stations demonstrated against the stations' lack of impartiality and pro-government stance. The right to freedom of association came under threat in July, when President Wade banned political demonstrations in central Dakar in response to protests demanding his resignation. Freedom House ranks Senegal as 'partly free'.

Most CSOs believe the state only communicates with a small number of CSOs, and on an ad hoc basis. 61% of CSO representatives consulted believe the state has a significant level of control over civil society, with state inspections of civil society long and hard to pass. Even though the legal framework is assessed as better than that in many neighbouring countries, 61% of CSOs consulted consider the registration system as slow and complex, and a third believe it is discriminatory. The tax regime is also not supportive.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

When considered according to their level of influence, national media, unions and professional networks, religious groups and national and international NGOs are assessed by CSOs as the most influential parts of civil society, while family and clan groupings, credit unions and village committees, and youth, women and disability organisations are assessed as less influential. Other civil society actors, positioned somewhere in between these two clusters, include radio commentators, local NGOs and CBOs, farmers' organisations, diaspora organisations, and universities and academic experts. Senegal is a predominately Muslim country and Muslim leaders are a key social force. Religious groups and the media are seen as having the best access to state institutions, while bilateral and multilateral funders are influential over CSOs.

Most formal Senegalese CSOs are based in the urban centres of Dakar, Saint Louis and Thiès. Recent years have seen a trend by many ethnic and religious CSOs to modernise and adapt to the legal system, and use the media and new technologies to bring their supporters together. As a result, previous differences between formal and traditional CSOs have diminished drastically.

PARTICIPATION

There is a notable level of individual activism in Senegal, with two thirds of people surveyed reporting they have written a letter to a newspaper, signed a petition, or taken part in a demonstration or march. Membership of CSOs, at just under half of people, is also high when compared to other countries, and 38% of CSO members belong to at least two CSOs. However, while Senegal has one of the highest levels of volunteering in sub-Saharan Africa, at 81% of the sample, only 16% volunteer with CSOs, indicating a high level of non-formal activity. Further, 76% of people surveyed have taken part in a collective community action, such as a community meeting or an action organised to solve a community problem.

On the whole, people feel free to take part in political activity without retaliation. There is a high level of comment on political events in Senegal, but political participation outside elections tends to



be low, and mobilisation tends to be stronger on religious issues than those concerning democracy and citizenship, begging the question of the extent to which participation in religious structures serves more broad-based and progressive causes. However, 2011 saw new forms of mobilisation: born out of frustration with frequent power cuts, poverty and high levels of unemployment, several popular rappers and activists used Facebook, YouTube and rap music to catalyse action as part of the ‘Y'en a marre (“We’re fed up” or “enough is enough”) movement’. This working-class, secular youth movement has since January 2011 been driving voter registration while explicitly refusing to support any particular political party, despite which one of the movement’s founders was arrested and questioned after speaking at a rally. The spontaneous riots that broke out in Dakar on 23 June after President Wade announced his plan to change the constitution marked the start of what became known as the June 23 movement (M23). Since then, sporadic protests and anti-Wade demonstrations have taken place in major cities.

PUBLIC TRUST

Unusually, the section of society which receives the highest level of trust is the armed forces, with 71% trust, suggesting their role would be pivotal in any future unrest. Trust in religious groups stands at 67%, and in CSOs in general at 66%. Only 41% of people trust political parties. 29% of people have no trust at all in political parties or leaders, and 26% no trust in central government. 83% of interviewees consider CSOs to be more efficient than the state.

Substantial corruption in the public sector, with Senegal’s gradual descent in Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index, from 85th out of 180 countries in 2008 to 122nd out of 183 in 2011, has led many to consider the state as incompetent and unreceptive. Judicial and private sector corruption are concerns alongside government corruption. Corruption is also present within CSOs, with two thirds of CSO representatives consulted believing civil society corruption to be frequent or very frequent, while financial transparency is largely absent.

NETWORKS

Many CSO representatives believe support structures and networks for civil society are insufficient and cover only a minority of organisations, with 13% of CSOs consulted assessing them as non-existent and 60% as limited, while only 43% rate networks as efficient. There is a strong tendency towards participation in international networks, but communication between CSOs is considered as only moderate, low or very low by almost 79% of those consulted.

“Many CSO representatives believe support structures and networks for civil society are insufficient.”

The principal CSO network is CONGAD - Council of NGOs working in support of Development, and its members are active in areas such as healthcare, education and water. Even though there are many examples of inter-sectoral cooperation – for instance between the CNES (National Confederation of Employers of Senegal) and the CSO Forum Civil as part of the ARMP (Agency for the Regulation of Public Contracts) – these are insufficient. Another significant structure is the Non-State Actors’ Platform, comprising CSOs, trade unions and employers’ organisations. Its 2010-2014 strategic plan aims, among other things, to strengthen non-state actors’ participation in political, social, economic and cultural dialogue and in the definition, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and strategies.

Quite often a lack of cooperation between CSOs is prompted by competition for funding and the weakness of the intellectual property regime in Senegal. Another reason is strong sub-sectoral differences and consequent distrust between types of CSOs (for example between NGOs and Muslim brotherhoods) which means it is difficult for different civil society actors to understand each other and work together.

RESOURCES

This situation is one of weak technological and infrastructural resources, while a third of CSOs consulted report serious funding problems, and only a third feel that they have a suitable level of resources for their ambitions. Donor funded CSOs (mainly NGOs, compared to unions, which are supported more by membership fees) particularly fear lack of funds. Donors tend to prefer to give large grants to a small range of organisations that they feel are able to manage them efficiently, with smaller CSOs seeking lower amounts of funding particularly challenged. Financial support from the state is viewed as limited and partial, and there is little culture of corporate social responsibility. More than half of CSOs receive at least 10% of their income from membership fees and around 21% receive 10% of their income from service fees.

86% of people surveyed report giving to charity in the past year, which can include non-monetary donations such as food and clothes. Much of this giving is likely to be to religious causes, but it is difficult to obtain information on this. A further question is the extent to which non-religious CSOs might be able to benefit from such giving.

IMPACT

CSOs assess themselves to be active, while acknowledging that their impact on government accountability and the promotion of democracy remains limited to weak. 62% of CSO representatives consulted believe they have limited impact on holding the state to account. Most believe that CSOs have limited or no impact on policies, and 57% that their public campaigns have little success. CSOs have great difficulties in scaling up, they operate mostly at the level of local or experimental projects, and they assess themselves as not good at developing alternative solutions to existing models.

CSOs are assessed as having far greater social impact than political impact. 75% of the public consulted say that CSOs have specifically helped poor people within the community to improve their living conditions. Success stories advanced include work with people with disabilities, pro-poor programmes in the agricultural and rural development field and programmes supporting people made homeless during the Casamance conflict. 74% of people judge that CSOs have helped women to improve their living conditions, while 73% consider CSOs active and successful in creating or supporting employment schemes and income generating actions, particularly for women and poor people.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Forum Civil - www.forumcivil.sn

CONGAD - Conseil des ONG d'Appui au Développement - www.congad.sn

Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux - www.cncr.org

Rural Foundation for West Africa - www.frao.info

Recontre Africaine pour la Defense des Droits de l'Homme - www.raddho.org

RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve the context for civil society in Senegal, efforts should be increased to advocate that the government adheres to the constitution and the international human rights standards to which it has subscribed, and improve and apply freedom of expression laws. Senegalese civil society should apply a working code of conduct, involve members more in making major decisions and be more inclusive of women, young people, rural populations and vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities. CSOs should also prioritise efforts to tackle corruption.



Basic facts	
Capital	Ljubljana
Official language	Slovenian
Population	2.0m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$2,285

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: SLOVENIA

With limited resources and low levels of professionalism, CSOs in Slovenia are often caught in the illusion of inclusion: CSOs are sometimes included in consultations, but these tend to come largely as a formality, particularly given weak CSO capacities to engage meaningfully and the strong, hierarchic and bureaucratic role of the state, which combine to fuel a dominant narrative of CSO weakness and ineffectualness. Cooperation between the government and civil society has not progressed, and this now constitutes a serious barrier against the further development of the sector. Without more spaces and resources, civil society will not grow and mature beyond its present marginalised, circumscribed role. The recent impact of the economic crisis on Slovenian politics makes the situation more volatile.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Compared to other former Yugoslavian countries, Slovenia was considered to have achieved economic and political stability, and to have established a pattern of regular and fair elections. However, in 2011 Slovenia experienced political crisis for the first time since independence. Months of disagreements on proposed pension and social benefit cuts in response to economic downturn led to a vote of no confidence in, and collapse of, the government, with the holding of parliamentary elections on 4 December leading to a newly formed centre-left party winning the largest number of seats. Economic crisis saw the country's debt as a proportion of GDP rise from 22% in 2008 to 45% in 2010, a rate of increase second only to Ireland, while unemployment doubled to 12% and some major companies became insolvent.

