Evaluation of CIVICUS – World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Final Report
January 2018

Bente Topsøe-Jensen
Ingrid Obery
Khilesh Chaturvedi
Raphaëlle Bisiaux
# Table of contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations and Acronyms</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 CIVICUS’ organisational capacity</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Strategic framework</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 The Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Operational framework</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 The restructuring process</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 The current organisational set-up</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 Leadership</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.4 Operating as a virtual organisation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.5 Human resource management</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.6 Funding and financial management</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.7 Sub-grant management processes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.8 Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.9 External and internal communication</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Synergies and complementarity</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Civic Space Initiative</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Innovation for Change</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Complementarity and synergies</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Concluding assessment</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Strategic framework</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Organisational structure and Leadership</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 People and systems for implementation</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Relevance, effectiveness and sustainability</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Synergy, complementarity and impact</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 A final comment</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Recommendations</strong></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 Annexes</strong></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Work plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>List of documents consulted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>CIVICUS organisational chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Methodology and limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>CIVICUS in a few words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Operational framework – additional information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGM</td>
<td>Annual General Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGNA</td>
<td>Affinity Group of National Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Counterpart International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIVICUS</td>
<td>World Alliance for Citizen Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COO</td>
<td>Chief Operations Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRF</td>
<td>Crisis Respond Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSI</td>
<td>Civil Society Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EENAA</td>
<td>Enabling Environment National Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>Evaluation Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET</td>
<td>Evaluation Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFC</td>
<td>Innovation for Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICNL</td>
<td>International Center for Non-profit Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICSW</td>
<td>International Civil Society Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MELA</td>
<td>Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMF</td>
<td>Operational Management Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMF</td>
<td>Programme Management Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPPL</td>
<td>Purpose, Process, People and Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEK</td>
<td>Swedish Krona (currency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>Secretary General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sida</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLT</td>
<td>Senior Leadership Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Human Rights Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSR</td>
<td>UN Special Rapporteur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPR</td>
<td>Universal Periodic Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>World Movement for Democracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

The evaluation of CIVICUS was commissioned by the Civil Society Unit at Sida through the framework agreement on evaluation services. The evaluation has been conducted by a team from NIRAS Indevelop consisting of Bente Topsøe-Jensen (team leader), Ingrid Obery and Khilesh Chaturvedi. Raphaëlle Bisiaux managed the evaluation process from the head office, and quality assurance was conducted by Ian Christoplos. The evaluation was undertaken in October 2017-January 2018 with one week of field work at the CIVICUS headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa in November 2017. This was complemented by extensive skype interviews with global stakeholders in November and December 2017.

The evaluation team thanks all CIVICUS staff, Board members, partner organisations and funding partners, who have kindly allocated time to talk to us. Without the openness to provide information and participate in frank discussions, we would not have been able to understand the comprehensive, multifaceted and diverse construction of CIVICUS. It is our sincere hope that the evaluation report will provide a substantial input to the continued collaboration between Sida and CIVICUS during the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2017-2022, and that discussions have contributed to individual reflection and organisational learning.

DISCLAIMER

The present report has been prepared by a team of evaluators and the content, findings, and recommendations reflect the views of the evaluators, and not necessarily that of Sida or CIVICUS.
**Rationale.** The present evaluation serves as an input to the future agreement between Sida and CIVICUS by providing an assessment, lessons learned and recommendations. The evaluation of CIVICUS in November 2017, commissioned by Sida, took place at a time when CIVICUS had recently adopted a new Strategic Plan 2017-2022, and had undertaken a complete restructuring of the secretariat to align with the strategy. Many processes were still on-going – staffing, system-building and establishment of management structures. The evaluation examined CIVICUS’ organisational capacity in relation to the demands posed by the Strategic Plan, and analysed synergy and complementarity with a particular focus on the Civic Space Initiative and the Innovation for Change programme (formerly known as the Civil Society Innovation Initiative, CSII). The evaluation was conducted as an open and iterative process, based on a document review and extensive interviews with CIVICUS Board members, staff, partner organisations and funding agencies. The evaluation focus on operational capacity, synergies, as well as the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

**Organisational capacity.** CIVICUS’ strategic framework consists of the *Strategic Plan 2017-2022*, which reflects a commitment to innovation and mobilisation of citizens, and it aligns with identified global challenges of closing civic space and climate change. The *membership strategy* is under revision, changing focus from benefits to solidarity. The operational framework is solid and responds to the requirements of the new Strategic Plan. The *recent restructuring process* produced a flexible and agile structure under the supervision of a lean Senior Leadership Team and two middle management structures for programme and operations oversight. The *governance structure* comprises a 13-member elected Board reflecting CIVICUS’ global identity. The *funding base* is diverse and consists of private and bilateral donors. The annual 2017/18 budget is approx. USD 10 million. There are solid systems and practices in place for *financial management and accounting*. CIVICUS operates several *sub-granting schemes* benefitting CSOs in 45 countries in the 2016/17 financial year. Systems for assessment, selection and administration of grants are in place and grants aim at strengthening civic space and democratic values.

A new *monitoring system* based on developmental evaluation principles is being introduced, including outcome harvesting and a joint database. External and internal *communication* is pivotal for CIVICUS. A draft digital communication strategy is in place, but a number of problems still need to be addressed, including the improvement of the website, overcoming the language barrier and Anglophone bias, strengthening collaboration with traditional media and the use of social media.
Synergies and complementarity was explored through two specific programmes. The Civic Space Initiative is implemented by a consortium of four organisations and aimed at protecting civic space through policy influence, empowerment of civil society actors and production of an effective counter-narrative. The Innovation for Change initiative is the largest CIVICUS programme, embracing 800+ CSOs. It is based on an extensive co-creation process, resulting in six regional hubs from where collaborative learning processes, capacity building and advocacy are developed. The extensive interaction at global, regional and national level provides a conducive environment for synergy and exchange, as well as protection in hostile political contexts. Both programs are examples of complementarity initiatives, characterised by flexibility, strategic prioritisation and innovation. There is strong evidence of a high level of exchange, complementarity and synergy between CSI consortium members, within and between CIVICUS programmes, contributing to overall knowledge generation.

The concluding assessment is that CIVICUS is relevant to Sida’s civil society strategy and the organisation is fit-for-purpose to achieve its mission and contribute substantially to fulfilment of its strategic goals. Sida is seen as a flexible, cooperative and risk-taking donor, valued for its engagement in critical dialogue.

Recommendations are mainly addressed to CIVICUS, acknowledging that they are refinements to processes and initiatives already set in motion. Sida has embarked on a sound collaboration based on core funding and the recommendation is therefore to continue the partnership based on these principles.

Within the coming 6-12 months, CIVICUS is recommended to:

1. Edit specific parts of the Strategic Plan 2017-2022
2. Maintain a symbolic membership fee
3. Clarify the remit of the Programme Management Forum and the Operational Management Forum collectively, and the clusters individually
4. Employ proactive collaborative coordination to identify areas of synergy
5. Constantly monitor organisational dynamics within and between the clusters
6. Introduce an effective and appropriate internal audit function, including contracting external part-time expertise
7. Regularly keep track of the balance between people working remotely or at the head office to ensure that an efficient and effective balance is in place
8. Undertake the induction of new staff over longer period of time
9. Re-introduce regular and holistic staff and management performance assessments
10. Strengthen the diversity of the staff profile
11. Review the structure and human resourcing of Finance and Operations cluster to make sure these areas are adequate and fit-for-purpose
12. Ensure that the initial monitoring momentum is not lost and that the new paradigm based on outcome harvesting is consolidated
13. Strengthen the engagement with media through a structured *media engagement strategy*

14. Consider systematic outsourcing of translation to overcome the language barrier to non-Anglophone countries

15. Increase focus on how results obtained through global UN-level advocacy can best be channelled into national (and local) level advocacy by member organisations
1 Introduction

Sida has supported CIVICUS financially since 2004, and has been a strategic partner through multiannual agreements since 2008. The relevance of CIVICUS' work is primarily related to the second goal of the Swedish civil society strategy: “Promoting an enabling environment for civil society organisations in developing countries.”

The Swedish support to CIVICUS consists of a main agreement for core funding to implement the CIVICUS 2014-2017 Strategic Plan (SP). The agreement has been amended three times and provided a total of SEK 80,448,800 for the period 2014-2018. This core funding includes support for the Innovation for Change (IFC) initiative. Sida also funded the Civic Space Initiative (CSI). Until mid-2017, SEK 8,686,944 for CSI flowed through the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL).

CIVICUS recently approved its new SP for the period of 2017-2022, and in October 2017 submitted a funding proposal to Sida. All funding from Sida will be contained under one core funding agreement for purposes of alignment and harmonisation.

The present evaluation serves as an input to the future agreement between Sida and CIVICUS by providing an assessment, lessons learned and recommendations. It is the purpose of the current evaluation to contribute to Sida’s understanding of how CIVICUS has adapted to the significant increase in funding and the broadened scope.

---

3 Latest amendment is a bridging arrangement signed 14.12.2018 to secure funding until the next funding period will start by mid-2018. The amendment is SEK 18.2 million.
4 The Civil Society Initiative (CSI) is referred to as the CSpi by CIVICUS staff to distinguish it from the initial designation of the Innovation for Change (IFC) initiative, which was Civil Society Innovation Initiative (CSII). In the present report, the designations CSI and IFC are used for the two initiatives.
The evaluation has addressed the following Evaluation Questions (EQ):

- **EQ1**: To what extent is the overall CIVICUS organisational set-up and capacity adequate in the view of the increase of activities, outreach and funding? This requires a focus on the organisational capacity for knowledge management, including monitoring, analysis and sharing of information. It also calls for a strong focus on an assessment of the organisational structure, management and governance systems and flexibility to change, as well as responsiveness to internal and external demands/needs.

- **EQ2 and EQ 3**: Are synergy and complementarity present rather than risks for overlap in selected programmes? The assessment of synergies, process and ownership related to the IFC and CSI initiatives will sustain the analysis of CIVIUS’ overall organisational capacity.

The overall evaluation approach has been an open and iterative process, during which the Evaluation Team (ET) has interacted closely with the CIVICUS Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and key staff members. The evaluation is based on qualitative evidence gathered through document review and interviews with 52 informants. A detailed description of the methodology applied and main limitations is included in Annex 6: methodology and limitations.

In addition to the Introduction, the report contains four main chapters.

- **Chapter 2**: CIVICUS organisational capacity presents main findings and analysis of the organisational capacity by applying the Purpose-Process-People-Leadership (PPPL) model.

- **Chapter 3**: Synergies and complementarity presents the analysis of the CSI and IFC initiatives in terms of overlaps, complementarity and synergies.

- **Chapter 4**: Concluding assessment, summarises the overall findings in relation to the evaluation questions and criteria.

- **Chapter 5**: Recommendations, presents a summary of recommendations to CIVICUS and Sida to enhance future collaboration around the Strategic Plan 2017-2022.

---

7 For a more detailed explanation of the evaluation methodology and approach, reference is made to the Inception Report submitted by NIRAS Indevelop to Sida on 08.11.2017.
8 Annex 3: List of documents consulted.
The report contains a number of **annexes** of which some are mandatory, i.e. Terms of Reference (TOR), workplan with list of interviewees and list of documents consulted. In addition, also annexes with the CIVICUS organisational chart; a description of applied methodology and limitations; a brief background information on CIVICUS; and a detailed analysis and evidence from document review and interviews related to analysis of the operational framework are included.
This chapter analyses Evaluation Question 1 – organisational capacity – through four main areas: the purpose of the organisation, i.e. the strategic framework and fundamental raison d’être of CIVICUS; the operational processes necessary for the organisation to fulfil its objectives and goals, including a closer look at leadership and human resources (people). The analysis has two main focus areas: the strategic and the operational framework, and assesses the adequacy of the organisational set-up and capacity in the view of the increase of activities, outreach and funding which CIVICUS has experienced over the last couple of years.

A brief background – the history, the governance and operational structure, and the strategic goals – is included in Annex 6: CIVICUS in a few words.

2.1 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

CIVICUS has established itself as a genuine organisation of the Global South, working in partnership with national and international non-government organizations (NGO), private funding organisations and bilateral donor agencies and providing a platform particularly for Southern civil society voices. CIVICUS’ purpose is clearly spelled out in its vision and mission and is reflected throughout the organisation, i.e. in the research, lobby and advocacy activities; in the human resources and organisational structure, as well as in the networks and working groups. With the increasing threat to civic space imposed by restrictive legislation and hostile political environments, CIVICUS becomes increasingly relevant as a safeguard for civic rights and democratic voices.

2.1.1 The Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022

The CIVICUS Strategic Plan 2017-2022 reflects the organisation’s vision of “a worldwide community of informed, inspired, committed citizens engaged in confronting the challenges facing humanity.” It flags a strong commitment to

---

10 See Annex 5: Methodology and limitations for a description of the analytical model (PPPL) applied.
innovation and mobilisation within civil society and citizens’ engagement. It transpires very strongly when talking to CIVICUS’ staff that the main focus internally is on the goals, and the overarching purpose is powerfully evident in everyday work, discussions and programme implementation.

The SP is the result of a comprehensive and truly consultative process, which according to CIVICUS is a result of “listening to thousands of people”. \(^{12}\) It reflects well the strong, collective commitment to the overall vision and mission of the organisation. The consultation process took place from late 2016 to April 2017 and secured that the new SP builds on experience from the previous SP 2014 – 2017. A cross-reading of the previous SP and the current SP reveals continuity in terms of maintained vision and mission, as well as innovation and adaptation to the changed political environment and overall challenges facing civil society in particular and humanity in general. A draft was circulated in March 2017 and inputs from members and partners have helped sharpen and shape the final version which was approved by the CIVICUS Board of Directors in April 2017. Interviews with member organisations, Board members and staff confirm that the ownership is genuine and that the SP process has served the dual purpose of preparing the SP and establishing ownership and identification with the core values of the organisation among all involved stakeholders. The ET finds the SP forward-looking and solidly reflecting the raison d’être and organisational values of CIVICUS.

The SP builds on a **Theory of Change** (TOC) in which inequality, insecurity and climate change; sustained attacks on human rights; the crisis of democracy and global governance; (need for) new and disruptive forms of participation and partnership; and threats to civil society credibility and legitimacy are identified as the most important challenges. The ET finds that the ‘because’ and ‘therefore’ connections between the sharp context analysis and the strategies proposed for reaching the goals by 2022 are not sufficiently clear in the SP. According to the SLT, one of the main changes between the previous and the new SP is in how they work, strengthening the focus on human rights and ensuring that civil society itself is the agent to address the closing space with a “much clearer focus on individual activists”. The ET does, however, find that these new features do not stand out clearly.

**CIVICUS’ role** is to provide solid evidence for advocacy and act as a convener of actors by setting the framework and providing guidance for initiatives to bloom. Interviews revealed some concern about the blurred border between the convener role of creating platforms or space and the coordination role. According to some inter-

---

viewees, CIVICUS could push further beyond convening and take a leadership role in driving new ideas or initiatives, i.e. push beyond coordination.

“CIVICUS is a very inspiring and active actor – it is a convener of small and big organisations; it enhances discussions at global level. CIVICUS is well known, inspiring, they provide solid reports on civil society which are popular and widely used. CIVICUS experts are very popular in international events – they do a solid job.”

The evaluation reviewed whether the strategic goals set for the 2017 – 2022 period are realistic. The strategic goals are spelled out in specific time bound and measurable indicators (impact statements). CIVICUS can definitely influence the outcomes of strategic goals 2 and 3. However, it is highly unlikely that CIVICUS would be able to ensure that by 2022 “there will be an improvement in civic space in countries where civic freedoms are under attack” (strategic goal 1). In spite of the efforts made by CIVICUS and other civil society actors, civic space may close even further.

