Transparency & ACCOUNTABILITY Initiative

Improving the Measurement of Civic Space

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Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CPDE	CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness
CSI	Civil Society Index
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EENA	Enabling Environment National Assessments
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICNL	International Centre for Non-For-Profit Law
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
NRGI	Natural Resource Governance Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OGP	Open Government Partnership
OSF	Open Society Foundation
PWYP	Publish What You Pay
RTI	Right to Information
SDGs	Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council

Executive Summary

Civic space (i.e. the freedom and means to speak, access information, associate, organise, and participate in public decision-making) is essential to the healthy functioning and development of any society and is considered a precondition for accountable governance and social justice. Over the past decades, despite some notable examples of progress, a worrisome trend of shrinking civic space has emerged around the world. The purpose of this study is to inform the development of an index/measure of civic space that will enable concerned actors and stakeholders including, among others, international initiatives/agreements to be more effective in supporting and advocating for the protection and enablement of civic space.

The development of an index/measure of civic space as proposed in this report would be of utility to a wide range of actors. Among these, international initiatives and agreements have a potentially vital role to play in using their leverage to protect civic space. International initiatives seek to measure civic space in order to: monitor compliance with (entry or validation) requirements; monitor changes (both positive and negative) in civic space over time; acknowledge progress and identify good practices; and, provide member countries with recommendations about how to protect and enable civic space. An international index/measure would help them achieve their stated objectives, protect their credibility and enhance the effectiveness and meaningfulness of multi-stakeholder processes.

To be effective, the index/measure should ideally: define a core set of civic space principles/standards; provide a simple, comparable, quantitative measure of overall civic space (and specific aspects of civic space); have broad (ideally global) coverage; be meaningful, accurate and credible; ensure that data is updated on a regular basis; and, include a detailed, country-specific narrative outlining strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for improvement. In addition, to reflect good practices, the measure should: make optimal use of existing data; be tailored for action by national governments; be designed for effective advocacy; be adaptable to different needs; and, ensure that the interests and needs of primary stakeholders (i.e. civic space actors) are served. Challenges in designing the measure include striking an appropriate balance between: simplicity and complexity; comparability and contextualisation; objectivity and country ownership; and, the "ideal" and the "doable".

For measurement purposes, civic space is conceptualised as being composed of five principal dimensions (and 16 sub-dimensions). These are: (i) freedoms of information and expression (access to information; freedom of expression; media freedoms; and, internet freedoms); (ii) rights of assembly and association (right of assembly; right of association; CSO autonomy and rights; and, CSO funding); (iii) citizen participation (free and fair elections, citizen participation and citizen advocacy); (iv) non-discrimination/inclusion (women's rights; minority rights; and, the rights of marginalised groups); and, (v) human rights/rule of law (human rights; rule of law). Most governments around the world have committed to upholding many of the basic rights and freedoms associated with civic space outlined here. It is considered logical and strategic to build the measure on commitments that have already been endorsed by most governments, but that are being implemented only to varying degrees. The measure should aim to assess to what extent these principles are adequately reflected in national legislative and policy frameworks (*de jure* aspects) and, more importantly, the extent to which they are applied in practice (*de facto* aspects).

Based on research findings, four different options for the measurement and comparison of civic space between countries are proposed for consideration – each of which has its own particular advantages, disadvantages and resource requirements. Listed in order from least to most resource-intensive, these options include: (1) creating a measure based on a compilation of existing data; (2) conducting new online in-country, experience-based surveys of civic space actors; (3) conducting new participatory, in-country research; and, (4) adopting a "hybrid" approach that combines the first three options.

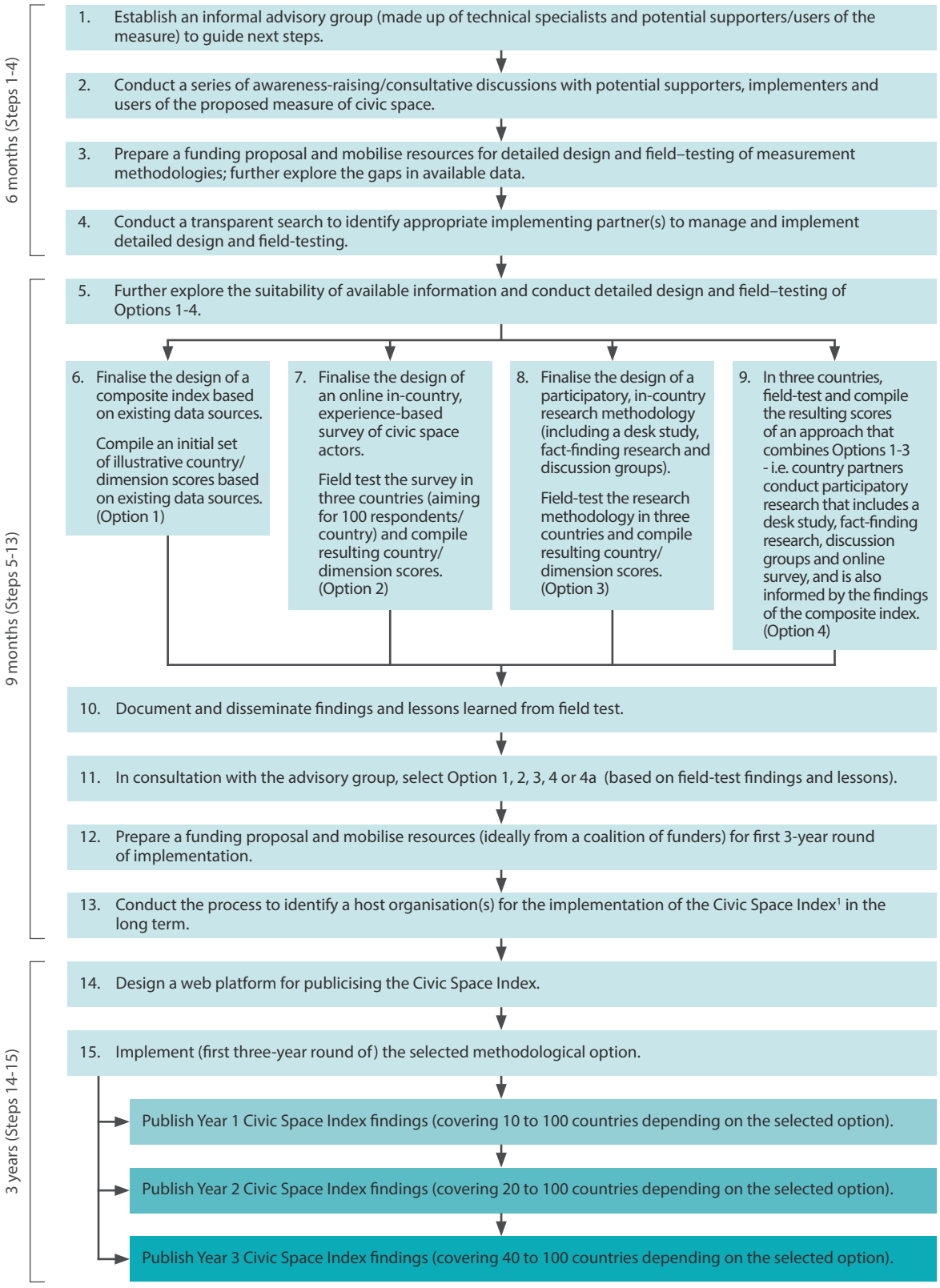
Option 1 makes optimal use of existing data and offers good possibilities for broad coverage at minimal cost, but fails to provide up-to-date data, engage stakeholders or offer problem analysis or recommendations. Option 2 is relatively fast and cost-effective and generates data that is more timely and up-to-date than Option 1, but it allows for only superficial engagement with stakeholders and also provides no detailed explanation or analysis of factors affecting civic space. While Option 3 is more demanding (in terms of time, effort and money) and takes longer to bring to scale, it offers the potential to score against a detailed set of standards; produces both comparable quantitative scores and qualitative narrative reports; and, meaningfully engages a variety of in-country stakeholders (which, in turn, contributes to building consensus around the notion of civic space, generating more accurate and relevant data, nurturing greater national ownership over research results, and laying the groundwork for subsequent multi-stakeholder dialogue and action). Option 4 is the most costly alternative (in terms of time, money and effort) but, by combining the research techniques of Options 1-3, it consolidates their collective benefits and overcomes most of the shortcomings associated with each individual methodology. Research findings under this option are arguably more robust, because they are based on a range of (quantitative and qualitative) data sources, allowing for cross-checking and triangulation. A potential variation of Option 4 (Option 4a) is to design a civic space index that is able to incorporate findings from Options 1, 2, 3 or 4 (offering a comparable score across countries, based on findings from one or more of the proposed options).

This allows for flexibility and gradual expansion over time (i.e. applying Option 1 across the board and complementing this with more in-depth research, starting with "priority" countries and expanding coverage as resources allow).

Three principal conclusions can be drawn from this scoping report. First, it *is both important and feasible for international initiatives and other stakeholders to measure civic space*. The report finds that measuring, monitoring and protecting civic space is necessary for international initiatives to effectively implement their activities, achieve their operational objectives and maintain their credibility. It also finds that while there is no perfect measure of civic space, numerous options for the development of a useful and credible measure of civic space are possible. Secondly, *the benefits of multiple international initiatives and others supporting and/or using a common measure of civic space are significant*. Many actors, including international initiatives, have much to gain from collectively endorsing and utilising a shared measure of civic space, including benefits related to cost-effectiveness, increased leverage, enhanced objectivity and greater credibility. Finally, *a measure based on in-country, participatory research is not the least-cost option, but offers significant added value*. Although a hybrid approach (i.e. Option 4 or 4a) that combines the use of existing data with original in-country research is the most resource-intensive option, it also best meets the expressed needs of international initiatives and offers the best potential to produce credible and useful results. Since achieving a rigorous and meaningful measurement of civic space with global coverage will require significant resources and sustained long-term support, the mobilisation of financial support from a coalition of multiple funders and the consideration of an approach that allows for a gradual scaling-up over space and time are recommended.

As outlined below, recommended next steps include: (i) a first (six-month) phase to disseminate the findings of the scoping report, garner support from key stakeholders for the development of a shared measure of civic space and identify/contract the right body to undertake a field-testing phase. This period will also be the time to explore in greater detail the availability of existing data. However, initial scoping has shown that existing data is not sufficient to generate a robust and comparative index, so preparations for testing other methods of composite collection should not be held up. Also foreseen are: (ii) a second (nine-month) phase to further develop and field-test each of the proposed methodological options and (iii) a third (3 year) phase to implement the selected methodology, expanding coverage over time, evaluating results and continuing to mobilise resources for the on-going implementation of the measure.

A Roadmap for Improving the Measurement of Civic Space by International Initiatives and Agreements



[1] This may or may not the same organisation that managed the implementation of the field-testing phase.