Since independence the most influential actors in Slovenian society have been the main political parties, both of ruling coalition governments and opposition. The power of the business community is also acknowledged, as it is able to use its influence to lobby for its interests and shape public opinion through the media.

Government often does not adhere to its own published minimum standards on public participation in the drafting of legislation. Both employers' and trade union associations serve on the tripartite Economic and Social Council, established in 1994, but few recent efforts have been made to develop a systematic framework for dialogue with civil society. There are examples of the government inviting CSOs from particular fields into working groups, for example on drugs or youth

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 51.1. Civic Engagement: 46.6; Level of Organisation: 60.2; Practice of Values: 42.3; Perception of Impact: 32.5; External Environment: 73.8. Ranked 17 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	18.1%
CSOs network membership	69.2%
Policy activity	63.3%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.884. Ranked 21 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 1. Civil liberties score: 1
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 5.9. Ranked 35 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +1.03. Percentile rank: 81.3. Rule of law: +1.02. Percentile rank: 82.5
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 9.14. Ranked 36 out of 178
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 31. Ranked 156 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 7.76. Ranked: 30 out of 167

policies, but consultation tends to be perceived as a box ticking exercise. One recent exception was a joint CSO memorandum on the financial crisis and civil society's role in overcoming it, with the government's action of forming a cross-departmental group to respond to the memorandum perhaps offering a new example of how collaboration with government could be fostered.

A series of different laws define and regulate different kinds of CSOs: associations, private institutes, foundations, cooperatives and religious communities and organisations, with separate legislation also covering professional chambers, trade unions and political parties. Slovenia's laws on freedom of association and organisation are assessed as being free and democratic, and yet this does not result in a strong enabling environment for civil society. 28% of CSOs surveyed report they have faced illegitimate restriction by local or central government, and around 30% consider the environment for civil society quite limiting. Almost half of CSO representatives believe the state exerts a great influence on civil society.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The number of CSOs increased from 11,000 in 1990 to over 28,000 in 2009. There is, however, some confusion over terminology, with governments tending to refer to the non-governmental sector rather than civil society, while many of those who work in the sector prefer to describe themselves as associations rather than NGOs, with the latter having negative connotations of fund-seeking. During the communist past and following liberalisation in 1974, associations were the only permissible type of formation, and around 75% of all CSOs are classed as associations, but this is down from 95% in 1996. These are defined broadly as membership-based organisations in pursuit of common interests; there is no requirement that they pursue broad public interests. A burgeoning of alternative social movements in the 1980s consolidated themselves into parties and political contestation in the 1990s. In addition, trade unions now make up 12% of all CSOs, private institutes 6% and religious organisations 4%. Over 80% of CSOs surveyed report that they are membership-based.

The distribution of CSO orientations is largely carried over from the communist period, with around 28% of CSOs being sports and recreation oriented, 13% focussing on culture, 10% on business, professions and housing and 9% on social protection. CSOs focused on advocacy and law make up just 1% of the total.

The most influential CSOs are those associated with religion, and trade unions and the employers' association, given their long acknowledged social partnership role. Others with less power but with well-established funding bases include organisations for people with disabilities and students' organisations, while humanitarian, environmental and advocacy CSOs are seen to have little power.

PARTICIPATION

One third of Slovenians are active members of a socially-oriented CSO, with sports and recreation groups (18%) and religious organisations (12%) having the largest membership. Around two thirds of the public take part in social activities with sports clubs or other voluntary organisations at least once a month. The figure for active political membership is lower, at around one in five people, with the largest membership being of trade unions. Almost one in three people take parts in individual acts of activism, such as signing a petition or joining a peaceful demonstration.



Volunteering is on the increase, following efforts to improve the regulatory framework for volunteering and the passing of a law on volunteering, co-drafted by CSOs, in 2011, which built on financial support from the government to promote voluntary work in 2009. The law stipulates the formal rights of volunteers, and the obligations of authorities and CSOs. However, there is a lack of accurate monitoring of volunteering levels, which is part of a broader lack of recognition and acknowledgement of the contribution of volunteering. Most volunteers contribute around ten hours a month, and it is estimated that the total voluntary hours committed to CSOs amount to the equivalent of over 7,000 full time CSO employees.

“Volunteering is on the increase, following efforts to improve the regulatory framework for volunteering and the passing of a law on volunteering.”

PUBLIC TRUST

Low levels of social capital offer a challenge. The highest levels of intolerance are expressed towards Roma people (39% of people are intolerant), gay people (35%) and people with HIV/AIDS (31%). Civil society is also characterised by low levels of public trust. Only 9% of people trust political parties, while the church, unions and environmental, charitable, humanitarian and women’s organisations have the confidence of around 40% of citizens, low compared to other countries.

Corruption, however, compares favourably to other former Yugoslavian countries, assessed at 35th out of 183 countries on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. There is no consensus about corruption in civil society, but there are concerns about an apparent culture of silence on the issue.

NETWORKS

Civil society networks are seen to have low, but growing, influence, with almost 70% of CSOs being members of networks. Networking structures and regional hubs are largely facilitated by EU policies and funds. However, there is concern about competition between networks and members, and lack of consensus about who can legitimately represent civil society. Poor communication channels and limited relationships between networks and grassroots organisations are seen to be factors here. More positively, eight out of ten CSOs meet with other organisations, with the average number of meetings being ten in a three month period. A little under half of Slovenian CSOs report that they are members of European level networks.

RESOURCES

Funding competition between CSOs is assessed as a barrier to further cooperation. CSOs also lack substantial government support. While this means they are relatively independent from the state, the continual struggle for grants awarded through public tenders and the modest donations CSOs receive considerably hinders their ability to operate. Only around 13% of Slovenian CSOs have a permanent, remunerated workforce, with civil society being heavily dependent on voluntary effort, and struggling to challenge perceptions of CSOs as entirely voluntary organisations. Altogether, CSOs provide less than 1% of the total workforce of Slovenia, one of the lowest rates globally. Unstable funding and lack of belief in the possibility for career progression within civil society are seen to be drivers behind the connected challenge of staff turnover.

“There is concern about competition between CSO networks and members, and lack of consensus about who can legitimately represent civil society.”

While the number of CSOs multiplied by 2.3 between 1996 and 2008, CSO income as a share of GDP only grew from 1.92% to 19.9%, implying a shrinking of resources available to each CSO. Further, there has been little change in the sources of CSO funding since 1996. Membership fees, service fees and income from sales of products account for 47% of CSO income, compared to 27% from public sources and 19% from private and individual donations. Almost all CSOs report an increased

workload and number of projects, but only around 40% received any corresponding increase in public funds, and over 60% feel their organisation's work has increased out of proportion to the availability of funding. Funding is also heavily project-based. Tax legislation is also felt to be inadequate.

IMPACT

Both CSO representatives and external stakeholders perceive civil society's impact on the pressing events of the day to be low. Only about a quarter of CSO representatives believe CSOs can make an impact on crime prevention, and only about one in five on economic stability. A challenge is that in the current make-up of civil society, few organisations are working on these topical issues. However, around half of CSO representatives believe they achieve impact on key social issues of education and supporting poor and marginalised communities. Compared to this, almost 70% of CSO representatives believe their policy impact is limited. Only one in five CSOs which had attempted policy advocacy reported that their efforts had met with success. This suggests that there are systemic barriers to advocacy towards government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to improve civil society in Slovenia include: encouraging links between CSOs and academia, to enhance the capacity of CSOs; establishing uniform criteria that define acting in the public interest as part of more enabling civil society legislation; creating an NGO fund to provide co-financing; and improving the tax legislation to encourage giving.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Legal and Information Centre for NGOs - www.pic.si

Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia - www.irssv.si

CNVOS – Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs - www.cnvos.si

Slovenian Platform for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid - www.sloga-platform.org



Basic facts	
Capital	Dodoma
Official languages	Swahili, English
Population	42.7m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$527

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: TANZANIA

Tanzania's civil society movement has the potential to play a more significant role in national policy processes. The weakening of the state's ability to deliver services, and the retreat of the state from one party rule in the 1990s led to an unprecedented mushrooming of CSOs. Issues that have persistently confronted the operation of CSOs since then include questions of their legitimacy, accountability and what they stand for, and their relationships with the state, with a persistent lack of an enabling legal and political environment.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society's assessment is that multilateral and bilateral donors are the most powerful actors in setting and influencing the public policy agenda. Second, but much less influential are multinational and transnational corporations, followed by local business tycoons and the similarly wealthy politicians who command the ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), which has been in power since independence, followed then by the government's coercive machinery, the media and, least influential, civil society.

