



Essential Resources on Supporting Civil Society in Politically Restrictive Environments

June 2019

Table of Contents

USAID Programs and Resources	Pg. 3
State Department Programs and Resources	Pg. 5
Multi/Other Donor/partner Programs and Resources	Pg. 6
Publications	Pg. 8
Theories of Democratic Change (TOC) Research	Pg. 11
Resources on Freedom of Expression and	Pg. 11

USAID Programs and Resources

Working in Closing Spaces: Best Practices

Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, Civil Society and Media Division. For this paper and other relevant resources please see: https://pages.usaid.gov/node/33436

CSO Sustainability Index (CSOSI)

This index tracks the overall environment for civil society organizations, including the legal environment, organizational capacity, advocacy, financial viability, service provision, infrastructure, and public image in 72 USAID partner countries worldwide.

For more information contact: Asta Zinbo (AOR) Tel: (202)-712-3562 | azinbo@usaid.gov or find reports at:

http://www.usaid.gov/africa-civil-society

http://www.usaid.gov/middle-east-civil-society

http://www.usaid.gov/europe-eurasia-civil-society

https://www.usaid.gov/asia-civil-society

Information Safety and Capacity Program (ISC)

This program provides Information and Communications Technology (ICT) capacity development-training, tools, and techniques to organizations, human rights activists, and media outlets that are in need of mentoring. ISC has a cadre of dedicated "ICT mentors" who build long-term relationships with beneficiaries to improve their information security procedures.

For more information contact: Josh Machleder (AOR) Tel: (202) 712-4942 Email: jmachleder@usaid.gov

Enabling and Protecting Civic Space (EPCS)

Illuminating New Solutions and Programmatic Innovations for Resilient Spaces (INSPIRES) This global innovative program will increase knowledge and capacity to respond to growing restrictions on democratic freedoms of association, assembly, and expression. INSPIRES will address civic space dynamics in three areas: I) Forecasting: conducting analysis through machine learning tools to deepen understanding of civic space drivers and inform programmatic priorities for civil society; 2) Prevention: testing programmatic interventions to boost civil society resilience to closing space threats; and 3) Response: empowering local partners to address civic space threats through flexible response technical assistance and support.

For more information contact: Asta Zinbo (AOR) Tel: 202- 216-3553 Email: azinbo@usaid.gov

Civil Society Innovation Initiative (CSII)

A network of regional civil society innovation hubs that work to connect CSOs across countries, encourage physical and digital peer-to-peer learning, provide CSOs and CSO networks with a virtual and physical platform to access tools and technologies to address their most pressing issues, and amplify civil society voices around the world. It is an initiative that is supported by USAID, Sida, and private foundations.

For more information contact: Mariam Afrasiabi (AOR) Tel: 202-712-0767 Email: mafrasibi@usaid.gov

Advancing Integrity in Media (AIM)

The DRG Center has a distinct pilot activity in each of these three countries: Indonesia, Kenya, and Moldova (2018-2019). These pilot activities were co-created and co-designed under USAID's Broad Agency Announcement Addendum "Advancing Integrity in Media" so that USAID and its partners can deploy new solutions to counter and build resiliency against disinformation, malign influence campaigns, and propaganda as part of their long-term development work.

For more information contact: Josh Machleder Tel: 202-712-4942 Email: <u>imachleder@usaid.gov</u>

Human Rights Grants Program (HRGP)

The HRGP was established through consultations with Congress to enable USAID to support innovative human rights interventions in critical or evolving country environments. HRGP funding has also been allocated to rapid response needs for Missions to respond to urgent or unanticipated human rights challenges, as well as limited or emerging windows of opportunity. The funding is not intended to meet existing mission budget shortfalls and should be dedicated to support stand alone or integrated human rights programming responding to national or regional trending towards constriction of rights, closing space, or other pressing rights considerations that are restricting a country's ability to meet its development objectives.