Improving the Measurement of Civic Space

I. Introduction

Background

1. The degree to which individuals and organised groups have adequate 'civic space' - i.e. the freedom and means to speak, access information, associate, organise, and participate in public decision-making - is essential to the healthy functioning and development of any society. In many countries around the world, civic space - which is considered an essential precondition for human rights, social justice and accountable governance - remains limited. The past decades have seen a worrying trend of shrinking civic space around the globe, including in emerging and established democracies.

2. As a result, many stakeholders and advocates are paying increased attention to these issues and are actively exploring how to take up their collective duty to promote the protection and enablement of civic space. This includes organisations supporting international agreements and international multi-stakeholder initiatives. These organisations have great potential as advocates and supporters of civic space, but face serious challenges in: judging when countries are ensuring sufficient civic space (e.g. to decide whether new members should be allowed to sign up); assessing countries' civic space performance over time (e.g. to acknowledge progress or identify "back-sliding"); and supporting and advising countries on how to better protect and enable civic space (e.g. through legal, policy or institutional reforms and multi-stakeholder action).

3. Part of the challenge faced by advocates of civic space lies in the current difficulty of defining, measuring and monitoring civic space. The lack of an effective measure makes it difficult to detect and track changes in civic space and to identify whether and where civic space is stable, expanding or shrinking. This, in turn, thwarts efforts to initiate informed multi-stakeholder dialogue about civic space issues; to identify actions to protect and enable civic space; and, to effectively advocate for the implementation of those actions. To provide practical support, the Transparency and Accountability Initiative commissioned this scoping study to explore issues around the measurement of civic space and to make practical recommendations for the design and implementation of a measure of civic space.

Purpose of the study and its target audience

4. The ultimate purpose of this study is to inform the development of a measure of civic space that will enable concerned actors and stakeholders, including international initiatives and agreements, to be more effective in supporting and advocating for the protection and enablement of civic space. Key questions it seeks to examine are the following: Why measure civic space? Is it possible to develop a common measure of civic space that could support the specific needs of a range of international initiatives/agreements and other concerned actors? What benefits would such a measure bring to international initiatives and their stakeholders? What would such a measure look like? How could it be implemented and at what cost?

5. At the start of the study, the principal target audience of the report related to international agreements and initiatives – the decision-makers (i.e. the managers, board members, steering committee members, advisors and representatives from donor and support organisations who seek to ensure that these initiatives achieve their stated missions and goals) and the broader range of actors who have a direct stake in these initiatives (i.e. the governments, civil society organisations, private companies, and in some cases inter-governmental and multilateral organisations, that participate in or are affected by the initiatives). However, in the course of its development and discussion at the stakeholders' workshop[2], it became clear that the approach and recommendations are equally relevant for all potential users of such a measure of civic space - the wide range of individuals, groups and organisations that are engaged in advocacy and action for the protection and enablement of civic space. These include: practitioners and activists that "inhabit" civic space; experts and researchers who seek to understand and measure civic space; advocates (at the local, national and international level) who defend and protect civic space; and, policy-makers and decision-makers who define and influence civic space.

Description of research methodology

6. Research for this study was conducted from November 2014 to February 2015. Research was undertaken by the author of the report, with guidance and inputs from the staff of the Transparency and Accountability Initiative and the members of an international Technical Advisory Group (see Acknowledgements). Research methodologies included: (i) a literature review (see the attached Bibliography); (ii) a broad-based scoping of existing measures and indices related to governance, civil liberties and civil society and a detailed review of a select number (of approximately 30) of these (see Annex 1); (iii) interviews with approximately 40 key informants (see Annex 2); and, (iv) a one-day multi-stakeholder consultative workshop (see Annex 3). The majority of interviewees and workshop participants were stakeholders associated with four international initiatives that served as examples for purposes of this research. These are: the Open Government Partnership (OGP), the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC); and, the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (Post-2015 SDGs). See Annex 4 for a brief overview of each of these initiatives.

[2] See Annex 3.

Overview of the report

7. The report is composed of seven sections. Following this introduction, section II of the report clarifies the meaning and importance of civic space. It: (i) proposes an operational definition of civic space, (ii) discusses why civic space is important, and (iii) reviews current threats to civic space. Section III of the report explores why civic space matters to international initiatives and why international initiatives matter to civic space. This section: (i) discusses why civic space, and its measurement, is an important issue for international initiatives; (ii) explores the potential benefits of international initiatives supporting and using a common measure of civic space; and (iii) reviews priority objectives and needs of international initiatives with regard to the measurement of civic space (focusing on the four above-mentioned international initiatives, as examples). Based on inputs from key informants and lessons from the literature, Section IV (i) proposes a set of guiding principles to inform the development of a measure of civic space and (ii) suggests recommendations for dealing with key challenges and inevitable trade-offs. Sections V and VI of the report aim to describe what a measure of civic space might look like. Section V describes what should be measured, by conceptualising civic space as a set of key dimensions and core principles, while section VI explores how civic space could be measured, by proposing and describing several methodological options. Finally, section VII summarises the conclusions of the report and outlines recommended next steps.

II. Civic Space: An Overview

What is civic space?

8. For the purposes of this report, civic space is defined as *the set of conditions that determine the extent to which all members of society, both as individuals and in informal or organised groups, are able to freely, effectively and without discrimination exercise their basic civil rights*.[3] Principal among these are rights of information, expression, assembly, association and participation. These rights are enshrined in international law and reflected in the constitutions and legal frameworks of a majority of countries around the world. The extent to which these fundamental rights are respected and enabled in practice, however, varies enormously, and no nation can claim a perfect record in protecting these rights for all inhabitants.

Civic space is defined as the set of conditions that determine the extent to which all members of society, both as individuals and in informal or organised groups, are able to freely, effectively and without discrimination exercise their basic civil rights.

9. The range of actors within civic space is large and comprises both individual members of society[4] (engaged in different forms of civic activity, such as accessing information about government policies or programmes or participating in a community activity, a town hall meeting, a public assembly or a peaceful demonstration) as well as informal and formal civil society organisations (CSOs)[5] including social movements, community-based organisations, indigenous movements, womens' organisations, youth groups, trade unions, independent media actors, NGOs, online discussion groups, etc. Civic space refers, therefore, to the set of conditions that enables manifold manifestations of civic activity by this full spectrum of actors to take place.

Why is civic space important?

10. Civic space is essential to the healthy functioning and development of any society, and is considered a precondition for accountable governance and social justice. Civic space is critical in order to enable all members of society to contribute to public life by empowering them to exercise their fundamental rights of information, expression, assembly, association and participation. When civic space is restricted, human and civil rights are denied, government accountability is jeopardised, citizen voices are silenced, civic energy is sapped, confidence in state authorities is eroded and opportunities for dialogue and development are lost. According to UN Special Rapporteur, Maina Kiai, "It is essential in any society that there is space for peaceful dissent, discussion and dialogue. And it is incumbent upon every Government to help create this space."[6]

11. The negative repercussions of shrinking civic space affect all sectors and spheres of society. By enabling citizens and CSOs to contribute to processes of public deliberation and decision-making, civic space helps to ensure that government decisions reflect the priorities and needs of the population at large. When this space is denied, the relevance and responsiveness of government decisions, policies and programmes is jeopardised. Closing civic space constrains the existence and operation of CSOs that contribute to societal and citizen well-being in myriad ways – by educating the public, protecting the environment, defending the interests of vulnerable groups, meeting basic needs, conducting social research and analysis, etc. CSOs also play an essential role as watchdogs of the State and as defenders of human and civil rights. When civic space shrinks, human rights and advocacy-oriented activists and CSOs, especially those who question or criticise the decisions and actions of the State or powerful non-state actors, are often specifically targeted. When such restrictions occur, protection against potential abuses of power, corruption, and violations of rights is diminished, jeopardising the security and well-being of society as a whole. Restrictions of civic space are also associated with increased marginalisation and extremism, which can in turn foment social unrest and political instability.[7] On the other hand, the protection of civic space contributes to the development of more open, peaceful, stable and prosperous societies.

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[3] A *rights-based* and *capability-based* definition of civic space is considered appropriate and useful from both a conceptual and operational standpoint. Conceptually, it clearly captures the essence of civic space as a set of conditions that are necessary for the realisation of fundamental rights. From an operational perspective, capability approaches have become a widely respected and commonly used analytical model in the human and social development fields (Sen, 1999). By focusing on the underlying conditions that enable individuals to achieve their own goals (in this case, participating in civic life and influencing decisions that affect their lives), capability approaches are considered to provide a valuable and non-prescriptive model for comparative assessments (Fioramonti and Kononykhina, 2014). Operationally, a rights-based definition of civic space is also well-suited for purposes of advocacy and collective action.

[4] This includes both citizens as well as those who lack formal citizenship status.

[5] The notion of civic space is closely related to that of civil society, especially "spatial" conceptualisations of civil society that define it as a "sphere" or "arena" in which citizens, either individually or in groups, are able to associate with one another to advance their shared interests (e.g. CIVICUS, CSI).

[6] Maina Kiai, UN Special Rapporteur, speaking at the conclusion of a follow-up visit to Rwanda in August 2014.

[7] "The alternative to peaceful assembly is extremism….In general, restrictions on and exclusions from the exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association have the consequence of reinforcing marginalisation." (Maina Kiai, UN Special Rapporteur, Speaking to OSCE government representative on Oct. 22, 2014).

Current threats to civic space

12. Civic space does not emerge of its own accord. Where it exists, it has been created as a result of persistent and active efforts on the part of state and non-state actors to protect and enable fundamental rights and to create the space for citizens and CSOs to contribute to societal goals. In countries with autocratic or authoritarian regimes, civic space is typically extremely limited. Even many "democratic" regimes are still in the process of consolidating civic space, guaranteeing civil rights and freedoms and building a shared understanding of the legitimate roles of civil society actors. Over the past decades, a worrisome trend of shrinking civic space and enhanced restrictions on CSOs has emerged around the world, including in "emerging" and "established" democracies in both the global North and South.[8] In practice, these threats to civic space take a multitude of forms including: passing restrictive laws governing CSOs, blocking CSO funding, cracking down on public demonstrations, harassing or intimidating civic space actors through arrests, smear campaigns, physical attacks, etc.

Over the past decades, a worrisome trend of shrinking civic space and enhanced restrictions on CSOs has emerged around the world.