Another question arose during the assessment of the purpose: whether there is sufficient trickle down of the activities carried out at the international/ global advocacy arena. That is, do the results of high-level advocacy in terms of declarations and resolutions influenced and adopted trickle down and have an effect at regional, national and local levels? There are many examples of CIVICUS successfully bringing the voices of otherwise voiceless local civil society organisations to the UN table, and CIVICUS maintains a feed of information from members upwards into UN-sessions in Geneva and New York. But the downward stream whereby local civil society activists make use of, for example, UN resolutions (adopted with influence from CIVICUS lobby work) in their local advocacy work is less documented. However, there is some evidence of a trickle-down, e.g., through the Innovation for Change initiative and the Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA) network. AGNA has created the space for national network organisations, but the networks do not always have sufficient capacity in terms of competences and resources to get to their members, which is necessary if ideas are to be carried further “downwards”.

A draft CIVICUS’ membership strategy has recently been prepared with the aim of aligning with the Strategic Plan 2017-2022. The draft membership strategy, which

13 Interview with one of the main donor agencies, November 2017.
15 CIVICUS Membership Strategy 2017-2022, draft, September 2017. For more details on membership
will be operational from mid-2018, aims “to draw on the strength of the CIVICUS alliance to collectively achieve a more just, inclusive and sustainable world by better aligning our network and membership development plans, programmes and policies with our mission, vision and strategy.” This focus on solidarity rather than benefits, means members will not pay a membership fee, but will be invited to contribute to a Solidarity Fund and thereby engage in mutual support functions. However, the option of re-establishing a membership fee is maintained in case of a future need for securing an income from members. The ET found the new membership approach challenging and innovative, but are concerned that voluntary contributions to the Solidarity Fund will not generate sufficient funds to allow for supporting solidarity initiatives.

2.2 OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

This section presents the main findings on operational processes and their coherence with the strategic goals. The analysis is based on the assumption that appropriate, efficient processes will result in an effective organisation. The following key processes are discussed: restructuring; the current organisational set-up; leadership; the challenge of being a partly virtual organisation; human resource management; funding and financial management; grant management; monitoring & evaluation, learning and knowledge management; and internal and external communications. Supplementary information to support the analysis is included in Annex 7: Operational Framework – additional information.

2.2.1 The restructuring process

With the aim of making the organisation fit-for-purpose to implement the new SP 2017-2022, an extensive restructuring of the secretariat (operational part) was undertaken in the relatively short period of April to July 2017. The intention was clearly to make sure the secretariat could meet the demands of the new SP, i.e., demonstrate a high degree of agility and efficiency in implementation of the increased activity and funding portfolio. This included a thorough needs assessment for structure and human resources; and an organisational capacity analysis workshop involving all staff in May 2017, financed by the Ford Foundation.
It is still far too early to assess whether the new structure is fit for purpose. However, the ET revisited the May 2017 assessment and found that most, if not all, issues raised as critical then, were addressed in the restructuring process, and new or changed modus operandi established. SLT key performance measures include all critical areas related to the CIVICUS mission.

2.2.2 The current organisational set-up

The restructuring process established a leaner operational management structure — the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) — with only five members compared to the previous 10+ members and introduced a middle management layer with two management fora: The Programme Management Forum (PMF) includes SLT members, specialists with specific roles and programme cluster leads and meets on a monthly basis. Interviews with cluster leads and staff indicated that the PMF works well with a good flow of information to staff in the clusters. The Operations Management Forum (OMF) which includes SLT members, consultants with specific roles and selected cluster leads has not yet met since the structure was put in place in August 2017, due to work overload related to annual and additional audits, the restructuring and consequent doubling of costs units, and because the Chief Operations Officer (COO) resigned in November 2017. The OMF has fewer members and is expected to deal with organisational systems and processes, including financial and human resource management, travel procurement, IT, etc.

The ET is concerned that the division between programme and operational issues may amplify the natural divide caused by different work focus. According to the SLT, this risk is balanced by the partial overlap between the clusters and SLT members represented in the two management fora. However, as the OMF is not operational, it has not been possible to assess whether overlapping participation mitigates the risk. The ET was assured that a review of the PMF and OMF experience is scheduled for early 2018, where complementarity versus overlap will be analysed.

---

20 See Annex 4: CIVICUS Organogram, August 2017. A short description of the different management organs (SLT, PMF and OMF) is found in Re-shaping for CIVICUS 3.0, confidential internal communication, May 2017.

21 See Annex 7: Operational framework – additional information for more details on the SLT mandate.

22 TOR for the OMF are not yet in place.

23 See Annex 7: Operational framework – additional information for an overview of PMF and OMF members.

24 During the SLT retreat in January 2018, functions across the organisation were reviewed and a new PMF chair selected, and plans for convening the OMF were agreed.
The staff is organised in 12 small operational thematic clusters.25 The clusters are flexible units with 1-8 staff, established as open platforms from where staff, albeit placed in a specific cluster, is encouraged to interact and collaborate across the clusters to enhance synergy and value addition. In addition to the 52 staff members placed in clusters and the five SLT members, there are 11 permanent specialists who work with all clusters and/or management fora.26 Interviews revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the way the SLT and the clusters operate thus far. Respondents stressed that the structure is agile and open, allowing for interaction.

### 2.2.3 Leadership

Leadership plays a key role in creating an environment of staff motivation, high-level team performance, as well as individual and organisational vision alignment and overall staff effectiveness. CIVICUS is carried by strong moral and political values, reflected not only in the strategic framework, but also in the organisational structure. This is spelled out in the staff handbook which guides staff on how to internalise and live the overall principles of the organisation.

The **Board of Directors** plays an important strategic leadership role by setting the political agenda and overall strategic framework.27 Although direct interaction between Board of Directors and staff is minimal, the values inherent to policy are transmitted by the **Senior Leadership Team**. The fact that leadership and not management is reflected in the designation of the team signals emphasis on strategic vision rather than administrative efficiency. The ET observed and confirmed through numerous interviews, the strong and visionary leadership exercised by the current **Secretary General** (SG). The SG was praised for his efforts to make CIVICUS visible and growing and being able to provide the strategic guidance for self-managing and dedicated staff members.28 Looking back over CIVICUS’ SGs, the current SG’s competencies were described as “the perfect match of external clout and internal appreciative management skills”.

CIVICUS’ leadership approach is based on an organisational culture of collaboration, consultation, integrity and transparency, supported by open

---

25 See Annex 7: Operational framework – additional information for more details on the thematic clusters

26 The number of staff is taken from the CIVICUS organisational chart from August 2017 (see Annex 4), but the exact number of staff and consultants has changed recently due to new recruitments and resignations.

27 See Annex 6: CIVICUS in a few words for information on the Board of Directors.

28 Interviews with donors and board members, November – December 2017.
communication. The SLT members supervise and support the different clusters, specialists and ad hoc work groups in line with the respective strategic goals for which they are responsible. As expressed by a SLT-member: “The challenge – and fun – lies in the overlaps, where coordination and collaboration between clusters is necessary.”

The ET raised the question of succession planning for leadership positions, and noted an active, progressive approach to leadership development. The new organisational structure also creates a range of opportunities for younger people to take on leadership and coordination roles, as well as opportunities for innovation. This serves as a collapse-mitigation-measure in case of a sudden shift at the top leadership level.

2.2.4 Operating as a virtual organisation

Operating as a global network alliance with offices in four different places and a substantial number of staff placed in different countries poses a challenge in terms of being a partially virtual organisation. The ET observed that the virtual operation is internalised by the organisation, and cluster leads explained their active management of virtual teams – and the importance of creating and maintaining team spirit by including social and informal chats as part of team meetings. All interviewees did, however, stress the importance of occasional face-to-face meetings. CIVICUS strives for the full secretariat team to meet at least once a year.

There is a delicate balance between the number, role and personality of staff present at the physical head office against the number and role of staff working elsewhere; and the balance might change over time in relation to specific personalities or organisational needs. The option of working out of the head office reflects flexibility and allows for placing people strategically, e.g., in Geneva or New York. It is also a way to attract and retain competent staff by allowing remote working. One example is the current SG who is based in London with frequent presence in Johannesburg. The ET’s impression is that the present constellation of staff clearly works, but all organisations need a robust and substantial core structure. There is currently only one SLT member based in South Africa, with other members spending at least one week per quarter in the Johannesburg office. Considerations in regard to the inside/outside head office balance are important, not the least when recruiting a new COO – a concern also expressed by the Executive Committee.²⁹

²⁹ Interviews with Board members, November – December 2017; Executive Committee Minutes, 16.11.2017, draft. The January 2018 advertisement for a new COO indicated that the position in principle is Johannesburg based.
The identity and operation as a partially virtual organisation is supported by the use of virtual platforms, some of which will be integrated within the coming six months when rolling out organisation-wide platforms for programme management, financial and human resource management, monitoring and knowledge management, and sharing documents and information, i.e. strengthening the institutional memory. Digital security is prioritized, recognizing the pertinent threat to virtual and online operations. This is important work in progress, which is expected to meet the demands of the virtual, global organisation, and address the concern of some newly employed staff that the institutional memory handover from previous employees is not yet sufficiently solid.

Interviews revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the administrative platforms for financial management, human resources and membership, as well as the platforms for sharing documents and internal communication. The ET found that especially in the area of financial management, there is a high degree of user friendliness and quick reference guides have been prepared and shared with staff. The process of establishing coherent and seamless linkages between the different platforms is currently under way. The ET determined that those involved are very aware of the need to ensure system user-friendliness and to avoid overlaps and incompatibility between different platforms.

2.2.5 Human resource management

Human resource (HR) management is handled by a two person, highly competent team who talked about the unique organisational culture of CIVICUS and the demands this puts on staff capacity and profile. The HR team comes from a corporate environment; they noted that CIVICUS staff have a very different attitude and focus, that their dedication and drive contribute to an environment where all staff do what is necessary to accomplish the targets, rather than just what is in their job descriptions. This commitment provides an excellent “human resource climate.”

The organisational set-up requires a staff capable of self-management and innovative out-of-the-box-thinking and with courage to take initiative. CIVICUS staff appeared to be dedicated and competent with strong idealistic drive and a high commitment

---

30 See Annex 7: Operational framework – additional information for a list of virtual platforms and data base tools.
31 Quick Guides on Definitions and Clarifications: Agreements; Partners; Procurement – roles and responsibilities; Procurement threshold; Processes – requisitions; and Processes – travel.
32 In 2016, the senior Human Resource Manager was contracted to develop a new human resource plan. She was then employed permanently to oversee the HR side of the restructuring. The second HR-person was recruited as part of the restructuring and started in August 2017.
33 Interview with HR-team, November 2017.
to the CIVICUS vision and cause. The staff profile is slightly biased towards young, European women, and do not fully reflect the diversity of CIVICUS membership, nor does it reflect a prioritization of inclusion of e.g. persons living with disabilities.\footnote{CIVICUS Inclusion Audit, January 2017, p.6.} Interestingly, the employment with CIVICUS is often a result of the employee having come across CIVICUS during activist work and kept an eye for vacancies. However, the ET noted that a number of staff members have been recruited from partner/member organisations, which is a positive step towards more diversity, and HR does monitor staff diversity in terms of geographical location, nationality and race.\footnote{Overview provided by the HR cluster, December 2017; CIVICUS Board Pack, December 2017, pp. 19-22, up-date on human resources.} CIVICUS’ character as a people-driven organisation is spelled out in the \textbf{staff handbook} and is reflected in the recruitment process as well as processes which allow innovation and voices from all levels.

The ET considered the implications of having a staff driven by their political commitment to the cause, who are young and relatively inexperienced, but who need to manage the sometimes chaotic and flexible structure where the borders between clusters are not fixed. Drive and dedication may take the organisation some way. The permeable structure requires strong leadership and direction-setting to keep work on course. But strong, competent staff also need space to take initiative and lead in their own right. Cause-driven organisations with a high level of personal commitment from individual staff members operate with a delicate balance between ensuring that people give their utmost, without risking a burn-out. The organisation must care sufficiently for its staff and make sure that the facilities to enhance effectiveness and efficiency are not turned to squeezing employees. In particular, the ET noted the rest-after-travel facilities at the headquarters in Johannesburg (\textit{the Civitonian}). This is an excellent facility, which may be used by staff arriving off international flights early in the morning unable to check into their accommodation, or for taking a shower after exercise, or in case of a need to rest. The ET finds, however, that it may reflect an implicit expectation that staff would be coming directly from the airport to the office after duty travel. However, the ET also noted that all staff with whom it interacted appear to be fit for their posts, and leadership was clearly aware of the challenges in terms of balancing expectations.\footnote{CIVICUS Employee Handbook comprehensively relates the organizational culture with policies and practices, which provides the employees with opportunities and right to ensure decent work conditions.}

Much effort has been put into \textbf{recruitment and restructuring}. The period since June 2017 is described as \textit{“a whirlwind”}, where the HR-team has not yet been able to start
embedding the general HR management processes. However, a number of initiatives to secure transparent and adequate human resource management have taken place during 2016-17:

- **Recruitment.** In the period of 2016-17, CIVICUS expanded staff numbers from around 30 to 73 staff by August 2017. Recruitment of new staff reflects the needs of the new organisational set-up and is based on specific job descriptions.
- There has been increased focus on career opportunities, individual growth and professional development. The more horizontal set-up provides increased opportunities for assuming responsibility for initiatives or work streams. This is a strong career path-building incentive for competent staff members.
- The *Employee Handbook* and *Policies and Procedures Handbook* were developed in 2016 and distributed to staff in February 2017. There is an obvious need for people to be guided, nudged, and challenged into operating in the new structure. Interviews confirmed that most people have found their feet within the new structure.
- The current salary scale notch system provides reasonable, attractive salary levels in relation to the international NGO market. Benchmarking benefits, allowances, insurances and pensions is planned for early 2018 to ensure that equal conditions are offered across diverse geographical work places.
- CIVICUS faces bureaucratic delays in obtaining South African work permits for international staff, which has affected a number of recent recruits.
- **Staff performance assessment** is undertaken as per the hierarchy, but the previously used 360° assessment has been abolished for everybody, as selection of peer reviewers was often found to be biased.
- **Focus on management training and coaching.** CIVICUS has a costed Leadership Development Programme for senior and middle layer managers to accompany the roll-out of the SP 2017-2022. The plan uses the specific requirements per job description as the point of departure from which skills development plans can be outlined and implemented for individuals.

---

37 Ibid.
38 See Annex 7: Operational framework – additional information for more details on HR management initiatives.
41 The ET has detailed information on specific salaries per category of staff, but the information is considered confidential.
42 CIVICUS Leadership Development Programme,
• **Diversity and Inclusion.** CIVICUS carried out an *Inclusion Audit* in late 2016. The ET noted that although the SLT and the HR cluster are aware of the importance of internalising inclusion and diversity in procedures, organisational culture and practices, the majority of the recommendations from the report are still relevant; i.e. in relation to integration of diversity and inclusion goals in HR policies, staff diversity, salary equity, parental leave and mainstreaming. The fact that the Capacity Development cluster lead employed in October 2017 has a specific mandate to implement these recommendations reflects overall prioritisation of the matter.

2.2.6 **Funding and financial management**

CIVICUS has a solid group of core donors, which guarantees flexibility and stability in funding, as well as support to the SP. **CIVICUS’ income** has increased steadily over the past four years and the 2016-17 financial year grant income was approximately USD 9.4 million. Of this, almost half was core funding from five main donors (private foundations and bilateral donors) and the remaining were designated funds for projects, hub incubation, reserve and grants from 10-15 different sources. Sida is among, if not the largest donor and the fact that Sida is combining into one all its funds flowing to CIVICUS is much appreciated – the previous amendments made for CSI and Innovation for Change (IFC) required separate reporting. Sida is generally considered a flexible donor, appreciated also for its role as critical dialogue partner.

The funding is diverse and dynamic in terms of periods, amounts and sources. Finance staff monitor cash flow weekly, the PMF monitors it monthly, with frequent reviews by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors so as to avoid a cash flow deficit, as well as to safeguard future funding. The SLT is responsible for updating the funding pipeline based on conversations with donors. The forecast for the coming SP period 2017-2022 is conservative, with an annual budget of around USD 10 million. This reflects a management decision to consolidate and focus rather than expand and divert attention. The decision also reflects the fact that CIVICUS

---

43 CIVICUS Inclusion Audit, by Francesca Molinaro, Strategy for Humanity, January 2017. The audit concentrated on internal practices and procedures for i.a. the culture of diversity and inclusion within CIVICUS, employees’ work experiences, overall effectiveness of CIVICUS in creating a diverse and inclusive work environment, and CIVICUS as a place to work. The report recommended a systematic integration of diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organisation. Diversity is understood in different dimensions, including gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation etc.


