Since the turn of the millennium, civil society is no longer seen as a panacea for the world’s problems. A lack of agreement over the exact definition of “civil society,” inconclusive results from studies on civil society’s contributions to democracy and development, and calls for greater accountability among civic organizations all point to the need for critical self-analysis and reflection. The CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) is the result of rigorous self-examination by civil society actors around the world.

How is something as vast and contested as civil society measured? The thousands of organizations and stakeholders that contributed to the CSI have engaged in a 360-degree participatory assessment of civil society, that included not only quantitative indicators, but also qualitative appraisals that are often neglected in evaluations of civil society. The CIVICUS Global Survey of the State of Civil Society: Volume 1 presents the program’s findings in the form of 44 concise country profiles which look at factors such as civic engagement, democracy, corruption, social capital, gender equity, and civil society’s role in policy. In most chapters, the assessment is followed by policy recommendations. (The second volume, a comparative analysis of findings, will be released later in 2007.) The result is arguably the most encompassing picture of civil society ever produced.

Contents:
CIVICUS Civil Society Index - Framework and Research Methodology
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Annex: Research Methods

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CIVICUS is an international alliance of civil society organizations dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world.