13. On the positive side, there has also been increasing recognition at the global level of the importance of civic space and a strong push on the part of numerous international, inter-governmental and multilateral organisations to highlight and protect civic space. For example, in 2010, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) passed a historic resolution on the "Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association" and, for the first time, established a Special Rapporteur to focus on this issue.[9] In 2011, at the Busan High Level Forum on Development Effectiveness, governments agreed, "to enable CSOs to exercise their roles as independent development actors, with a particular focus on an enabling environment, consistent with agreed international rights" (Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, 2011, para. 22); and in 2014, numerous countries, including Ireland with the support of Chile, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Japan, enabled the adoption at the UNHRC of a resolution urging States to create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment in which civil society could operate free from hindrance and insecurity.[10]

14. There is also evidence of efforts to open civic space, improve conditions for CSOs and expand opportunities for citizen participation in some countries. For example, a recent report of the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (2013), while confirming a global trend of "persistent and continuing narrowing of the legal and regulatory space for civil society", nevertheless, found positive examples including a "generally positive impact of national legislation on the activities of CSOs" in Kyrgyzstan and an improvement in the political environment for CSOs following 2012 presidential elections in Malawi (CPDE, 2013, Annex 1). With the global expansion of the social accountability[11] movement and the replication in many countries of practices such as participatory budgeting, public forums, social audits, citizens' report cards and community-led monitoring, citizens in many countries around the world now also have increased opportunity to influence public decisions and seek accountability through (both independent and institutionalised) participatory mechanisms.

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[8] Evidence of shrinking civic space in many countries around the world in the last decades has been documented in numerous reports. See, for example, Kiai, 2013; CIVICUS 2013; *FrontLine Defenders, 2014*; CAFOD, 2014; and, AidWatch Canada, 2013.

[9] This mandate complements that of other existing Special Rapporteurs including on: the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression (established in 1993); violence against women (established in 1994); the situation of human rights defenders (established in 2000); and, minority issues (established in 2005).

[10] See more at: http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15109&LangID=E#sthash.NqpUAMoK.dpuf

[11] Social accountability refers to the broad range of actions and mechanisms (beyond voting) that citizens can use to hold the state to account, as well as, actions on the part of government, civil society, media and other societal actors that promote or facilitate these efforts. (Malena, Forster and Singh; 2004).

III. International Initiatives and Civic Space

15. The previous section has argued that civic space is critically important and currently under threat in many parts of the world. This section explores more specifically the relationship between civic space and international initiatives. Why is civic space and its measurement important to international initiatives? What are the potential benefits of international initiatives supporting and using a common measure of civic space? What are the priority objectives and needs of international initiatives with regard to the measurement of civic space?

Why civic space and its measurement matters to international initiatives

16. There are five principal reasons why civic space, and its measurement, are important to international initiatives. These are related to: (i) the role of civic space actors as change agents and (ii) implementing partners; (iii) the ability of international initiatives to achieve their operational goals and (iv) maintain their credibility; and, (v) the unique ability of international initiatives to protect civic space as a critical end in and of itself.

17. Most models of social or political change are based on the presumption that citizens (both individually and collectively in CSOs) can speak and take action in defence of their interests. As outlined in Annex 4, the "theory of change" of each of the four highlighted international initiatives assumes (either explicitly or implicitly) a key role for civil space actors. Whether the goal is to: promote government transparency and accountability (OGP); ensure the effective management of natural resource revenues (EITI); strengthen the effectiveness of development cooperation (GPEDC); or, promote long-term poverty eradication and sustainable development (Post-2015 SDGs); the role of civil society and, therefore, the protection and enablement of civic space is vital. International initiatives thus have a stake in measuring and monitoring civic space over time, in order to understand factors that are affecting their results and impacts and to identify and address potential barriers to their theory of change.

18. Secondly, all four of the highlighted international initiatives also directly depend on the engagement of civil society actors for the implementation of their activities. For example, as outlined in Annex 4, the OGP counts on and requires "the active engagement of citizens and civil society" in the development and implementation of country action plans. The EITI also depends on the active participation of civil society actors in the multi-stakeholder groups that oversee the EITI process at country level. Both the GPEDC and the Post-2015 SDGs rely on the direct engagement of civil society actors in the development, implementation and monitoring of their agreed multi-stakeholder commitments. In order to implement their activities, each of these international initiatives therefore depends upon the existence and effective functioning of CSOs within member countries, which in turn is dependent on the existence of a protected and enabling civic space.

19. Thirdly, reflecting and acknowledging the critical role of civic space actors as agents of change and as implementing partners, each of the international initiatives identifies the protection and enabling of civic space as a specific operational goal. In the case of the OGP, the protection of civic space lies at the very heart of the initiative's vision and mission, with the OGP Declaration calling on member governments to: enhance citizen access to information, protect media and civil society freedoms, allow/enable CSOs to function and promote public participation in decision-making, policy-making, monitoring and evaluating governments activities (OGP, 2012). In the case of the EITI, beyond requiring participating governments to "commit to work with civil society" and to promote "active and effective civil society engagement in the EITI process", Requirement 1.3 exhorts member governments to: create an enabling environment for civil society participation; respect the fundamental rights of civil society representatives; ensure no narrowing or restricting of public debate in relation to implementation of the EITI; and, ensure the right of stakeholders to speak and operate freely and express opinions about the EITI without restraint, coercion or reprisal (EITI, 2013). Under its Indicator 2, the GPEDC (2013) calls on government to ensure that "Civil society operates within an environment which maximises its engagement in and contribution to development", while draft Post-2015 SDG 16 calls on member countries to establish responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels (Goal 16.7), ensure public access to information, and protect fundamental freedoms (Goal 16.10) (Open Working Group of the General Assembly on SDGs, 2014). The protection and enablement of civic space is, therefore, an explicit goal of the four highlighted international initiatives that needs to be measured and monitored over time.

20. Fourthly, for those initiatives that have eligibility requirements for member countries, measuring and monitoring civic space is critical to ensuring the credibility of the initiative. Both the OGP and the EITI have membership requirements related to civic space. In order to join the OGP, countries must demonstrate "openness to citizen participation and engagement in policymaking and governance, including basic protections for civil liberties" (OGP, 2102). As mentioned above, the first requirement for a country to become an EITI candidate is that the government ensures the full, independent, active and effective participation of civil society in a multi-stakeholder oversight group - by creating an enabling environment for civil society participation; respecting the fundamental rights of civil society representatives; ensuring freedom of speech; allowing wide and unrestricted public debate in relation to implementation of the EITI; etc. (EITI, 2103). It is critically important for international initiatives that apply such requirements to be able to effectively measure and monitor compliance, both to determine initial eligibility and to verify adherence to the requirements over time. Initiatives that fail to do so, run the risk of losing their credibility.

21. Finally, as outlined in section II, civic space is a manifestation of fundamental human rights and an essential feature of any healthy society. As a result, it is an issue of core relevance to any initiative that aims to contribute to improved governance, development or human well-being. Many countries with the worst track records in terms of violations of civil liberties and restrictions of civic space are heavily dependent on aid flows. International initiatives and agreements are, therefore, seen as having the moral responsibility to ensure the protection of these fundamental rights. They are also seen as being uniquely well-placed to do so. International initiatives and agreements offer critically important opportunities to: raise the profile of civic space related issues through multi-stakeholder dialogue processes; build consensus around civic space principles and standards; use both incentives and sanctions to encourage the opening (and prevent the closing) of civic space; and, promote collective multi-stakeholder action (at the international and national levels) for the protection and enablement of civic space. In order to make effective use of these opportunities, international initiatives require the capacity to measure and analyse the protection of civic space across participating countries.

The benefits of international initiatives supporting/using a shared measure of civic space

22. This previous section has discussed how the measurement and monitoring of civic space is necessary to help international initiatives: achieve their stated objectives; protect their credibility; enhance the effectiveness and meaningfulness of multi-stakeholder processes; and, use their leverage to help open and protect civic space. Given that necessity, this section explores the important potential benefits of international initiatives coming together to support and use a shared measure of civic space to achieve these goals. These benefits are related to: (i) cost-effectiveness; (ii) objectivity (real and perceived); (iii) the potential for consensus-building; (iv) increased leverage; and, (v) enhanced credibility.

23. First, individual international initiatives have neither the capacity nor resources to put in place a rigorous and comprehensive measure of civic space on their own. It therefore makes practical sense to contribute to a collective effort. As explored later in the report, developing and implementing a measure of civic space that is rigorous and sustainable is a significant undertaking, requiring substantial and ongoing resources. Given the magnitude of the task, it is important to avoid duplication of efforts and instead collectively invest in the development and use of a shared credible, sustainable and cost-effective methodological tool.

24. Secondly, during interviews and at the consultative workshop[12], key informants from the different initiatives expressed a preference for being able to draw on a "third party" measure of civic space, rather than conducting their own "internal" assessments. In addition to the practical benefits mentioned above, stakeholders stated that using a third party measure would help them to remain (and to be perceived as remaining) "objective" vis-à-vis member countries (by being able to refer to the findings of a separate and independent data source, rather than their own research). It was felt that this would put the secretariats and boards of international initiatives in a better position to maintain productive dialogue and healthy relationships with member countries, especially in more difficult situations involving the potential application of sanctions against countries failing to meet established standards.

25. Third, key informants from all initiatives referred to the current lack of a common definition and understanding of civic space (both within and among different stakeholder groups) and a lack of clarity regarding standards and recommended practices. This is a serious drawback as it makes it difficult for country governments to know exactly what is expected of them and impedes efforts to assess civic space and demand accountability. The development of a shared measure of civic space offers an important opportunity to collectively define the concept and build clarity and consensus around an agreed set of core principles and standards.

