



Progress For People Through People: Perspectives from CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Katsuji Imata
Deputy Secretary General-Programmes

**OECD World Forum, Busan, Korea,
27 October 2009**





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.



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 main offices 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.
- e-CIVICUS, CIVICUS's weekly e-newsletter, is subscribed by 85,000.
- Serves a unique function to provide “convening” space for various CSO actors to engage with key institutions from other sectors



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

Measuring the State of Civil Society: Civil Society Index



- Action-research project that aims to assess the state of civil society in countries around the world.
- Initiated in 2000, it has successfully completed a pilot phase (2001), a full implementation phase (2003-2006) and is now in its second full implementation phase with a new methodology and new partners

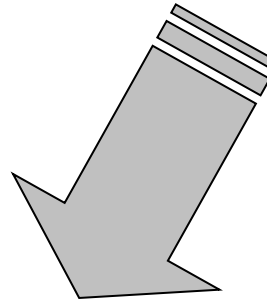
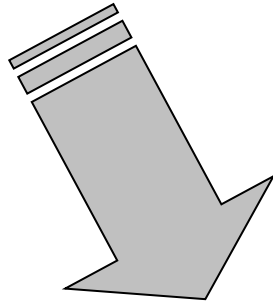




CSI's Theory of Change

**Evidence
Knowledge**

**Participation
Action**



Strengthening Civil Society



CSI History & Status

- 1999-2000: Consultations with CIVICUS members & partners, pilot funding from UNDP
- 2000: Development of basic framework by H. Anheier, LSE
- 2000-01: 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
- 2008-10: Phase 2 implementation
- 2008: Formalised partnership with UNDP by signing an MOU