45 Aggregated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2017, September 2017. CIVICUS. Calculations of size of different donors’ grants can be measured either as overall budgets per allocation or in terms of annual disbursements.

46 Interview with Financial cluster, November 2017.
wishes to maintain the overall role of convener and coordinator rather than competing with its members in the field of implementation. The ET considers the decision wise, acknowledging the need for CIVICUS to focus on strategic priorities as well as consolidate the operation of the new cluster structure.

The Board of Directors actively monitors financial sustainability and have a five-year projection table with an overview of different donors. This enables the Board to track new grants and assess the status of negotiations with different donors. The Board was aware of the need to oversee the sometimes messy scenario of fund diversification. Based on previous experience with a cash flow crisis, the Board of Directors oversees a reserve fund, which sits currently at USD 1.5 million. This is sufficient to cover a four-month period, but the aim is to build up a six-month reserve. Funds are set aside annually for the reserve, which is currently also replenished by membership fees. The Board of Directors must approve any spending from the reserve fund.

CIVICUS demonstrates best practice for the NGO-sector in terms of taking lead on donor coordination. The fact that they have urged donors to harmonize and align to CIVICUS’ reporting requirements through the use of common formats, indicators and reporting periods is appreciated externally by several donors and partners interviewed, as well as internally by staff and management.

The restructuring of the secretariat, as well as the increased activity portfolio have implications on the demands for financial management systems, requiring more financial staff, as well as coaching of existing staff. The ET found that sound financial management systems are in place with comprehensive procedures and policies for budgeting, accounting, procurement and grant management.47

In terms of accounting practice, CIVICUS uses one platform in all countries (SAGE evolution) and operates bank accounts at its four offices – processing is centralised in Johannesburg. Most funds are kept in the USD-based account, as it is the only one from which expenses can be paid in other currencies without incurring losses. Expenses are approved by the budget holder, and payments are approved by the finance manager and the COO. Two signatures are required to release payments. With the restructuring, the number of project cost centres has increased from 13 to 24, placing additional demands on staff training and monitoring. Deliberate attention is given to ensuring that budget holders know what to do through ongoing training and short procedural documents, and there is focus on making systems and procedures

47 A financial management self-assessment questionnaire was filled by key financial management and account staff and allowed for verification and cross-checking during the interview.
more efficient. In spite of this, the 2016 audit report\textsuperscript{48} called attention to the \textbf{understaffing of the finance team} caused by staff resignations, a situation which has become more critical with the recent resignation of the COO, although there is a temporary replacement. CIVICUS is addressing the understaffing

The Board of Directors’ Operations Committee consists of three Board members. It plays an important role in \textbf{financial oversight}, convening regularly to check-up with finance staff around a report prepared by the secretariat. It also meets (virtually) with the external auditors: \textit{“This dialogue is an important process to ensure that things are running properly and provides the possibility to input”}.\textsuperscript{49} Operations Committee oversight includes review of all documents related to HR, financial status, cash flow, donor funds, expenses, revenues etc., as well as a review of the risk dash board (see below). The reports are generally found to be comprehensive and solid, but every now and then the committee suggests improvements: one example is when they suggested that HR produce gender disaggregated data, which was then followed up by due practice. The Operations Committee’s role is advisory, and the Treasurer takes any issues raised to the Executive Committee in preparation for the next Board meeting. Prior to each Board meeting, CIVICUS secretariat prepares a comprehensive \textit{“Board pack”} which provides logistical information for the meeting, the meeting agenda, minutes from the last meeting, Board Committee reports, the SG’s report covering all operations, the Board dashboard and updates on specific issues, e.g. Board elections.\textsuperscript{50}

CIVICUS uses its \textbf{risk dashboard} to assess risks related to human resources, security, data, changes in government legislation, i.e. any kind of risk is assessed, mitigating defined and needed adjustments carried out. Every SLT member reviews the dashboard and an average is presented in a report shared and discussed with the Board of Directors. The Board discusses all risks, cross-checks for additional risks or deviating perceptions of risk. The Board Treasurer found the tool innovative, showing that CIVICUS is an example of a world-class organisation.

The \textbf{external audit} has been undertaken by the same South African audit company for over five years. The current auditors specialise in the NGO-sector and their capacity has been suitable for CIVICUS. However, the auditors’ performance in the last year was not satisfactory, causing delays in disbursement from donors, and an

\textsuperscript{48} Management Letter, Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman, September 2017.
\textsuperscript{49} Interview, Julia Sanchez, Board Treasurer, Chairperson Operations Committee, December 2017.
\textsuperscript{50} CIVICUS Board Packs for December 2016, April 2017 and December 2017.
open tender process for a replacement is planned in 2018.\textsuperscript{51} This is important, as the auditors’ capacity should match CIVICUS’ organisational growth. The audit is based on project audits and usually starts in July with finalisation by September.\textsuperscript{52} The ET noted that CIVICUS has no internal audit function. According to the SLT, the size of the organisation does not justify a permanent internal audit function, but the need for periodic review/control, as well as better transparency on procurement is recognised. A whistle-blower system is in place and the ET was provided with confidential information on its effective and swift use.\textsuperscript{53}

### 2.2.7 Sub-grant management processes

For some time, CIVICUS has acted as a grant maker. Over the past two financial years, CIVICUS has supported members and partners with grants totalling just over USD 3 million, or around 10\% of the organisation’s total income. In the 2016-2017 year, 64 CSOs in 45 countries received grants.\textsuperscript{54}

The ET reviewed the grant management systems\textsuperscript{55} already in place and found them robust and thorough. The sub-granting process contains measures that ensure flexibility, which capture extensive information to support grant decision-making, and also aim to minimise risk as much as possible in what can often be unconventional contexts. Subgrants covered a wide group of recipients and purposes and are funded by many different donors.\textsuperscript{56} Grantees have included member and associate organisations, networks and organisations and individuals involved in various CIVICUS programmes.\textsuperscript{57} Grants are determined by programme steering committees or reference groups and grantee assessments are based on a standard “Partner Checklist”. This includes consideration of their absorbent capacity and governance mechanisms. The assessment involves the project coordinator, the COO and in some cases the SG. Grant oversight is done by the project coordinator, who could be in any programme cluster. Reporting requirements depend on type and duration of the partnership.

---

\textsuperscript{52} Interview with Financial Cluster, November 2017.
\textsuperscript{53} Interview with SLT, November 2017.
\textsuperscript{55} Grants Mechanism Concept document, n.d.
\textsuperscript{56} Donors funding sub-grants made in the 2015-16 financial year included the European Commission, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sida, Irish Aid, Lifeline Fund (via Freedom House), Hewlett foundation, Open Knowledge Foundation, and DFID. For more information on grant types, see Annex 7: Operational Framework – additional information.
\textsuperscript{57} CIVICUS programmes benefitting from grants: AGNA, The CIVICUS Monitor, CSI including SPEAK, Civil Society Watch, CRF, DataShift, IFC, and Leave No-one Behind.
One example of a specific grant is the **Crisis Response Fund (CRF)**, which is funded through the Lifeline Embattled CSO Assistance Fund, supported by 17 governments and two philanthropic foundations. It is used to resource emergency advocacy activities by CSOs and human rights defenders facing imminent threats, with amounts between USD 10,000 to USD 15,000, and must be used within 4 months of receipt. CIVICUS has previously drawn on the CRF to support over 100 organisations and activists at risk in every geographic region of the world.

In the Operational Plan 2017-18, under **Strategic Goal 4: Creating a world-class organisation**, the first indicative activity is to “Create grants management platform that reflects best practice across sectors.” In a detailed concept note that talks to the new Strategic Plan 2017-2022, CIVICUS discusses the rapidly changing landscape within which civil society must operate, and a number of grant types are defined to match the diverse needs. The concept note further explains that CIVICUS is exploring “a number of structural options for the set-up of a grant-making operation”, what it terms a **“funder-mediator” structure**. This structure will be a separate entity with a dedicated board of directors, and will operate around a core interactive system, which “in quick iterations becomes a social platform for grant making and peer-to-peer learning in grant-making good practices”.

The ET found that the current grant management system appears thorough, well aligned to the work that CIVICUS does, and clearly seeks to enable civil society work as well as improve and build the capacity of recipients. The different grants are used to reinforce civil society striving for space and democratic values and are a unique complementary tool. The information required to check grantees looks for previous links with CIVICUS work, and reviews the suitability of potential recipients via peer enquiry. The supporting documents for grant applications and management are very detailed and manage to allow flexibility within a clear framework of accountability. The ET believes the proposed “funder-mediator” structure will provide a good foundation upon which it can expand the grant making function.

---

58 See Annex 7: Operational framework – additional information for more details on the CRF.
60 CIVICUS Operational Plan 2017-2018.
61 Grants Mechanism Concept document, n.d.
62 See Annex 7: Operational framework – additional information for more detail on grant types.
63 Grants Mechanism Concept document, n.d.
2.2.8 Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability

Monitoring of results (outputs, outcome, impact) has been a constant concern in the dialogue between Sida and CIVICUS over the years:

“...during this process not enough time was dedicated to set up a complementary monitoring, evaluation and learning framework and to establish the related data collection processes. This has also been identified by Sida as CIVICUS’ major challenges and has been and continues to be a matter of dialogue.” The new SP provided CIVICUS with an opportunity to re-shape the monitoring system based on principles of developmental evaluation, which is focus at on-going reflection and learning.

In 2017, two staff members were recruited to set up a monitoring system, and in July 2017 with the re-structuring of the secretariat, a Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability (MELA) cluster was established. In addition to designing and establishing the monitoring system, MELA is also responsible for compiling a comprehensive CIVICUS operational plan from the annual cluster plans, which are the result of internal priority discussions. MELA has provided guidance and facilitated the planning process and ensured adherence to overall strategic goals.

The compilation also serves to provide the SLT with an overview of activities. The coming year will show how the planning process has worked and how the monitoring system yields information on change and outcomes. The Annual Planning framework is translated into Trello (planning tool) in order to help cluster leads to follow progress towards achievement of goals during the year. Based on the consolidated annual plan, MELA has also compiled a cross-cluster collaboration overview, which should enable the clusters to identify where and with whom interaction and collaboration is expected during 2017-2018. The ET found this to be an interesting tool, although it has not yet been implemented.

The new monitoring system represents a paradigm shift in monitoring from “tick-off” monitoring to an on-going process whereby documentation is shared and provides the basis for knowledge generation. It is closely linked to CIVICUS’ Theory of Change and is integrated into the management approach. It is based on outcome harvesting, where the focus is on contribution to qualitative changes. For data collection, a web-based project management tool (DevResults) has been introduced and staff from all clusters has been trained to secure a broad and shared data collection and use. Finally, the system allows for linking expenditure to strategic goals by use of specific codes;

---

64 Conclusion on Performance, Sida, 30.03.2016, p.5.
this feature is not yet operational, but the ET confirmed that it is possible to “run financial reports according to the strategic goals.” As part of the efforts to establish a sound and robust monitoring system, an accountability framework has replaced the more traditional results framework.

Although the first results captured through the monitoring system are expected in 2018, the system has already yielded some information. The CSI Highlights Report (July 2016-June 2017) used CIVICUS’ new evaluation method of outcome harvesting and the process documented nine outcomes: Five outcomes at global fora included three from United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), and one each at the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC). Nationally, the consortium presented four positive outcomes in Kazakhstan, Mozambique, Panama, and Honduras. For the CSI, the new DevResults system should indicate whether the large number of diverse activities are contributing to CIVICUS’ strategic goals.

The ET found that the new monitoring system is a genuine innovation that introduces a utility-focus and links all monitoring to strategic goals and expenditure. This will ultimately allow a simultaneous focus on contribution to change processes as well as traditional accountability in relation to costs. The recently introduced DevResults will need to be embedded throughout the organisation through a conscious process of training, coaching and nudging.

The MELA cluster is still very fragile, as the recently employed lead resigned at the end of November, leaving the cluster with a single staff member who is temporarily based in Berlin waiting for a South African work permit. A third position of data / monitoring specialist is vacant, but recruitment has been put on hold until a new lead is employed. The ET is concerned that the changes and temporary lack of staff may slow the momentum. However, the SLT has put in place a sound transition plan whereby the out-going lead will be attached to CIVICUS on a part time basis until a permanent replacement is found, hopefully during the first quarter of 2018. The SLT is aware of the situation’s seriousness and has prioritised the new system roll out.

Learning and knowledge management are derived products of the monitoring system, and CIVICUS focusses strongly on organisational learning within the new organisational set-up. Learning is seen as an internal driver and a necessity for much of the work. The ET encountered several examples of formalised knowledge sharing

---

69 Interview with Financial cluster, November 2017.
practices, reflecting a genuine focus on on-going capturing of experience, and development of best practices. At Board level there is also a genuine culture of learning – every three years the Board undertakes a thorough self-assessment to gauge its capacity and operation. However, it was not clear to the ET to what extent the organisation is building a systematic and theoretical basis for action based on lessons learned: that is, how are lessons learned, disseminated and integrated into future practice. Lots of sharing happens which is good for individual growth and use of information – but is there a systematic knowledge management system ensuring a repository or record of these learnings? Interviews with recently-employed staff indicated that there is insufficient information available for new staff to easily catch up the momentum of predecessors.

CIVICUS is committed to accountability i.e. through its membership of Accountability Now to whom it submits an annual report. CIVICUS has drafted a specific feedback response policy and mechanism through which members, allies and supporters can make objections should CIVICUS not fulfil expectations in terms of work and activities. The mechanism is still not rolled out but reflects CIVICUS’ commitment to maintain an open dialogue with members and other stakeholders and to constantly remain open to improving practices.

2.2.9 External and internal communication
Communication is a pivotal activity for CIVICUS – externally as well as internally. It is part of most of the networking and advocacy activities promoted and facilitated by CIVICUS among members, and to targeted and broader audiences, and it is part of knowledge sharing and organisational learning.

As is the case with many on-going processes in CIVICUS, a major effort has recently taken place to analyse the background and formulate a draft Digital Communication Strategy. The draft strategy emphasises the need for better visual and easily accessible communication and deals with the digital audience, the channels, as well as tools and training needs. It contains specific targets for different channels and addresses the role of the Communications cluster for each of these targets. Outreach

---

73 https://accountablenow.org/
75 CIVICUS Feedback Mechanism draft, n.d.
to visitors and followers on social media and e-communications is monitored closely and reported to the Board.77

The Communications cluster coordinates the primary output and content from the different teams and defines what is relevant for whom. The cluster has an editorial role in determining what to prioritise for publishing and promotion on website, with whom and when to share information in selected countries and target outlets (web, newspapers, broadcast and social media etc.). As the organisation has grown, the capacity to produce content has also grown dramatically. This increased the need for prioritisation to avoid overloading recipients with information. The cluster makes sure information is tailored to specific targets within and outside the organisation and among members. It also takes decisions on appropriate moments for release of specific information to ensure the timing corresponds with the events and political situation. The ET believes that the Communications cluster is aware of its pivotal role in the organisation, and that it interacts closely with other clusters to enhance relevance and effectiveness in external and internal communication.

Despite this positive view, the ET identified some problems related to external communication:

- There is a language barrier which disadvantage non-Anglophone countries. CIVICUS is aware of this, but the efforts are so far limited to French and Spanish and not sufficiently systematic and of scale to overcome the problem.
- The CIVICUS website www.civicus.org is slow, unresponsive, not user friendly or interactive, and only available in English.
- There is limited engagement with traditional media (newspapers, radio, tv), and CIVICUS has no structured ‘media engagement strategy’, which could make them proactive allies in the demand for civic space. Consequently, there is limited linkages and relationships at national levels to help reach audiences outside of the “tech bubble”. 78
- There are few likes and re-tweets currently in spite of a wide network, and there are national CSOs with more Facebook page likes than CIVICUS, even though CIVICUS is a membership based global network. It is important to work with and through members to get voices and messages out through social media: members need appropriate messages to enhance outreach and social media must be chosen to match regional and target group preferences.