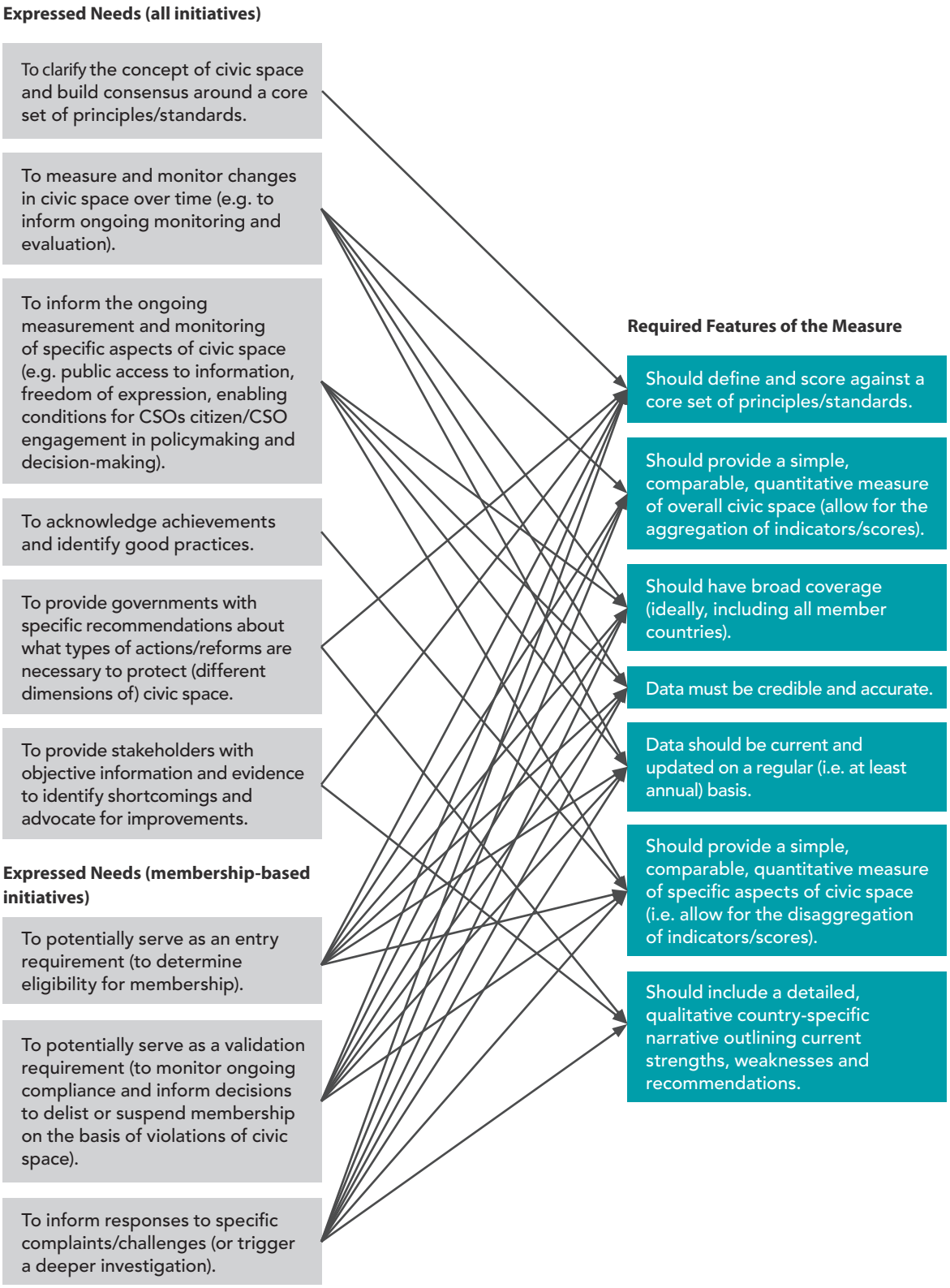
26. Fourth, the ultimate objective is not just to measure civic space, but to use the results of the measure to advocate for and realise meaningful changes and reforms that lead to the opening of civic space. As discussed above, international initiatives and agreements are considered to have enormous potential to promote and support the protection and enablement of civic space. This leverage can be greatly enhanced if multiple international initiatives are able to join forces by agreeing a common definition and measure of civic space.

27. Finally, and closely related to the previous point, the effectiveness of any socio-political measure is linked to its perceived credibility, which in turn is linked to the perceived "status" or "authority" of the measure's creators and supporters (Wilson, 1983). A measure that is endorsed and used by multiple international initiatives and supported by a broad coalition of donors is much more likely to be perceived as credible and authoritative (e.g. than a smaller initiative undertaken by a single organisation acting on its own). It is, therefore, also more likely to be effective and impactful.

28. The benefits of developing a common measure of civic space, that is supported and used by multiple international initiatives, are clear and significant. The principal challenge of such an approach is to ensure that this measure can effectively respond to the specific needs of individual users. In order to address this challenge, it's important to assess the particular priorities and needs of individual initiatives and understand how and for which purposes they plan to use the measurement findings.

[12] See Annex 3.

DIAGRAM 1 - REQUIRED FEATURES OF A CIVIC SPACE MEASURE TO MEET THE EXPRESSED NEEDS OF INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES



Specific needs of international initiatives with regard to measuring civic space

29. In order for a measurement tool to be "fit for purpose", its design must be based on a clear conception of why the measurement is needed and how the results will be used. To inform the design of the measure, this section seeks to clarify the specific expectations of international initiatives with regard to a measure of civic space and exactly how they would intend to use the results. Stakeholders from each of the four highlighted international initiatives expressed a range of priority needs and potential uses of a measure of civic space. As shown in Annex 5, there is significant overlap in the expressed needs of individual initiatives, reinforcing the argument for a shared measure of civic space.

30. The left-hand side of Diagram 1 outlines the six principal needs/uses for a civic space measure expressed by all four international initiatives, as well as three potential additional uses identified by membership-based initiatives. As indicated, all initiatives would seek to make use of a measure of civic space to: (i) build consensus around core principles and standards or civic space; (ii) monitor changes (both positive and negative) over time in civic space overall, and in specific aspects of civic space; (iii) acknowledge progress and identify good practices; (iv) provide member countries with specific recommendations about how to protect and enable civic space, and; (v) provide stakeholders with objective information and evidence to identify shortcomings and advocate for improvements in civic space. In addition, membership-based initiatives would potentially use the measure to: (i) determine eligibility; (ii) monitor ongoing compliance with requirements (to inform decisions to suspend or delist member countries); and (iii) inform complaints handling.

31. The right-hand side of Diagram 1 outlines key features that the measure must have in order to adequately respond to the expressed needs of international initiatives listed on the left. In order to best meet the expressed expectations of international initiatives, the measure should ideally: (i) define a core set of civic space principles/standards; (ii) provide a simple, comparable, quantitative measure of overall civic space, as well as (iii) specific individual aspects of civic space; (iv) have broad (ideally global) coverage; (v) be accurate and credible; (vi) be current and updated on a regular basis; and, (vii) include a detailed, qualitative country-specific narrative outlining strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for improvement.

32. In summary, research found that the expressed needs of international initiatives could largely be met through a common measure, and that a shared "third party" index is the most effective and viable way to monitor civic space.[13] Such a measure would also provide an important public resource and serve the needs of a much wider range of stakeholders with an interest in civic space - including, for example, civic space advocates, CSOs, governments, international organisations supporting development and governance initiatives, researchers, analysts and academics. The adoption of a common definition of civic space and an agreed set of core principles and standards could also help to guide international initiatives in conceptualising and implementing the more specific/internal assessments they may need to conduct to carry out individually - e.g. to monitor the capability of civil society partners to engage meaningfully in the initiative; to evaluate the quality of the initiative's multi-stakeholder platforms and processes; to assess the relevance/adequacy of national reforms and actions proposed in the context of the initiative; and/or, to evaluate the results and impact of the initiative.

[13] This finding was confirmed by the consultative workshop.

IV. Guidelines for the Development of a Measure of Civic Space

33. In addition to the specific features identified above, to ensure that the proposed measure of civic space responds to the expressed needs of international initiatives, a range of other factors and considerations must also be taken into account to make the proposed civic space measure as effective as possible. Research identified a rich pool of previous experiences and studies from which to draw lessons and insights regarding socio-political measures in general and the measurement of civic space in particular.

34. The lessons and guidelines that follow are distilled both from the literature and from consultations with key informants. They are intended not as a prescription for the measurement of civic space, but rather as a set of reflections and suggestions to guide the development of the measure. These include recommendations to: (i) ensure the measure is meaningful and credible; (ii) make optimal use of existing data; (iii) tailor the measure for action by national governments; (iv) design the measure for effective advocacy; (v) make the measure adaptable to different needs; and, (vi) ensure the interests and needs of primary stakeholders (i.e. civic space actors) are served. This section also provides guidance on dealing with certain challenges and trade-offs that are inherent to the measurement of civic space. These include striking a balance between: (i) simplicity and complexity; (ii) comparability and contextualisation; (iii) objectivity and country ownership; and (iv) the "ideal" and the "doable".

Lessons and recommended practices

35. Ensure the measure is meaningful and credible. A fundamental requirement for all measures and indices, is that the data they generate is *meaningful* and *credible*. In order to be *meaningful*, data must capture not just what is most easily measured, but what it most critical and relevant to the issue at hand. In the case of measuring civic space, for example, it is essential to assess both *de jure* and *de facto* aspects, the extent to which civic space is protected both in law and in practice. It is also important to capture the different key dimensions of civic space (e.g. rights of information, expression, assembly, association and participation) and how these are experienced by different categories of civic space actors (including marginalised groups and minorities). In order to be *credible*, data must accurately and reliably reflect reality. A number of factors contribute to the credibility of research results including, for example, the careful selection of indicators, a broad and diverse information base, triangulation across different information sources, competent data analysis, explicit scoring criteria and logical rules of aggregation. If methods of data collection, analysis and scoring are not perceived to be sufficiently rigorous, if data is considered unreliable or there are doubts about the credibility or competence of the researchers, then the effectiveness of the measure may be diminished. When a measure is used for purposes of advocacy, especially in a context where the subject is contentious, these requirements become even more important as any (real or perceived) shortcomings with regard to the quality or credibility of data may be used by critics to question the measure and discredit the findings.

Given the significant time and money required to conduct large-scale primary research, it makes practical sense to reduce those costs by making the best possible use of existing data.

36. Make optimal use of existing data and measures. Research found that while there is currently no satisfactory measure of civic space, there are a large number of current measures and indices that touch on various elements and aspects related to civic space. A summary overview of the more than 30 existing measures and indices that were reviewed and assessed by the author is provided in Annex 1. In interviews, many key informants stressed the importance of drawing on existing data sources to the greatest extent possible, conducting primary research only as necessary to validate, fill gaps and deepen analysis. This approach was recommended in terms of practicality, feasibility, credibility, and collaboration. Given the significant time and money required to conduct large-scale primary research, it makes *practical* sense to reduce those costs by making the best possible use of existing data. Savings in terms of time, money and effort should also enhance the *feasibility* of the exercise by making it less onerous and expensive to implement. As it takes time to build a reputation as a reliable measure, drawing on well-established and trusted sources of data could contribute to the *credibility* of the measure; especially if it draws on multiple sources. Finally, acknowledging and building on the work of others avoids duplication and promotes cooperation and *collaboration* among peers.

Experience shows that indices that seek to influence government behaviour are most effective when they focus exclusively on those things that government can do.

37. Tailor the measure for action by governments. The ultimate purpose of this proposed measure of civic space is to generate action on the part of national (and, where appropriate, sub-national) government actors, who play a principal role in the creation and enablement of civic space. While national governments are not the only actors who affect and influence civic space, they are considered its primary architects as it is their decisions and actions that determine the extent to which civic space exists and is protected in law and in practice. In order to be fit for purpose, the measurement tool and process must, therefore, be explicitly designed to achieve the objective of targeting and stimulating government action. Building the measure around a clear set of operational principles and standards based on existing international commitments is one key method of promoting and fostering action by this set of actors. Another important way to fit the measurement tool for this purpose is to ensure that it targets factors and indicators that are actionable by supply-side actors (i.e. over which national governments have some degree of control or influence). Experience shows that indices that seek to influence government behaviour are most effective when they focus exclusively on those things that government can do.