For more information contact: Leah Kaplan Tel: 202-712-1746 Email: lkaplan@usaid.gov

The Human Rights Support Mechanism (HRSM) Leader with Associate Awards (LWA):

Global mechanism intended to supporting human rights programming needs in the field. HRSM is a Leader with Associates (LWA) award with a five-year period of performance (October I, 2016 to September 30, 2021) and a \$175M ceiling, of which \$150M is available for associate awards and \$25M is designated for the leader, including rapid response. The purpose of HRSM is to help Missions access proven, state of the art capabilities related to promoting and protecting core civil and political rights; respond to crises faster and more effectively; and identify and utilize evidence-based approaches. HRSM's objectives cover a broad range of human rights-related programming including support for improving the enabling environment for protecting rights (e.g. strengthening laws and policies, or building the capacity of local human rights defenders); responding to ongoing violations (e.g. supporting documentation efforts, or helping activists operate more safely in hostile environments), and support for effective remedies (e.g. providing legal or rehabilitative services to victims).

For more information contact: Mark Goldenbaum (AOR), Tel (202) 712-0729, Email: mgoldenbaum@usaid.gov

The Global Labor Program (GLP)

A five-year (2016-2021) Leader with Associates award, promotes workers' rights, civil society strengthening, strengthening protection for vulnerable workers, and access to justice for workers. The program also has a strong component of work addressing counter-trafficking in persons by promoting safe labor migration. The program implementer is Solidarity Center. Leader award programs are active in nine countries as well as regional and sub-regional programs in Central America/Latin America, Southern Africa, South Asia/Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. The Leader also supports thematic research and advocacy programs on gender, migration and trafficking, informality, and rule of law.

For more information contact: Bama Athreya (AOR), Tel (202)-216-3808, Email: bathreya@usaid.gov

Strengthening Civil Society Support Globally (SCS Global) Leader with Associates (LWA)

Provides technical assistance to strengthen CSOs, independent media and independent labor organizations to enhance citizen participation and government transparency and accountability as well as advance other development goals. This global support mechanism is a Cooperative Agreement/Leader with Associates Award (LWA).

For more information contact: Maryanne Yerkes (AOR) Tel: (202) 712-0915 Email: myerkes@usaid.gov

Global Development Alliance on Community Philanthropy (GACP)

A partnership between USAID, Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the InterAmerican Foundation. Community Philanthropy is the practice of communities mobilizing capital of various kinds - financial, civic, social, human, political, and intellectual - to improve overall quality of life. Community philanthropy complements current development approaches by mobilizing resources that make communities and local CSOs more resilient against future economic shocks or reductions in traditional development aid. USAID has a Global Development Alliance (GDA) with AKF that contributes to the larger Alliance. It has the following objectives: I) Develop a body of evidence for community philanthropy through research and learning; 2) Increase awareness and adoption of community philanthropy approaches by development actors; 3) Improve institutional capacity of the growing global community philanthropy sector, including strengthening the capacity of the Global Alliance's secretariat. USAID Missions can connect with the GACP to learn more about community philanthropy and potentially to create country-level alliances.

For more information contact: Maryanne Yerkes(AOR) Tel: 202-712-0915 Email: myerkes@usaid.gov

YOUTHPOWER

A USAID Agency-wide mechanism to strengthen local, national and global youth systems and programs to achieve sustainable, positive youth outcomes in health, education, and political and economic empowerment, and to increase youth engagement in development efforts. YouthPower is composed of two inter-linked Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts intended to support USAID in the implementation of its Youth in Development Policy. One IDIQ, YouthPower Action, is focused on supporting Missions in implementing cross-sectoral youth programs. The second, YouthPower Learning, is focused on reinforcing and applying learning on cross-sectoral youth programming. The YouthPower CORs are in the Global Health Bureau; however, DCHA participates on an intra-agency steering committee responsible for overseeing YouthPower.

