Activism is the rent I pay for living on this planet.
International Civil Society Week (ICSW) is a key global gathering for civil society and other stakeholders to engage constructively in finding common solutions to global challenges. CIVICUS and the Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO) co-hosted ICSW 2017 from 4 to 8 December in Suva, Fiji. ICSW 2017 brought together 634 delegates from 115 countries to participate in more than 40 events related to the theme “Our Planet, Our Struggles, Our Future”. In the months preceding, 12 ICSW/local events and one ICSW/virtual event took place under the ICSW umbrella to broaden participation beyond those who were able to physically attend ICSW 2017.
For the first time in more than twenty years of international convening, CIVICUS in partnership with PIANGO held its flagship event in the Pacific region. ICSW 2017 provided an ideal forum for civil society leaders from around the world to meet, discuss climate and social justice, and stand in solidarity with our colleagues from the Pacific. More than half of the delegation present in Fiji came from Oceania (55%), while Africa (6%), the Americas (13%), Asia (10%) and Europe (12%) were also well represented. The delegation was gender balanced with strong youth representation, while also representing diverse actors working to strengthen civil society and citizen participation.

Delegation by gender

- Female: 55%
- Male: 38%
- Other: 1%
- No data: 6%

Delegation by age

- 30<: 23%
- 31-59: 71%
- 60>: 6%

Delegation by organisation type

- Civil Society: 63%
- Non-formal Civil Society: 10%
- Government/Intergovernmental: 10%
- Media: 2%
- Think Tank/Research: 2%
- Donor: 1%
- Private Sector: 1%
- Other: 8%
- No data: 3%

Delegation satisfaction

- 92% of delegates said they improved their connections with diverse stakeholders during ICSW 2017. “It was a fantastic exposure to the Pacific, and a valuable opportunity to connect with its peoples and their struggles.”

- 93% of delegates agreed that ICSW 2017 was a good space to share experiences. “I’m very thankful ICSW was held in the Pacific. The opportunity to learn and share with people from all over the world was a great benefit.”

- 82% of delegates felt that they gained concrete tools they could use to enhance their work. “I have better understanding on the Sustainable Development Goals and the monitoring process.”

- A total of 84% of delegates were satisfied or very satisfied with the programme content of ICSW 2017.

Our Planet

Our planet and its biodiversity are under threat. Often excluded people face the most severe and unjust consequences. Events in this track explored how innovation and good practice are vital to realising environmental sustainability, the Paris Climate Agreement, and Agenda 2030.

ICSW/Local events included:

- (Indonesia) Climate Change Journalism Fellowship & Workshop
- (Colombia) Alliance for a Colombia Free of Fracking
- (Tunisia) Struggles & Adaptation: Tunisia Coast Areas and Slums
- (Jordan) Climate March: You have a Print, Make it Green – Our Planet

Concurrent event session topics included:

- Post COP23: Analysis and Achievement
- Volunteers as First Responses in Times of Crisis
- Fairtrade in the Pacific
- Civil Society Service Delivery: Actions for Protecting People and the Planet
- Climate-Induced Displacement: A Pacific Perspective
- Empowering Guardians of the Forest: How to Engage Local Communities in Sustainable Conservation Efforts
- Environmental Abuses from Mauritania to South Africa
- Youth Call for Action to Climate Justice
- Pacific Climate Warriors Have Your Sei Campaign for COP23
- Much Maligned Tracks: The Key to Solving the Ecological Crisis (Genesis 1-2)
- Intergenerational Dialogue on Indigenous Approaches to Environmental Stewardship

The CIVICUS World Assembly Contribution to the Track included:

- A moving performance by internationally renowned Fijian dance troupe Vou Fiji that explored climate change and resilience through contemporary dance and music;
- A panel discussion on climate justice in the 21st century moderated by CIVICUS Board Member Joanna Kerr from Greenpeace Canada, with interventions by May Boeve representing 350.org; Dame Meg Taylor representing the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, and Ms. Sharon Bhagwan Rolls representing femLInkpacific; and
- A CIVICUS Talk on the need for provisions for climate migrants in the forthcoming UN global compact on safe, orderly and regular migration by Amy Taylor, followed by the launch of the Declaration on Climate-Induced Displacement by Pacific Climate Warrior Brianna Fruean.
OUR STRUGGLES

A global crisis of democracy and a clampdown on people’s rights are affecting the progress of our social justice struggles. Events in this track explored trends in civic space and political participation.

