What is CIVICUS?
CIVICUS Mission and Vision

**Mission:**
To strengthen global citizen action and civil society throughout the world

**Vision:**
CIVICUS’ vision is of a worldwide community of informed, inspired, committed citizens engaged in confronting the challenges facing humanity.

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CIVICUS’ 3 E’s

- **Promote Civic Existence**, by defending people’s fundamental rights to organise and act collectively towards the public good;

- **Promote Civic Expression**, by strengthening the capacities of civil society organisations to freely amplify the voices of ordinary people; and

- **Promote Civic Engagement**, by fostering interaction between citizens, their associations and other institutions to ensure that public institutions reflect the will of the people and are accountable to them.
CIVICUS: When and Where

- Established in 1993
- Membership-based international alliance
- Moved the headquarters to Johannesburg in 2002 to better represent our primary constituency in the global South
- Registered in South Africa and USA
- Representative in New York and Geneva to liaise with various United Nations forums

CIVICUS: A Global Alliance

- A global membership alliance of 110 countries, consisting of about 450 members.
- CIVICUS’ members represent a network of an estimate 75,000 further members based on a recent survey.
- e-CIVICUS, CIVICUS’s weekly e-newsletter, is subscribed by 85,000.
Strategic Directions and Key Approaches 2008-12

Strategic Directions
1. Protecting the rights of civil society actors
2. Strengthening good practice within civil society
3. Strengthening civil society’s ability to influence the policies and practices

Key Approaches:
• Knowledge generation and analysis
• Communication
• Convening and multi-stakeholder engagement
• Advocacy

CIVICUS World Assembly

• A global convening point for civil society key stakeholders
• Overarching Theme: Acting Together for a Just World
• Next World Assembly in Montréal, 28-31 August, 2009
Civil Society Index:
Structure and Design

- An action-research project that assesses the state of civil society in countries around the world
- Creating a knowledge base and an impetus for CS strengthening initiatives.
- Initiated and implemented by, and for CSOs, and involves a broad range of stakeholders including governments, donors, academics and the public.
CSI’s Theory of Change

Evidence Knowledge | Participation Action

Strengthening Civil Society

CSI Goals and Objectives

Goals
Existence of active and effective national and international platforms for knowledge-based actions for the strengthening of civil society

Objectives
Through the CSI process: knowledge is generated and shared among CS stakeholders, civil society’s capacity and commitment are increased
### CSI History & Status

**1999/2000:** Consultations with CIVICUS members & partners, pilot funding from UNDP  
**2000:** Development of basic framework by Helmut Anheier, LSE  
**2000/1:** Pilot Phase in 13 countries  
**2002:** Redesign of CSI approach & methodology  
**2003-06:** Phase 1 implementation in over 50 countries involving 7,000 stakeholders. Led to the publication of *Global Survey of the State of Civil Society* Vols 1 and 2  
**2007/08:** Methodology Revision in partnership with Heidelberg University  
**2008-09:** African Phase in partnership with UNDP

### Civil Society Definition

**Phase 1: 2003-2006**  
The arena, between family, government, and market where people voluntarily associate to advance common interests

**Current Phase**  
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
Implications of CIVICUS definition

1) Civil Society includes a *broad* range of *diverse* actors and organisations - not only NGOs!
2) Civil society also includes 'un-civil' elements
3) Civil Society is broader than the sum of civil society organisations
4) `Who‘s in and who‘s out` is *context-specific*

New Dimensions

1) **Civic engagement.** The extent to which individuals engage in social and policy-related initiatives.
2) **Level of organisation.** The degree of institutionalisation that characterises CS
3) **Practice of values.** The extent to which CS practices some core values.
4) **Perceived impact.** The extent to which CS is able to impact the social and policy arena, according to internal and external perceptions
5) **External environment.** The conditions (e.g. socio-economic, political and cultural variables) within which CS operates.
New ‘Diamond’

**Civic Engagement**

Practice of Values

Level of Organisation

External Environment

Perceived Impact

Actors

**CIVICUS**

National coordinator (from the NCO)

National Implementation Team (NIT)

Researcher

Civil Society Specialist (CSS)

Advisory Committee (AC)

Stakeholders
CSI Flow chart

1. Call for Expression of interest
2. Application and Selection
3. Preliminary Steps
   - Establishing the National Implementation Team (NIT)
   - Training Workshop
   - Training of NIT
   - Setting up of Advisory Committee (AC) and 1st AC meeting
4. Quantitative primary research
5. Qualitative primary research
6. Regional focus groups
7. 2nd AC meeting and National workshop
8. Output Analytical Country report
9. Output Policy Brief
10. M&E