---

77 CIVICUS Board Pack, December 2017, p.37.
78 Interview with Communication cluster staff, November 2017. See also organisational self-assessment facilitated by Ford Foundation, May 2017.
The ET recognises that the draft Digital Communication Strategy addresses issues related to communication and social media.

**Internal communication** is important for organisational coherence, complementarity and knowledge sharing and creation of synergy. A number of measures have been taken to enhance internal communication, e.g. brown bag lunch meetings, where information and knowledge about new or specific projects is shared, as well as internal weekly emails with updates. Extensive use of Google Docs is important in this context. Frequent emails from the SG, staff and cluster meetings, as well as sharing and learning meetings are institutionalised parts of the organisational culture and enhance the internal communication. This is important, as all staff members are considered ambassadors of the organisation and must be able to provide an overview of the wide menu of project areas that the organisation works on. In general, the ET found a strong focus on internal communication and knowledge sharing, which is a healthy sign for any organisation.
3 Synergies and complementarity

This chapter addresses EQ2 and EQ3, assessing the Civic Space Initiative (CSI) and the Innovation for Change Initiative (IFC) programmes. These programmes were not evaluated separately but were reviewed to identify whether synergy, rather than overlap, characterises their implementation within the CIVICUS strategy.

It is worth noting at the outset that, for both of these programmes, results are a mixture of process and innovation achievements as well as specific outcomes. For example, CSI activities include enabling people from grassroots organisations to speak at UN sessions, ensuring that these voices continue to be heard within these dialogues. In IFC, while a programme objective was to create six regional hubs, the co-creation process from conceptualisation through to realisation is in itself an intentional intermediate 'result'.

3.1 CIVIC SPACE INITIATIVE

CSI is one of the major CIVICUS initiatives benefitting from Sida core funding, although different initiatives under the CSI-umbrella are complemented by funding from other donors, e.g. the Ford Foundation with earmarked funds for Vuka!79. The CSI is best described as a larger programme consisting of many projects.

The CSI started in 2012 and aimed to “protect and expand civic space by fostering an enabling legal and regulatory environment for civil society organisations”80 at global, regional and national levels. The programme’s rationale was based on increasing threats to civic space, a situation which CIVICUS continues to actively monitor. CSI initially worked on eight themes, including supporting the UN Special Rapporteur (UNSR) on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; enhancing synergies among the UN mandate holders; promoting civil society engagement with the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC); promoting respect for and strengthening the freedoms of assembly, association and expression at global and regional levels;

79 “Vuka” is an isiZulu word meaning “awake” or “arise”. The Vuka! Coalition for Civic Action is an initiative that aims to form and work in progressive alliances, bringing together substantial masses of citizens and connecting classic CSOs, protest movements, journalists, trade unions, youth groups, social enterprises, artistic platforms and many other parts of the civil society universe”. New Initiatives Vuka Beyond Accounts-ability. n.d.
80 CSI Highlight Report, September 2017, p.3.
promoting enabling environments and public awareness at national level; and employing cutting-edge research that supports these initiatives.

The set-up is unique in the CIVICUS context, with a consortium consisting of Article 19, CIVICUS, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) and the World Movement for Democracy (WMD) responsible for implementation. According to CIVICUS, consortium meetings provide a platform for fruitful exchange. From mid-2017, the chair will rotate between consortium members, and a recent meeting sought to further improve coordination. Other consortium partners\(^\text{81}\) stressed the fruitful collaboration with CIVICUS and identified its strength as the network of local CSOs from which “they bring reality” and outreach by inviting local CSO representatives to UN sessions. This complements other partner competences such as legal frameworks.

Previously, Sida funds for CSI were channelled through ICNL to the other partners, but from mid-2017 Sida is providing bilateral core funding to Article 19, ICNL and CIVICUS, whereas WMD no longer receives Sida funding, but continues to be engaged with the CSI initiative.\(^\text{82}\) For CIVICUS and other consortium partners, there is clear logic in this move, as all CSI sub-programmes and activities align exactly with its strategic mandate. The fact that ICNL is no longer responsible for administration all funds has made the internal collaboration more efficient and helped focus on strategic substance.

CIVICUS sees the CSI as adding value to its portfolio, with different implementing partners bringing complementary expertise to their shared goals. CSI’s relevance was confirmed by an end 2015 evaluation, which concluded that impact could be seen in increased international attention to the importance of civic space, the establishment of new norms at international and regional levels and greater solidarity reported by CSOs and human rights defenders. The evaluation determined that CSI-supported production of guidelines, toolkits and videos held the greatest potential for sustainability of benefits. However, the evaluators expressed concern at the “wide diversity of topics, countries, and themes – and a large number of small activities... [which] pulled efforts in many directions, rather than sharpened focus towards a clear, unified, goal”.\(^\text{83}\)

\(^\text{81}\) Interviews with ICNL and Article 19, November 2017.
\(^\text{82}\) Interviewed partners stressed that this change has not disrupted the implementation, but the relationship among partners has changed slightly, as WMD contribution is no longer funded by the same source.
\(^\text{83}\) CSI evaluation report, December 2015.
The current phase of CSI incorporates most of the original themes in **three specific goals with respective workstreams**, which include a plethora of different activities:

1. **Positively influence policy actors to ensure greater protection for civic space at the global, regional and national levels** – focussed on lobbying and advocacy around human rights at global (UN and multi-stakeholder fora), regional and local levels.

2. **Civil society actors empowered to push back against shrinking of civic space and to advance civic space freedoms** – focussed on protecting civic space, supporting human rights defenders, journalists and vulnerable groups, empowering networks and providing research tools.

3. **Targeted public audiences increase their engagement and support for civil society and civic space** – focussed on engaging the public on civic space issues and providing an effective counter-narrative.

**The CSI is coordinated** from the CIVICUS Geneva office, where the CSI project manager is based, but different projects under the CSI umbrella are implemented through a range of clusters in the new CIVICUS structure. Within CIVICUS, CSI activities may stand slightly apart from other initiatives, but there is a high degree of complementarity and coordination, and a number of examples were given e.g. by piggybacking on training events to save costs.

At the global level, **CIVICUS works with ICNL** to “empower local CSOs to monitor SDGs 16.10 and 17.17 at national and international levels”. The CIVICUS/ICNL partnership also contributes to promoting development effectiveness through the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, and the two organisations participate in the Community of Democracies’ Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society and its Working Group on Freedom of Expression and Opinion. CIVICUS also states that deeper and more sustained engagement in the Multi-stakeholder Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and the Enabling Environment has developed. In addition, there are several points of intersection between CIVICUS and ICNL in projects such as Lifeline Embattled CSO Fund.

**CIVICUS works with the United Nations Special Rapporteur (UNSR) on freedoms of peaceful assembly and association**, UN experts and human rights defenders. At this level, CIVICUS seeks to present an effective counter narrative to mitigate the effects of increasing efforts to close down civil society actors and organisations. Part of building this counter narrative is the work contributing to

---

84 CIVICUS has worked closely with the former UNSR from 2011-2017. The post was temporarily filled but is currently vacant, January 2018.
UNHRC’s UPR, where CIVICUS has “been able to significantly expand the number and scope of civil society organisation that … effectively inform UNHRC discussions on civil society space”.

Examples of collaboration within the CSI consortium include:

- ICNL organised a workshop at ICSW 2017 in Fiji looking at how civil society can engage the private sector in claiming civic space. The three organisations worked together to draft a note for the event. Different speakers from the three organisations participated as panellists, contributing examples from their own experience.
- All CSI partners have had meetings with the new UNSR, who since then retired from the mandate. The consortium coordinated the engagements to ensure best possible synergy, with the aim of optimising her mandate.
- When the UNHRC prepared a report for the Human Rights Council on public participation, CSI collectively compiled a contribution. CIVICUS input included knowledge gained from its membership network, which enriched the process.

Part of CIVICUS’ modus operandi is to ensure local voices are reflected on national and international platforms. The CSI programme has enabled CIVICUS to “support local and national civil society activists to take part in UNHCR and UPR sessions”. Another initiative supported by CSI is SPEAK!. In 2017, CIVICUS rebranded its Global Day of Citizen Action as SPEAK! “to help give a voice to everyone, everywhere”, particularly young people, culminating in three days of global action in September 2017.

The CSI Highlights Report found that work done in 2016-17 has set down “… a solid foundation for future work”. The report states that CSI values the use of training and capacity enhancement “…in ensuring that partners can continue activities without the direct support of the CSI”, and that “CIVICUS has deepened relationships with a greater range of HRC states and extended contacts to complement and reinforce Geneva based advocacy”. The CSI Highlights Report provides a table of very practical examples of how CSI supported activities and the outcomes achieved.

---

85 [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org)  
86 [https://www.togetherwespeak.org/](https://www.togetherwespeak.org/)  
validate the programme’s Theory of Change.

Important evidence of synergy between CSI and CIVICUS operations is the fact that CSI-supported activities contribute to CIVICUS’ overall knowledge generation. Among these are i.a. the annual publications, the State of Civil Society Report and the CIVICUS Monitor, as well as the CSI-hosted Enabling Environment National Assessment (EENA) which by end of 2016 were carried out in 22 countries.\(^{88}\)

### 3.2 INNOVATION FOR CHANGE

Innovation for Change (IFC) is the largest initiative in CIVICUS, and “more than 800 CSOs, four donors, and five implementers have in some way touched the initiative over the last three years”\(^{89}\). It was launched at a workshop in Istanbul in 2014, with ambitious programme goals – setting up six regional innovation hubs in just under three years, and getting four donors to participate as partners in a co-creation process. This initial co-creation process, which was completed during 2016, brought together donors, the project partners (CIVICUS and Counterpart International (CI)) and regional and national organisations in ongoing dialogue, exploration, trial and testing, to determine how each hub should be structured and governed. Since then, USAID and Sida no longer regularly participated in IfC events, but maintained an on-going dialogue, while emphasising that CIVICUS and CI together with local partners assume full ownership of the initiative. Co-creation principles have continued to be applied by all current stakeholders, working together as equal partners,\(^{90}\) and the regional hubs’ priorities, establishment process and focus areas were all determined by regional civil society stakeholders in a way that worked for them and their context.

The IFC regions are Latin America and Caribbean, Africa, East-Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia, South Asia, and Middle East and North Africa. By end of 2017, five\(^{91}\) hubs are making good, albeit diverse progress, with some choosing to immediately engage with their constituencies and identify services needed. “The regions are identifying the problems and how to deal with them. For example, Central Asia is partnering with government, while the East Asia process is focused on human rights

---

\(^{88}\) CIVICUS Annual report 2015-2016.
\(^{89}\) SLT interview, November 2017.
\(^{90}\) Interviews with IFC hub participants, November 2017.
\(^{91}\) There are five hubs as two regions – Central Asia and South Asia – operates from the same hub, based in Bangkok.
activists.”  

The Africa hub chose to establish a sound governance and secretariat structure before planning activities, and the hub was launched at its first major event, CampaignCon, in November 2017. “The IFC platform is where the relationships will be built. We will launch campaigns, log and share information and we need to learn how to use it.” This hub has also “…built a legal defenders app, that will put people in touch with legal support within 72 hrs. Thomson Reuters [an international data specialist company] has offered us access to their database and pro bono help.” In this initiative, IFC is collaborating with CSI to establish the database.

The hubs are increasingly looking for collaborative learning opportunities: “First the hubs were interested in sorting out their own regions. Now there is a huge thirst to share their experiences and looking at how other people are doing it.” The IT processes for IFC were developed through a co-creation process, which was extensive, but resulted in engagement of a broad group of young people in the platform technology. In May 2017, stakeholders from all the hubs met for an inter-regional retreat, which “was a nice moment, there were some that had done a lot but not considered governance and sustainability. Africa shared their experiences.”

A key focus for IFC is building capacity and enabling organisations regionally and nationally. An illustrative example of how regional connections enabled national capacity enhancement was provided from Mauritania: “…we did the media training three days before a referendum on CSOs. The workshop was used to produce a press release that was put onto social and international media spaces. The organisations who attended (we planned for 15 and 30 turned up!) learned how to document and reveal issues in their countries – before this we couldn’t reach these voices on the ground.”

One of the most frequently mentioned issues was that of language and the need to ensure that more CIVICUS and IFC material is translated into the main languages of the hubs and also into sub regional languages at local level. Currently CIVICUS has some internal capacity to do translations into Spanish, Arabic, and French, which however, is spread thin and resides in staff with many other responsibilities. The organisation is aware of the language barrier, but apparently only limited systematic measures have been taken to address the problem.
Because of the size and complexity of IfC, CIVICUS established a separate cluster for the project within the new structure. As convener and coordinator CIVICUS works to build capacity at national and regional levels, and the cluster supports hub stakeholders in the establishment of hub platforms, structure and governance. The CIVICUS IFC cluster, together with CI are seen as “Helper Hubs” to the regional hubs – in other words a source of information, support, and convening assistance. The Helper Hub acts as secretariat to the IFC community. Over the next two years, “... as the hubs become more self-sufficient and sustainable, it is likely that the work of the cluster will change”, with different elements of CIVICUS’ IFC work being incorporated into other clusters such as networks and/or research. IFC work as part of the global ‘Helper Hub’ with Counterpart International will continue in this way, “...until the Donor Coordination Group or the IFC Governance Circle decides differently”.

Next up on IFC cluster’s agenda is working on global governance with all of the hubs. This is already in process, supported by a well-researched and consulted report which details the proposed governance structure developed by hub stakeholders in May 2017 based on three options with a particular focus on supporting and enabling innovation – in other words “Governance for Innovation”.98

---

IFC hub participants interviewed99 all felt positively about the process of co-creation, but more importantly, could articulate clearly the benefits to their organisations and to civil society in their regions: “[We] started to be connected with lots of African countries and sharing of information became much better and we started to learn from each other and improve our tools”; “[IFC] enabled us to look at other things we could do around closing civic space, helped us to engage media and report on the process. The relationship it is like a mother and a son and the mother is interested in your growth and build your capacity”; “They have been able to introduce us to tools for advocacy and influencing and maintaining the links between the grassroots and the global.... Working with CIVICUS gives you visibility”; “Some of it is capacity building and exchange – learned so much about governance from [name withheld] – now if she is in a workshop they tell her to go and lead sessions on governance, and she can say I didn’t learn at school but in the CIVICUS school”; “we have strong relationships now and we could plan a workshop that made a lot of noise in civil society”; “I’ve been travelling a lot in relation to IFC work. When I get home, I do a debriefing with others. Now other organisations I’ve been working with have started using that methodology”; “Civic space is closing all the time in my country and there is legislation that is seeking to close organisations... it has also

---

99 Interviews during the CampaignCon conference in Pretoria, November 2017.
been good to communicate with others and especially human rights defenders and comparing experiences and strategies for dealing with issues.”

Of the two primary donors, Sida is known for its flexibility and willingness to engage around programme results and risks: “there is a different level of trust and efficiency with Sida...is flexible in reallocation of funds between hubs and the money flow works well”\textsuperscript{100}, while USAID’s funding framework is more rule-bound. Sida funding goes directly to CIVICUS, and USAID funding flows through Tides\textsuperscript{101} to be sub-granted to regional hubs and to Counterpart International for Helper Hub operational and programmatic work. The CIVICUS/CI relationship faced initial coordination problems through 2016, but CI personnel changed in early 2017 and the partnership is once again working effectively.

### 3.3 COMPLEMENTARITY AND SYNERGIES

A wide reading of CIVICUS documents and the evaluation interviews, indicated that the data collection for CIVICUS publications provides a substantial and credible evidence base for CIVICUS initiatives, as well as a knowledge base which informs a wide range of platforms and stakeholders.

