



**AGNA Africa meeting
Johannesburg, 19-20 June 2014**

Venue: CIVICUS House, Newtown
Date: Thursday 19th and Friday 20th of June

Agenda

Day 1-Thrusday 19 th June		
Time	Areas of discussion	Lead
9:45-10:00	Welcome and introduction of participants	Patricia Deniz
10:00-10:30	Update on AGNA's work	
10:30-10:45	Q&A	
10:45-12:30	Self-regulation and CSO accountability: an introduction to the CIVICUS self-regulation toolkit	Dorothee Guénéheux
12:30-13:30	Lunch	
13:30-14:30	State of Civil Society Report 2014: The year that was and other findings	Ciana-Marie Pegus and Dominic Perera
14:30-15:30	The state of human rights in Africa: CIVICUS' experiences under the Irish-Aid project.	David Kode
15:30-16:00	How to engage with other stakeholders? Experiences from civil society on the extractive industry	Melissa Lawson
16:00-16:45	Q&A	Patricia Deniz
16:45-17:00	Wrap up of the day	Patricia Deniz

Day 2-Friday 20th June		
Time	Areas of discussion	Lead
9:45-10:00	Review of previous day's discussions	Patricia Deniz
10:00-10:30	The Enabling Environment for Civil Society: introducing the Enabling Environment National Assessments (EENA)	Ine van Severen
10:30-11:00	Presentations of EENAs by partners	Lewis Mwape and Sophie Kange
11:00-11:45	Working groups: Identifying common trends and opportunities to improve the EE for civil society regionally and sub-regionally (themes under EE, key stakeholders to influence)	All participants
11:45-12:30	Presentation in plenary of group's work and discussions	Each group
12:30-13:30	Lunch	
13:30-14:00	How to influence in the Post 2015 development agenda : introducing two new practical resources for effective advocacy	Patricia Deniz
14:00-14:30	Sharing advocacy experiences and lessons learnt	Participants
14:30-15:15	Working groups: AGNA's work on advocacy- What could be a successful AGNA led advocacy plan in Africa? (theme, objective, stakeholders, resources, etc.)	Participants
15:15- 15:45	Presentation in plenary of working groups and discussion	Each group
15:45- 16:30	Plenary discussion AGNA regional work-Identification of priority areas for collaboration and timeframe. Possible areas: LTA, EE, resourcing, advocacy, membership, knowledge sharing, solidarity actions.	Patricia Deniz and participants
16:30- 16:45	Closing session	Patricia Deniz

Participants

	Name	Organisation	Comments
1	Lewis Mwape	Zambia Council for Social Development- ZCSD	Confirmed
2	Samad Abdool Sairally	Mauritius Council of Social Services- MACOSS	Confirmed
3	Tatenda Makanza	Zimbabwe National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations -NANGO	Confirmed
4	Voice Mhone	Council for NGOs in Malawi-CONGOMA	Confirmed
5	Finland Bernard	Tanzania Association of NGOs-TANGO	Confirmed
6	Sophie Kange	Uganda NGO Forum	Confirmed
7	Munya Mandipaza	South African National NGO Coalition - SANGOCO	Confirmed

Presenters (in order of appearance)

Name	Organisation/Position	Role in meeting
Patricia Deniz	CIVICUS-AGNA Coordinator	Coordination of meeting and Advocacy toolkit
Dorothee Guénéheux	CIVICUS- Partnerships Officer-	Self-regulation-LTA
Ciana-Marie Pegus	CIVICUS- Research Officer	State of Civil Society Report (SoCS)
Dominic Perera	CIVICUS- Research Officer	IGO Scorecard
David Kode	CIVICUS- Policy and Advocacy Officer	Africa Human Rights project
Melissa Lawson	Tearfund/ Senior Policy Adviser (Governance and Corruption)	Stakeholder engagement: experiences from CS working on the extractive industry
Ine van Severen	CIVICUS-Research Officer	Enabling Environment National Assessments (EENA)

Report on the first day: Workshop

CIVICUS House hosted an Africa AGNA workshop/training (19th of June) and peer-learning (20th of June) that is detailed in the section about networking. Both events counted with the participation of 7 AGNA members from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda and Mauritius. During the first day of the meeting, the workshop agenda was composed by the following:

-An introduction to different types of self-regulation mechanisms and initiatives and techniques on how to improve compliance. The exercise included a discussion about different types of self-regulation practices in different countries and identified bottlenecks in compliance performance, and opportunities and good practices to reinforce the impact of self-regulation mechanisms.

-The results of the analysis that was published in the CIVICUS 2014 State of Civil Society report on the links between civic space threats and limitations and the existence and characteristics of mass protests. The dynamics of global governance and the international agenda were also part of the discussions and participants were introduced to CIVICUS new initiatives on holding Intergovernmental Organisations accountable (IGO scorecard) and the Big Development Dashboard (BDD) that tries to bring citizens into producing reliable data on the achievement of development goals and include them in the accountability process.