Tanzania has a low level of human development, ranked 152 out of 187 countries on the 2011 UN Human Development Index, and while Tanzania has East Africa's second biggest economy, with a steady economic growth rate of an average around 7% since 2001 according to World Bank statistics, one in every third person remains below the national poverty line. Recent times have seen rising dissatisfaction at increasing commodity prices, including fuel prices, and power rationing. Responses have included doctors' strikes and unrest in universities

In the 2010 election, incumbent President Kikwete stayed in power with an overwhelming 61% of votes cast, but the vote saw a low turnout of only 43%, and observers' reports cited irregularities such as vote rigging, manipulation and electoral process corruption. Though there is provision for separation of powers between legislature, judiciary and executive, there are concerns that the executive is overbearingly powerful and still enjoys some of the structural advantages left over from the single party regime, given that the transition to multi-party competition was a top-down process resulting in limited institutional change. Tanzania is therefore considered to be 'partly free' in Freedom House indicators for political freedoms and civil liberties. There are also a number of restrictions on the labour movement, which has a contested relationship with the state, and

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 1.67 out of 3. Structure 1.84. Environment 1.68. Values 2.01. Impact 1.57
Interpersonal trust	31-50%
CSOs network membership	30-50%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.466. Ranked 152 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 3
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3. Ranked 100 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.5. Percentile rank: 37.8. Rule of law: -0.51. Percentile rank: 36.5
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 6. Ranked 34 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: very weak. Ranked 59 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 81. Ranked 65 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 5.64. Ranked 90 out of 167
Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2011	Score 58.1. Ranked 13 out of 53

more so in the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, which have their own president and parliament. Both on the mainland and islands, workers are legally prohibited from striking, leaving them without a mechanism to articulate dissent. In January 2011, three protesters were killed and several injured during a demonstration in Arusha over flouted mayoral election procedures, and in November a further demonstration was banned. The president also has the right to ban publications.

The process toward a new constitution is generating controversy. In April 2011 parliament rejected the Constitutional Amendment Bill, with a new bill passed in November 2011. The main opposition, together with civil society groups, coordinated by Jukwaa la Katiba Tanzania, the University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly and the Tanganyika Law Society are opposed to the bill, citing deficits such as violation of the current constitution, denial of opportunities for public debate and the flouting of parliamentary procedure. Jukwaa la Katiba Tanzania has resolved to initiate a parallel process, while Tanganyika Law Society has declared a legal pursuit to stop the official process.

Space for civil society engagement with government is accordingly limited. In 2010 civil society representatives were invited by government to participate in the review of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty. Previously, CSOs were selectively invited to take part in reviewing policy reforms such as Local Government Reform Programme, Legal Sector

Reform Programme, Public Service Management Reform Programme and Public Finance Reform Programme. Civil society is acknowledged in general terms in the 1984 Bill of Rights, while other more recent texts include the 2003 National Social Security Policy, which states that the government should provide an enabling environment for civil society, the 2002 Water Policy, which mandates the formation of water users' associations, and the 2003 Fisheries Policy, which stipulates a role for grassroots structures in environmental management. However, no formal institutional framework to manage and sustain partnership exists. 41% of CSOs consulted characterised relations with the state as limited and a further 49% as moderate.

There is currently no law that encompasses all CSOs in Tanzania, given the range of their roles and modes of operation, and varied membership. The NGO Act (2002) is currently the national level instrument governing registered NGOs, but it does not cover trade unions, social clubs, sports clubs, political parties, religious organisations or CBOs, which are governed by laws such as the Societies Act (2002) and Cooperative Societies Act (2003). This multiplicity of laws is a source of confusion. 57% of CSOs consulted believe CSO registration is too slow and 42% said that they were subject to unfair restrictions by government. There are examples of the government prohibiting CSOs which raise controversial issues, while the laws prohibit CSOs from engaging in politics and partisanship, without clearly defining these terms. Meanwhile the laws regulating charitable giving, such as the Game Act (2008), Income Tax Act (2006) and Public Order Act (2002), only give tax exemption to religious organisations. Any donation made by the corporate sector is subject to taxation unless it is donated to a local government or religious organisation.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Tanzania is thought to have a large civil society compared to other developing countries, occupying an estimated 2% of the economically active population. Cooperatives, faith-based organisations, community-based organisations and informal grassroots organisations dominate the sector, while



independent media plays an important role. Issue-based groups include those of people with disabilities and older people, and gender-based groups, while key areas of focus include poverty, HIV/AIDS, education and health. Recently, social auditing for government public accountability has become a popular function of CSOs in Tanzania, with CSOs engaged in such activities as budget monitoring, public expenditure tracking surveys, public service delivery assessments and corruption perception surveys, which have provided essential stimulus to CSO advocacy activities.

Clan-based groups, women's informal credit systems, recreation and self-help groups and neighbourhood prayer groups constitute the main parts of informal civil society. By informal is implied the groups' lack of formal registration rather than their mode of operation, since many groups have an agreed objective, structure and administration procedures.

Civil society in Zanzibar and Pemba is weaker organisationally, while efforts at East African regional integration of civil society to correspond with renewed political emphasis on the East Africa Community are mostly led by Kenyan CSOs.

PARTICIPATION

52% of people surveyed are members of at least one CSO. Farmers' and fishers' groups and cooperatives, and conservation and sports associations offer popular platforms for participation. Further, 90% of those surveyed are involved in savings or credit societies. Multiple membership and cross-membership of both formal and informal groups is common. Membership and volunteering is assessed as highest within informal unregistered groups.

PUBLIC TRUST

According to the World Values Survey, people report high confidence in religious institutions, the press, labour unions, the government and the women's movement. In the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index Tanzania ranked joint 100th out of 182 countries. Large scale corruption has come to light in procurement in the energy sector and the Central Bank, while a 2010 judgment in the UK found British arms company BAE Systems guilty of bribing Tanzanian decision-makers to secure a weapons deal. The police, health sector, judiciary, energy sector and licensing and revenue services are assessed as particularly corrupt. 29% of CSO representatives consulted state that they see occasional corruption in civil society, 27% see frequent corruption and 23% see very frequent. There is a low level of CSO involvement in anti-corruption campaigns: under 40 CSOs are involved in the Publish What You Pay campaign for extractive industries revenue transparency.

NETWORKS

There are assessed to be at least 228 networks, 59% defined by specific themes, with the rest more general. At least 170 networks are specific to districts of Tanzania, while there are 25 sub-national and 33 national networks. Some of the key networks that have formed have focused on election monitoring and civic education. During the 2010 general elections, 17 national CSOs formed the Tanzania Civil Society Consortium on Election Observation, which conducted independent observation of elections along with the Tanzanian Election Monitoring Committee. Key umbrella bodies include the Tanzania Association of NGOs and the National NGO Council.

Almost half of CSOs consulted take part in African level networks, and 42% network beyond the continent. The East Africa Law Society, Federation of East Africa Trade Unions, Trade Mark East Africa and the East Africa Bribery Index are amongst the significant regional networks. However, only 24% of CSO representatives consider civil society umbrella bodies as generally effective, while 52% consider them partly effective or ineffective. Only 19% feel that there is a significant level of communication across CSOs.

RESOURCES

Around 40% of Tanzania's national budget depends on support from donors, and many CSOs have critical donor dependency. A survey conducted by the Foundation for Civil Society in 2008 showed that 81% of national networks and 78% of regional networks are highly dependent on donors. Overbearing donor dependence has the potential to compromise CSOs' autonomy. It also implies competition for resources with government.

50% of CSOs consulted believe resources to be inadequate compared to 33% who find them adequate, while 44% consider their human resources adequate compared to 30% who rate them inadequate. Most CSOs have five employees or fewer.