Measures that are broader in scope, and include a range of factors over which governments have little or no control, are less likely to have a practical impact (Keck and Sikkink 1998). The chances of government action are even greater when "scores" are accompanied by a qualitative description and analysis of current shortcomings and, ideally, concrete recommendations about what needs to be done to make improvements (UNDP, 2008). Numerous initiatives have found that impact is greatest when government actors themselves are involved in the assessment process - e.g. informed about the research initiative, asked to provide information or evidence, given the opportunity to self-assess, engaged in dialogue, and/or invited to validate or comment on findings (Weaver, 1991; Scheufele, 2000; Kelley and Simmons, 2014). Ideally, the measurement process should serve not only to generate a "score", but to raise awareness and build a common understanding among in-country stakeholders (from both government and civil society) regarding key principles and standards of civic space, current shortcomings and how to address them. Options for multi-stakeholder engagement in the measurement process should therefore be considered, keeping in mind that possibilities for meaningful and fruitful interaction with government actors will depend on the specific country context and will need to be adapted on a case-by-case basis.

38. Design the measure for effective advocacy. A common criticism of governance-related indices and measures is that, while they may produce valuable findings and serve to advance knowledge of the field, they are often ill-adapted for purposes of advocacy. From an advocacy perspective, in addition to the basic requirements of data being *meaningful* and credible, it is also essential for data to be *strategic, action-oriented, timely, understandable* and *empowering*. In this case, it is proposed that the measure should strategically target the actions of national governments (as described above), focusing on a limited number of issues judged to be of greatest relevance/importance. In addition to generating a score, the measure should also be action-oriented by providing information that identifies specific problems and clearly indicates what needs to be done to make improvements (UNDP, 2008).

If the measure is to be used to advocate for action and reforms in the real world, then information needs to be an accurate reflection of the current reality. It must be possible to update data on a regular (e.g. annual) basis and, ideally, to have some mechanism for detecting important changes or developments on an even more frequent (e.g. quarterly) or ongoing basis. Even if the measure concerns a complex phenomenon (like civic space), for purposes of advocacy, the measurement tool must make it possible to identify and present key messages in a *simple and understandable* way. This can be done, for example, by summarising and formatting findings in a simplified manner (e.g. in the form of a single score, ranking or rating, accompanied by key messages) and by "packaging" results in an attractive and user-friendly way - e.g. by using a "green/yellow/red" traffic-light system to rate countries or by designing an interactive website where data can be easily searched and accessed through infographics, maps, comparative tables, narratives, etc. Finally, the measure must be designed to *empower*, and not discourage or *disempower* those who seek to influence and protect civic space. For example, the measure must not simply attribute scores and point out problems and failures, but rather aim to: identify both strengths and weaknesses; acknowledge progress; highlight good practices; and, provide specific, actionable recommendations for making improvements.

39. Make the measure adaptable to different needs. As discussed above, international initiatives have a range of different needs with regard to the measurement of civic space and seek to use the findings in a multitude of ways (including as a consensus-building exercise, an entry requirement, a monitoring tool, a means of analysing country-specific strengths and a guide for reforms and collective action). Ideally, given diverse needs and potential usages, the measure should be designed in a manner that allows users to "pick and choose", using different forms of information in different ways for different purposes. One way to achieve this goal, for example, would be to (i) design a measure with multiple "layers" of analysis - allowing users the possibility to draw on scores as a simple indication of the overall status of civic space (or the status of specific aspects of civic space), or to refer

BOX 1 - RECOMMENDED PRACTICES TO ENSURE THE SECURITY OF IN-COUNTRY RESEARCHERS, INFORMANTS AND PARTICIPANTS

In most countries, it is expected that it will possible to undertake research without problems and with the active support and participation of all concerned stakeholders. In some country contexts, however, (e.g. where issues related to civic space are contentious, where civic space is restricted and/or where there are precedents of violations of civil/human rights) it is essential to take precautions to ensure the safety and security of in-country research partners, informants and participants. In such circumstances, it is important to ensure that local research partners have a strong understanding of current issues and dynamics and are fully aware of potential challenges and risks. In contexts that are risky or problematic, a first basic precaution is to offer research informants, survey respondents and discussion group participants the possibility of maintaining their anonymity if they wish. In some cases, this may necessitate conducting individual interviews rather than group discussions. It also involves ensuring that interview notes and research findings are kept secure and confidential. In situations where it is judged that conducting research and publishing findings may put research partners at risk, the possibility of contracting an out-of-country researcher/organisation to undertake research (rather than engaging in-country researchers) should be considered. If it is anticipated that the publication of research findings may elicit a backlash or retribution, it may be preferable to publish the report in the name of the global secretariat (rather than in the name of the in-country research organisation) and/or to make provisions for the lead researchers/authors to be out-of country at the time of publication. Finally, a contingency fund (e.g. emergency travel fund) should be established to ensure the ability to adequately respond to urgent security concerns should they arise.

to more detailed narrative resources for an analysis of issues, problems and recommended actions. Other ways to make the tool adaptable to the needs of different users include: (ii) presenting measurement findings in multiple forms (e.g. attributing countries a score of 0-100; ranking them from first to last place and/or categorising them (as "Compliant", "Partially Compliant" or "Not Compliant"), and (iii) ensuring that overall country scores can be disaggregated into individual scores for each dimension/sub-dimension of civic space (for example, allowing a user to hone in on specific issues such as CSO financing, internet freedoms or non-discrimination/inclusion concerns).[14] Beyond building flexibility into the design of the tool itself, each international initiative will also, obviously have the freedom to use the findings of the measure in the manner they choose, making their own decisions about where to "draw red lines" and how to deal with countries that are not compliant with established standards, according to their own internal policies and rules.

The process through which research and analysis is carried out is extremely important in its own right, as it is a valuable opportunity for civic space actors to come together to collectively learn about and reflect on standards of civic space and how to protect them.

40. Ensure the interests and needs of primary stakeholders are served. This study emphasises the important role that international initiatives can play in working with participating countries to open and protect civic space, and therefore aims to design a measure of civic space tailored to meet their particular needs. Any measure of civic space must also, however, seek to inform and empower the "inhabitants" of civic space – those individuals, groups and CSOs who occupy and function within civic space and advocate for its protection on a daily basis. The process through which research and analysis is carried out is extremely important in its own right, as it is a valuable opportunity for civic space actors to come together to collectively learn about and reflect on standards of civic space and how to protect them. Ideally, the measurement process should serve to empower primary stakeholders by: (i) informing and educating them (e.g. about civic space standards and good practices); (ii) giving voice to their experiences and concerns; and, (iii) consolidating and publicising their recommendations for improvement while, all the while, (iv) taking care to ensure their security and protect them from reprisal –particularly in contexts where issues related to restricted civic space are contentious. (Some recommended practices to ensure the safety of in-country researchers, informants and participants are outlined in Box 1). Explicit attention should also be paid to making sure that the *results* of the measurement process serve the interests and needs of primary stakeholders, acting as a springboard for in-country advocacy. It is important, for example, to: (i) share results and data with civic space actors in a proactive and timely manner; (ii) ensure that results are accessible and understandable to primary stakeholders (e.g. presented in a user-friendly format, and made available in the national language(s)); and, (iii) where possible, promote and support an appropriate mechanism for multi-stakeholder dialogue/action to open and protect civic space. Responding to the priority needs of primary stakeholders also necessitates consulting with them during the design and development of the measurement tool.

Dealing with inherent challenges and trade-offs

41. Simplicity versus complexity - There are inherent benefits in keeping any measure as simple, straight-forward and transparent as possible. At the same time civic space is, by nature, a complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon. Any measure of civic space must, therefore, face inevitable trade-offs between simplicity (to make the measure easy to implement and understand) and complexity (to ensure the measure is meaningful and adequately detailed to be operationally useful). The prospect of a simple and elegant measure of civic space, based on a few well-chosen and easily-observable proxies is alluring, but elusive. First, given multiple ways in which civic space is influenced and manifested, and enormous diversity across country contexts, identifying specific indicators or proxies that are universally applicable and meaningful is extremely difficult. Secondly, if the ultimate goal of the measure is not only to generate a score, but to diagnose and address threats to civic space, then simple proxies are of limited usefulness in and of themselves, and a more in-depth research process, resulting in a qualitative description and analysis of strengths, weaknesses and recommended actions is required.[15] According to numerous informants, this is where the real added value of a civic space measure lies. A proposed strategy to deal with this trade-off is to acknowledge the multiple dimensions of civic space (for example, related rights of information, expression, association, assembly and participation), but to focus on a limited number of key, strategic issues/indicators within each of these, exploring these in some depth to generate both a qualitative analysis and an indicative score. Even if the measure is based on multiple indicators and in-depth analysis, it is important to ensure that overall findings can be summarised and presented in a simple and graphic format, allowing users to be able to choose the level of complexity they require (e.g. ranging from simply knowing whether a given country is compliant or not in its protection of civic space, to consulting the score/status of specific dimensions of civic space; to accessing a narrative report providing a detailed (quantitative and qualitative) description of specific issues and aspects of civic space.

[14] The broader importance of publishing disaggregated data is emphasised in the literature. See, for example, Munck and Verkuilen, 2002 and UNDP, 2008. It is equally important to publish coding rules and processes.

[15] That said, by analysing findings over time and across countries, it is possible that certain proxies may emerge. These could potentially be used for specific purposes (e.g. in cases where only a single, simple indicator is sought and no detailed analysis is required).

42. Comparability versus contextualisation - During the research process, stakeholders from international initiatives frequently emphasised the need for a comparable measure with global (or near global) coverage. Again, for any global measure, there is an inevitable trade-off between the need for standardisation/comparability on the one hand and the need to adapt measurement tools to specific country contexts on the other (UNDP, 2008, p. 41). As mentioned above, in the case of civic space, it is very difficult to identify indicators that are meaningful and applicable across all countries; there is no easy or satisfactory "one-size-fits-all" solution. Given this inherent challenge, a proposed strategy is to seek to define a common, comparable framework that defines and scores against key dimensions, principles and standards of civic space, while allowing for the fact that systems and practices inevitably differ across countries and that the precise manner in which standards are applied may vary from one context to another. By striking the right balance between specificity and some limited "room for interpretation/adaptation" of specific standards, it should be possible to achieve local relevance and an "acceptable" level of comparability.

For any global measure, there is an inevitable trade-off between the need for standardisation/comparability on the one hand and the need to adapt measurement tools to specific country contexts on the other.

43. Objectivity versus country ownership - Related to this challenge is the trade-off between an approach that relies more on an "outsider" assessment conducted by an international fact-finding mission or a "neutral" party (emphasising objectivity and comparability) versus an "insider" method of assessment that directly engages primary stakeholders (and emphasises stakeholder engagement and ownership). Experience suggests, however, that this may be a false dichotomy. By engaging different stakeholders groups in appropriate ways, using well-adapted participatory techniques and identifying skilled and "neutral" facilitators, experience shows that it is possible to conduct participatory research in a rigorous and objective manner. If in-country research is conducted, informants expressed a clear preference for the adoption of participatory, multi-stakeholder research approach, given the important potential benefits in terms of educating and empowering primary stakeholders and creating a springboard for in-country advocacy, dialogue and action. Experience shows that such approaches are also more likely to influence government actors. According to the UNDP (2008, pp. 25 and 39), "If assessments are not locally owned, they will likely be shelved and will not feed into policymaking processes…Internal assessments have more relevance and credibility with national stakeholders than international assessments… [and] locally generated efforts typically enjoy better credibility with sceptical government policy makers". The objectivity and comparability of such approaches can be safeguarded by: providing in-country researchers with a common framework and clearly defined research guidelines; using stringent criteria in the selection of in-country researchers (and providing training/technical assistance as required); creating a group of national experts (including at least one knowledgeable "outsider") to support in-country researchers and; subjecting all country reports to review and quality control by an international panel. While national ownership is important to ensure legitimacy and buy-in, it can also be a double-edged sword, especially in contexts where issues around civic space are highly contentious or relations between government and civil society actors are tense or hostile. The operational challenge here is to apply research methodologies that can engage government actors in a productive way that promotes their ownership of the results, while protecting the autonomy of the assessment process and the ability of research participants to speak out in safe and confidential spaces and, if they wish, to maintain their anonymity.