ICSW/LOCAL EVENTS INCLUDED:

- (Western Balkans & Turkey) EU & Civil Society: Quo Vadis?
- (Pakistan) Empowering Women in Decision-Making through Political Process

CONCURRENT EVENT SESSION TOPICS INCLUDED:

- Commercial and Sexual Exploitation of Children – Everybody’s Business
- Land Rights in Palestine: Between Settlements & Occupation
- Inclusivity and Peace Building: Rights, Inclusion and Well-being of Persons with Disabilities
- Innovation Lab: Campaigning to Protect Civic Space
- Together we SPEAK!: How to Give a Voice to Everyone, Everywhere
- Launch of the Global Standard for CSO Accountability
- Shrinking Space for the Feminist Movement
- Human Rights: Crisis or Transition? Strategies for Reopening Civil Society Space
- Civic Charter: The Global Framework for People’s Participation: A Campaign Workshop
- Self-Determination and Liberation in the Pacific
- Launch of the Faces of Inequality Campaign: Join the Movement!
- How Can We Improve Research on Civic Space?
- The Era of the Sharing Economy and Shrinking Civic Space
- Speaking Back to History: The Legacy of Indenture

THE CIVICUS WORLD ASSEMBLY CONTRIBUTION TO THE TRACK INCLUDED:

- an interview-style conversation on current global challenges and civil society responses with Former Prime Minister of New Zealand and UNDP Administrator Helen Clark, moderated by CIVICUS Board Member Julia Sanchez from the Canadian Council for International Co-operation;
- a panel discussion on building a global movement for change moderated by CIVICUS Board Chair Anabel Cruz from Rendir Cuentas, with interventions by past CIVICUS Secretary Generals Miklos Marschall, Kumi Naidoo and Ingrid Srinath; and
- a CIVICUS Talk presenting an evidence-based view of the state of civic freedoms in the world today by Cathal Gilbert, followed by an intervention on the struggle for a world without nuclear weapons by Vanessa Grifffen, representing 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Winner International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

“Personal highlights were to see the general interest and acceptance of the Global Standard for CSO’s accountability [and to] learn about the ‘feminist’ agenda in the Pacific.”

OUR FUTURE

Civil society is organising and responding to the crises facing us in powerful new ways to create the future we want. Events in this track considered how we can support the next-generation leaders and build solidarity across diverse movements, mobilisations, and initiatives.

ICSW/LOCAL EVENTS INCLUDED:

- (Democratic Republic of Congo) Great lakes Transgenerational Dialogue
- (Trinidad & Tobago) Shared Values in Governance
- (Sri Lanka) Social Media for Social Justice
- (Uganda) Accelerating Protection, Empowerment and Equal Opportunities for Children
- (India) Education for Sustainable Development: Role of Youth
- (Peru) Youth Leading the Future: Engaging Youth in Public Policy Design & Implementation

CONCURRENT EVENT SESSION TOPICS INCLUDED:

- Technology for Good: How to Inspire Donors and Supporters Worldwide to Give and Take Action
- New Ways of Cooperating for Civil Society Worldwide
- Rising Seas and Nuclear Issues in the Pacific: A Call for Global Action
- #MembershipMatters
- Women and People Defending the Commons: Why It Takes Everyone, to Change Everything!
- The Private Sector: Challenges and Opportunities for Engagement
- Insight and Beyond in an Age of Uncertainty
- Global Exchange: New Approaches to Civil Society Resilience
- Mobile for Good: How Mobile Technology Can Help Us Address the Challenges of Tomorrow

THE CIVICUS WORLD ASSEMBLY CONTRIBUTION TO THE TRACK INCLUDED:

- an interview-style conversation on the experience and learnings from the struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline with Former Chair of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and indigenous peoples’ rights leader Dave Archambault, moderated by CIVICUS Board Member Jesse Chen from Powerline;
- a panel discussion on the role of people, voice, and power in reimagining democracy moderated by CIVICUS Board Member Amitabh Behar from National Foundation for India, with interventions by UN youth Envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake, student protest leader Sebastian Vielmas, Amnesty International Board Member Nicole Bieske, and UN Assistant General and Scaling Up Nutrition Movement Coordinator Gerda Verburg; and
- a CIVICUS Talk on how a data revolution driven by citizen-generated data can contribute to social transformation by supporting people and their organisations to monitor, demand or drive change by Alex Sardar.