59% of people surveyed state that they had donated to charitable causes within the last year. However, charitable giving practices in Tanzania are influenced by local politics and the regulatory framework, with the income tax law a key restraining factor. Charitable giving is more an informal than formal practice. In rural and semi-urban areas, many informal civil society groups donate materials or money to support social needs such as burial, harvest and marriage ceremonies.

IMPACT

Civil society is perceived as being quite active on social policy issues, but its impact is limited by organisational and capacity constraints. Civil society is perceived as having success in influencing gender rights and human rights, with less influence on transparency, one of Tanzania's major challenges.

External stakeholders mostly see civil society as active in directly meeting pressing social needs through service delivery and promotion of self-help initiatives. The sector's highest visibility is in the provision of social service and financial facilities. For example, the non-governmental sector provides more hospitals than the government. Of people surveyed, 50% believe CSOs are better at providing a service than government, compared to 37% who preferred government.

Policy gains due to CSO lobbying activities are evident in the sectors of water supply, education and health provision, legal services and HIV/AIDS related services. National and regional-based organisations, such as the National Coalition for People Living with HIV and AIDS, have been able to advance their needs for incorporation in the 2010 National HIV and AIDS Policy. Between 2006 and 2009 the Media Council of Tanzania successfully mobilised the public to block a second government attempt to introduce a law widely regarded as inhibiting freedom of information. Further, the Trade Union Congress of Tanzania succeeded in mobilising workers in 2010 to demand pay increases, and improved work conditions. Negotiations with the government are continuing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Tanzanian civil society requires a comprehensive capacity and needs assessment, accompanied by a capacity building programme for informal and unregistered groups. There is a pressing need to develop a more enabling national constitution, amend laws that constrain basic rights and freedoms and establish a harmonised policy, legal and regulatory environment for civil society. There should be more civil society networking to establish stronger platforms for advocacy, underpinned by a coherent national CSO code of conduct. There is also a need to heighten civic education and make a concerted attack on corruption.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Tanzania Association of NGOs - www.tango.or.tz

ForDIA – www.fordia.org

National NGO Council - www.nacongo.or.tz

Foundation for Civil Society - www.thefoundation.or.tz



Basic facts	
Capital	Ankara
Official language	Turkish
Population	78.8m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$10,094

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: TURKEY

Civil society in Turkey can be characterised as being in transition, but with more weaknesses than strengths, and with its pace of development somewhat stalled after some positive developments in the early 2000s. Many CSOs are functioning with insufficient levels of institutionalisation, problematic governance structures, and insufficient resources and relationships. The picture is also one of marked regional differences within Turkey, including in levels of participation, organisational capacities, resources and international relations.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Turkey is now placed among the top 20 economies of the world. Its economy continues to grow and it appears to have weathered the economic crisis better than many other countries. Its GDP growth rate in 2010 was 8.2% according to World Bank data, one of the highest in the world. Yet while economic growth offers an opportunity for the development of philanthropy, Turkey also has by far the lowest employment rate of OECD members, with unemployment reported at 9.3% at the end of 2011, while poverty has increased to around 18%. Inequality is a challenge, suggesting the benefits of growth are not being distributed: the income gap is rising, with the wealthiest 10% having 14 times the income of the poorest 10%.

The most influential actors in Turkish society include those highly connected with religion, both at family and state level. The divide between secular and Islamic discourse is becoming sharper, and secular elites which traditionally encompassed state bureaucrats, media, larger corporations and army are giving way to religious social groups, with the rise of a middle class with an economically liberal but socially Islamic identity. Shifts between secular and Islamic discourse have also seen the ruling AK Party, which has its roots in Islam, consolidating power, and the military's formerly revered place in Turkish society diminishing. Due to a strong central state tradition the prime minister and main governmental bodies also have a significant role, while the business community has a strong voice, manifesting support both for the ruling party and opposition parties. The media are positioned closer to the private sector, rather than under strong governmental influence.

The 2011 election saw incumbent prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan remain in power for an unprecedented third term with an increased vote, but with seats just short of giving the AK Party the ability to propose a referendum on

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 46.5. Civic Engagement: 31.4; Level of Organisation: 54.6; Practice of Values: 48.98; Perception of Impact: 40.2; External Environment: 57.6. Ranked 29 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	4.8%
CSOs network membership	41.1%
Policy activity	50.4%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.699. Ranked 92 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 3
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: partly free. Score: 45
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 4.2. Ranked 61 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.35. Percentile rank: 66.0. Rule of law: +0.1. Percentile rank: 58.3
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 70. Ranked 148 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: weak. Score: 68 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 104 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 5.73. Ranked 88 out of 167

constitutional changes. The election result further consolidated the power of central government and space for opposition has diminished. Erdogan enjoyed immense popularity in the Arab World in 2011, particularly in states in transition, not least for taking a stance against the discredited Syrian government.

The main accelerator of democratic reforms, the EU accession process, has slowed down as a result of economic crisis and the unresolved Cyprus conflict. EU membership remains a long-term political goal, and movement towards this has entailed the acceptance of the Copenhagen Criteria, which contains the key EU rules on institutions to guarantee democracy, human rights, rule of law and minority rights, amongst others. This had the effect, as in other EU candidate countries, of significantly expanding space for civil society freedoms through constitutional amendments and legal reforms between 2001 and 2005, although EU support is not yet felt to have strengthened CSO capacity. In addition, there were changes in legislation directly concerning CSOs, and some progress on government-civil society dialogue. For example, the law on foundations, introduced in 2008, means that many activities which previously required approval, such as international partnerships, now require reporting only, and there is now an elected Council on Foundations. Not to be underestimated also is the important role of the European Convention on Human Rights in entrenching human rights standards.

However, civil society's expectations of new laws and participatory mechanisms have not been fully met, and some provisions have not been entirely implemented, while taxation laws to support philanthropy remain limited. There are problems more in the implementation of laws related to freedom of association and expression than the laws themselves, and this recent experience of frustrated expectations has weakened civil society-government relations. 26% of CSOs surveyed have experienced illegitimate interference by central or local government. The majority, 69%, believe that the state engages with a selective group of CSOs on a need-only basis, and only 13% believe civil society is fully autonomous from the state. The government has introduced genuine reforms, but its intolerance of criticism has been proved by arrests of opposing journalists and politicians, and heavy application of anti-terror laws established in the context of the conflict between the state and Kurdish separatists, such that many people are questioning whether the government is promoting democracy or its own perpetuation in power.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

There is no legal structure that unifies CSOs in Turkey. Instead CSOs tend to be structured as either associations or foundations. Associations are defined as membership-based and foundations as endowment-based, although restrictions on membership were abolished by a constitutional court decision in 2008. Associations and foundations are subject to different legislation and regulated by different public agencies, yet they show great and converging similarity in their functions.

There are estimated to be 90,578 CSOs (4,547 foundations and 86,031 associations), and the number rises above 150,000 when trade unions, professional chambers and cooperatives are included. There are estimated to be over 58,000 cooperatives. Yet these numbers are quite low for an estimated population of over 72 million, with one CSO for every 780 people.

CSOs tend to be most active in the areas of social services and solidarity, with advocacy and policy oriented activities less common. Around 65% of associations work on delivering social services



and fostering solidarity. Foundations have a similar tendency toward social aid (56%), education (48%) and health (22%) as their most common areas of activity. Only around 1% of CSOs carry out activities that can be classified as addressing democracy, law and human rights. There has however been a notable recent increase of activity and visibility among advocacy oriented CSOs in areas such as women's rights, human rights, consumer protection and student and youth issues, and in addressing two key identity political issues, the status of the Kurdish minority and the secular/ Islamic divide.

PARTICIPATION

People's participation is narrow and deep in nature, with a small group participating very actively and intensively, and many who are members of one CSO being members of at least one other, but distinct social groups such as young people, women and ethnic minorities are under-represented in CSOs. Low levels of membership, volunteering, political activism and community engagement suggest that most Turkish citizens are disconnected from civil society. Only around 5% of people report being an active member of a CSO, with volunteering levels lower still, at around 3-4% depending on organisation type. Most volunteering is shallow: about half of volunteers commit one to four hours a week, and only 23% commit more than nine hours. The percentage of the population that report undertaking individual political activism in the past five years, such as signing a petition or attending peaceful demonstrations, is only 12%.