Civil Society Definition

Phase1: 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



Implication 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*

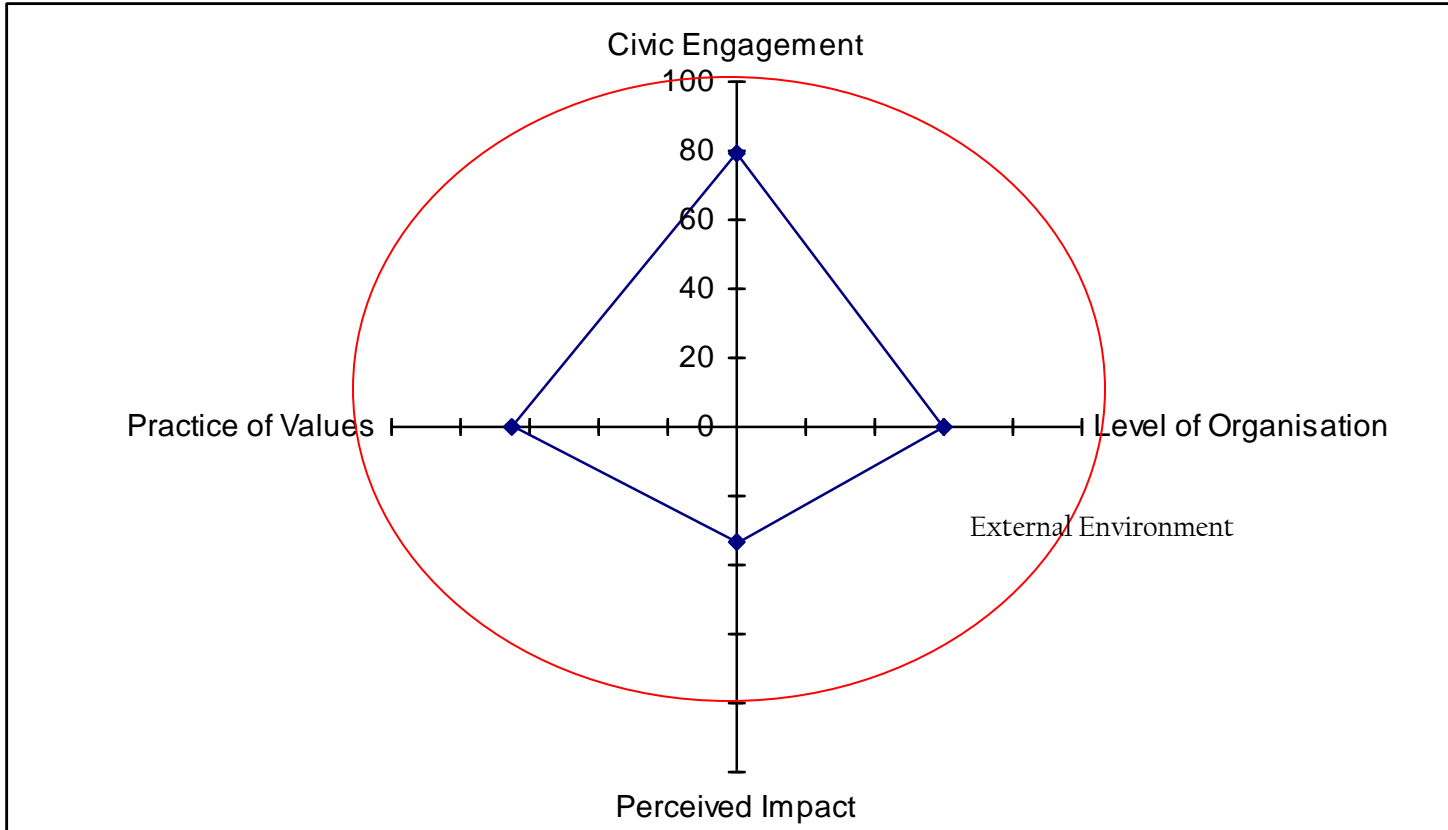


New Dimensions

- 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.

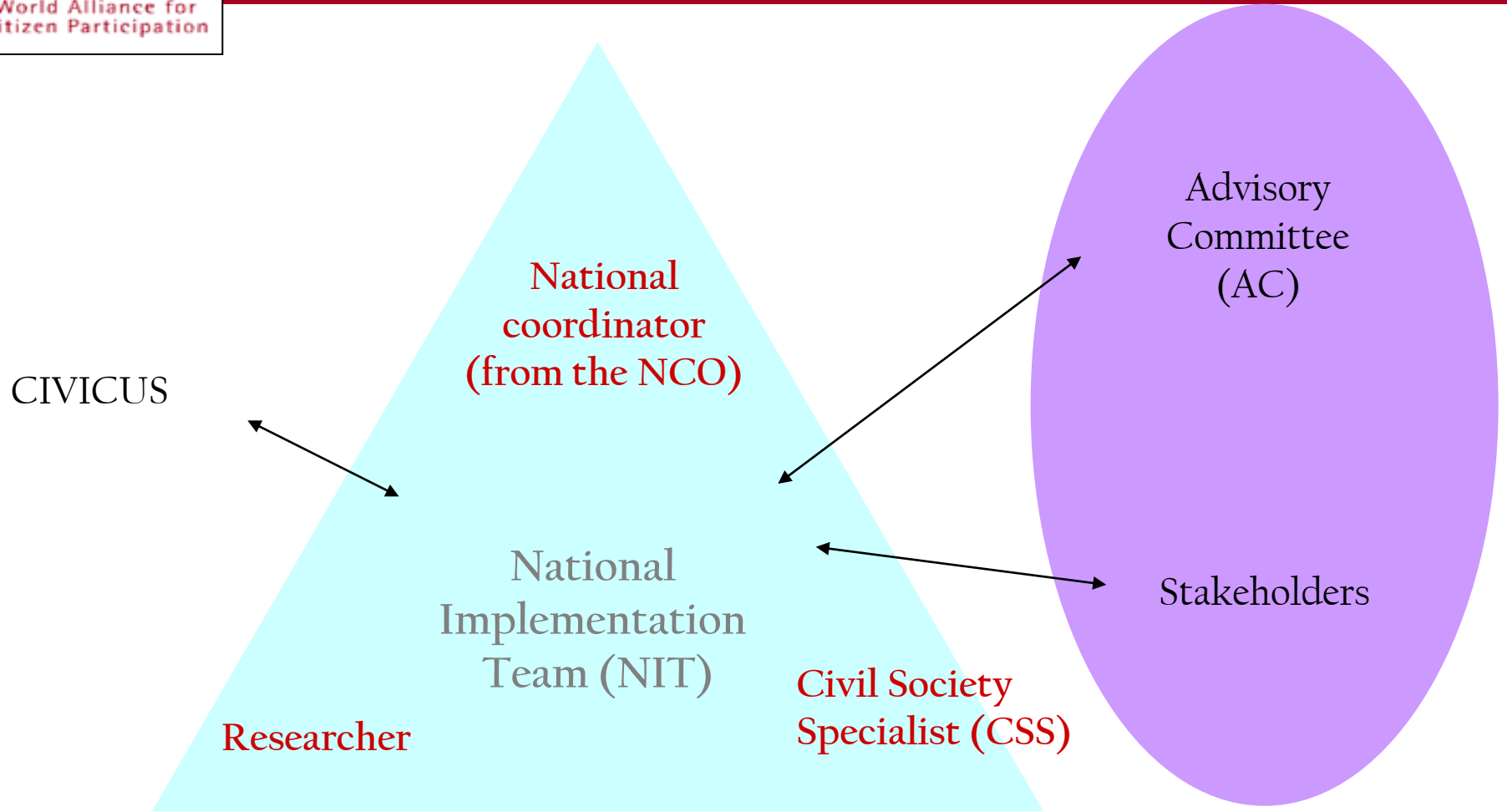


New 'Diamond'