“I was inspired by a young activist from Niue who was so full of enthusiasm and eager to learn and be an agent of change for her community.”
CULTURAL AND EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITIES

ICSW aims to create meaningful opportunities for global delegates to participate in cultural and experiential activities of the host region.

The President of the Republic of Fiji George Konrote hosted the official ICSW 2017 opening ceremony. It featured multi-faith prayers, a traditional Fijian welcoming ceremony and keynote speech by Former President of Timor-Leste and Nobel Peace Prize winner H.E. José Ramos-Horta. Participants also had the opportunity to sample local cuisine while experiencing live music and dance performances.

Other cultural and experiential activities included an art exhibition by Youngsolwara Pacific, a Marketplace curated by USP Campus Life and a Pacific Islands Night hosted by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, which was a joyous celebration of local hospitality and global solidarity. In addition, Commonwealth Writers curated several events featuring written anthologies, documentary shorts, and spoken word performances. These were complemented by panel discussions on small island themes, including the politics of identity, gender and justice, and the legacy of indenture.

More than 100 young activists gathered during ICSW 2017 for the eighth CIVICUS Youth Assembly. Delegates participated in simultaneous discussions led by young leaders from Fiji, Samoa, Australia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, and Canada. The small group discussions covered topics ranging from youth inclusion in decision-making processes in international development, and the role of young women in climate change education and movement building, to social enterprises and peacebuilding. As a result, seven recommendations emerged on how to better strengthen and advance youth civic engagement and civic space for new generation civil society leaders:

1. Foster creative and innovative forms of expression for peace and change.
2. Give youth power in defining and critiquing the SDG’s processes and priorities on every level.
3. Practice inclusion and representation in civil society organisations by ensuring that at least 25% of decision makers are under the age of 35.
4. Break down elitism and the influence of youth gatekeepers through equal participation with marginalised populations.
5. Support youth resourcing through donor connections, non-discriminatory access to funds and socially inclusive budgeting.
6. Prioritise and invest in climate education initiatives such as a ‘climate change dictionary’.
7. Facilitate peer to peer mentoring between NGOs and social enterprises.

Youth activists from ClimateTracker, 350.org Samoa, Water Protectors from Standing Rock and more, also shared their creative strategies and tactics for climate change campaigns (storytelling, street mass mobilisation, intergenerational collaboration, arts, etc.) during concurrent event sessions. In addition, participants shared their perspectives on the current status of democracy and possible solutions to governance challenges around the world during a Re-imagining Democracy Roundtable.

Between sessions, youth delegates had the opportunity to meet with international leaders like H.E. Helen Clark and UN Youth Envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake for conversations on the role of youth in building a more sustainable and peaceful world order.

“The assembly was a great avenue to share ideas with fellow youth. Thanks for the space and good job!”

– Feedback from Youth Assembly 2017 delegate

“Great exposure for the University of South Pacific students who were involved in ICSW, from the regional campus leaders to the volunteers. It improved the diverse connections [and provided] concrete tools that can be used within the 14 campuses of USP across 12 USP member countries.”

– Feedback from Youth Assembly 2017 delegate
As in previous years, one of the highlights of the ICSW World Assembly was the presentation of the 2017 Nelson Mandela-Graça Machel Innovation Award winners: Khaled Elbalshy, an Egyptian activist and journalist; Jubilanté Cutting, a young Guyanese change-maker; Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative, a Nigerian mental health organisation; and Guerrilla Foundation, a German philanthropic foundation.

For the first time in 2017, the Awards were run in collaboration with The Elders – a group of independent leaders working together for peace, justice and human rights, founded by Nelson Mandela – as part of their #WalkTogether campaign. Throughout the World Assembly programme, special videos profiling the Award winners’ work were premiered, featuring personal messages of congratulations from members of The Elders, including Kofi Annan, Ban Ki-Moon, and Graça Machel herself.

Then, in the final segment of the day, the winners came together on stage for a dynamic and courageous conversation. Topics included: the role of young people in leading social change, better approaches to supporting mental health, the challenges of attracting funding, and the value of awards.

The brave work of the Award winners will continue, and CIVICUS will seek further opportunities to support their inspiring efforts to create a more just and sustainable future for all.

ICSW/local is a new partnership track within ICSW to bring more local voices to the global stage. This was the second year that CIVICUS supported local events to realise a smarter, more sustainable ICSW with better global outreach.