There are striking differences in participation levels between Turkey's seven regions. Data show a direct correlation between association membership and population density and urbanisation levels, with social participation and individual activism being disproportionately high in Istanbul, the largest city. Only 16% of association members and 14% of CSO board members are women, and women's membership in associations appears to be decreasing, having stood at 22% in 2005. Young people have higher than average levels of social participation, while people from ethnic minorities tend to have higher levels of individual political activism, suggesting that conventional CSOs are not offering adequate vehicle for such groups.

PUBLIC TRUST

There is a general level of trust of 51% in CSOs. This is higher for religious organisations (71%) and lower for political parties (33%). Over half the population express trust in unions, environmental organisations, women's groups and charitable and humanitarian organisations.

Turkey stands 61st out of 183 in the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, close in ranking to other EU candidate countries. Around 30% of CSOs surveyed believe that corruption in CSOs is either frequent or very frequent.

NETWORKS

Only 41% of CSOs surveyed report being part of a network. There has however been a growth in CSO federations and confederations, with the number of federations having increased by an estimated 60% and confederations by 100% since 2005, suggesting new opportunities to network. Moreover, 83% of CSOs surveyed had met and 75% exchanged information with other CSOs in a three month period, with CSOs typically contacting between one and five other CSOs. However, under half of CSOs have regular contact with over five CSOs, and some have no contact at all. CSOs can therefore be understood as functioning rather disconnectedly and independently.

Only 28% of CSOs surveyed report being a member of an international network, while 42% exchange information with international CSOs. Very few have consultative status with UN or EU bodies. International relations may shift following changes in the law that make it easier to receive foreign funding, but remain hampered by language constraints and bureaucratic visa processes.

“There is no legal structure that unifies CSOs in Turkey.”

EU funding is assessed to have improved connections with EU-based CSOs, but is critiqued for providing opportunities mostly for CSOs which already have relatively developed capacity.

RESOURCES

“CSOs are functioning rather disconnectedly and independently.”

Most CSOs function with very limited funds, and place financial resources at the top of their most pressing needs, with 79% of CSOs assessing their finances as insufficient. 97% of CSOs surveyed describe the range of CSOs that receive government financial support as limited or very limited. There is also unease about potential dependency on EU funding. Around 45% of CSOs report annual incomes of under 10,000 Turkish Lira (under US\$5,500), and 16% under 2,000 TL. 57% of CSOs do not have paid staff, with six to 20 volunteers on average per CSO. Foundations have much greater annual incomes than associations, and this is reflected in the fact that 37% of foundations have paid staff compared to under 1% of associations.

CSOs therefore channel much of their efforts into fundraising. There is some diversity in funding sources, which include membership fees (34%), foreign donors (18%), individual (18%) and corporate (8%) donations, government funding (8%) and income generation activities (5%). However, given the size of the population, individual giving of 8% to CSOs can be regarded as low. Corporate giving is erratic, generally available to a select group of CSOs, and on an ad hoc basis linked to PR objectives. Project-oriented funding methods are criticised, with many staff dependent on project-based funding. Many CSOs are now seeking EU partnership, but there is acknowledgement that this is based largely on a desire to access the grants available, and so long term relationships are lacking, and there are examples of CSOs designing projects to qualify for grants.

IMPACT

Civil society was visible in giving and volunteering campaigns in response to the Van earthquakes of late 2011, but the main campaigns were organised by the government instead of CSOs, while during the humanitarian crises in Syria and Somalia, Turkish aid was organised and transferred by public agencies.

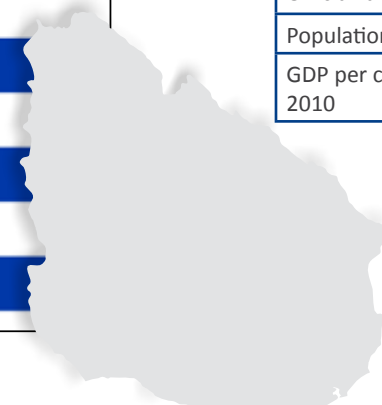
Civil society’s impact is perceived to be limited both on social and political issues, with social impact higher than political impact. Internal and external stakeholders agree that CSOs’ contributions to solving pressing contemporary problems such as unemployment are quite limited, compared to higher impact on areas such as education, support to disadvantaged groups and human rights, in which many CSOs fill public service gaps left by government. Although the importance of advocacy is becoming more understood, there is still need to develop internal capacities and stronger governmental structures for dialogue. Half of CSOs surveyed pushed for a particular policy in the past two years, and only 12% of these report that their advocacy was completely ignored, but 73% of internal stakeholders and 68% of external stakeholders believe policy impact is limited or nil.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FURTHER INFORMATION

Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TUSEV) - www.tusev.org.tr
 Civil Society Development Centre (STGM) - www.stgm.org.tr
 Istanbul Bilgi University Centre for Civil Society Studies - <http://stcm.bilgi.edu.tr>

Recommendations to strengthen civil society in Turkey include: increasing long-term operational and governance capacity for CSOs; enhancing CSOs’ capacity to promote legal reforms on tax benefits, fundraising legislation and ensuring effective use of participatory mechanisms; improving coordination between donors and CSO umbrella and support organisations; and increasing interaction between CSOs and the public to ensure greater accountability and more participation in CSOs.



Basic facts	
Capital	Montevideo
Official language	Spanish
Population	3.3m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$11,996

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: URUGUAY

For the first time in Uruguay's history, a left-oriented government took office in 2005, which brought additional opportunities for civil society to participate in the execution of public policies. However, strategic participation is not still as frequent as desirable, and in partnerships between government and civil society, the emphasis is on short term issues rather than on any longer term strategic view. Uruguayan political parties have traditionally been and remain strong. Crucial areas for strengthening identified by CSOs include their critical autonomy towards the state and their long term sustainability.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Uruguayan society remains highly centred around the state and leading political parties, which is felt to be a factor behind low levels of political civic engagement in non-institutionalised actions. But civil society's assessment of the socio-political context for its operations is favourable, with a widespread view that it has improved in recent years. The leftist government that took office in 2005 was re-elected in 2009, and this brought the opening of new spaces for and new relationships with civil society.

Few restrictions are placed on CSOs by government, but only just over half – 52% - of CSOs surveyed assess the legal framework for civil society as moderately enabling, and a further 36% rate it as rather limiting. The legal framework is seen as too cumbersome and comprehensive, failing to take into account the diversity and varying capacities of civil society, with one issue being the length of time it takes a CSO to obtain legal status. CSO representatives question whether the regulations discourage the formation of some kinds of associations, as opposed to facilitating or promoting them. Against this, only around 18% of CSOs report facing restrictions or attacks from government. The closest collaboration with CSOs comes from the Ministry of Social Development, which implements its programmes in cooperation with CSOs.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Most CSOs originally defined themselves in opposition to the government, since many organisations played an important role in the fight against dictatorship and in the restoration of democracy in

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 56.3. Civic Engagement: 44.8; Level of Organisation: 59.5; Practice of Values: 43.1; Perception of Impact: 60.9; External Environment: 73.0. Ranked 4 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	17.0%
CSOs network membership	71.3%
Policy activity	59.6%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.783. Ranked 48 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: free. Political rights score: 1. Civil liberties score: 1
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 7. Ranked 25 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: +0.66. Percentile rank: 70.8. Rule of law: +0.72. Percentile rank: 71.1
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 4.25. Ranked 32 out of 178
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 41. Ranked 154 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: full democracy. Score: 8.17. Ranked 17 out of 167

1985. But after more than 20 years along the democratic path, many CSOs now cooperate with the government in the execution of social policies. CSOs working on gender and human rights issues are seen to have influenced the public agenda quite strongly, especially in comparison to environmental or grassroots organisations.

Cooperatives, particularly peak organisations of cooperatives, are also considered to have some influence. Trade unions have different levels of power, depending mostly on which economic sector they represent. Other types of CSOs, such as networks and think tanks, are assessed as having very little public or governmental influence. The relationship between governments and CSOs varies: in some cases government works effectively with CSO to outsource work, and the relationship is essentially contractual, while in other cases, CSOs are allowed more responsibility and more scope to influence.

PARTICIPATION

Voluntary work in socially-oriented CSOs has increased in recent years, reaching around 20% of the population of age 14 and above, compared to 7% in 1998, while 43% of the population has volunteered at some point in their lives. The average number of volunteers per CSO surveyed was 66. Men and women devote the same amount of time to voluntary work, but people who identify themselves as lower class contribute more time than people who identify as upper class. There is assessed to be good participation by people from minority and marginalised groups, and when it comes to CSO staff, women outnumber men, including in executive positions. The CSOs that have the highest active population are church and religious organisations, arts and educational organisations, and sport and recreational organisations, with consumer organisations and environmental and human rights CSOs recording the lowest levels of participation.