For more information contact: Maryanne Yerkes (POC) Tel: 202-712-0915 Email: myerkes@usaid.gov

Department of State, Programs and Resources

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL), US State Department DRL works with democratic partners, international and regional organizations, NGOs, and engaged citizens to promote democracy, internet freedom, protect human rights and international religious freedom, and advance labor rights globally. Some of DRL's specific programs are listed below. http://www.state.gov/j/drl/

Human Rights Defenders Fund DRL is supporting a global human rights initiative. Defenders of human rights often risk their own and their families' lives and safety to advocate for universally recog-

nized human rights. In response to increased pressure on human rights and democracy NGOs and activists, the State Department made defending these individuals a priority and established a \$1.5 million emergency fund. This Human Rights Defenders Fund draws upon the Bureau's expertise of protecting and assisting human rights defenders who advance democracy and promote human rights, women's rights, fair labor, anti-corruption, independent media and journalism, rule of law and other issues where defense of such issues may result in the risk of safety and/or life.

Further information on the Human Rights Defenders Fund can be found at: http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/
ps/2006/77837.htm

Lifeline – Embattled CSO Assistance Fund The Department of State, together with Australia, Benin, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, launched this fund. The aims of the Fund are to: a) Provide emergency assistance to embattled NGOs for needs including, legal representation, appeals, and trial monitoring; medical bills arising from abuse; transportation costs for prison visitation of incarcerated members; and replacement of equipment damaged or confiscated as a result of harassment. b) Support discrete advocacy initiatives that raise awareness of the difficult, often hostile environments in which NGOs and civil society operate and to address the barriers to their freedom of association. The program website is www.csolifeline.org which has information about applying for assistance, and up to date program figures.

USG points of contact are Emily Stanfield (StanfieldE@state.gov) and Carolyn Zander (ZanderC@state.gov).

The Freedom House contact is name Aaron Myers (myers@freedomhouse.org). Emergency assistance requests go to info@csolifeline.org.

Multi/Other Donor/Partner Programs and Resources

ICNL's Civic Freedom Monitor (formerly NGO Law Monitor) provides up-to-date information on legal issues affecting not-for-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world. At this time, ICNL presents reports on 54 countries and 8 multilateral organizations. Each country report provides an overview of key issues relating to the freedom of association and NGO legal framework, with a focus on legal barriers affecting civil society. Each multilateral organization report provides an overview of the organization, with a focus on NGO legal issues. USAID, through INSPIRES, supports a significant number of these reports.

http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/

Civicus Monitor The CIVICUS Monitor is a cutting edge research tool built by civil society. It aims to share reliable, up-to-date data on the state of civil society freedoms in all countries. The interactive world map allows access to live updates from civil society around the world, track threats to civil society and learn about the ways in which our right to participate is being realised or challenged. https://monitor.civicus.org/

Freedom House *Freedom in the World* is an annual global report on political rights and civil liberties, composed of numerical ratings and descriptive texts for each country and a select group of territories. The 2019 edition covers developments in 195 countries and 14 territories from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018. https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2019

Freedom House Freedom on the Net report features a ranked, country-by-country assessment of online freedom, a global overview of the latest developments, as well as in depth country reports.

In addition, *Freedom on the Net* has newly launched the Internet Freedom Election Monitor to estimate the risk of restrictions on internet freedom during upcoming elections.

https://freedomhouse.org/report/special-reports/internet-freedom-election-monitor

Freedom House Freedom of the Press, an annual report on media independence around the world, assesses the degree of print, broadcast, and digital media freedom in 199 countries and territories. Published since 1980, it provides numerical scores and country narratives evaluating the legal environment for the media, political pressures that influence reporting, and economic factors that affect access to news and information. Freedom of the Press is the most comprehensive data set available on global media freedom and serves as a key resource for policymakers, international institutions, journalists, activists, and scholars worldwide.