Twelve ICSW/local partners held local events between September and November in: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Trinidad and Tobago, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Uganda, Serbia, Pakistan, Colombia, Peru, Tunisia, and Jordan. Representatives from nine of the ICSW/local events also traveled to Suva to bring their diverse civil society and community perspectives into the global conversations in Fiji.

ICSW/Local Timeline:

**September 2017**
- 25-29 September: Democratic Republic of Congo, Yole! Africa
- 29 September - 2 October: Trinidad & Tobago, G.O. International Academy of Learning
- 29 September - 2 October: Indonesia, Climate Tracker
- 9-12 October: Western Balkans & Turkey, Technical Assistance for CSOs (TACSO)
- 23-29 October: Pakistan, Da Hawwa Lur
- 30 October - 1 November: Tunisia, Junior Chamber International – Rhodes

**October 2017**
- 1 November: Jordan, Green Generation Foundation
- 19 November: India, The Dais Foundation

**November 2017**
- 11 November: Peru, Somos El Presente

**December 2017**
- 26 December: Colombia, CORDATEC
ICSW 2017 organisers aimed to facilitate connections through the creation of open spaces for networking and discussions, including:

- Global Village for Youth Assembly delegates
- CIVICUS Monitor installation
- ICSW/local poster exhibition
- Group exercises facilitated by Tailofa Yoga Fiji and Sports Matters
- Peer-mentoring encounters between ICSW delegates
- Thematic discussion on technology, sustainability, accountability, and financial resilience
- Innovation for Change Members Mixer
- CIVICUS/PIANGO Members Mixer at Fiji Museum

ICSW VIRTUAL

From Tuesday 14th to Thursday 16th November 2017, over 120 people from all over the world joined a live webinar and online discussion forum. We aimed to inspire actors in the global development system to take co-responsibility for ensuring the independence, credibility and sustainability of civil society. We shared new thinking on the relationships between funders, intermediaries and civil society organisations.

SUSTAINING CIVIC ACTION

“Towards a global movement for respectful partnership and responsible exit”

84% of delegates thought that ICSW 2017 provided an effective space to discuss and tackle local and global challenges.

“...I got to meet a lot of people who shared and empathised with our issue, this was especially helpful for our organisation’s contact building and in strengthening our local campaigns. The different activities during the week also provided space to share about our struggles and experiences to a broad audience while learning about theirs as well. It also helped us make new friends from all over the world.”

JOIN OUR COLLECTIVE RETHINK

The gap between rhetoric and reality in ‘partnership’ is huge and has been debated over and over, but the times in which we live demand a new direction in support of a thriving civil society.

For national CSOs: “We need to be ready to say no to a partnership if it compromises our principles, puts us at risk and does not mean real sharing of power.” (Nicole Leotaud, CANARI)

For INGOs: “We need to see more peer pressure amongst international NGOs, pushing each other to be better partners, talking about their experiences, talking about their failures, talking about where things have worked really well.” (Jessie Davie, Malasili Initiatives)

For funders: “Perhaps there are more opportunities to connect the dots between international funders and grassroots groups, while strengthening their legitimacy and keeping a focus on building local support.” (Esther Meester, Wilde Ganzen Foundation)
Numerous side events took place before, during and after the main ICSW 2017 programme, including:

- PIANGO Council Meeting
- Protest Movement Leaders Convening
- Affinity Group of National Associations Members Meeting
- How to Leverage More and Better Resources to Deliver Sustainable Development in the Global South
- Vuka! Coalition for Civic Action Steering Group Meeting
- International Volunteering Day Awards Ceremony
- Sustainable Development Roundtable with H.E. Helen Clark
- State of the Civil Society Globally and in the Pacific discussion
- Youth Democracy Dialogue Convening
- CIVICUS Board of Directors Meeting
- Innovation for Change Pacific, Co-creation Event
- Sport, Human Rights and Sustainable Development: Pacific Civil Society Consultations
- Resilient Roots: Design Workshop

Leading up to and during ICSW 2017, communications promoted participation (physically and virtually), and encouraged conversations around key themes and messages.

**Media**

ICSW 2017 received widespread media coverage ranging from press statements and op-eds to interviews and live coverage, resulting in over 150 media hits plus a large number of reprints.

**Social Media**

From mid-November to mid-December, we tracked 8,652 tweets from CIVICUS, partners, and supporters using the hashtag #ICSW2017, resulting in over 80 million impressions. A key goal for social media engagement was to link events in the Pacific with global civil society.