In general, participation in politically-oriented CSOs is lower than in socially-oriented CSOs, reflecting a practice of politics that is highly rooted in political parties, and so in which there is little perceived scope for individual activism to achieve results. Union membership received a boost following the creation of salary boards for pay bargaining between government, business and workers in 2005, sparking 70,000 new or renewed memberships.

There is also worry about whether the small number of very active people participating in multiple platforms, while demonstrating dedication by this group, may suggest a wider participation deficit.

PUBLIC TRUST

Over three quarters of the population express some trust in charitable (76%) and women's (77%) organisations, with environmental organisations trusted by 59% of the public. In contrast, around 32% of people trust labour unions and only 44% trust the church, a low figure compared to other countries. The government and judiciary also have the trust of 44% each, and only 19% trust political parties.

According to the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, Uruguay is one of the least corrupt countries in the world, ranking 25th out of 183 countries. Interpersonal trust appears to have declined in recent years, with only 17% of people saying other people can be trusted, but tolerance of diverse groups is uniformly high, with over 90% of the public expressing



tolerance of different minority groups.

NETWORKS

Over 70% of CSOs report being members of networks, of which there are more than 90, many of which have a sectoral or thematic role, including the National NGOs Association, Uruguayan Cooperatives Confederation, Inter-Trade Union Assembly Plenary Session – National Workers Convention and the National Follow-up Commission of Beijing Commitments, on gender issues. But there are concerns about falling levels of active participation in networks, which means many networks do not have sufficient human, economic and time resources to meet their objectives, and so the impact and efficacy of CSO networks is being called into question.

There are also several local networks, but organisations based outside the capital, Montevideo, struggle to be represented, a consequence of the historical concentration of power and assets in the capital, and there is a sense that CSOs based in Montevideo have privileged access to resources as well as space. In contrast, CSOs based outside Montevideo believe they are starved of information and influence, and encumbered by centralist registration procedures. CSOs are also acknowledged to be poor at external communication.

RESOURCES

CSOs have seen the loss of international funding as donors that came into Uruguay following the restoration of democracy have withdrawn as the country is now stable and classed as a middle income country. Just over half of CSOs believe they have an adequate human resource base and four out of five believe their staff has a sufficient level of experience for the CSO to perform its functions. 65% of CSOs surveyed assess themselves as having a sustainable financial base, but both financial and human resource levels are more challenging outside Montevideo. Members' subscriptions are the most frequent source of CSO funding, followed by foreign donors, government funds and individual donations. Over half of CSOs receiving government funds rely on them, with the funds making up 80-100% of these organisations' funding base. There is relatively little private sector support.

“CSOs have seen the loss of international funding as donors that came into Uruguay following the restoration of democracy have withdrawn as the country is now stable.”

IMPACT

CSOs judge themselves as having a high level of responsiveness to the current priority issues of poverty and employment, and to have high impact on supporting poor and marginalised people and on education. However, only around 60% of CSOs surveyed report attempting policy advocacy during a two year period, and only about half of these report a successful outcome, with the main focuses for policy advocacy being housing, health and education policy. External stakeholders also rate highly the social impact of CSOs, and assess CSOs' policy impact as higher but their responsiveness as lower than CSO representatives do themselves. Visibility of CSO actions is acknowledged as an issue which hampers impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations for strengthening civil society in Uruguay include: expanding civic participation through creating volunteering demand and supply data banks, and developing volunteering training, compensation and acknowledgment mechanisms; strengthening civil society networks and partnerships, including through promoting trust-

“Visibility of CSO actions is an issue which hampers impact.”

building between different institutions and brokering agreements to share different institutional strengths; enhancing the diversity of the sector by seeking direct subsidy from the government for CSOs with fewer resources and technical and administrative capacities; building the capacity of personnel in the sector by developing partnerships with universities; and enhancing the available information on the sector by carrying out a census of CSOs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

La Sociedad Civil en Línea - www.lasociedadcivil.org

Asociación Nacional de ONG (ANONG) - www.anong.org.uy

CNS Mujeres - www.cnsmujeres.org.uy

Mesa Nacional de Diálogo sobre Voluntariado y Compromiso Social - www.mesadevoluntariado.org.uy

Red Uruguay de ONGs Ambientalistas - www.uruguayambiental.com

Rendir Cuentas - www.rendircuentas.org



Basic facts	
Capital	Caracas
Official language	Spanish
Population	27.6m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$13,590

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: VENEZUELA

Venezuelan civil society exists in an unfavourable, volatile and unpredictable political environment, a proscribed legal environment and a restrictive environment for expression. Society seems to be made up of two blocs: one in favour of the current revolutionary project and one against, with a lack of neutral spaces for collective dialogue. Between these two poles, most CSOs are affected by a model in which autonomous intermediary organisations are not considered by authorities as legitimate interlocutors. The state has centralised powers in the hands of the president, and citizens demonstrate alienation. These conditions limit engagement, networking and coexistence between CSOs, and between civil society, the state and the private sector.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

As Venezuela is one of the world's top oil exporters, oil has long since underpinned the economy and political power, with the state the main distributor of income. While oil has brought undoubted economic gain and distribution of public income, given prices rising from US\$10 per barrel in 1998 to over US\$100 in 2011, inequalities and social exclusion persist, and the power structures oil wealth enables have fed an orientation of looking towards the state as opposed to social organisations for the solution of problems, as well as cynicism over politics, seen as an arena for the pursuit of material interest. Instead of economic growth and job creation, distributive programmes known as 'missions' have been largely responsible for a reduction of poverty. These missions are heavily dependent on oil prices and therefore hard to sustain in the long term. Inflation has remained steadily high at around 30% in the last decade, currently the highest in the world and far exceeding the Latin American average of 7%.

The notion of civil society is contested in Venezuela, where there is a push to introduce participatory forms of democracy directly mediated by the state, under the 'Popular Power' rubric, and political rhetoric attacks CSOs which do not align with the revolutionary project as agents of class or foreign interests. The process of change has been rapid, following a boom period for CSOs in the early 2000s, and CSOs have had to take positions, adapt, move into other organisational forms or close down, expending their energy in defence. A 2000 Supreme Court ruling defined CSOs as Venezuelan associations, groups and institutions which do not receive external subsidy. Between July and August 2010, 34 CSOs were placed under investigation for receiving foreign funding, and there are attempts to introduce an agency for

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 46.6. Civic Engagement: 37.5; Level of Organisation: 56.6; Practice of Values: 37.8; Perception of Impact: 46.5; External Environment: 54.5. Ranked 27 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	6.6%
CSOs network membership	67.6%
Policy activity	61.9%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.735. Ranked 73 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 5. Civil liberties score: 5
Freedom House Freedom on the Net, 2011	Status: partly free. Score: 46
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 1.9. Ranked 172 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -1.02. Percentile rank: 14.8. Rule of law: -1.64. Percentile rank: 1.4
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 55. Ranked 117 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2009	Status: weak. Score: 61 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 71. Ranked 80 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 5.08. Ranked 97 out of 167

international cooperation to exert control over the receipt and disbursement of foreign funds.

In 2007, the President proposed a reform of the Constitution, in order to create a Communal State for the construction of a socialist society. This attempt was rejected in a referendum in December 2007. However, the project is being imposed through a series of laws and regulations, and ahead of the 2012 presidential elections, the government has pursued a policy of consolidating its ideology within social institutions, inculcating an 'us vs. them' mentality. In March 2010, the law of the Government Federal Council was passed. This defines organised society as "...formed by communal councils, workers, farmers, fishermen councils, communities and any other organisations based on the Popular Power, duly registered with the Ministry of Popular Power, competent to hear matters as to citizen participation." Participation is therefore explicitly linked to the revolutionary project and the building of a socialist society, which means the legal framework essentially seeks to define a state-sanctioned, acceptable civil society. It has also increased centralisation, through substantially reducing the power and competences of sub-national levels of government, and many CSOs that work outside the capital, where local governments were close partners, have stressed the negative effects of this on their access to resources and to spaces of decision-making.