Actors





CSI Countries (in Phase 1)

Western Europe	Central Eastern Europe and Eurasia	Sub-Saharan Africa	Asia	Middle East, Northern Africa and Mediterranean	South America and Caribbean
Germany Italy Netherlands Northern Ireland Scotland Wales Greece	Armenia Azerbaijan Bulgaria Croatia Czech Republic Georgia Macedonia Montenegro Poland Romania Russia Serbia Slovenia Ukraine	Botswana Burkina Faso Ghana Guinea Kenya Mozambique Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone Rwanda Tanzania Togo Uganda	China East Timor Hong Kong Fiji Indonesia Mongolia Nepal Orissa (India) South Korea Taiwan Vietnam	Egypt Lebanon Cyprus (northern and southern communities) Turkey	Argentina Bolivia Chile Costa Rica Ecuador Guatemala Honduras Jamaica Uruguay



Most Common Challenges to Civil Society

Challenge	% of reports (n=43)*
Legitimacy, accountability, transparency of civil society	67
Infrastructure & level of organization of civil society	50
Level of civic engagement	48
Financial resources available to CSOs	43
Civil society's relations with private sector	38
Civil society's relations with the state	36



Some Findings from CSI (1)

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



Some Findings from CSI (2)

Key Success 1: Growing Diversity

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

Key Success 2: Increased Roles

- Mobilisation of citizens
- Input in policy & governance
- Cooperation with other sectors
- Delivery of social welfare services



Some Findings from CSI (3)

Key Challenge 1: Loss of Autonomy

- “Corporatization“
- Sub-contracting
- Partisan control
- GONGOs, QUANGOs, BONGOs and more

Key Challenge 2: Legitimacy and Accountability

- Individual cases of mismanagement & corruption
- Donor-dependent CSOs
- Lack of linkages to constituencies
- Uprooted civil societies



Civil Society Accountability in the Asia-Pacific Region

- From the paper for presentation at the International Society for the Third Sector Research (ISTR) Regional Conference in Taipei, Taiwan on November 1-4, 2009
- Written by Jacob M. Mati and Tracy Anderson (CIVICUS Civil Society Index staff)



Main reasons why accountability is important

CSI analysis found the following:

1. Earning and maintaining public trust, which in turn eases the way for successful public impact;
2. “to pre-empt regulation by the government, which, in many cases, is likely to be less conducive than civil society’s self-regulation”;
3. To accomplish the various forms of accountability measures demanded by donors to ensure their funds are used appropriately.



Issues of CS Accountability

- Multiple entities to whom a CSO must be accountable
- CSOs often reframe their programs to better fit the needs and wants of the donors in an effort to secure funding
- This often at the expense of the communities and other beneficiaries for whom the program are supposed to help and support



CSI Analysis on Accountability

- Analysis of 4 indicators that represent accountability issues
 - Self-regulation
 - Democratic practices
 - Perceived corruption
 - Financial transparency
- Study has found that Asia Pacific CSOs exhibit the same trend as most of the world's CSOs, an overall weakness in accountability.



To improve accountability, CSOs must:

- promote existing codes of conduct (Fiji);
- provide courses and training to develop accountability and transparency skills (Fiji);
- involve citizens in the community where the program will operate in program discussions and design so that programs reflect the needs of the communities (Indonesia);
- develop codes of ethics (Indonesia);
- and encourage donors to provide financial support for improving CSOs' accounting and financial reporting systems (Indonesia).



Follow up Actions

- In Vietnam, CECODES began a two-year project in 2008 that evaluates corruption in Vietnamese CSOs.
- The Hong Kong Council of Social Service designed and hosts annual Social Forums, which are used to establish accountability in the civil society by providing the opportunity for CSOs to engage with each other, build relationships and trust in working together.
- Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS), established a training institute for CSOs to build the capacity of Fijian CSOs. Many of these courses provide the participants will increased knowledge and skills in the areas related to CSO accountability.



Innovative and Practical Actions

The Asia Pacific region presents some of the most innovative and practical actions to overcome the limitation in accountability. It is welcoming to know that the fact that civil society stakeholders are confronting civil society's accountability and transparency concerns is a pointer to the reflective mood of these stakeholders



Join CIVICUS!

- Join CIVICUS' Membership
- Be part of CIVICUS' network in solidarity with strengthening civil society globally
- Participate in the World Assembly, CIVICUS programmes and other activities
- Subscribe to e-CIVICUS, a free weekly newsletter
- Visit www.civicus.org