



From Peru to Belgium, together we are stronger

By Jorge Vallejo, from the Latin American Youth Network for Democracy, Peru, and CIVICUS member delegation at the EC Partnership Forum 2018.



It was a great satisfaction to receive the confirmation of having been selected to the Partnership Forum 2018 of the European Union thanks to the call that CIVICUS launched. I remember that the night I was preparing my postulation was the day before the start of the week of the Summit of the Americas in Lima, in which my organization, the Latin American Youth Network for Democracy, participated. Being notified weeks

after that I was also invited to the European Union Partnership was a great joy. So, this year, on both sides of the pond, I had the opportunity to continue searching for strategic alliances between actors to strengthen our democracies and respect for freedoms, generating more citizenship for community life. That was what motivated me to apply for the opportunity, and the forum has given me a more global perspective on the issues, with more tools to work with, and exposure on valuable experiences from the 5 continents.

Between new learnings and new challenges

Here we meet with Lusanda (South Africa), Pek (Bhutan), Ekaterina (Kuwait) and Cathryn (CIVICUS HQ)! The travellers are in Brussels! The highlight of the meeting was the Agenda 2030 and making the Sustainable Development Goals reach a local landing that effectively allows "not to leave anyone behind", highlighting the relevance of partnerships to achieve objectives (SDG 17).

There are many cases to mention, but in this space I would like to talk about the experience of Senegal and its participatory budgets, having a "citizen certification" as an evaluation for the accreditation of local actors as good resource managers, something redeemable and replicable on the way to Transparency (Aliou Sow, President of the High Council Commission of Local and Regional Authorities of Senegal).

Having recently lived the ravages of nature, in my country once again, with the Coastal Child Phenomenon, I joined the session "Resilience." It was very clear that there was talk of consolidating the governance of local authorities and their twinning, in addition to avoiding creating parallel systems for disaster risk management. For this reason the territory management must be decentralized and well understood, said Genevieve Sevrin, General Director of United Cities, France.

I also attended the session on "Peace, security and development", to learn from new African cases of efforts to make post-conflict negotiations really inclusive (Mama Koite, President of the Platform of Women Leaders of Mali), or the development of special programs in schools

so that young people are prepared in negotiation and dialogue strategies, together with cultural and sports activities for proximity (Georges Magambo, Platform of Local Authorities of the States of the Great Lakes). Experiences that will serve in my work in the Ministry of the Interior.

I am left with several lessons such as the Framework Agreements of Association signed by the European Union with civil society organizations (CSOs) and local authorities, as well as the importance of roadmaps, the roadmaps with the objectives of cooperation with CSOs. How many of our organizations are aware of these tools? On the other hand, do we have a clear map of CSOs and their themes in our countries? This is fundamental.

Thanks to the European Commission and especially to CIVICUS for the opportunity of gaining new learnings, new friends and more desire to continue working for the empowerment of civil society organizations and cooperation networks because, definitely, "together we are stronger". As the Peruvian poet César Vallejo wrote: "There are, brothers, a lot to do ...". And at CIVICUS we are taking the challenge. Courage!

Get to know more about the [five CIVICUS members who shaped CIVICUS Delegation at the EC's Partnership Forum](#).