44. The "ideal" versus the "doable" - Given political and practical considerations, there will inevitably be trade-offs between what is "ideal" and what is "doable" in terms of measuring civic space. In the identification of indicators, for example, it will be necessary to take into account both strategic/political factors (e.g. Which specific aspects are most important/problematic/actionable? Which will be "politically acceptable" to various stakeholder groups?) as well as practical factors (e.g. How feasible is it to measure this indicator? What is the level of availability, credibility, timeliness of the required data?) Given resource constraints, the (direct and indirect) costs of the proposed methodology must also be taken into account. For example, the advantages of an in-depth process of primary data collection must be weighed against the significant costs of adopting such an approach. As concluded by ICNL (2014, p. 20) in its comparative assessment of measurement approaches, "Assessment tools relying on primary data can provide invaluable detail and significant depth, but can be expensive, time-consuming and difficult to administer. Conversely, tools relying on secondary data are easier and cheaper to conduct, and thus can cover a larger geographical scope, but are typically incapable of offering the same level of nuance and specificity as those relying on primary source, on-the-ground data collection". Recommended tactics for managing this trade-off include to: (i) determine minimal requirements to adequately meet priority needs; (ii) evaluate a range of different methodological options, according to "greatest return on investment" rather than "least cost"; (iii) draw to the greatest extent possible on existing data, use primary research to fill gaps; and, (iv) seek the most cost-effective means possible of collecting and processing required data (be it through primary or secondary research). As outlined below in the description of different methodological options, the possibility of applying a "layered" or "staged" approach, where in-depth research is triggered only where needed, should also be considered.

V. What to Measure? Conceptualising Civic Space

45. An important first step in designing a measure of civic space is to determine exactly what will be measured. As discussed, research revealed the lack of a clear definition and common understanding of the concept of civic space. Numerous informants expressed the view that building consensus around a core set of principles/standards would be, in and of itself, an important step forward. Ideally, the measure should aim to affirm and consolidate standards that have been (or are being) developed with regard to different dimensions of civic space (e.g. established principles related to rights of information, expression, assembly, association and participation) and to fill gaps where they exist.

BOX 2 - SOME PRINCIPAL INTERNATIONAL DECLARATIONS AND COMMITMENTS RELATED TO THE PROTECTION OF CIVIC SPACE[16]

- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)*
- *Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention No. 87 (1948)*
- *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)*
- *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)*
- *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)*
- *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992)*
- *Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1999)*
- *UN Millennium Declaration (2000)*
- *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)*
- *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (2009)*
- *UNHRC Resolution on Freedom of Opinion and Expression (2009)*
- *UNHRC Resolution on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association (2010)*
- *Endorsement by the UN General Assembly of High Level Principles of Fiscal Transparency, Participation and Accountability (2012)*
- *UNHRC Resolution on the Promotion, Protection and Enjoyment of Human Rights on the Internet (2012)*
- *UNHRC Resolution on Civil Society Space: Creating and Maintaining, in Law and in Practice, a Safe and Enabling Environment (2013)*

46. Most governments around the world have committed to upholding many of the basic rights and freedoms associated with civic space (i.e. rights to information, expression, assembly, association and participation). Some of the principal international declarations and commitments related to civic space are listed in Box 2. As the ultimate objective of the measure of civic space is to promote concrete actions and reforms by governments to open and protect civic space, it is considered logical and strategic to build the measure on commitments that have already been endorsed by most governments, but that are being implemented only to varying degrees. The measure should aim to assess to what extent these principles are adequately reflected in national legislative and policy frameworks (de jure aspects) and, more importantly, the extent to which they are applied in practice (de facto aspects). In some cases (such as the right to citizen participation) where international law has affirmed basic principles, but where mechanisms and practices (pertaining to a wide range of different forms of citizen participation) are still being developed and established, the measure should ideally contribute to proposing and building consensus around a clear set of basic principles and standards.

47. In keeping with the proposed rights-based definition of civic space, five principal rights-based dimensions (and 16 sub-dimensions) of civic space are proposed. As outlined in Diagram 2, these include: (i) Freedoms of Information and Expression; (ii) Rights of Assembly and Association; (iii) Citizen Participation; (iv) non-discrimination/Inclusion; and, (v) Human Rights/ Rule of Law. The definition of these dimensions/sub-dimensions takes into account a mix of conceptual, practical and strategic considerations. In addition to building on (i) existing international declarations and commitments related to civic space, they are based on: (ii) a review of the literature regarding the concept of civic space and its key features, (iii) an analysis of the principal "real world" problems and challenges faced by civic space actors; (iv) recommendations from interviewees and TAG members regarding key issue areas; and, (v) practical considerations of what can feasibly be measured, understood and acted on.

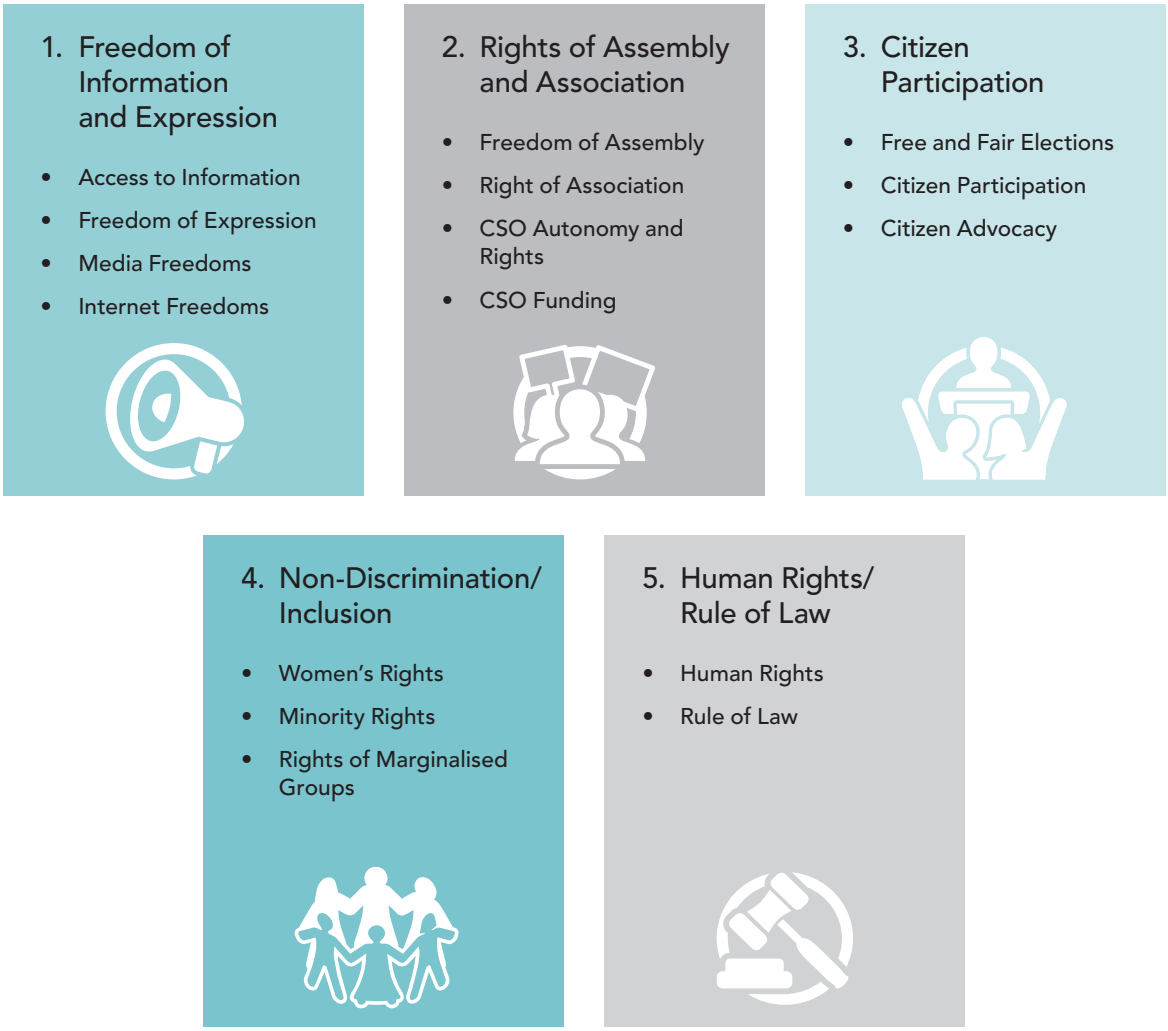
Dimension 1: Freedoms of Information and Expression

48. Freedoms of information and expression are a first essential defining dimension of civic space. Key sub-dimensions include: access to information, freedom of expression, media freedoms and internet freedoms.

[16] These are complemented and reinforced by a longer list of more specific international resolutions and conventions (related to particular aspects of civic space), as well as many other regional declarations, treaties, and charters (by the European Union, the African Union, the Organis ation of American States, the League of Arab States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, etc.) and national laws, policies and regulations. See, for example, CIVICUS. January 2010. Compendium Of International Legal Instruments And Other Inter-Governmental Commitments Concerning Core Civil Society Rights.

[17] Whether or not a Civic Space Index is implemented, international initiatives are encouraged to make use of this conceptual framework of civic space to guide their individual assessment initiatives and to promote a common definition and operational understanding of the concept of civic space.

DIAGRAM 2 - FIVE PROPOSED DIMENSIONS (AND 16 SUB-DIMENSIONS) OF CIVIC SPACE



49. Access to Information - The right to information is recognised by a number of international bodies as both a fundamental human right and an essential condition for democracy and citizen participation.[11] In order to engage as active citizens, people need to have access to information about government actions and decisions. According to the LogoLink Global Charter on the Right to Participation (2013, p. 5) "Citizens can exercise their right to participate only when they also have the right and access to information. Quality of participation is directly proportionate to access to quality information." In situations where governments operate in secrecy, depriving people of knowing how and why public decisions are made and how public resources are used, civic space is constrained and fundamental citizen rights are denied. A first principle of civic space is that: Access to information is guaranteed by law and respected in practice.