-Human rights work, promotion and protection of human rights defenders was also part of the agenda. The CIVICUS Human Rights in Africa project (funded by Irish Aid) served as an induction to how to engage with regional and international intergovernmental bodies in the defence of human rights and human rights activists in Africa.

- Civil Society multistakeholder's engagement strategies. This session was intended to showcase the work done by TearFund, one of CIVICUS' partners, in the identification and engagement of stakeholders for advocacy purposes. The participants were taken through the basics of designing and implementing a good engagement strategy: identifying the topic/cause of action, understanding and researching the topic from local to global, identifying the target actors, learning from their interests and agendas, setting up your goals, identifying ways of influencing the targeted audience and working with the media.

The 20th of June was the second day of the meeting in Johannesburg and it was organised as a peer-learning. The meeting took stock of the discussions of the previous day to concentrate on advocacy experiences and the work done by the partners in the area of enabling environment for civil society. This session was conceived as a peer-learning and the participants had prepared different presentations on the work done in their countries on the two areas of focus. The debate highlighted good practices, do's and don'ts, as well as opportunities and challenges. As a result, the conversations led to the identification of priority areas in the region for AGNA's work in the coming 2 years (see report in annex) and opportunities for engagement with unusual stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental bodies and actors).

Some of the main points of discussion, challenges identified and opportunities were summarised for the two days as follows:

Self-Regulation and LTA

- 4 different types of SRI: WG, information services, awards, code of conduct, certification schemes
- Long term process

Challenges:

- Tension in Government-CSOs relations: regulate? control? Doesn't improve Gov.-CSOs relations
- Confusion between self-regulation and government regulations (government adopts professional bodies' regulations)
- Easy to establish but **compliance** is a challenge:

- Lack of capacity of member organisations and smaller CSOs
- Lack of awareness from staff members, smaller CSOs in local areas (Big v Small CSOs, Old v New)
- Lack of willingness from heads of organisations
- Voluntary nature
- Consensus on “what do we want” is a challenge
- Funding
- Returns are slow
- Sustainability is a challenge

Some lessons learnt and good practices:

- Peer reviews** show good results and require less resources (trust within sector)
- Informal alliances** with Government officials proved to be effective
- Publicize** the SRI: give visibility- by in of other CSOs and government
- Flexibility** is a key element for success (different levels of certification)
- Donors** can become an ally
- Research** can become a tool to **demonstrate added value** and returns of SRIs
- Learn from other’s** experiences: trade unions, churches, etc.
- National Associations to **promote training**, capacity development, awareness

State of Civil Society report

Protests- Era of dissent

- Mas protests: dissatisfaction and lack of trust of citizens
- Same requests as in 2010-2011 (real democracy, no division between rights)
- Overreaction of Governments: restrictive legislation, persecutions, threats, etc.
- New forms of mobilization: social media, word to mouth (not CSOs) – youth, unemployment, lack of opportunities
- Disconnect between organised CS and citizens – How to bridge that gap?
- Learn more about these movements- how to connect local realities with global dynamics and decision making processes (potential role of CSOs and NAs)
- Create spaces, even if informal to engage with citizens and listen to their needs

Human rights project in Africa-Irish Aid

- Disconnect between Human Right's Org. and other CSOs (SD are HRs)
- Difficult to raise our voice and complain about HR violations: persecuted
- Inform HR activists about the usefulness of working with NAs as allies: sensitization- NAs as bodies that can open space for dialogue and bigger impact- Collective voices are more powerful
- How to advocate with other CSOs and International bodies- research and work in coalitions
- How to follow up on recommendations and hold governments to account- lack of understanding and knowledge about HR processes at Gov. level- Interministerial awareness and training

TEARFUND- Stakeholder engagement

- ✓ Identify demand for the topic you want to focus on
- ✓ Research the issue: local, national, global levels
- ✓ Identify targets for campaigning-Work with unusual suspects!
- ✓ Long term process- patience, strong strategy
- ✓ Link local to global
- ✓ Always remember your goal-don't focus only on activities

- ✓ Networking is an asset- work in coalitions with partners that bring added value (no competition)
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluation: vital tool to assess your progress
- ✓ Power of the Media! (do your homework)