The IFC and CSI programmes are good examples of CIVICUS’ focus on complementary initiatives within the framework of the SP. The initiatives have flexible, not fixed structures, which also serve as funding platforms for focused pilot programmes, which are gradually incorporated into CIVICUS’ core business. The fact that most interviewees were not conversant with “CSI” as a programme, but rather with the specific activities and their outcomes, which were well-known and recognized as being of great importance, demonstrates the coherence and cause driveness of the initiatives. On the other hand, respondents across the globe were familiar with “the innovation hubs”, seeing this as a CIVICUS initiative, but not a separate programme.

Importantly, as one funding partner noted, CIVICUS “operates in overlapping spaces with other international organisations...it has a less sharply defined mandate [than specific interest organisations]”. This means that CIVICUS can “…maintain focus on the broader needs of civic space”. The two programmes reflect important focus areas within CIVICUS’ core business: CSI addresses advocacy around civic spaces

\textsuperscript{100}IFC cluster interview, November 2017.
\textsuperscript{101}Tides is a US-based public charity that distributes money from donors to other organisations working in a range of areas including human rights.
and puts pressure on those seeking to close civic space and limit people’s voices from those spaces; and IFC complements this in its convening role by connecting and enabling activists and organisations in the same region and across regions, promoting knowledge sharing and encouraging the development of new and innovative approaches for communication, support, funding and events.

An important focus for IFC and CSI programmes is innovation through the testing of new and flexible approaches for mobilising and developing useful platforms and tools for national and local level stakeholders. There was extensive evidence in the IFC programme of developing innovative ways to provide support to local organisations that are not registered and cannot receive funds from foreign sources. A staff member commented that: “We’re looking at the legal frameworks and the challenges of digital money in the Middle East to see if this has potential to support CSOs to get access to funding. We were inspired by the Latin America experience of using digital money. We’re also looking to support initiatives in Egypt through other vendors in the region”. Local or regional peer organisations vet where this kind of indirect funding takes place. CIVICUS is recognised for innovative out-of-the-box thinking, as a Board member commented: “…CIVICUS can serve as a model-organisation in the sector. It is quickly moving into that space and can become a model in the way they organise their work”. This is clearly in line with CIVICUS’ 4th internal strategic goal of becoming a world class organisation.

The ET found evidence of synergy between different CIVICUS initiatives. An IFC staff member commented that “IFC feeds from all the other clusters e.g., Capacity, Advocacy, Research – because we want to introduce the way we do things into CIVICUS as a whole”. The Civil Society Resourcing Specialist enlisted all clusters in thinking about the most resilient funding models for the civil society landscape. Another respondent noted that CIVICUS’ role in building the counter narrative work is important as well as ensuring engagement with the diversity of actors. The SPEAK initiative identified potential recipients for the CRF. One respondent mentioned that AGNA linkages give the organisation global connections and capacity building opportunities, and activities of “the regional hub” enabled organisations and people in the different countries of the region to talk and share information and strategies. Communications staff mentioned the way different programmes connected and enabled synergy; e.g. “…there is a lot of ground for collaboration between IFC and Action for Sustainable Development…and the meeting in Denmark drew upon the CSI and CIVICUS networks”. Another example given was the possibilities the hubs provide for collaboration on input for the UN, e.g. to special reviews, UN resolutions and debates.

Internal engagement is, however, not without tensions, but issues arising appear to be addressed head on by staff, who are proactive and empowered to speak out. One example was the advocacy cluster staff who felt their capacity was not being harnessed in providing advocacy capacity building for the hubs; a problem which is
considered transitional and due to the need for the hubs to consolidate before being able to define needs for cross-fertilisation from other CIVICUS initiatives.

Examples of synergies between projects

- **One example is how the CIVICUS Monitor has informed advocacy on the Sustainable Development Goals.** CIVICUS created an index on the state of civil society liberties for the 44 countries that reviewed their goal progress at 2017’s UN High Level Political Forum.\(^\text{103}\)

- **CIVICUS has prepared similar indexes for a 2017 G20 meeting and BRICS Summit.** Repackaging the Monitor findings for intergovernmental meetings provided an important opportunity for CIVICUS to collaborate across project work streams.\(^\text{104}\)

- **The UNLEASH: Sustainable Development Goals Innovation Lab in Denmark brought together 1,000 international development talents from around the world to develop implementation programmes for the goals.** Action for Sustainable Development was asked to recruit 30 members from the CIVICUS network and other CIVICUS projects to be fully sponsored to participate in this event. The CIVICUS attendees were able to work with experts across sectors to design resource efficient and scalable projects to implement the goals. A number of these projects received funding and pro-bono technical support. It has been suggested that Action for Sustainable Development and CIVICUS are annual partners in this event.

## 4 Concluding assessment

The analysis in chapter 2 reviewed the CIVICUS’ leadership, structure, internal systems and implementation effectiveness against the strategic framework, and considered each of these in terms of relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The two initiatives – CSI and IFC – were analysed in Chapter 3 with the aim of identifying synergies and complementarity. This chapter summarises findings and conclusions from Chapters 2 and 3, and aims to answer the evaluation questions and address the specific OECD evaluation criteria.

---

\(^\text{102}\) Examples provided Communications Custer, November 2017.

\(^\text{103}\) [http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/07/achieve-ambitious-goals-need-start-basic-rights/](http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/07/achieve-ambitious-goals-need-start-basic-rights/)

The overall finding is that CIVICUS as an organisation is fit-for-purpose to achieve its mission and realise, or at least contribute substantially to, its strategic goals within the given political global context.

4.1 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

CIVICUS’ non-sector-specific focus on civic space places it in a unique position. The new SP 2017-2022 addresses pertinent global questions relevant to closing civic space, as well as the ongoing threats posed by climate change. The SP clearly defines CIVICUS’ focus of operations, making use of international mechanisms and strategies (e.g. UN and the SDGs), as well as the extended network of civil society organisations and actors from global to local level. A thorough and extensive consultative process ensured that members, the Board of Directors and staff all have full ownership of the SP. Sub-strategies for specific areas – membership, communication, inclusion etc. are in place and being operationalised. It is worth noting that CIVICUS is not as strategic-document heavy as many other organisations, and most documents reviewed are user- and reader-friendly.

CIVICUS’ vision is of a worldwide community of informed, inspired, committed citizens engaged in confronting the challenges facing humanity. The vision and strategic goals articulated in the SP 2017-2022 are highly relevant in the current global context of closing civic space and alarming climate change. CIVICUS lobbies strongly at the UN, ensuring that the crisis of civic space unfolding at national and grassroots levels is placed on international agendas. CIVICUS also works at regional and national levels through programmes and platforms like IFC, CSI, AGNA and others.

In national, often politically hostile environments, the CIVICUS international brand provides members with support and credibility. CIVICUS is known to be a dynamic, knowledgeable, flexible, respectful and open-minded collaborator. Members appreciate CIVICUS as an organisation of the global south, giving them a great sense of solidarity. A respondent who has worked with CIVICUS said “Their strength is their global reach and their ability to consolidate or engage civil society and convening power. If you need something to go global they are the organisation to go to. I am not sure of their weaknesses. We have never had a bad experience with them. The work they have done with us has always been of good quality”105. The membership base has a global reach, albeit with severe geographical and language bias (the South Pa-

105 Interview with donor/collaborator, November 2017.
cific and the non-Anglophone world are less represented).

Operating as a global alliance with frequent meetings and conferences with international participation, CIVICUS inevitably has a **heavy carbon footprint**, but also a high level of awareness about this. Attempts to address this include working virtually and having clear policies and practices to save paper, energy, water and office supplies.

### 4.2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

CIVICUS has a **solid governance structure** with well-established mechanisms with clear mandates and modus operandi. The Board of Directors engages actively within its defined oversight and advisory roles vis-à-vis the secretariat and operations. The AGM is participatory and held on-line over five days, encouraging member participation.

There is a clear division between strategic and operational leadership, with the SG linking these two. The SG demonstrates excellent strategic sense and a clear understanding of operational requirements for an efficient and effective organisation.

The **revamped secretariat** is taking shape as a flexible and nimble structure able to juggle the multiple and multi-faceted activities CIVICUS undertakes. The new structure includes a high degree of delegation, operating with multiple smaller clusters and a lean core team of decision-makers. The structure is open for synergy and complementarity, and allows interplay between areas, reinforced by a conscious effort to work across. This is important for staff empowerment, satisfaction and career opportunities, as well as agile decision-making at all levels.

The operational leaders are **very aware of the challenges** they have and will face internally and externally. Albeit agile and staff-friendly, the cluster structure also carries the risk of diversion and uncoordinated initiatives – these can only be mitigated by attentive leadership and internal communication. The diligence shown in ensuring that SP implementation is undertaken by an appropriate and suitably flexible structure is commendable and promising.

### 4.3 PEOPLE AND SYSTEMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

CIVICUS staff is **young, professional and highly committed** to CIVICUS’ core values and objectives. The staff cohort contains huge potential, requiring a delicate leadership balance to allow individual aspirations to unfold under reasonable work conditions while steering the organisation in the right direction.
The recent expansion also represents a leadership challenge. Although CIVICUS leadership is strongly outward focused, it is aware of the importance of internal systems and processes in terms of their utility. The managers are well-qualified, but human resources are spread thinly over some vital processes, and the monitoring & evaluation system is of concern, with only one staff member currently.

CIVICUS currently has a good spread of number and types of donors, and carefully monitored processes for expanding funding sources. All the critical systems – financial management, HR management and monitoring & evaluation – and processes are in place, together with comprehensive manuals and guidelines for managers and staff. However, most systems are under (temporary) pressure due to the recent and still on-going restructuring.

CIVICUS engages in many different global and local level advocacy initiatives, and works via a number of different modalities – each serves a specific purpose, target audience or niche-need and addresses different elements of the strategic goals. CIVICUS also has a keen focus on innovation and the organisational courage to experiment with different initiatives, acknowledging that processes do not always develop smoothly or to plan, and that the journey provides additional learning.

4.4 RELEVANCE, EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

The CIVICUS programme is highly relevant to the Swedish civil society strategy 2016-2022, as well as to other donors. Sida’s Strategy aims to “contribute to the development towards a vibrant and pluralistic civil society in developing countries, that operates from a rights-perspective in order to improve living conditions for people living in poverty, in all of its dimensions, to increase respect for human rights, and to promote global sustainable development”. The strategy expects to contribute to (i) strengthened capacity among civil society actors in developing countries, and (ii) a more enabling environment for civil society organisations in developing countries.

Sida was described as a flexible, cooperative and risk-taking donor with a long-term commitment, and is recognised as an engaged strategic dialogue partner, with CIVICUS and with other donors/partners. The IFC co-creation process was cited as an example of Sida’s willingness to innovate and take risks. By emphasising core funding and full support to the strategic priorities of the organisation, Sida enables CIVICUS to achieve its strategic objectives in the way CIVICUS itself determines is most effective.

The ET found that CIVICUS is effective in attaining its objectives, and several recent results-focused evaluations were positive about achievements. Member organisations interviewed during this evaluation appreciated the support and space CIVICUS provides. A number mentioned that CIVICUS respects their roles as members and CSOs.
Support members have received and been included in studies, helping with UN submissions, developing Policy Action briefs, consultations, and side events aimed at opening civic space. CIVICUS is building capacity of organisations and is providing platforms for connections (e.g. AGNA and the regional hubs). CIVICUS supports activists (e.g. the CRF) and keeps focus on civil society in general, including civil society’s own accountability to members and funders. CIVICUS is alert to new opportunities and acts on them: currently, links are explicitly made between CIVICUS advocacy work and the Sustainable Development Goals – these links are used to augment civil society’s role in demanding accountability from national governments.

In terms of sustainability, CIVICUS demonstrates a high degree of awareness not only on financial sustainability, but also in terms of organizational and political sustainability. The financial sustainability is monitored closely by the Board of Directors and the operational leadership prioritises to secure a diverse and solid funding with long-term core funding agreements, which will enhance predictability and allow for a steady cash flow. In addition to this, a reserve fund is being build up to secure operations in case of cash flow crisis. The HR policy with focus on staff retention measures and career development opportunities contributes to organisational sustainability. The political sustainability is safeguarded by operating with a relevant and shared strategic focus supported by all members.

4.5 SYNERGY, COMPLEMENTARITY AND IMPACT

The CIVICUS organisational structure is built on the assumption of synergy and complementarity. Most staff interviews gave examples of internal collaboration around advocacy, capacity development, communications, MELA and so on. The clusters are not fixed structures and may well evolve and change over time, as CIVICUS activities and initiatives evolve. Clusters can be used as temporary vehicles for specific purposes – as is the case with the IFC cluster, parts of which may be absorbed by other clusters once the Hubs are up and running.

The CSI and IFC programmes were reviewed with a particular focus on synergy and complementarity within and between the programmes and in relation to other CIVICUS initiatives. Within CSI complementarity is evident, e.g. in the division of responsibilities among the consortium partners in relation to its strategic goals. CSI operates primarily at the international advocacy level, whereas IFC brings innovation, mobilisation and consolidation across regions through the regional hub structures which provide a platform for regional and local organisation to jointly manage and build regionally strong links. Hubs themselves are platforms for synergy and co-creation of knowledge and tools of use to national and local civil society organisation. There is also evidence of synergy between the hubs and the Monitor – hubs contribute information and then make use of the research results. The ET found no obvious examples of overlap within CIVICUS work, either in terms of the two programmes, or across the full spectrum of work done.
The true impact of CIVICUS’ work would be if and when civic space expands globally instead of closing. However, that is unlikely to happen in the near future, with the current global scenario characterised by securitization, xenophobia, insular societies, shifting geopolitics and punitive governments. Nonetheless, CIVICUS has been impactful in driving home the message of shrinking civic space and in developing mechanisms for resisting this shrinkage. Some positive impacts visible through CIVICUS interventions are that dialogue around civic space is kept alive at UN level and confirmed through activities of the UNSR, and CIVICUS’ contributions to the UPRs. CIVICUS amplifies the voice of otherwise voiceless CSOs on various global platforms, and has succeeded in being referenced at key international events such as the World Economic Forum. CIVICUS’ key products – the Civic Space Monitor and the State of Civil Society Report – are recognised as important reference documents among members and beyond, and on occasion, CIVICUS’ staff writings and views are covered by international media houses like The Guardian and Al Jazeera. CIVICUS has developed mechanisms such as the CRF to ensure the legitimacy, safety, and even survival of members and activists in fragile situations. With support from CIVICUS, activists at national level are organising civil action against shrinking space, and protecting human rights defenders.

An issue at CIVICUS is to be able to capture and document these outcomes and impacts. The MELA cluster has developed a new monitoring paradigm and introduced corresponding tools and methods for data collection and processing. This has started to yield results, and will presumably build clearer outcome and impact pictures in the times to come.

4.6 A FINAL COMMENT

The following quote from the CIVICUS Evaluation Inception Report reflects the ET’s perception of CIVICUS at the onset of the evaluation. The evaluation exercise has confirmed this initial impression and assumption:

|We have got an impression of an organisation with a responsive leadership, operating in a predominantly virtual structure, where staff members from thematic clusters are not necessarily based in the same geographical place. We see the organisational set-up as a response to the challenges faced by a global network, but we also see the challenges in terms of implementation, coherence and effectiveness – and not the least, in terms of evaluating the organisational capacity. We understand that the majority of CIVICUS’ activities are analysis, research, knowledge generation, advocacy or training events and campaigns engaging a wide range of members and|
other civil society actors at global, regional and national levels. We see evidence of comprehensive management systems being in place with detailed and shared procedures, formats and manuals. We assume that CIVICUS leadership has made timely decisions to calibrate the organisation for the challenges during the next strategic period. The evaluation will test and validate this assumption.  

---

The evaluation took place at a time when CIVICUS had just adopted a new Strategic Plan and undertaken a complete restructuring of the secretariat. Arising from this, CIVICUS undertook an extensive and comprehensive reflection process, analysing its purpose, and the resulting requirements for processes, human resources and leadership. Consequently, many of the recommendations below are refinements to processes and initiatives already set in motion by CIVICUS. The timeframe proposed is therefore short, with most recommendations envisaged to take place within the next 6-12 months.