Key Findings from CSI Phase 1
### CSI Countries (in Phase 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Europe</th>
<th>Central Eastern Europe and Eurasia</th>
<th>Sub-Saharan Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Middle East, Northern Africa and Mediterranean</th>
<th>South America and Caribbean</th>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>(northern and southern communities)</td>
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<td>Ukraine</td>
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### Comparative Perspectives (1)

Regional perspectives:

- **Africa**: big NGOs vs. informal widespread CS/strong service provision and weak advocacy/ lack of resources & infrastructure/disabling socio-economic and political environment

- **Western Europe**: strongest CS (e.g. policy influence) and infrastructure/ most enabling environment though more restrictions after 9-11/ risk losing autonomy due to close cooperation with state (e.g. new public management) or private sector

- **CEE and Eurasia**: decreasing civic engagement & social capital/ strong role of donors/ strong policy role of environmental CSOs
Comparative Perspectives (2)

Regional perspectives:
- **Asia and the Pacific**: strong reliance on state (e.g. China, Vietnam)/ helped by democratization, hampered by social exclusion
- **Latin America**: volatile mobilization/ charismatic leadership and authoritarianism/ strong human rights orgs and social movements/ contentious politics → mobilization democracy or participatory democracy?
- **MEM**: disabling political context/ low participation/ weak advocacy role/ authoritarian state → popular conservative social movements and elite-based pro-democracy groups

Most Common Challenges to Civil Society

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>% of reports (n=43)*</th>
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<tr>
<td>Legitimacy, accountability, transparency of civil society</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure &amp; level of organization of civil society</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Level of civic engagement</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial resources available to CSOs</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil society’s relations with private sector</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil society’s relations with the state</td>
<td>36</td>
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Where civil society is strong:
- Democracies
- Strong, lawful & effective states
- Peaceful countries
- Religiously diverse countries

Where civil society is weak:
- Authoritarian Regimes
- (Post-) Conflict Situations
- Pervasive Inequality (& Poverty)
- Corrupt Regimes
Key Success of CS 1: Growing Diversity

- Number and forms of CSOs
- Levels & spread of citizen participation
- Range of issues being addressed

Key Success of CS 2: Increased Roles

- Mobilisation of citizens
- Input in policy & governance
- Cooperation with other sectors
- Delivery of social welfare services
Key Challenge of CS 1: Loss of Autonomy
- “Corporatization”
- Sub-contracting
- Partisan control
- GONGOs, QUANGOs, BONGOs and more

Key Challenge of CS 2: Legitimacy and Accountability
- Individual cases of mismanagement & corruption
- Donor-dependent CSOs
- Lack of linkages to constituencies
- Uprooted civil societies
CSI Accomplishments (Global)

- Viewed as independent assessment of the civil society sector that is owned by CSOs in the country and has multi-stakeholder involvement.
- The CSI tool and approach are used by an increasing number of institutions in their work on civil society issues at the global level (e.g., UNDP, SIDA, EuropeAid).
- UNDP country offices have used CSI findings to inform strategic directions in their Civil Society engagement and strengthening initiatives (e.g. Ghana, Nigeria, Cyprus) in broader governance and development assessments (e.g., Mongolia).

CSI Accomplishments (Country level 1)

Awareness building and capacity development of civil society

- The CSI contributed to the promotion of civil society through disseminating the country report findings at major workshops and seminars (e.g. UNESCO International Forum of Civil Society and UNDP-VUSTA Seminar on “CSOs and Aid Effectiveness, Hanoi 10/07”) (Vietnam)
- The CSI initiative contributed to the establishment of the ‘Social Leadership Training Institute’ by bringing civil society stakeholders together to find solutions to address the leadership gap in civil society (Fiji).
Impact on the government policy on engagement with civil society

- The government adopted the ‘Strategy for Cooperation with the Civil Society Sector’ in January 2007 based on the CSI findings and diligent advocacy work of the CSOs involved in the CSI project (Macedonia)
- The government facilitated the development and adoption of the “Concept of Government and Civil Society Cooperation in the Ukraine”.

Formation of Policy Action

- From the CSI consultative process and findings, civil society stakeholders made a concerted effort to mobilize and develop proposals in effecting change to government and its legitimacy, transparency, and accountability policy (Uganda)
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Q&A / DISCUSSION