The government's reaction to CSOs that try to preserve their autonomy has been to criminalise them and make their operation

more difficult. 70% of CSOs surveyed found the environment for civil society restrictive, and around 40% reported experiencing illegitimate attacks or restrictions from government, a figure which rises to 60% for civic and human rights CSOs. Definitions of libel and slander have been broadened and penalties have been increased. As a result, there is considerable self-censorship. In July 2011, CIVICUS and its partners assessed that 2,500 people faced criminal charges for participating in public protests. Judicial independence also fell under the spotlight in 2011, with international calls to release a judge, currently under house arrest, who was jailed in 2009 for granting bail to a businessman linked to the opposition, who had been detained without trial for over two years, even though her decision had been based on Venezuelan law and recommendations by a UN human rights working group.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

A recent study estimated there are just over 32,000 CSOs, while the government claims to have promoted the creation of almost 58,000 participatory organisations.

Civil society falls into three broad clusters. The first is formed by movements and CSOs which have ideological affinity with the revolutionary project and which defend governmental policies. The most numerous group here is of CSOs promoted by the government, and the cluster includes trade and labour unions, the United Socialist Party of Venezuela, and CSOs such as urban land committees, water users' groups, communal councils and semi-legal groups. Battle units and Bolivarian militias are also organised to act in critical circumstances in defence of the revolution. The second bloc includes CSOs that do not identify with the revolutionary project in some way. The most prominent members of this group are CSOs which were formed within the earlier institutional framework of representative democracy, including political parties, other labour unions, business and professional associations and organisations affiliated with the Catholic Church. New networks and movements have appeared here, such as the student movement, neighbours' associations and



human rights and workers' associations, which have developed from individual protest to collective organisations. There is a third group of organisations which is not identified with either rejection or adhesion to the revolutionary project but concerned largely with the preservation of its work and autonomy.

PARTICIPATION

Civic engagement and participation is lower than international averages, and membership of organisations appears to have decreased, despite a political model of promoting direct participatory institutions. The percentage of the population active in political organisations is a low 14%, with around 8% active membership of political parties, and only 4% of humanitarian and charitable associations, while only one in ten people volunteer in politically-oriented CSOs. Overall, under one in five Venezuelans is engaged in voluntary work, compared with almost one out of three worldwide, with the highest level of voluntary work in activities related to religion. Religious organisations also have the largest amount of active members (16%) and inactive members (12%), followed by sport or leisure CSOs (8%). There is a common perception that the pool of active participants is quite shallow.

There is higher engagement in community-based activities, and growing participation in public protest, with a 105% increase in demonstrations from 2008 to 2009. 26% of Venezuelans reports engaging in individual political activism, such as joining a demonstration or signing a petition, while another third say they would be prepared to do so. The difference between the low rate of engagement in formal organisations and relatively high participation in public demonstrations suggests a lack of institutional channels to take action and express dissent.

PUBLIC TRUST

One of the reasons for low levels of civic engagement is the low level of interpersonal trust, while there is also low awareness of human rights and some fatalism about the value of participation as a mechanism to solve problems. There is, however, high trust in charitable organisations (74%), the feminist movement (73%), the Catholic Church (72%) and environmental movements (67%). But trust in political parties (27%) and unions (23%) is even lower than trust levels in the public entities which are usually assessed negatively by citizens, such as the armed forces (57%), major companies (48%), national government (45%), the media (45%), the national assembly (38%), the judiciary (38%) and the police (32%). The average trust in civil society of 55% confers legitimacy, offering a source of strength and an opportunity.

Venezuela is ranked very low on the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, at 172nd out of 183 countries, the lowest South American country, and an apparent further decline from its level of 162nd out of 179 in 2007. There is little enforcement of anti-corruption legislation. 43% of CSOs perceive corruption in civil society as frequent.

NETWORKS

Just over two-thirds of CSOs surveyed belong to networks or federations; half participate in more than one network and three out of four declare themselves as active participants. One third belong to an international network. Almost nine out of 10 CSOs report having an exchange with another CSO of on average once a week. Human rights and development networks that regularly meet include REDSOC, SINERGIA and Alianza Social VENAMCHAM, while Foro por la Vida and Red de Apoyo por la Justicia y la Paz are two human rights coalitions with acknowledged communications and coordination capacity. CSOs promoted by the government also participate in networks. Tracking changes in the political, economic and social situation through watch groups and other monitoring systems has become a common practice of networks, with findings communicated to CSOs and to national and international public opinion.

Despite these high levels of communication, within CSOs there are political and ideological conflicts, which sometimes prevent collaboration, and have caused some previously successful networks to fall into abeyance. Reductions in public funding for CSOs, as well as the channelling of public funding to CSOs identified with the governmental ideology, has fuelled competition and distrust among organisations that previously worked together.

RESOURCES

47% of CSOs surveyed report that their funding position has declined from one year to the next. The funding base of CSOs is diverse, with not one source dominating. Only 15% of CSO funding comes from national government, 17% from individual donations, 16% from foreign donors, 16% from sales of products and services, 12% from members and 10% from Venezuelan companies. In the case of the Communal Councils, all of their funding comes from the government, but 88% of civic, political and human rights CSOs and two thirds of support CSOs do not receive any government funds. 62% of CSOs believe their human resources are to some extent adequate and 87% that their staff are sufficiently experienced. Compared to this only 37% believe their financial resources are largely adequate.

IMPACT

CSOs believe they have limited impact on public policies, but have a more positive perception of their social impact. CSOs highlight two issues as the highest social priorities: insecurity and exclusion. Impact on exclusion is assessed as more significant than on insecurity: 49% of CSOs and 63% of external stakeholders surveyed see tangible impact on exclusion, while 36% of CSOs and 40% of external stakeholders see tangible impact on insecurity. CSOs are perceived to have the highest levels of impact on education (according to 78% of CSOs and 83% of external stakeholders), promotion of social rights (around 70% in both cases) and assistance to poor and vulnerable people (75% and 81%). There is a lower impact on the practices of the government, with 35% of CSOs and 42% of external stakeholders believing civil society has tangible impact. With regards to influencing public policy, 63% of CSOs and 74% of external stakeholders believe policy impact is limited or nil. There are attempts to exert pressure on changing laws and regulations, the implementation of programmes and the promotion of rights, but these are challenged by government restrictions. 62% of CSOs have made an attempt to influence policy, but 69% of these met with no success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Venezuela needs to build a civic sense of politics and participation. Priority should therefore be given to creating dialogue platforms that reduce polarisation, and which include political parties, citizens, CSOs and sectors such as business, academia and donors, and actors with different ideologies. Civic spiritedness and trust need to be improved by enhancing values training programmes, upholding the rights to participate in public spheres and to access state resources without relinquishing autonomy, and by resisting attempts at clientelism. It is also

important to encourage the peaceful settlement of conflicts in order to reduce violence. Fostering civic engagement would entail organising a broad campaign to inform people of their rights enshrined in the 1999 constitution, the obligation of public powers to respect and guarantee them, and the need for citizens to join actively in realising their rights.

FURTHER INFORMATION

SINERGIA - www.sinergia.org.ve

REDSOC – Venezuelan Network of Organisations for Social Development - www.redsoc.org.ve

VENANCHAM - www.venamcham.org

Foro por la Vida - www.ucab.edu.ve/foro-por-la-vida.html

Red de Apoyo por la Justicia y la Paz - www.redapoyo.org.ve



Basic facts	
Capital	Lusaka
Official languages	Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi, Lunda, Kaonde, Luvale, English
Population	13.9m
GDP per capita 2010	US\$1,253

CIVIL SOCIETY PROFILE: ZAMBIA

Zambia has the highest recorded civic participation rate of all countries profiled. However, participation is assessed to have declined from its peak in the early 1990s, when there was heavy mobilisation in support of multiparty democracy. Furthermore, high poverty levels erode the time available for voluntary activities, and test confidence in the ability of the political system to meet pressing socio-economic needs. Key challenges that civil society seeks to address are corruption, poverty and poor governance. The major internal issues that face the sector are heavy donor reliance, limited scope for policy dialogue with government and the personalisation of many organisations.

CONTEXT AND ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The Zambian election of 2011 saw a democratic change of president, with Rupiah Banda accepting defeat to bring to an end 20 years of government by his party, and handing power over to the opposition leader, a trade unionist and former minister. There were instances of riots in the late stages of the election, and criticism over the lack of neutrality of state media, but in the main observers viewed the election as well-conducted.