The timing of the evaluation also tallied with Sida’s appraisal of a new partnership contract to start by mid-2018. Considering that Sida has already embarked on a sound collaboration based on core funding and increasingly moves away from earmarked, project funding, while maintaining a high level of critical dialogue and active engagement with CIVICUS, there are no specific recommendations to Sida, except for continuing the partnership based on these principles. The following are recommendations directed at CIVICUS.

**Strategic framework recommendations:**

1. Do a slight editing of the Strategic Plan 2017-2022 to make it more precise and reflect the strong analytical and logical links. This should include:
   a. A clear explanation on the new features of the SP as compared to the previous plan in order to show development and actual relevance.
   b. A clearer explanation of how strategic goals unfold through the activities and how this contributes to achievement of the goals.
   c. A reformulation of Goal #1 to show that achievement is not something that depends entirely on CIVICUS’ efforts: “By 2022, there are broader, visible and more sustained efforts locally, nationally and internationally by civil society actors to protect Civic space and demand improved recognition and protection of Civic freedoms and civil society rights at national, regional and global levels”.

**Membership strategy recommendations:**

2. Maintain a symbolic membership fee with the aim of engaging members and holding them accountable when the new Membership Strategy is approved.
   a. The membership fee should be paid into the planned Solidarity Fund.
**Organisational recommendations:**

3. Formally **clarify the remit of the Programme Management Forum and Operational Management Forum collectively, and the clusters individually**, defining their purpose, obligations, and mutual expectations to harness possible synergies and avoid risks of overlap. This should be done by early 2018 to provide the review of the structure with sufficient background.

4. Consciously **employ proactive collaborative coordination**. This would involve identifying areas of synergy and potential cost-saving efficiencies, anticipating where overlaps and conflicts may occur, optimising existing skills and competencies across the clusters to supporting the various mechanisms, projects, events, and structures; e.g., what do the IFC hubs need from the advocacy cluster, and what does the Monitor need from the hubs?

5. Constantly **monitor organisational dynamics within and between the clusters**, and acknowledge that seamless cooperation is not achieved overnight. Timely action is required when lack of progress or conflicts are detected to secure continued effective operation. When new people fill the vacant posts, there will be a need to guide, nudge, and challenge them into operating in the new structure.

**Financial management recommendations:**

6. Introduce an effective and appropriate **internal audit function**, including contracting external part-time expertise with the aim of enhancing and making visible internal accountability.

**Human resource management recommendations:**

7. Regularly keep track of the **balance between people working remotely or at the head office** to ensure that an efficient and effective balance is in place, as this might change over time in relation to specific personalities as well as organisational needs.

8. Undertake the **induction of new staff** over longer period of time to ensure full integration, particularly for people who will be based remotely. This includes ensuring access to proper knowledge management files to ensure momentum within programmes is maintained.

9. Re-introduce **regular and holistic staff and management performance assessments**, including mechanisms for regular and anonymised feedback on performance, where people in senior positions are appraised by staff, and where participants are anonymous and not selected by the person being appraised.

10. **Strengthen the diversity of the staff profile** to counterbalance the bias towards young, European women, currently dominating the staff group to better balance North/South representation as well as inclusion by employment of e.g. people living with disabilities.
11. **Review the structure and human resourcing of Finance and Operations cluster** to make sure these areas are adequate and fit-for-purpose to manage an organisation of the size and nature of CIVICUS.

**Monitoring & Evaluation recommendations:**

12. Ensure that the initial MELA momentum is not lost and that the **new paradigm based on outcome harvesting is consolidated** and internalised by staff within the organisation, particularly with regard to extracting learning.
   a. Introduce Quick Guides (like in Financial Management) to facilitate the use of DevResults.

**Communications recommendations:**

13. Strengthen the engagement with media through a structured **media engagement strategy**, making different media channels proactive allies in the demand for expanded civic space:
   a. Make the website more user friendly, i.e. faster, more interactive, and multilingual. This may imply setting up a formal institutional arrangement for multiple language translations.
   b. Apply a more diverse approach to external communication with an increased focus on traditional media to influence decision makers.
   c. Focus on systematically enhancing outreach through social media with a conscious effort to use members and partners to enhance the CIVICUS social media presence.
14. Consider systematic outsourcing of translation to overcome the language barrier to non-Anglophone countries. Budget provisions should be made to secure this operation.

**Make UN achievements meaningful at local level:**

15. Increase the focus on how **results obtained through global UN-level advocacy** can best be channelled into national (and local) level advocacy by member organisations, e.g. through the AGNA network and IFC hubs.
6 Annexes

6.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

Sida

The strategic partners to Sida’s Unit for Civil Society (CIVSAM) are made up of both Swedish civil society organisations (CSOs, a.k.a. framework organisations, FOs, or ‘ramorganisationer’ in Swedish) and international CSOs. The FOs have qualified for support from Sida through multiannual agreements from the appropriation item “Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations”107. From 2016 there are 17 FOs and the total amount of financial support that year reached approximately 1.6 billion SEK. The bulk of the budget, approximately 95%, goes through the FO and the remaining funds are channelled to the international CSOs. The distribution of the funds managed by CIVSAM is governed by a government strategy entitled “Strategy for support via Swedish civil society organisation for the period 2016-2022”. The strategy sets out two goals: (1) to strengthen the capacity within civil society, and (2) promoting an enabling environment for civil society organisations.

Sida has supported CIVICUS financially since 2004 and the organisation has been a strategic partner through multiannual agreements since 2008. The relevance of CIVICUS’ work is primarily related to the above-mentioned goal two of the strategy that governs CIVSAM’s work.

CIVICUS

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation is an international alliance of members and partners which constitutes an influential network of organisations at the

107 In Swedish, Anslagsposten ”Stöd genom svenska organisationer i det civila samhället”.
local, national, regional and international levels, and spans a broad spectrum of civil society.

CIVICUS has worked for nearly two decades to strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world, especially in areas where participatory democracy and citizens' freedom of association are threatened. 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.

CIVICUS provides a focal point for knowledge-sharing, common interest representation, global institution-building and engagement among these disparate sectors. It acts as an advocate for citizen participation as an essential component of governance and democracy worldwide. CIVICUS seeks to amplify the voices and opinions of ordinary people and it gives expression to the enormous creative energy of the burgeoning sector of civil society.

CIVICUS is currently working on the organisation’s new strategy for 2017-2022. Broad-based consultations and an evaluation in 2016, including various follow-up studies, have been conducted to collect feedback for the development of the new strategy. CIVICUS and Sida have agreed that CIVICUS will submit a proposal for bridge-funding for the six months of January to June 2018. CIVICUS will then submit a multiannual proposal for July 2018-December 2022 by September 2017.

Civil Society Innovation Initiative

In 2013, the Swedish government, through Sida, and USAID entered a new partnership focused on science, technology, innovation and partnerships (STIP) to source game-changing innovations with the potential to solve longstanding development challenges. Several different initiatives are included in this partnership, one of which is the Civil Society Innovation Initiative, CSII (now renamed Innovation for Change/IFC). The main activities of the CSII started in 2015 and early on the two international civil society organizations CIVICUS (long-standing strategic partner to Sida) and Counterpart International (long-standing strategic partner to USAID) assumed the role as implementing agencies. The CSII was formed in a co-creation process that included Sida’s and USAID’s active engagement and participation, alongside CIVICUS, Counterpart and many other actors, to co-create the initiative’s overall direction. Subsequently, Sida and USAID have gradually stepped away from the process, allowing the civil society actors themselves to take full ownership as the process matured. The aim of CSII is to support new and established approaches to promote, strengthen, and connect a vibrant, pluralistic, and rights-based civil society in open, closing, and closed spaces through the establishment of demand-driven and cutting-edge Civil Society Innovation Initiative (CSII) hubs.
**Civic Space Initiative**

Around the world, efforts by various governments to restrict the space in which civil society operates have grown at an alarming rate. Increasingly, governments are using laws, policies, and practices to limit the ability of people to come together to improve everyday lives. The Civic Space Initiative (CSI) is a multi-year program that began in 2012 to address this troubling trend, aiming to: advance a legal environment that enables all people to exercise the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, and expression; and create spaces for citizens, communities, and civil society organizations to meaningfully engage with government and other power holders on freedoms of assembly, association, and expression. The CSI brings together international partners, including the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), ARTICLE 19, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, and the World Movement for Democracy.

2. **Purpose and Key Questions**

The purpose of the evaluation is

- to contribute to Sida’s understanding, which will feed into the appraisal of CIVICUS’ incoming funding proposal in 2017, of how CIVICUS has adapted to the significant increase in funding and the broadened scope of work; and
- to contribute to learning within CIVICUS, in particular to get an external view of the potential synergies and overlap of their operations.

The key questions for the evaluation are

1. To what extent do the various CIVICUS initiatives, projects and programmes demonstrate synergies (and effectively contribute to the overall goals) versus overlap?
   - Sub-questions: to what extent does CIVICUS have systems/an organisational structure and processes in place that facilitate synergies among their activities, projects and programmes? This question should be seen, partly, in light of the significant increase and broadened diversity of funding to CIVICUS recently, and how the organisation has adapted to this new reality. Other sub-questions may include: (i) have CIVICUS’ organisational structure and vision/identity changed as a result of this growth, and if so, (ii) to what extent are those changes relevant in relation to, and reflect the needs of, their members and tar-
get group; (iii) to what extent has this process been (and is) externally (imposed from outside) or internally (owned by CIVICUS) driven and owned?; and (iv) what are some key positive and negative impacts of CIVICUS’ growth?

2. Related to the Civil Society Innovation Initiative (CSII, now renamed Innovation for Change/IFC):
   a)  [SYNERGIES] To what extent does the CSII complement versus overlap CIVICUS’ other initiatives, projects and programmes?
   b)  [PROCESS] To what extent has the co-creation process – the close collaboration among donors and implementers in the initial program design phase – benefited or weakened the initiative, facilitated or hindered out-of-the-box thinking?
   c)  [OWNERSHIP] To what extent is the CSII perceived of as owned by the implementers and the target group, or imposed by external actors?

3. To what extent does the Civic Space Initiative (CSI) complement versus overlap CIVICUS’ other programmes and initiatives?
   o  Sub-question: to what extent has the new coordination set-up for the CSII established in 2017 had positive and negative effects?

The evaluators shall use these questions as a starting point, but they are encouraged and expected to suggest modifications to ensure the evaluability of the questions, as well as adapting them after initial conversations during the inception phase. Any modifications, or suggested emphasis on certain questions, should however be agreed by Sida and be part of the inception report.

3. Methodology and Scope of Work

The evaluation shall include a desk study, field visits and report writing. The desk study will include a review of relevant documentation in order to contribute to the answers to the above mentioned key questions. In addition to this, field visits will be conducted to countries to explore further the key questions. Interviews will be conducted with relevant staff at CIVICUS (including the board and staff as deemed relevant) and their partners and possibly the target group, as well as Sida and other donors. The period to be evaluated is July 2016 until June, 2017.
Evaluations that Sida commission use the OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria as a starting point.\textsuperscript{108} For the purpose of this evaluation, the priority is on the evaluation criteria relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

4. Timetable and Deliverables

The evaluation team (ET) selected for this assignment will include an inception report, as per below, which will include a proposed plan for conducting the evaluation, including a time table, budget and a narrative part covering methodology and other essential information on how the ET intends to fulfil the requirements of the assignment. The evaluation is expected to be initiated around September and concluded in November 2017. A general time-plan will be submitted by the ET as part of the tender, and a detailed time-plan will be submitted and approved by Sida as part of the initial phase after the signing of the contract.

**Deliverables**

- **Inception report.** Will be submitted to Sida no later than ten working days after the signing of the contract for the assignment. The inception report will be no more than ten (8) pages, excluding any attachments. Sida will approve the inception report within five (5) working days of its reception. CIVICUS shall also be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the inception report. The approved inception report will be the agreed basis for the implementation of the evaluation.

- **Draft reports.** A draft report will be submitted to Sida at a mutually agreed date as specified in the final and agreed inception report.

- The draft report shall be no longer than twenty-five (25) pages, excluding annexes, and with font Times New Roman size 12. The report shall include a table of content, an executive summary of maximum two (2) pages, methodology, analysis of key findings, conclusions and recommendations. It shall also include the following annexes: list of interviewees, list of documents reviewed, terms of reference (this document). Recommendations shall be directed primarily to CIVICUS and their partners, and secondarily to Sida if and when relevant. Sida and CIVICUS will provide feedback on the draft reports no later than seven (7) working days after the submission of the draft reports.

- **Final reports.** Final reports will be submitted to Sida no later than ten (10) calendar days after the submission of the draft reports. The final reports shall fully address Sida’s feedback on the draft reports. The maximum length and the content of the final reports shall be the same as for the draft report mentioned above.

Should the ET wish to suggest modifications to the above, they may do so, but this needs to be clearly justified in the tender and/or inception report.

5. **Budget**

The budget for this assignment has an upper limit of 1 200 000 SEK.
### 6.2 WORK PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meeting whom?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08.11.17</td>
<td>16.00 - 17.00</td>
<td>Interview with CIVICUS Board member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.11.17</td>
<td>11.00 - 12.00</td>
<td>Interview with CIVICUS Board member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.00 - 14.00</td>
<td>Interview with CIVICUS Board member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.11.17</td>
<td>09.30 - 10.30</td>
<td>Skype interview with CSI Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.00 - 12.00</td>
<td>Skype interview with MELA cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.30 - 15.30</td>
<td>Skype interview with Communications cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.11.17</td>
<td>14.30 - 17.00</td>
<td>Team start-up meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.11.17</td>
<td>10.00 - 11.00</td>
<td>Introduction at CIVICUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.00 - 12.30</td>
<td>Interview with MELA cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.30 - 15.00</td>
<td>Team work - preparation of interview guides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.00 - 16.00</td>
<td>Meeting with IFC cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.11.17</td>
<td>10.30 - 11.30</td>
<td>Meeting with Membership &amp; Networks cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.00 - 14.00</td>
<td>Meeting with Advocacy &amp; Campaigns cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.00 - 15.00</td>
<td>Meeting with SLT member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.11.17</td>
<td>10.00 - 11.00</td>
<td>Meeting with Communications cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.00 - 12.00</td>
<td>Meeting with Advocacy &amp; Campaigns cluster on Crisis Response Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.00 - 16.00</td>
<td>Meeting with SLT members including SG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.11.17</td>
<td>09.00 - 10.00</td>
<td>Meeting with IFC cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.00 - 13.00</td>
<td>Meeting with South African partner organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.30</td>
<td>Meeting with South African partner organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.00 - 18.00</td>
<td>Skype meeting with Civic Space Research cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7pm SA time</td>
<td>Skype meeting with voting member / Monitor reseach partner in Latin America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8pm SA time</td>
<td>Anabel Cruz: Board Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.11.17</td>
<td>08.00 - 09.00</td>
<td>Meeting with Human Resources cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>09.15 - 10.00</td>
<td>Wrap-up meeting with SLT members including SG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.00 - 11.00</td>
<td>Meeting with Financial Management and Accounting staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>Skype meeting with Capacity Development cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>Skype meeting with partner organization in Latin America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>Skype meeting with partner organization in Latin America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.11.17</td>
<td>12.00 - 14.00</td>
<td>Team wrap-up session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Departure team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.11.17</td>
<td>10.00 - 11.00</td>
<td>Skype interview with CS Resourcing Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.30</td>
<td>Skype meeting with Capacity Development cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.00 - 17.00</td>
<td>Skype interview with voting member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.11.17</td>
<td>10.00 - 11.00</td>
<td>Skype interview with funding partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.30 - 12.30</td>
<td>Skype interview with CSI consortium member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>Skype interview with Danish CIVICUS member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skype interview with AGNA Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.11.17</td>
<td>11.00 - 11.45</td>
<td>Skype interview with member organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.30</td>
<td>Skype interview with bilateral donor agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>Skype interview with bilateral donor agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.11.17</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>Skype interview with bilateral donor agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>Skype interview with Danish national NGO platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>Skype interview with private donor agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.30</td>
<td>Skype interview with CIVICUS Board member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.11.17</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>Skype interview with CSI consortium member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skype interview with voting member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.11.17</td>
<td>All day</td>
<td>Team workshop in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01.12.17</td>
<td>All day</td>
<td>Team workshop in Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.12.17</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>Skype interview with private donor agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.3 LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

CIVICUS Board
- CIVICUS Board Pack, December 2016
- CIVICUS Board Pack, April 2017
- CIVICUS Board Pack, December 2017
- CIVICUS Induction Manual, 2017
- CIVICUS Board members [http://www.civicus.org/index.php/who-we-are/civicus-board](http://www.civicus.org/index.php/who-we-are/civicus-board)

Civic Space Initiative
- Civic Space Initiative, Concept Note (?), CIVICUS, May 8, 2012
- Innovative support to the civil society, Sida, 23.07.2014
- End-of-Project Evaluation for the Civic Space Initiative (CSI), by Cara Stern and François Lenfant, Sida, December 2015
- Civic Space Initiative – Highlight Report, CIVICUS/ICNL/ Article19/WMD, September 2017
- Protecting and Promoting Rights and Responsibilities for a more Diverse and Resilient Civil Society, CIVICUS, n.d.
- Writing about civic space on CIVICUS platforms - a practical handbook, CIVICUS, August 2017

Innovation for Change (IFC)
- Civil Society Innovation Initiative (CSII), Main Proposal, November 2015
- Innovation for Change Network Governance Report, by Stephanie Clohesy & Francesca Pick, July 2017

AGNA
- INTERIM NARRATIVE REPORT (AGNA), July 2016

Sida funding documents
- Amendment to the Agreement on additional core funding between Sida and CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Partnership, June 2015
• Second amendment to the agreement on core support to CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Partnership, 2014-2017, July 2016
• AGREEMENT BETWEEN SIDA AND INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR NOT-FOR-PROFIT-LAW INC. ON SUPPORT OF CIVIC SPACE INITIATIVE DURING 2012-2015, September 2012
• Strategy for support via Swedish civil society organizations for the period 2016-2022, Government Offices of Sweden / Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.
• Sida’s Evaluation Guidelines 2010, UTV, Sida, n.d.