50. Freedom of expression - Freedom of expression is a basic human and civil right enshrined in international law.[19] People have the fundamental right to formulate their own opinions and ideas and to express these in public. This right extends to ideas that may offend or disturb. An important measure of civic space is the extent to which people are able to freely express themselves in public, including criticising government decisions, actions, laws and policies, without harassment or retribution. A second principle of civic space is that: Freedom of expression is guaranteed by law and respected in practice.

[19] Article 19 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. The right to freedom of expression for all is affirmed in numerous other international charters and treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. International law mandates that freedom of expression can only be restricted under very limited circumstances (e.g. where it is necessary to protect the rights of others, or to safeguard national security or public order.

[20] Article 19 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that the right to freedom of expression "includes freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also affirms this right.

51. Media freedoms - As an essential means of citizen information and expression, free media is inextricably linked to the first two freedoms, and equally guaranteed under international law.[20] Free media allows for the unrestricted flow of information and the open exchange of opinions and ideas regarding all aspects of public life – making it a fundamental component of the civic arena. Independent journalists and media outlets are also important civic space actors in their own right. Where media freedoms are denied (i.e. where there is censorship, government control of media or harassment of journalists) civic space is constrained. A third key principle for the protection of civic space is, therefore, that: Media freedoms are guaranteed by law and respected in practice.

52. Internet freedoms - The internet and social media are an increasingly important platform for citizen information, expression, communication and association around the world. Increasingly civic space exists both offline and online. International law recognises this reality and protects citizens' online rights.[21] Another important measure of civic space, therefore, is the extent to which people are able to freely access the internet, both to access information and communicate. A fourth key principle of protected civic space is that: Internet freedoms are guaranteed by law and respected in practice.

The internet and social media are an increasingly important platform for citizen information, expression, communication and association around the world.

Dimension 2: Rights of Assembly and Association

53. Rights of assembly and association represent a second essential defining dimension of civic space. Key sub-dimensions include: freedom of assembly, right of association, CSO autonomy and rights, and CSO funding.

54. Freedom of assembly - The right of peaceful assembly is a fundamental human right, enshrined in international law.[22] Freedom of assembly is an essential element of civic space as it affirms the right of citizens and CSOs to come together in the public sphere to advance their common interests, including their legitimate right to exercise dissent through peaceful protest, demonstrations and public meetings. According to UN Special Rapporteur Maina Kiai (2014, Para. 31) "Public assemblies are at the heart of an active civil society and a functioning democracy". Therefore, a fifth key principle for the protection of civic space is that: Rights of assembly are guaranteed by law and respected in practice.

55. Right of association - Like freedom of assembly, freedom of association is considered a fundamental human right, and is protected as such by international law.[23] Freedom of association is an essential determinant of civic space as it guarantees the right of individuals to form, join and participate in associations, groups, movements and civil society organisations. According to Maina Kai, "These rights are indeed fundamental – not simply because they are inscribed in the law, but because they satisfy people's fundamental desire to take control of their own destinies".[24] Therefore, a sixth key principle for the protection of civic space is that: Rights of association are guaranteed by law and respected in practice.

56. CSO autonomy and rights – A key determinant of civic space is the right of CSOs to operate freely and autonomously as independent actors, without unwarranted state interference in their affairs. International law prohibits any government policies or actions that violate these recognised rights, for example, through practices such as invasive oversight, burdensome reporting requirements, excessive audits or inspections.[25] The State has a duty to ensure that legislative and regulatory frameworks protect these rights and create a free and enabling operating environment for CSOs. A seventh key principle for the protection of civic space, therefore, is that: CSOs are able to function independently and free of government interference.

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[21] UNHRC Resolution A/HRC/RES/24/5 on Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, for example, refers to the obligation of States to respect and fully protect the rights of all individuals to assemble peacefully and associate freely, online as well as offline.

[22] The right to peaceful assembly is guaranteed by Article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and also by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the 2010 UNHRC Resolution on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association. International law places strict limitations on the restriction of this right and also regulates the use of force by authorities in controlling public assemblies.

[23] The right to freedom of association is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UNHRC Resolution on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association. As in the case of the right of assembly, International law places strict limitations on any restrictions of this right. International law obligates states not to interfere with this right except in very limited cases, for example, where there is a genuine threat to national security, public safety or the rights and freedoms of others.

[24] Speech by Maina Kiai before presenting his report on multilateral institutions to the General Assembly, Oct. 28, 2014.

[25] The right of CSOs to function freely and autonomously is inherent to the right of freedom of association under international law. Like other fundamental freedoms, the legal parameters for restricting this right are very limited. Governments are required to lean in favour of permitting CSO freedoms and creating an enabling environment for civil society to independently exist, operate and thrive.

57. CSO funding - According to international law, within broad parameters, CSOs have the right to access resources from any legal domestic or foreign source (including individuals, businesses, international organisations and governments). The right of CSOs to access funding is protected in numerous international treaties, under provisions related to freedoms of association. For example, Article 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights protects all activities of an association including fundraising activities. The Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms specifically guarantees the right of human rights defenders "to solicit, receive and utilise resources for the purpose of protecting human rights (including the receipt of funds from abroad)". [26] The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (2011, p. 95) has stated that in order for CSOs to be able to carry out their activities, "it is indispensable that they are able to discharge their functions without any impediments, including funding restrictions." There is an enabling fiscal environment for CSOs.

Dimension 3: Citizen Participation

58. The right to participate meaningfully in public life, including participating in and influencing processes of public deliberation and decision-making represents a third core dimension of civic space. Sub-dimensions include: free and fair elections, citizen participation and citizen advocacy.

59. Free and fair elections - The most basic form of citizen participation is the right to choose one's government and elected representatives. Free and fair elections are necessary to allow citizens to express their political will, hold their leaders to account and protest against abuses of power or limitations of civil rights. The right to free and fair elections is enshrined in international law, including in Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the Universal Declaration on Democracy[27]. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that elections must be periodic, genuine, organised according to universal suffrage, and by secret ballot. In other words, elections must: be held on a set schedule known to the electorate, offer equal opportunities for all competing parties and candidates, allow all citizens to vote (limiting participation only on the basis of legitimate criteria such as age or residence); and protect the anonymity of voters. An ninth key principle of protected civic space is that: Elections are free and fair.

60. Citizen participation - Beyond voting, all members of society – both as individuals and as community/ CSO representatives - have the fundamental right to contribute to and influence processes of public decision-making that affect their lives. This right of participation is enshrined in numerous international declarations and treaties – affirming, for example, "the right of citizens to participate in public affairs"[28] and acknowledging "the crucial importance of the active involvement of civil society in processes of governance that affect the life of people"[29], including fiscal policy and budget-making[30]. A tenth principle of enabled civic space is that: The government facilitates the participation of citizens and CSOs in processes of public deliberation and decision-making.

All members of society – both as individuals and as community/ CSO representatives - have the fundamental right to contribute to and influence processes of public decision-making that affect their lives.

61. Citizen advocacy - In addition to participating in "invited" spaces[31] of public deliberation and decision-making, a fundamental right of citizens and CSOs is to have the civic space to seek to influence public decisions through their own independent advocacy, lobbying and watchdog activities. In its 2013 resolution on Protecting Civil Society Space, the UNHRC urges States to "acknowledge publicly this important and legitimate role of civil society…and to engage with civil society to enable it to participate in the public debate on decisions that would contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law and of any other relevant decisions". An eleventh principle of protected civic space is that: The government recognises and respects the legitimate role of citizens and CSOs as independent advocates, watchdogs and development agents.

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[26] See also Article 6(f) of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief; and, Article 13 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

[27] Adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council at its 161th session in Cairo in September 1997.

[28] Article 25 of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

[29] UNHRC Resolution A/HRC/RES/24/5 on The Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association.

[30] See, for example, UN Resolution on Promoting transparency, participation and accountability in fiscal policies, 2012. The importance of public participation in fiscal policy and budget-making is also recognised in the IMF Fiscal Transparency Code and the OECD Principles of Budgetary Governance.

[31] See Gaventa, 2006.

Dimension 4: Non-Discrimination/Inclusion

62. International law guarantees the human and civic rights of all individuals and groups without discrimination. In practice, however, certain individuals and groups do not enjoy equal rights or face discrimination because they belong to a minority or a marginalised group (e.g. on the basis of their gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, physical abilities or socio-economic status). Space to engage in policy-making, for example, may be shrinking for some groups while it's expanding for others. While the first three dimensions capture the principal rights and freedoms associated with civic space, this dimension aims to measure the extent to which that space is equitable and inclusive; the extent to which fundamental civic rights and freedoms are enjoyed by all individuals and social groups without discrimination. Key sub-dimensions include: women's rights, minority rights and the rights of marginalised groups.

International law guarantees the human and civic rights of all individuals and groups without discrimination.

63. Women's rights - Equal rights for women and men, including equal civil rights, is enshrined in international law. For example, CEDAW Article 7 states that "all parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right to vote… to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to participate in non-governmental organisations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country". Laws, policies and programmes that promote gender equity and affirm equal rights and opportunities for women are, therefore, required to achieve equitable and inclusive civic space. A twelfth principle of protected civic space is that: Women have equal civil rights and equal access to civic space.

64. Minority rights - Minority rights, including equal political and civil rights for all groups within a given society, are guaranteed in numerous international treaties. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights prohibits discrimination "on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status" and stipulates that "in those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied rights" (ICCPR, Articles 26 and 27). Article 5 of the ICERD guarantees "the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of…political rights [and]…civil rights".[33] UN Special Rapporteur, Maina Kiai, adds that "limiting assembly and association rights on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity is in clear violation of international human rights law".[34] A thirteenth principle of protected civic space is that: Minority groups have equal civil rights and equal access to civic space.

65. Rights of marginalised groups - The UNHCR Resolution A/HRC/27/L.24 on Civil Society Space "emphasises the importance of civil society space for empowering persons belonging to vulnerable groups" and "calls upon States to ensure that legislation, policies and practices do not undermine the enjoyment of their human rights or the activities of civil society in defending their rights". Equal civil rights for vulnerable groups – including, for example, persons with disabilities, indigenous and tribal peoples, youth and children, migrants, non-citizens, refugees and stateless persons - is stipulated in a range of international conventions.[34] Despite these protections and guarantees under international law, a broad range of studies and reports confirm that, in practice, in virtually all countries around the world, vulnerable and marginalised groups are often unable to effectively exercise their fundamental civil rights. [35] A fourteenth principle of protected civic space, therefore, is that: Marginalised groups have equal civic rights and equal access to civic space.

[32] See also, Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992) and Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (1981).

[33] Maina Kiai, UN Special Rapporteur, A/HRC/26/29, para 28.

[34] See, for example: International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990); Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989, No. 169); Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006); Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1950); and, Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954). Maina Kiai, UN Special Rapporteur, notes that "The right to freedom of peaceful assembly is particularly important for non-citizens and migrants, who may lack other mechanisms with which to advance their political, social and economic interests." (A/HRC/26/29, para 37).