https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-press

Open Government Partnership (OGP) was launched in 2011 to provide an international platform for domestic reformers committed to making their governments more open, accountable, and responsive to citizens. Since then, OGP has grown from 8 countries to 79. In all these countries, government and civil society are working together to develop and implement ambitious open government reforms. At its September 2014 meeting, the OGP Steering Committee adopted a new policy to deal with concerns raised about civic space in participating countries. The policy has two objectives: assist a country in question to overcome difficulties and to help re-establish an environment for government and civil society collaboration; and safeguard the Open Government Declaration and mitigate reputational risks to OGP. The new policy acknowledges that there may be issues outside the scope of country National Action Plans that have a major impact on successful participation in OGP, and creates an opportunity to address them. This may include restrictions on basic freedoms, access to information and the overall enabling environment for civil society. To maintain the OGP's credibility – and safeguard its long-term future – it is important that participating countries uphold these values and principles, as expressed in the Open Government Declaration and in the Articles of Governance (all countries endorse the Open Government Declaration on joining OGP). - See more at: http://www.opengovpartnership.org/

Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011) The Busan Partnership agreement was adopted at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. It provides a framework for dialogue and efforts to enhance the effectiveness of development co-operation. It highlights a set of common principles for all development actors that are key to making development co-operation effective. Two of those principles are:

Partnerships for development: Development depends on the participation of all actors (including civil society), and recognizes the diversity and complementarity of their functions.

Transparency and shared responsibility: Development co-operation must be transparent and accountable to all citizens

In November 2011 the partnership issued the following statement: CSOs "play a vital role in enabling people to claim their rights, in promoting rights-based approaches, in shaping development policies and partnerships, and in overseeing their implementation." 160 countries endorsed a commitment to "enable CSOs to exercise their role as independent development actors, with a particular focus on the enabling environment." 160 countries endorsed a commitment to "enable CSOs to exercise their role as independent development actors, with a particular focus on the enabling environment.

http://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/busanpartnership.htm

UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of

Association A Special Rapporteur is an independent expert appointed by the Human Rights Council to examine and report back on a country situation or a specific human rights theme.

https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/AssemblyAssociation/Pages/SRFreedomAssemblyAssociationIndex.aspx

Community of Democracies The Community of Democracies is a global intergovernmental coalition of states, founded in the year of 2000 to bring together governments, civil society and the private sector in the pursuit of a common goal: supporting democratic rules and strengthening democratic norms and institutions around the world. The Community seeks to support democratic transition and consolidation worldwide and help bridge the gap between principles and practices of democracy and universal human rights. The Community will achieve this mission by assisting societies in the development and strengthening of democratic institutions and values; identifying, alerting and responding to threats to democracy in order to keep states on the path to democracy; supporting and defending civil society in all countries; advancing broad-based participation in democratic governance; and giving a voice to those working peacefully for democracy in all countries.

https://community-democracies.org/

Publications

Social Movements and Social Change in Africa

Christian Elongue and Charles VanDyck

In this article, Charles Kojo Vandyck and Christian Elongué of West African Civil Society Institute (WACSI) present key characteristics of some contemporary social movements in Africa, analyzing challenges and limits the social movements are facing and suggesting strategies to overcome them. The authors suggest that social movements broaden their field of vision beyond tactical efforts to build alliances across sectors in order to execute longer-term strategies. They also urge philanthropists to adjust their practices to support social movements without overly bureaucratizing them.

https://rightscolab.org/social-movements-and-social-change-in-africa/

Gaining Ground: A Framework for developing strategies and tactics in response to governmental attacks on NGOs

To inspire international solidarity and enhance cross-border exchange between different organizations, Gaining Ground provides resources and analysis designed to support national organizations who wish to formulate strategic tactics to counteract governmental threats and assaults. It identifies five strategic questions, related to specific threats observed around the world, and enumerates possible responses, evaluating their pros and cons while addressing the possible considerations determined by the context in which the organizations operate. Moreover, the publication shares relevant case studies that INCLO collected from NGOs around the world.