CIVICUS Strategic Plan and process
• Our Strategic Priorities 2013-2017, CIVICUs, n.d.
• CIVICUS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2017-2022, CONSULTATION REPORT, CIVICUS, January 2017
• CIVICUS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2017-2022, DRAFT FOR COMMENT, March 2017
• CIVICUS Strategic Plan 2017-2022, CIVICUS, n.d.
• TOC narrative, 2017

Received from CIVICUS
• Annual Report 2015/2016, CIVICUS, September 2016
• Aggregated Annual Financial Statements for the Year ended 30 June 2017, CIVICUS, September 2017
  o Board and Staff Diversity Tables
  o Budget Forecast 2017-2022
  o Development Evaluation Principles
  o Employee Handbook
  o External Evaluations and Assessments
  o Finance Quick Guides
  o Grant-making Mechanism, Concept
  o HRBA Project Cycle Checklist
  o Leadership and Development Programme
  o Membership Strategy 2017-2022, September 2017
  o New Initiatives, Vuka! Coalition for Civic Action and Beyond Accountability
  o Operational Plan 2017-2022
  o Organogram, (August) September 2017
  o Partner Checklist and Agreement
  o Policies
  o Salary Scales, September 2017
  o Strategic Plan 2017-2022
  o Sub-Partnership Agreement and Partner Checklist

• Partner checklists and agreements
  o CIVICUS Partner checklist
- **Evaluations and Assessments**
  - CIVICUS Digital Audience Analytics Report, by Monica Davies, CIVICUS, 19 July 2017
  - CIVICUS Digital Communications Strategy Inception Report, by Monica Davies, CIVICUS, 14 July 2017
  - Digital Communications Strategy, Draft 1, by Monica Davies, July 2017
  - CIVICUS Verification research, pp-presentation, n.d.
  - Network & Membership Engagement, Final Report, CIVICUS, March 2017
  - CIVICUS INCLUSION AUDIT, by Francesca Molinaro, CIVICUS, January 2017
  - Innovation for Change - Network Governance Report, by Stephanie Clohesy & Francesca Pick, July 2017

- **Finance Quick Guides**
  - Definitions and clarifications: Agreements, 250117
  - Partners
  - Roles and responsibilities in relation to the procurement processes, activities and controls
  - Procurement Threshold
  - Processes Requisitions
  - Processes Travel

- **Policies and Templates**
  - POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL/Handbook, CIVICUS, September 2016
  - Approvals Framework, September 2017
  - CIVICUS practice note on Anti-bribery and corruption, n.d.
  - Board Reimbursement Policy, CIVICUS, n.d.
  - CIVICUS Investment Policy, version 1, CIVICUS, 24.01.2016
  - CIVICUS IT Policy, n.d.
  - CIVICUS Confidentiality Information Agreement, template, n.d.
  - CIVICUS CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION, TEMPLATE, N.D.
  - CIVICUS Exception to Procurement Policy form, template, n.d.
  - CIVICUS Procurement Analysis, template, n.d.
  - Service Level Agreement – international, template, n.d.
  - Service Level Agreement – South Africa, template, n.d.
  - Service Level Agreement – short term, template, n.d.
6.4 CIVICUS ORGANISATIONAL CHART

CIVICUS Organogram

OMF

PMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1

PMF

OMF

SLT

Operations and Systems (OMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Maria Koka)
- Data Specialist (Tobz externally)
- Staff 4

Membership and Networks (PMF)
- Lead (Michael Silberman)
- Membership Coordinator (Yaelle Cohen)
- Network Liaison (Daniela Zvobgo)
- Admin Coordinator (Sharon Wachtel)
- Staff 5 Consult 1

Innovation and Change (OMF)
- Lead (Cathy Kadoe)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 3 Consult 1

Training and Development (PMF)
- Lead (Caroline Njiru)
- Coordinator (Khalil Mwambo)
- Staff 4 Consult 2

Advocacy and Campaigns (PMF)
- Lead (David Kole)
- Coordinator (Cherie Deliah)
- Staff 5 Consult 2

Capacity Development (PMF)
- Lead (Tobz externally)
- Coordinator (Miguel Reis)
- Staff 4 Consult 1
6.5 METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

Methodology
The overall evaluation approach\textsuperscript{109} has been an open and iterative process, during which the Evaluation Team (ET) has interacted closely with the CIVICUS Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and key staff members. The evaluation is based on qualitative evidence gathered through a document review\textsuperscript{110} and interviews with 52 informants. Informants have included Board members, work groups and networks, member organisations, senior level and cluster staff, as well as partner organisations, donor agencies and funding partners. This provided the ET with a 360º view of the organisation.


tabular_data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview of interviews</th>
<th>Main issues discussed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board members (current and incoming)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting members (individual and organisational)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Management Team members</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff and advisers</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors and partners</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total interviews</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Selection of informants was guided by the intention to cover all categories of stakeholders, as well as practical considerations as to what was possible within the time available, and geography. The ET relied primarily on CIVICUS to identify informants. This potential bias was counterbalanced by the volume of interviews as well as ET interrogation of the rationale for selection of specific informants.

Face-to-face interviews were concentrated at the head office and during the CampaignCon Conference\textsuperscript{111} in Johannesburg, South Africa, as well as in Delhi, India where one team member is based. The majority of interviews were individual and semi-structured, based on interview checklists. The interviews focused on change processes and outcome and have aimed at answering the EQs, as well as

\textsuperscript{109} For a more detailed explanation of the evaluation methodology and approach, reference is made to the Inception Report submitted by NIRAS Indevelop to Sida on 08.11.2017.
\textsuperscript{110} Annex 3: List of documents consulted.
\textsuperscript{111} https://campaigncon.org/
filling in the organisational capacity assessment model applied for the overall analysis – with a focus on Purpose, Processes, People and Leadership.\textsuperscript{112} To ensure global outreach a considerable part (60\%) of the interviews has been carried out via Skype.

For the purpose of triangulation of information, findings are analysed against the EQs, and conclusions are reviewed against the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria\textsuperscript{113} of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

**Limitations**

The timing of the evaluation coincided with a very busy period for CIVICUS planning the upcoming International Civil Society Week (ICSW) which took place in Fiji between 4-8 December 2017. In spite of this, staff and Board members have readily made themselves available for interviews.

The initially planned survey among members was dropped, as member organisations have been through an intensive year of surveys during the preparation of the new Strategic Plan 2017-2022, and CIVICUS has imposed a ban on surveys for the time being. The ET respected this ban and opted to include a broader outreach through Skype interviews.

Similarly, the initial plan to conduct a workshop with headquarter staff in Johannesburg was also dropped, as CIVICUS had gone through an organisational mapping assessment supported by Ford Foundation in May 2017 when preparing for the recent re-structuring of the secretariat. As this assessment was comprehensive and addressed operational, structural and programme issues, the ET opted to build on this during individual interviews and focus group discussions with the SLT.

It was a challenge to plan field work in a global network organisation, where meeting physically with a critical mass of informants in one place is almost impossible. Discussions on possible field work sites originally considered Thailand, Kenya, Uruguay, Geneva and London. However, after careful cost-benefit analysis in terms of time and money spent on travel against number of face-to-face interviews, the ET opted for extensive use of Skype interviews. The quality of the data collection has not been affected by the extensive use of Skype-interviews. Focus-group

\begin{flushleft}
\begin{itemize}
  \item[112] The PPPL-model was described in detail in the *CIVICUS Evaluation Inception Report*, NIRAS Indevelop, 08.11.2017, pp. 10-11.
  \item[113] http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm
\end{itemize}
\end{flushleft}
discussions were conducted only with the SLT and on a few other occasions due to time pressure and geographical dispersion of informants.
6.6 CIVICUS IN A FEW WORDS

This sub-chapter provides a brief background to CIVICUS – the history, the governance and operational structure and the strategic goals.\textsuperscript{114}

**History**

The history of CIVICUS is important to understand the current organisation and its strong culture, dominated by dedication to defend democratic values, human and citizens’ rights, and civic space. CIVICUS was established in the early 1990s by a group of civil society leaders, seeing the need for a global network alliance for citizens’ engagement, defence of civic space and human rights.\textsuperscript{115} The first headquarters were established in Washington DC, and activities were concentrated on traditional capacity building with a focus on East Africa. The organisation worked mainly with private funding. In 2002, the decision was taken to move the headquarters to Johannesburg in South Africa as a strong statement to underline CIVICUS’ global identity. The organisation grew and became more visible, acting as a convener of events and agenda-setter for new approaches to defend civic space. This was accompanied by growth in terms of staff, a broader funding base, and increased number of members. With the formulation of a new SP in late 2016/early 2017, CIVICUS responded to the global context of increasingly shrinking space for civil society and climate change threats to humanity and moved into a new phase (“version 3.0”). This combined with organisational and financial growth demanded a reorganisation to ensure a competent and agile response to implementation and new strategic priorities.

\textit{“The next five years present some urgent challenges and opportunities. We must reverse the worrying trends in civic freedoms before they become the new normal. We must build a new economic system before inequality, insecurity and climate change tear our societies apart. We must promote a new, progressive internationalism in the face of a retreat into extremism, nationalism and populism. The changes we make now are likely to make or break our chances of achieving the vision embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals.”} \textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{114} A comprehensive and all-round introduction is found in the CIVICUS Board Induction Munual 2017, December 2017.

\textsuperscript{115} [http://www.civicus.org/index.php/who-we-are](http://www.civicus.org/index.php/who-we-are); and interview with CIVICUS Senior Leadership Team, November 2017.

\textsuperscript{116} Message from Secretary General, CIVICUS Strategic Plan 2017-2022, p.ii.
**Structure**

The governance structure of CIVICUS consists of an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of voting and associate members as the top-level structure.\(^{117}\) Voting members at the AGM are responsible for electing the members for the Board of Directors, approving the Annual Report, providing input and feedback on activities, finances and messages as needed; and participating in discussing and defining CIVICUS strategic priorities every five years. The AGM provides a platform for members to discuss current topics of common interest; e.g. at the November 2017 AGM, members discussed and provided comments to the new Membership Strategy, which will be launched in 2018.\(^{118}\)

The elected **Board of Directors** consists of 13 elected members, which serve for a three-year term with approximately half of the members changing every 1½ year.\(^{119}\) Current CIVICUS voting members are eligible to nominate someone or to be nominated as candidates. For the 2017 elections, voting CIVICUS members were invited to nominate individual candidates through a call for nominations. A Nominations Committee selected a list of 12 candidates for which voting members could vote. The voting remained open during September-October, and the new members of the Board were presented at the ICSW in December 2017.

The Board convenes twice a year (April and December) and operates with an Executive Committee, an Operations Committee, a Governance & Membership Committee and ad hoc committees (currently a Strategic Priority Reference Group).\(^{120}\) Members are elected from civil society organisations representing a global outreach and strong networks/member organisations with focus on human rights. The current chair is serving her second term as chair. The Board of Directors has “decided that it needs to be a policy and oversight oriented role which provides space to the SG/CEO to lead in the management of work and delivery of programmes. The shared leadership between Board and staff is one which strengthens the focus on mission, effectiveness and accountability.”\(^{121}\)

The **operational structure** consists of the headquarters in Johannesburg, offices in Geneva, London and Washington DC and approximately one third of the staff members placed “all over the world”. The organisation is headed by a **Secretary**

\(^{117}\) [http://www.civicus.org/index.php/annual-general-meeting](http://www.civicus.org/index.php/annual-general-meeting)


General (SG), who provides the link between the governance and the operational structure.

CIVICUS is a membership organisation with “a total of 4,023 members (both voting and associate) from 178 countries divided as follows: 3,831 associate members (both individual and organisation, 37 individual voting members, 147 organisational voting members, 27 voting members (both individual and organisations) are recipients of a fee waiver.” In addition, there are approximately 950 organisational associate members and the rest of the membership is made up of individual associate members. The CIVICUS’ membership strategy has recently been revised to align with the overall Strategic Plan 2017-2022. The draft will be presented to the Board in early 2018 for approval. Prior to the formulation of the new membership strategy, a thorough analysis of the membership networks was undertaken in early 2017 with the aim of assessing the current state of the CIVICUS membership with focus on strengths and weaknesses. The report presented a long list of recommendations, i.a. increasing membership engagement; redeveloping the membership page on the CIVICUS website; refocusing membership roles; providing support for membership administration; and ensuring the upgrade of the CRM. The recommendations have fed into the formulation of the new membership strategy, and are currently being addressed by the Membership & Network cluster. The objective of the new membership strategy is “to draw on the strength of the CIVICUS alliance to collectively achieve a more just, inclusive and sustainable world by better aligning our network and membership development plans, programmes and policies with our mission, vision and strategy.” The new membership strategy is planned to be operational from mid-2018.

Members are currently divided in different categories: individual and organisational members, which can be either voting or associate members. Member registration is kept in a CRM-data base from which information can be extracted according to region, theme, type of membership, voting status etc. When an individual or organisational membership application is received, CIVICUS verifies the application for both voting and associate members (the latter only recently). The new membership strategy will operate with a different categorization of members, whereby members are placed in concentric circles with the active members (i.e. Board, committee and working group participants) at the centre, followed by

---

122 Ibid., p.16.  
125 CIVICUS Members at the Centre, Membership Policy, Terms and Conditions, March 2014, pp.4-5.
members (individuals or organisations) which is “the only single membership category available” in future. The circle also counts allies who support the alliance without undergoing verification process necessary for membership, as well as the “followers or consumers of CIVICUS information”. Unlike the present membership, the new will not operate with a membership fee, but will focus on solidarity rather than benefits. This means that members will be invited to contribute to a Solidarity Fund and thereby engage in mutual support functions. However, the option of re-establishing a membership fee is kept for future decision, as it may become necessary.126

**Strategic goals**
CIVICUS is guided by its Strategic Plan (SP) 2017-2022127 which operates with four strategic goals with respective targets by 2022:

1. **Defending civic freedoms and democratic values.**
   - There will be an improvement in civic space in countries where civic freedoms are under attack, improved recognition and protection of civic freedoms at the national, regional and global levels, and improved participation of people and organisations in democratic processes at all levels.