**Media Fellowships**

The ICSW 2017 Media Fellowship Programme enabled significant media engagement. Six journalists from around the world published more than 30 reports in key media outlets, including leading global English language news outlets Al Jazeera and Reuters, the world’s most read Spanish newspaper online El Pais, Chinese-language online news platform The Stand News, which reaches millions across the Far East and Chinese diaspora, and pan-African radio service Channel Africa.

**Content Partnerships**

CIVICUS entered into partnerships with global news agency Inter Press Service and global independent media platform openDemocracy/democraciaAbierta for the production and distribution of content related to ICSW 2017. Over 25 reports and op-eds were written and published on the IPS website and distributed to more than 5,000 subscribing media outlets in 138 countries. In total, articles on a wide range of topics relating to ICSW thematic issues were published in 1,900 publications through IPS’ subscription channel.

An ICSW special edition of IPS’ newsletter, containing all published content, was disseminated to all 60,000 subscribers, plus selected stories were distributed to other newsletters totaling more than 100,000 email subscribers, and through our social media channels (with over 300,000 likes on Facebook and over 50,000 followers on Twitter).

The content partnership with openDemocracy and its Spanish language division democraciaAbierta saw the creation of a special website dedicated to ICSW-related content. More than ten pieces written in English and Spanish have been posted to the site, with several more still in progress. The platform attracts 8 million visits per year.
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Holding an international conference comes with a big environmental footprint. Flights, ground transportation, accommodation, catering, and meeting space all require natural resources. CIVICUS and PIANGO are conscious of International Civil Society Week’s impact on the planet and took steps to measure and manage the conference’s water, waste, and carbon footprint. Below is an overview of both how we have been able to minimise our environmental impact as well as identifying areas where we could have been more resource efficient:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS TAKEN</th>
<th>LIMITATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WATER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Water-saving measures: not washing linen and towels daily</td>
<td>• Limited use of water-efficient appliances, in particular toilets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reuse of grey water for gardening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communal water dispensers available at meeting venue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited use of water-efficient appliances, in particular toilets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENERGY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Electricity provided by renewable energy (hydroelectric)</td>
<td>• Limited use of energy-efficient appliances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSPORT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shared transport from airport to conference centre</td>
<td>• International flights were the primary source of carbon emissions for the conference. Each international participant produced on average 4 tonnes of carbon emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support to a number of local conservation programmes in Fiji to help offset the carbon emissions produced by conference air travel</td>
<td>• Shuttles and taxis were not fuel efficient and were gasoline operated”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Majority of delegates within walking distance of their accommodation to the conference centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATERING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Food was primarily local and seasonal, which reduced need for food imports and excess refrigeration</td>
<td>• Limited food composting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All meals included a variety of vegetarian options</td>
<td>• Food waste was not redistributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WASTE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cutlery and plates were reusable</td>
<td>• Trash was not sorted and separated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Volunteer opportunity to pick-up trash on local beach</td>
<td>• Limited amount of materials that could be recycled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recycling receptacles available on site for paper and plastic refuse</td>
<td>• Non-reusable paper cups were used for water dispensers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conference was primarily paperless</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The key outcome of ICSW 2017 was a joint declaration on climate induced displacement.

The joint declaration makes the following demands on governments:

- Recognise that climate change is a driver of internal and international displacement.
- Commit to fulfilling the objectives of the Paris Agreement.
- Reaffirm international and regional human rights commitments.
- Recognise that communities must have key human rights like food, water, housing and health protected to reduce the necessity of migration.
- Commit to consultation and engagement with impacted communities.
- Commit to those who are most vulnerable to climate displacement.

Hundreds of civil society leaders attending joined the call to protect the rights of people forced from their homes because of climate change.
THANK YOU...
... to CIVICUS and PIANGO members
... to the University of the South Pacific and USP Students Association
... to the local host and international steering committees
... to the ICSW 2017 delegates and supporters
Together we are stronger!
CIVICUS
CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world. We were established in 1993 and since 2002 have been proudly headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa with additional hubs across the globe. We are a membership alliance with more than 4,000 members in more than 175 countries. To find out more about how you can join our global movement for a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world, visit www.civicus.org/join.

PIANGO
For more than 25 years, the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organisation (PIANGO) has served the Pacific through strengthening and building the capacity of the civil society sector. PIANGO gives the sector a voice in policy formulation, and directly contributes to the development and strengthening of its National Liaison Units (NLUs) that represent civil society umbrella organisations in the 23 member countries of the Pacific. To learn more about PIANGO and its members, please visit www.piango.org.