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

- Old versus new laws: restrictive use of power by Governments in some contexts, interfering in registration, operation processes and internet freedom.
- Shrinking operating space for CSOs is visible in almost every country of the African region.
- CSOs-government relations are negative in many countries and there is lack of trust and abuse of power by the public institutions.
- In some countries (i.e. Zambia, Malawi, Uganda) CSOs register under different types of Acts: society, corporate and NGO Acts, which entail different prerogatives and requirements. In cases like Zambia, CSOs tend to register more under the society's and corporate's Acts to avoid governmental influence.
- CSO-government relations fall under different types of Ministries in different countries, and it also depends on which type of Act they've been registered under. Difficult to have clear number of CSOs in a country due to lack of communication between ministries- need to map number and types of CSOs to facilitate the creation of alliances/coalitions.
- Government controlling CSO registration processes and informing donors of which CSOs are not registered and can't be recipients of Aid (case of Zambia)
- Opposition parties including EE in their programmes to gain supporters as a strategy to reach power.
- Corruption interferes even in contexts with facilitating legal and regulatory frameworks (non-legal barriers need to be taken into consideration- convenient use by governments of arguments such as terrorism, religion, drugs trafficking to control CSOs)
- Relevance of CSO-citizens-media alliances in contesting restrictive laws and proposing alternative positive change.
- Weak justice system becomes an added challenge while dealing with restrictions and threats from government (Case of Uganda)
- Important to think about the role of NAs as promoters of advocacy work for an EE. There are some good examples of how relevant it is to forge informal alliances with government officials in order to operate and open spaces for dialogue and collaboration between CSOs-government (case of Uganda NGO Forum)
- Enabling environment also challenges by the characteristics of the CS sector itself (i.e. Tanzania) where CSOs in some cases lack institutionalization and good governance structures.
- CSOs need capacity to be able to promote a more EE and contest the current interference of the government. Role of NAs in strengthening CSOs is vital as a complementary tool to influencing the government.
- Enabling Environment National Assessments (EENA) as a good tool to analyze the legal and regulatory framework in which CSOs exist, but need for a more comprehensive tool that also assesses other dimensions (power relations, collaboration, governance, funding, etc.) EENA as a first step towards a long term process of advocacy and action.

ADVOCACY

- A good strategy for a successful advocacy campaign is to generate evidence through research and position papers. Also, the creation of informal spaces for discussion and concentration with government officials.
- All 7 National Associations present in the peer learning agreed that the use of thematic platforms for advocacy is more effective as it allows the creation of coalitions between CSOs and the incorporation of more technical inputs into the advocacy strategy.
- Establishing partnerships with the media has been proven to be vital although also challenging depending on the context. These and other traditional means of communication such as the radio can help us improve the awareness of citizens and other CSOs at the local levels.
- Parliamentarians can also be key actors while influencing the decision making process. The case of Uganda NGO Forum showcases how establishing an agreement with this body (in their case through an MoU) can be a positive way of formalizing the relationship and creating channels of collaboration and education/sensitization of Parliamentarians on specific issues such as responsible budgeting. Uganda NGO Forum is now part of the thematic Committees of the Parliament and they provide inputs in the deliberations.
- A challenge can be to include NAs members in advocacy campaigns. MACOSS is assessing the needs and interests of their members to incorporate them in their long term strategic plan that will also include advocacy activities. CONGOMA has a good experience in working with their members on a thematic base. Sectoral groups within their constituency facilitates easier reach and collaboration.
- NAs have the potential to convene a broader group of interest and reach out to a boarder audience. Need to identify how NAs in the region can come together and coordinate advocacy efforts to influence the regional decision making process.

After the two days of discussions, the participants came up with a set of priority areas for AGNA's work in the region in the period 2014-2016:

Priority areas for AGNA in Africa

LTA:

- Support the capacity development of NAs members and staff .
- Promote M&E practices within the network: tools for self-assessment and peer-assessments.
- Create an interactive platform or online space to share ideas, experiences and proposals for feedback and support.

Enabling Environment and government relations:

- Common challenges in the region facilitate the creation of minimum standards for NGO legislation. To be developed by AGNA members in collaboration with ICNL.
- Create a monitoring mechanism for checking on these minimum standards.
- Promote information sharing between members on good practices, calls for support and solidarity actions.
- Share good practices on advocacy strategies for EE and the national and regional levels.
- Capacity development for CSOs on how to engage with governments and adapt to different political environments.
- Create a thematic group to assist with reviewing reports, policy brief and strategies.
- Collaboration between members: feedback, working together, build a movement across the region to lobby for change in governance situation in a certain country

Fundraising:

- Share practices and tools for self-fundraising and diversifying income sources.
- Explore thematic fundraising
- Support training on fiscal budgeting at the country level (to be able to influence it)
- Identify alternative donors for AGNA's different areas of work
- Identify opportunities for regional and joint fundraising between members, AGNA's secretariat and CIVICUS.

Institutional governance:

- Training on engagement strategies and trust building with stakeholders at country level.
- Tools on institutionalisation and management of CSOs.
- Share good practices and tools for monitoring standards of good governance at the organisational levels.

Advocacy:

- Sharing of tools and good practices on advocacy campaigns
- Monitoring of SDGs: creation of a common monitoring mechanism for the Africa region with AGNA members and CIVICUS.
- Identifying the role of NAs in promoting taxation on environmental impact (Payment for environmental services) and promotion of impact assessments.

Women role in CS:

- Share tools on gender practices in CSOs and women empowerment in the work place.
- Assess the role of women in NAs of AGNA's network (number of women, roles, levels, salary) and follow up with a set of principles and good practices for NAs on promoting gender equality in the work place.

Stakeholders engagement:

Some stakeholders were identified as potential allies and targets of AGNA's work under the different priority areas described above:

Beneficiaries, NA's members, government bodies, development partners, regional organisations (SADC, EU, AU), regional apex bodies (Council of NGOs in ECOSOC, ECOWAS, SADC), networks of CSO networks in Africa and sub-regions, and private sector.

END