2. **Strengthening the power of people to organise, mobilise and take action.**
   - There will be many and diverse examples of how people have organized and mobilised to drive positive change from influencing local actors to changing global policies.

3. **Empowering a more accountable, effective and innovative civil society.**
   - Civil Society actors will have greater capacity to deliver their mandates, will be experimenting more often, will be taking calculated risks and will be more inclusive in the ways that they organize themselves and their work.

4. **Building a world class organisation**128
   - The 4th strategic goal is internal and intended to gather all in-house engagement under one common goal related to organisational capacity.

**Ways of working**
Based on a firm commitment “to strengthen civil society and citizen action throughout the world”129 (mission), CIVICUS responds to the shrinking civic space,
the democratic deficit and the need for improving civil society practice by **working with a variety of partners in different ways** to:

- **Build solidarity among civil society across borders and at scale**
- **Support civil society to connect with others**
- **Produce timely and world-class knowledge and analysis**
- **Advocate for open spaces and systemic change**
- **Amplify voices of those not usually included**
- **Promote the resourcing of a diverse and resilient civil society**
- **Innovate and incubate bold initiatives**
- **Promote, model and disseminate civil society best practice**
6.7 OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The restructuring process
When the broad lines of the new SP were ready in February 2017 after extensive consultations with members, the staff was invited by the SG to provide comments and was informed that a process of “re-shaping the structure and improving the ways we work” would take place. This was followed by a detailed communication explaining the new set-up with a leaner management group, the establishment of more and smaller clusters, need for improved internal communication, and integration of stand-alone projects in the main organisation. The overall re-structuring process took place over a relatively short period of time, but with a high level of involvement of and information to staff. In spite of this, some interviewees have indicated that the process was maybe too fast – as expressed by one: “On Friday you worked in a Department, and when you woke up Monday, you were in a cluster”. But others have appreciated the swiftness, which may have caused momentarily chaos, but also an immediate way forward, which has not interrupted implementation momentum.

The SLT mandate
The SLT has prepared a charter and defines its main obligation as ensuring “that CIVICUS is functioning as well as it can administratively, financially, and programmatically.” The charter also clarifies the borders to other management organs within the organisations (Board, PMF and OMF – see below). The aim is clearly aligned to the forth strategic goal and stated as building “a world-class organisation that leads the way in how civil society operates.” The key areas of SLT responsibility include the financial stability and sustainability; an appreciative leadership which allows for development of individual performance; responsiveness to members, and at the overall level stewarding the Strategic Goals of CIVICUS. The SLT meets on a fortnightly basis.

130 E-mail from Secretary General to staff, 23.02.2017.
131 Re-shaping for CIVICUS 3.0, confidential internal communication, May 2017.
132 SLT charter, draft, 2017.
Overview of PMF and OMF members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Management Forum</th>
<th>Operational Management Forum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLT members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Assistant and Board Liaison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity and Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MELA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy &amp; Campaigns</td>
<td>Operations Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Space Research</td>
<td>Risk, Compliance and Contract Management Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership &amp; Networks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events / Convening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilization Lab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation for Change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Offices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society Resourcing Specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor in Chief</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Development Specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Research Specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thematic clusters
The staff is organized in 12 small operational thematic clusters. The clusters are flexible units with 1-8 staff, established as open platforms from where staff, albeit placed in a specific cluster, is encouraged to interact and collaborate across the clusters to enhance synergy and value addition. It appears that people attend the meetings they have to and benefit from, and do not meeting-hop without necessary justification. Each cluster has a lead (head), responsible for managing the agreed work plans, work streams and initiatives. Most clusters have staff in different locations and operate on a (semi)virtual basis with weekly meetings. The ET has not been able to verify whether formal descriptions of cluster mandates exist or will be prepared. The agreed work plans serve as guidance for the clusters, and it may well be that the absence of a formal mandate keeps the organisation agile and apt for responding to upcoming opportunities. Clusters have either a support function or
coordinating implementation responsibility, albeit the IFC cluster, due to the character and size of the IFC programme has a different profile by being more directly engaged in implementation.\footnote{See chapter 2.3.2 Innovation for Change.} In addition to the 52 staff members placed in clusters and the five SLT members, also 11 consultants are working on a permanent basis with CIVICUS and holding specific functions in relation to clusters and/or management fora.\footnote{The number of staff is taken from the CIVICUS organisational chart from August 2017, but the exact number of staff and consultants has changed recently due to new recruitments and resignations.}

**Virtual platforms and data base tools**

The following virtual platforms and data base tools are currently in use:

- **SAGE** for financial management
- **TRELLO** for programme and activity management, which will be integrated with Asana for project management, currently used by one team working with non-CIVICUS stakeholders
- **ESS** for human resource management
- **DevResults** for Performance Data management and monitoring
- **CRM** for membership and alliance management
- **Google docs** for collaboration and sharing of documents and work in progress
- **@Workplace** for Internal communication and community management (only for staff), which will be converged with Slack, used for internal communication and collaboration by two teams who work with non-CIVICUS partners; and with WhatsApp, used for internal communication
- **SharePoint** as Intranet
- **Office 365** for office suite and collaboration

**Human resource management initiatives**

In the period of 2016-17, CIVICUS has experienced an expansion in the number of staff, increasing from the previous approximately 30 staff members to 73 by August 2017. During the same period, a total of 12 have left the organisation, whereas 31 new staffs have been recruited, i.e. a net increase of 19 positions. Of the 12 who have left the organisation, three of five retrenchments were due to positions becoming redundant within the new set-up, and the remaining were resignations for personal reasons. There is still a number of key positions to be filled, some of which are under recruitment.\footnote{MELA Cluster Lead, advocacy & Networks Officer; and Risk, Cost & Management Accountant. A few vacant positions are on hold until the new structure is consolidated and ready to accommodate more new staff members: Credit Supervisor, Network Development Specialist, Data Specialist; and the Chief Operations Officer, which is temporarily filled with an interim COO. E-mail correspondence with Senior Human Resource Manager, December 2017. For details, reference is made to CIVICUS Board} With a relatively high intake of new staff, there is a pertinent need to
spend time in induction over longer period to ensure full integration, particularly for people who will be based remotely.

With the introduction of the new organisational set-up, there is an increased focus on career opportunities and individual growth and professional development within the organisation. The more horizontal set-up provides opportunities for assuming responsibility for various initiatives or work streams and represents a strong incentive and opens a career path for competent staff members.

The Employee Handbook\textsuperscript{136} and Policies and Procedures Handbook\textsuperscript{137} were developed in 2016 and distributed to staff in February 2017. Some parts related to recruitment, lactation policy and disability will be reviewed. The HR team holds a monthly session on policies and procedures, which helps identify areas in need of update or revision and maintains an open dialogue with staff on working condition. HR management has a keen focus on ensuring proper hand-over and has introduced optional exit interviews, which are usually completed, as staff leaving want to contribute to a smooth handover process. There is an obvious need for people to be guided, nudged, and challenged into operating in the new structure. Interviews have, however, confirmed that most people within the organisation have found their feet within the new structure.

The current salary scale is based on the Paterson Grade\textsuperscript{138} and operates with annual salaries between USD 13,820 and USD 179,775. The scale is currently not used to the extremes and reflects a reasonable, yet attractive salary level, considering the international NGO market.\textsuperscript{139} As CIVICUS operates in very different locations in terms of costs for which allowances are paid, there are plans for benchmarking benefits, allowances and pensions in early 2018. The task is complex, considering the geographical diversity of CIVICUS, but important to provide equal conditions.

CIVICUS is facing some challenges in obtaining work permits for international staff to work in South Africa. Currently, a number of internationally recruited staff

\textsuperscript{136} CICIVUS Combined Employee Handbook, draft, August/September 2016.
\textsuperscript{137} CIVICUS Policies and Procedures Handbook, Revised September 2016
\textsuperscript{138} The Paterson grading system is an analytical method of job evaluation, used predominantly in South Africa. It analyses decision-making in job task performance or job descriptions, and sorts jobs into six groups that are graded and grouped into two to three sub-grades—such as stress factors, individual tolerance, length of job and number of job responsibilities—that correspond to organisational levels. The six grades, also called bands, define pay scales. \url{http://www.patersongrading.co.za/}
\textsuperscript{139} The ET has detailed information on specific salaries per category of staff, but the information is considered confidential.
members are waiting for their work permits, but the HR team is confident that they will succeed as the success rate has so far been 100%, albeit time consuming.

A number of **solid initiatives to secure transparent and adequate human resource management** have taken place during 2016-17:

**Staff performance assessment** is undertaken as per the hierarchy. All performance assessments are based on a self-assessment and a management review, and result in a personal development plan, including performance indicators and possible trainings. 360°-assessments were used previously, but with no safeguard against choosing biased persons for assessment. The reintroduction is under consideration. The ET finds that the reintroduction would reflect well the overall open and transparent culture, which transpires the human resource management approach of CIVICUS.

**Focus on management training and coaching.** CIVICUS has formulated a costed Leadership Development Programme\(^{140}\) for senior and middle layer managers to accompany the roll-out of the SP 2017-2022. The plan takes point of departure in the specific requirements per job description, which is then compared to the personal qualifications and competences of the staff member. Based on this, a skills development plan is outlined and implemented. There is focus on different learning modalities, including modular based training sessions, coaching, mentorship, targeted training, action learning sets, and distance learning / e-learning / Business Schools. Currently, two cluster leaders have external coaches, an arrangement which seems to work well and is considered a good practice. The ET did, however, not have the opportunity to discuss the experience with the two cluster leaders.

**Diversity and Inclusion.** CIVICUS has a deliberate focus on diversity and inclusion and carried out an Inclusion Audit in late 2016.\(^{141}\) The audit concentrated on internal practices and procedures for i.a. the culture of diversity and inclusion within CIVICUS, employees’ work experiences, overall effectiveness of CIVICUS in creating a diverse and inclusive work environment, and CIVICUS as a place to work. The report recommended a systematic integration of diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organisation. Diversity is understood in different dimensions, including gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation etc. The ET has noticed that although the SLT and the HR cluster is aware of the importance of internalising inclusion and diversity in procedures, organisational culture and practices, the majority of the recommendations from the report are still relevant, e.g. in relation to integration of

---

\(^{140}\) CIVICUS Leadership Development Programme,

\(^{141}\) CIVICUS Inclusion Audit, by Francesca Molinaro, Strategy for Humanity, January 2017.
diversity and inclusion goals in HR policies, staff diversity, salary equity, maternity leave and mainstreaming to mention but a few.

**Crisis Response Fund**
Flexibility within the support rationale for the CRF has allowed CIVICUS to support a wide range of advocacy work addressing legal and policy gaps, land rights, the need to support women human rights defenders, and demands to unfreeze civil society organisations’ bank accounts. Applicants must demonstrate that they experience “restrictions to freedom of association and/or assembly in the country where they operate, and the activities must include advocacy to respond to or address the restrictions to freedom of associations and/or assembly in the country”. When applications are received, CIVICUS asks existing partners in the same country to verify the applicant “if they are not a voting member of CIVICUS or member of IFC. In the application form we also ask for contacts that we can call to verify, if we don't already have trusted contacts to reach out to”. If the applicant meets initial approval, a summary of the application is sent to the SG and the Lifeline Consortium for approval. If the organisation has not previously been supported, “we ask donors to fill out third party checklist”.

**Grant types**
Grants are determined by programme steering committees or reference groups, based on the needs of the programme. Grantees may be identified via an open call for proposals or an internal process of selection. Potential recipients are reviewed by the project coordinator against a range of criteria on a standard “Partner Checklist”, including their capacity to use the grant and governance mechanisms. The COO then does a risk assessment, which determines the percentage of the grant that can be paid up-front. The project coordinator then prepares a sub-partnership agreement, which is reviewed by the operations coordinator and approved by COO, before being sent to sub-grantee partner for counter-signature. Grant oversight is done by the project coordinator, who could be in any programme cluster, including Innovation for Change; Membership and Networks; Communication; Policy and Advocacy; Civic Space Research; Capacity Development etc. Reporting requirements are dependent on type and duration of the partnership.

The huge rapid advances in communications and technology often leave many civil society organisations “locked out of global platforms and conversations”, the kinds of funding and the requirements attached are also evolving, the lines between profit and non-profit organisations are disappearing. The issue to be addressed, CIVICUS argues is: “In an era of crowd-sourcing, crowd-funding, crowd-movements, and crowd-everything-else, how do we make sure that doers, funders, and even the crowds find each other quickly, work together with greater certainty, and achieve more confidently for expanded impact”, particularly in a context where resources are disproportionately allocated to “northern-based, large implementing NGOs, while southern-based civil society actors, on the front lines of the most critical issues, are left behind”. Consultations with stakeholders led CIVICUS to determine that its grant
making operations need to go “well beyond the mainstream convention of grant making in civil society... to emphasise effectiveness, values and impact as the overriding dimensions of successful programming and grants partnerships in civil society”. The concept note document outlines seven types of grants CIVICUS can provide and oversee, their primary purposes, and reporting requirements:

- The Standard Grant: provides broad financial assistance including institutional support, made on a reimbursement basis.
- The Fixed-Amount Grant: for well-defined programme elements tied to fixed cost amounts, made upon the achievement of a specific milestone.
- In-Kind Grants: where goods and services are procured on behalf of the grantee.
- Combination Grants: which are Standard or Fixed with an In-Kind element.
- Cluster Grants: which are used to fund a network, and stimulate close collaboration among network members and strengthen network capacity.
- Stipend Grants: which are extensions of capacity building programmes for local activists.
- Rapid Response Grants: a small targeted grant designed to meet an immediate need to deploy funds on the ground to address an urgent situation or capitalize on a brief opportunity

The concept note explains that CIVICUS is exploring “a number of structural options for the set-up of a grant-making operation”, what it terms a “funder-mediary” structure. This structure will be a separate entity, with a dedicated board of directors, and will operate around a core interactive system, which “in quick iterations become a social platform for grant making and peer-to-peer learning in grant making good practices”.

**Accountability Framework**

The accountability framework spells out the changed approach to monitoring and evaluation and links strategic goals, operational plan and cluster annual plans into one system, whereby monitoring and data collection feeds into internal accountability against strategic goals. The accountability framework allows CIVICUS to tell its “performance story by describing why we choose to measure our success in this way and what components will be held up to which measures.” This includes a break-away from traditional impact indicators and a replacement by *utilization-focused critical learning questions.* These questions address the substance of the activities related to specific strategic goals; for example:

---

**Strategic Goal #1:** Defending civic freedoms and democratic values → **Critical Learning Question:** Which CIVICUS lobbying and engagement efforts positively impacting attitudes and behaviours by decision makers to better protect civic freedoms and democratic values, and why?

The accountability framework will help CIVICUS produce relevant information on influenced changes within the overall SP and its TOC and will address the need for keeping different stakeholder informed: alliance members, donors, civil society at large, as well as CIVICUS internally: “We are showing outputs and outcomes for donors, but the SLT needs to look at more aspirational goals and forward-thinking measurements of our success.” The ET finds that the new monitoring system reflects a genuine innovation by introducing a utility-focus and by linking the overall monitoring to strategic goals as well as expenditures. This will allow for a simultaneous attention on contribution to change processes and traditional accountability in relation to costs.

---

143 Interviews with MELA staff, November 2017.
Evaluation of CIVICUS – World Alliance for Citizen Participation

The evaluation of CIVICUS was commissioned by the Civil Society Unit at Sida through the framework agreement on evaluation services. The concluding assessment is that CIVICUS is relevant to Sida’s civil society strategy and the organisation is fit-for-purpose to achieve its mission and contribute substantially to fulfilment of its strategic goals. Sida is seen as a flexible, cooperative and risk-taking donor, valued for its engagement in critical dialogue. Recommendations are mainly addressed to CIVICUS, acknowledging that they are refinements to processes and initiatives already set in motion. Sida has embarked on a sound collaboration based on core funding and the recommendation is therefore to continue the partnership based on these principles.