The most powerful forces in Zambian society are assessed by CSOs to be the political leaders, the police force and the mining and energy industries, with significant external forces including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and international NGOs. Zambia is one of the world's largest copper exporters, and copper mining contributes around two thirds of government revenue. China is a key investor in the copper industry, but there are concerns about poor labour standards, which were a theme of the 2011 election and the subject of a critical report by Human Rights Watch in 2011. Zambia has seen recent economic growth as a result of higher international copper prices, with average annual growth between 4% and 6% in the first half of the 2000s. However, Zambia remains classified as a least developed country by the World Bank, with rural poverty particularly persistent. Unemployment remains high. The national prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS is 16%, which entails the loss of people in the most productive age bracket and high numbers of child-headed households and street children.

There are different types of regulation for different facets of civil society, and not one piece of legislation covers the whole sector. A

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Key data about civil society	
CSI overall scores	Overall score: 59.5. Civic Engagement: 60.8; Level of Organisation: 58.3; Practice of Values: 59.3; Perception of Impact: 61.7; External Environment: 57.2. Ranked 2 out of 33
Interpersonal trust	7.9%
CSOs network membership	72.7%
Policy activity	61.9%

Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.430. Ranked 164 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 4
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3.2. Ranked 91 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.8. Percentile rank: 23.4; Rule of law: -0.49. Percentile rank: 38.4
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 30. Ranked 86 out of 178
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 83.8. Ranked 55 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: flawed democracy. Score: 6.19. Ranked 71 out of 167
Ibrahim Index of African Governance	Score 57. Ranked 16 out of 53

new NGO Act was passed in 2009, but is criticised for investing a government-dominated NGO registration board with too many powers, and for placing stringent requirements on NGOs, including the obligation to report on their funding, activities and the assets of their personnel, which could deter smaller organisations from registering as NGOs. The act does not cover churches and other religious organisations, clubs, professional groups and trade unions. These are regulated by the colonial era Societies Act of 1958, which is also criticised for giving too much power to the state. For example, it allows government powers to cancel the registration of any society, and stipulates government approval for receipt of foreign funding. The 1955 Public Order Act is also seen to give the police excessive authority to regulate public meetings. There is no freedom of information legislation.

Partly as a result of these legal restrictions, dialogue on governance issues is assessed as weak. When CSOs are involved in such processes it is usually at the insistence of donors, with considerable ambivalence about this on the part of government. Government is supportive of CSOs in playing a service delivery role, but there is hostility when CSOs enter the territory of advocacy for good governance, with threats of bans issued against organisations such as SACCORD, the South Africa Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. There is also some

cooperation between private sector and civil society at the community level, e.g. in healthcare and education, and CSOs have worked with companies to develop workplace HIV/AIDS strategies. However corporate social responsibility still tends to be piecemeal.

MAKE UP OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society in Zambia includes professional bodies, trade unions, gender-based groups, human rights and advocacy groups, service-oriented CSOs, faith-based organisations, international NGOs and the media. Around 43% of CSOs are classed as education, youth and child development organisations, perhaps reflecting an emphasis on and funding support for activities which address MDGs. There are also sizeable concentrations of CSOs in the fields of governance (13%), HIV/AIDS (11%), employment (10%) and water and sanitation (10%).

The independent media is seen as a strong force within civil society, and a necessary counterpoint to the strength of the state media, particularly broadcast media. In 2011, several attacks were noted against independent journalists. Traditional leadership also continues to play an important role, particularly in rural Zambia. CSOs are however seen as overly concentrated in cities, with half of all CSOs based in the capital Lusaka, which challenges CSOs' ability to tackle rural poverty.

Civil society is viewed as well institutionalised, but somewhat untransparent. CSO governance structures are critiqued as often resulting from donor insistence on minimal governance standards as a condition of funding. CSO board members are not felt to be of the same quality as the board members of corporate sector institutions, and many CSOs remain dominated by founder members and other long-serving individuals. This is acknowledged as undermining CSOs' significant role as a watchdog of government and promoter of good governance. Alongside the lack of enabling civil society legislation, CSOs acknowledge the absence of their own code of conduct; the NGO authorising board established by the 2009 NGO Act has been tasked with elaborating a code of conduct for NGOs. A need to develop participatory accountability mechanisms that are oriented around CSO beneficiaries rather than donors is also identified.



PARTICIPATION

A high 80% of people are members of a socially-oriented CSO, with membership divided equally between women and men; most engagement is through religious structures, which can challenge attempts to promote progressive social change, although church organisations have also been active on campaigns on issues such as debt cancellation. There is also distinctly less participation in politically-oriented activities compared to social affairs: over 50% of people have no participation in political activities other than in voting. A gender divide is also apparent here: in politically-oriented CSOs, 59% of participants are men. Campaigns to encourage greater women's political participation are seen to be highly dependent on donor funding, and therefore unsustainable.

PUBLIC TRUST

Around 63% of the public express trust in civil society, but unusually, compared to many other countries, people in Zambia also have high trust in the press (70%), television (66%) and major companies (60%), while even state bodies enjoy at least 48% of people's trust. The most trusted CSO types in Zambia are churches (91%), charitable and humanitarian organisations (72%) and women's organisations (65%). Social discrimination exists around gender, particularly in customary courts, sexuality (with the criminalisation of same-sex acts), disability and to a lesser extent people with HIV/AIDS.

Corruption is identified as a major concern of Zambia's citizens, with the extent of corruption suggested by the fact that in 2009 some donors chose to suspend financial support of the health sector due to high levels of corruption. Zambia is ranked at 91st out of 183 in the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, and many civil society representatives assess the Anti-Corruption Commission as lacking in independence.

NETWORKS

73% of CSOs are members of networks. Sectoral networks are seen to be strong, with a range of peak thematic umbrella organisations for CSOs working on such matters as poverty reduction (Civil Society for Poverty Reduction), gender equality (the Non-Governmental Organisations Coordinating Council and Women for Change), HIV/AIDS (Zambia National AIDS Network and Churches Health Association of Zambia) and education (Zambia National Education Coalition). Many of these umbrella organisations are also members of and take part in international networks. However, communication outside these umbrella groupings is poor, except when civil society mobilises at times of crisis, and there is high duplication of CSO activities due to lack of coordination between CSOs in different sectors and locales.

“Sectoral networks are seen to be strong, with a range of peak thematic umbrella organisations for CSOs working on such matters as poverty reduction, gender equality, HIV/AIDS and education.”

RESOURCES

Only around half of CSOs are assessed as having a sustainable financial base, and CSOs are heavily reliant on donor funding, and compete with each other for funding. This is also seen to lead to questions of CSO autonomy and ownership of development. CSOs experience rapid staff turnover, with loss of staff to international NGOs and donor agencies, and there is a heavy reliance on volunteers by around 70% of organisations. The main reason is that donor-funded projects generally exclude administrative and salary costs.

IMPACT

Civil society is assessed as highly responsive to citizen's needs on key issues such as poverty and HIV/AIDS, both by representatives of CSOs and external stakeholders. CSOs are seen to have a

strong social influence, as well as having some influence on national budgeting, where it takes part in sector advisory groups alongside government and the private sector, albeit its role here is stymied by lack of information and lack of access to the major decision-making meetings.

Lack of regulations to involve CSOs in policy processes on a consistent basis is a weakness. Even where CSOs have been allowed into processes, such as those around the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, there is the challenge of control of access to information. Other challenges identified for policy advocacy are lack of knowledge about policy processes, limited use of communications strategies, weak connections between CSOs and other actors, and government perceptions of CSOs as competitors for donor funding. As a result of this, only 54% of CSOs report taking part in advocacy for policy change, and only around 20% of these record being successful in their attempts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Zambian CSO recommendations for government are to: reinforce existing structures such as the sectoral advisory groups to strengthen citizen participation in public policy processes; open new dialogue on strengthening cooperation between civil society and government on non-service delivery issues, such as governance, human rights and the rule of law; and revise the 2009 NGO Act to take more account of the diversity of civil society. Recommendations for CSO themselves are to develop income generation schemes in order to reduce donor dependency; and spread CSO presence to rural areas and work to mobilise self-help groups in these areas.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Zambia Council for Social Development – www.zcsd.org.zm

Civil Society for Poverty Reduction - www.csprzambia.org

Non-Governmental Organisations Coordinating Council - www.ngocc.org.zm

Women for Change - www.wfc.org.zm

Zambia Civic Education Association - www.zamcivic.com.zm

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