https://ccla.org/closing-space-civil-society-democratic-dissent/

Space to be Heard: Mobilizing the Power of People to Reshape Civic Space

The global trend of shrinking civic space mutes citizens' voices and threatens civil society's very exist-

ence. Without space to speak out, organize, and take action, progress on inclusive development is severely constrained. Citizens, civil society actors and their allies must formulate a strong and consolidated global response to defend our common space for engagement, debate and action.

https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/space-be-heard

A CSO Playbook to Reclaim Civic Space: Version 1.0

Project Director: Amy K. Lehr

Author: Catherine Hyde Townsend, A Report of the CSIS Human Rights Initiative

Governments have learned quickly from one another, replicating strategies such as restrictive NGO legislation, overbroad counterterrorism measures, and the harassment of activists. Civil society must develop its own playbook to share tactics and focus limited resources on approaches that not only protect civic space but also enhance the impact and relevancy of human rights groups. This brief seeks to build on existing efforts to develop such a playbook.

A CSO Playbook to Reclaim Civic Space: Version 1.0

Responding to Closing Civic Space: Recent Experiences from Three Global Initiatives

Authors: Fabian Hetz and Annika Elena Popp, A Report of the CSIS Human Rights Initiative

The present report focuses in depth on three initiatives selected from the 2017 report: the World Movement for Democracy, the Civic Space Initiative, and the Civil Society Innovation Initiative. These initiatives are collaborative in nature, civil society driven, and global in outreach. They do more than simply provide a communication platform or offer financial assistance; instead, they pursue advocacy and other activities on the ground. This report describes their challenges and successes in pushing back against closing civic space and aims to identify lessons learned as well as strategic adaptations and innovations that other initiatives can use to defend civic space in national, regional and global contexts.

Responding to Closing Civic Space: Recent Experiences from Three Global Initiatives

Supporting Civil Society in the Face of Closing Space

Author(s): Mariam Afrasiabi and Mardy Shualy

Development professionals focus on the need to bolster and expand civil society's "open space" in countries around the world.

http://www.afsa.org/supporting-civil-society-face-closing-space

Civil Society Under Assault: Repression and Responses in Russia, Egypt, and Ethiopia

Author: Brechenmacher, Saskia.

The closing of civic space has become a defining feature of political life in an ever-increasing number of countries. Civil society organizations worldwide are facing systematic efforts to reduce their legitimacy and effectiveness. Russia, Egypt, and Ethiopia have been at the forefront of this global trend. In all three countries, governments' sweeping assault on associational life has forced civic groups to reorient their activities, seek out new funding sources, and move toward more resilient organizational models. 2017. CEIP.

http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/05/18/civil-society-under-assault-repression-and-responses-in-russia-egypt-and-ethiopia-pub-69953

Global Civic Activism in Flux

Author: Youngs, Richard.

Important changes appear to be under way in civil society across the world. Civil society organizations have been subject to considerable criticism and doubt over the past ten years, after enjoying an enormous expansion and heightened attention throughout the developing and post-Communist worlds in the 1990s. Influential observers and analysts in many quarters decry a predominant focus on Western-style nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). They argue that these groups are looking increasingly ineffective, tired, and out of touch—artificial creations often nourished by foreign supporters that lack real domestic constituencies and the ability to sustain themselves locally. March 2017. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

http://carnegieeurope.eu/2017/03/17/global-civic-activism-in-flux-pub-68301

The Closing Challenge: How are Funders Responding

Author(s): Carothers, Thomas

An examination of the ways Western public and private funders are responding to the increasing restrictions on support for civil society around the world. November 2015. Carnegie Institute.

http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/11/02/closing-space-challenge-how-are-funders-responding/iob2

Authoritarianism Goes Global: Civil Society Under Assault (II)

Author: Rutzen, Douglas

Once widely celebrated, civil society today is regarded as a threat by many governments, leading them to restrict its funding and activities. October 2015. Journal of Democracy

http://www.icnl.org/news/2015/27-Oct.html

Aid Barriers and the Rise of Philanthropic Protectionism

Author: Rutzen, Douglas

Around the world, countries are burdening the ability of civil society organizations to receive cross-border philanthropy. This article presents the macro-political context underlying these restrictions. It then categorizes constraints, summarizes governmental justifications, and analyzes restrictions under international law. March 2015. International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law / vol. 17, no. I

http://www.icnl.org/research/journal/vol17ss1/Rutzen.pdf

Closing Space: Democracy and Human Rights Support Under Fire Report

Author(s): Carothers, Thomas and Saskia Brechenmacher. February 2014. Carnegie Institute http://carnegieendowment.org/2014/02/20/closing-space-democracy-and-human-rights-support-under-fire

Watchdogs under Watch: Media in the Age of Cyber Surveillance

Author: Podesta, Don. April 2015 Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA).

http://www.cima.ned.org/resource/watchdogs-under-watch/

The Closing Space Watchdogs under Watch: Media in the Age of Cyber Surveillance

Author: Podesta, Don. April 201 Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA).

http://www.cima.ned.org/resource/watchdogs-under-watch/

Theories of Democratic Change (TOC) Research Initiative

This is a multi-phase research initiative designed to improve USAID's understanding of the conditions and processes driving democratic change. Each phase explores a particular trend in democratization and produces a practitioner-friendly guide to existing academic research and evidence. The findings are meant to help DRG officers develop sound country strategies and programming recommendations, justify resource requests, and assist USAID DRG practitioners and leadership to better engage in substantive policy discussions.

Phase I: Democratic Backsliding - In the first phase of research completed in May 2015, USAID explored the understudied phenomenon of democratic backsliding to better understand how and why a governance system that had been democratizing would shift instead toward greater authoritarianism. The research determined that democratic backsliding is best conceived as a change in a combination of competitive electoral procedures, civil and political liberties, and accountability, and that backsliding occurs through a series of discrete changes in the rules and informal procedures that shape those elections, rights, and accountability. These discrete changes take place over time, separated by months or even years, and the end result is not pre-determined: backsliding may result in democratic breakdown, or it may not, and can occur within both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Regardless of whether these changes ultimately, or eventually, lead to regime change, they do degrade citizens' rights and their engagement with the state, and both have widespread repercussions for USAID's work.

Phase II: Paths Away from Authoritarianism – A review and evaluation of research on what causes, influences, or deters paths away from authoritarianism, examining a variety of regime types, country characteristics, and change processes that result in countries taking small and large steps away from authoritarian practices and structures.

Phase III: Transitions from Conflict - A thorough review of theories linking democratic practice and violent conflict.

Link to TOC Phases I-3 Reports: https://www.iie.org/Programs/USAID-Democracy-Fellows-and-Grants-Program/Grants/Grantees/Theories-of-Change

TOC Overview: https://drive.google.com/open?id=Iw0t786D5CLLmRaQH44DiKjX0o7ACs0ky

Democratic Erosion Dataset: http://democratic-erosion.com/event-dataset/

Resources on Freedom of Expression and Disinformation

The Autocrat's New Toolkit: by Richard Fontaine and Kara Frederick: https://www.wsj.com/articles/ the-autocrats-new-tool-kit-11552662637

Oxford Internet Institute's computational propaganda project: http://comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk/research/cybertroops2018/

Freedom on the Net 2017: Manipulating Social Media to Undermine Democracy https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FOTN_2017_Final.pdf

Journalism, 'Fake News' and Disinformation: A Handbook for Journalism Education and Training https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265552

Information Disorder: Framework for Research and Policymaking https://drive.google.com/file/d/17IQ2NYJIffz3cryX_8tJrBfLNtgBb5xb/view?usp=sharing