[35] UN Resolution A/HRC/26/29, para 15.

Dimension 5: Human Rights/Rule of Law

66. In order for civic space to be real and meaningful, the social and political context in which that space exists must meet certain minimal standards. These fundamental preconditions for civic space include the protection of a culture of basic human rights and rule of law.[36] In the absence of these, the more specific rights and freedoms associated with civic space discussed above are jeopardised. This dimension is therefore intended to measure the broader enabling environment for civic space. While respect for human rights and rule of law do not, in and of themselves, suffice to ensure civic space they are considered necessary preconditions.

67. Human rights - Governments have the duty to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. This duty is both negative (i.e. the obligation to not restrict or violate basic rights and freedoms), and positive (i.e. the obligation to ensure respect for these rights and freedoms). In addition to numerous international treaties and declarations that affirm these duties,[37] the UN Human Rights Council Resolution on Protecting Civil Society Space urges states "to create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment in which civil society can operate free from hindrance and insecurity".[38] This must include activists and advocates working in more politically sensitive areas (such as anti-corruption, human rights, land rights, natural resources, environmental protection and climate justice). A fifteenth principle of protected civic space, therefore, is that: Basic human rights are guaranteed by law and respected in practice.

68. Rule of law - In the absence of rule of law or where impunity is widespread, existing legal and regulatory frameworks for the range of rights and freedoms outlined above lose their meaning. Basic rule of law is therefore also considered a necessary precondition for meaningful civic space. The fundamental duty of States to ensure rule of law is clearly enshrined in international law. In particular, the UN Human Rights Council Resolution on Protecting Civil Society Space urges States to "ensure access to justice, accountability and end impunity for human rights violations and abuses against civil society actors".[39] A sixteenth and final principle of protected civic space, therefore, is that: There is effective rule of law.

69. Without claiming (or attempting) to be comprehensive or all-encompassing, these five dimensions (and 16 sub-dimensions) are considered to capture the essential elements of civic space. The literature warns against being too "maximalist" (including theoretically irrelevant attributes) or too "minimalist" (excluding theoretically relevant attributes) in identifying attributes of the concept to be measured (Munck and Verkuilen, 2002, p. 8). The proposals here aim to heed this advice and strike an appropriate balance between the two. Munck and Verkuilen also emphasise the need to of isolate the "leaves" of the concept tree, to avoid problems of redundancy and conflation. During detailed design of the civic space measure, further review by a group of technical experts is recommended to verify that the proposed dimensions and sub-dimensions adequately meet these requirements.

70. Given the diverse needs of users, as discussed above, different stakeholders may have a particular interest in one or more dimensions of civic space and/or wish to compare the relative strengths/weaknesses of individual dimensions of civic space. For this reason, it is proposed that the measure of civic space be designed to measure each dimension and sub-dimension of civic space individually as well as producing an overall measure/scores or civic space. It is proposed to aggregate scores based on a simple average, giving equal theoretical weight to each of the five dimensions.[40] In the detailed design and field-testing of the measure, it will nevertheless be useful to test this proposal and assess the implications of different aggregation rules.[41]

71. Over time (or after an initial field-testing period) it is also recommended that correlations between different dimensions, sub-dimensions and indicators be analysed and modifications made as necessary – for example, to establish the cross-system equivalence of indicators and to maximise homogeneity within measurement while minimising the number of necessary distinctions (Munck and Verkuilen, 2002, p. 8).

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[36] While this sub-dimension includes the more specific civil liberties described in Dimensions 1-4, it is intended to capture in a broader and more all-encompassing manner the extent to which the fundamental rights (be they civil, political or personal) of individuals living in a given country are respected.

[37] See, for example, the UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), the UN Millennium Declaration (2000) and the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1998) that specifically supports and promotes the work of human rights defenders.

[38] See UN Resolution A/HRC/27/L.24, Para. 3.

[39] See UN Resolution A/HRC/27/L.24, Para. 9.

[40] The proposal to aggregate by using a simple average takes into account the need to ensure correspondence between the theory of the relationship between attributes and the selected aggregation. (Munck and Verkuilen, 2002, pp. 26-27)

[41] Special consideration should be given to Dimension 5, since basic human rights and rule of law can be considered not only as important sub-dimensions of civic space but as essential preconditions.

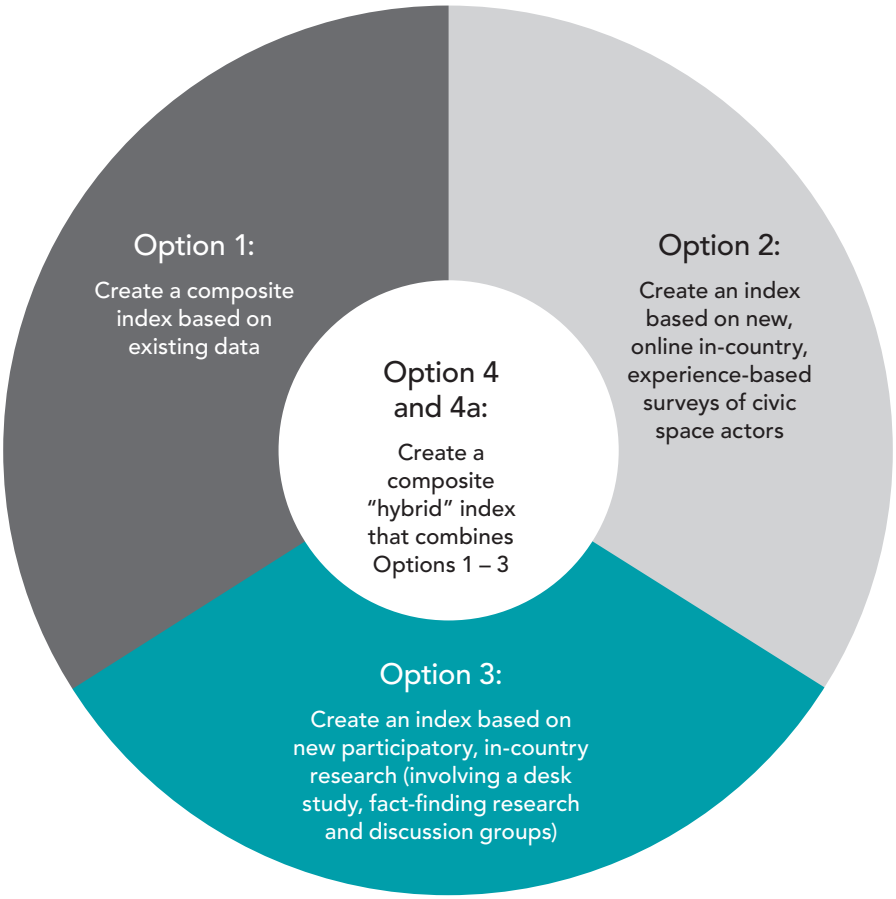
VI. Measuring Civic Space: Some Proposed Options

72. Numerous approaches are possible for measuring civic space as conceptualised above. Given the importance of comparability between countries (as discussed in paragraph 42), there is a need to generate a globally relevant index of government performance on protecting and enabling civic space. Based on research findings, four different options for the measurement and comparison of civic space are proposed for consideration – each of which has its own particular advantages, disadvantages and resource requirements. Listed in order from least to most resource-intensive, these include: (1) creating a composite measure based on combining existing data; (2) conducting an online in-country, experience-based survey of civic space actors; (3) conducting a participatory, in-country research process; and, (4) adopting a "hybrid" approach that combines the first three options. The following section describes each one of these options, outlining the relative pros, cons and related costs of each.

Option 1: Create an index based on existing data

73. Description/Justification - The first proposed option for measuring civic space is to create a composite index based on existing data sources, updated annually at global level. In research interviews, many key informants recommended drawing on existing data sources to the greatest extent possible, using primary research as necessary to fill gaps. Research found that while there is currently no satisfactory measure of civic space per se, there are a large number of current measures and indices related to various aspects of civic space. As described above, approximately 35 existing measures and indices, representing hundreds of indicators related to different dimensions of civic space were reviewed. While the detailed design of the composite index will require a more in-depth development process (including inputs from technical specialists), initial research found the creation of such an index to be a feasible option based on existing data.

DIAGRAM 3 - METHODOLOGICAL OPTIONS FOR CREATING A CIVIC SPACE INDEX



74. In line with other composite indices (such as the World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators and the CIVICUS Enabling Environment Index), it is proposed to use multiple indicators and data sources to reduce bias and to increase coverage - given that not all data sources cover all countries. In Annex 6, a preliminary list of selected indicators and data sources for each dimension of civic space is proposed. Selections are based on: the relevance of indicators (i.e. the extent to which they capture the essence and meaning of the given dimension/sub-dimension), as well as the credibility, coverage, timeliness and sustainability of data sources - i.e. only data from recognised producers that use credible research methodologies; have global (or, at least, multi-regional) coverage; update data on a regular basis and are expected to continue to produce data in future are included. The process of recalibrating, weighting and aggregating scores poses some technical challenges and will require careful consideration, but there are numerous precedents to draw on and learn from. Experience shows, for example, that it is important to be aware of the risk of correlation errors and sample bias, and to design the index in such a way as to minimise these risks (Arndt and Oman, 2006, p. 49).

75. Once recalibrated and aggregated, all data and findings are made available on an interactive website. Findings can potentially be represented through a system of scoring (e.g. 0 to 100) and/or categorisation (e.g. civic space in each country is categorised as Protected, Partially Protected or Not Protected, according to an agreed benchmarking system).[42] See Diagram 4.[43] The online index should also offer a breakdown of the scores/categories for each individual dimension/ sub-dimension of civic space – allowing for both an indication of relative strengths/weaknesses within each country and the ability to make comparisons of more specific issues (e.g. levels of citizen participation or non-discrimination/inclusion) between countries.

DIAGRAM 4 - CIVIC SPACE INDEX: A SAMPLE DASHBOARD FOR OPTIONS 1 THROUGH 4

Country Name	Score	Categorisation	Individual Dimension Ratings				
			Dim. 1	Dim. 2	Dim. 3	Dim. 4	Dim. 5
Country A	90/100	Protected	■	■	■	■	■
Country B	75/100	Protected	■	■	■	▫	■
Country C	60/100	Partly Protected	■	▫	■	▫	▫
Country D	40/100	Not Protected	▫	▫	■	■	■
…	…	…			…		
…	…	…			…		

[42] A system of five categories, rather than three, could also be considered to provide a more nuanced rating system. Countries could also potentially be ranked (from first to last place) according to their respective scores. Ranking is not recommended here, as the efficacy of such an approach was questioned by research interviewees. The pros and cons of ranking could, however, be further assessed in the context of detailed design and field-testing of the Civic Space Index.

[43] The use of such a dashboard applies to all of Options 1 through 4.

76. Beyond existing measures and indices, there are also a large number of civic space-related country reports, narrative updates, alerts and news bulletins that are updated on an annual (or even more frequent) basis. A selective list of such existing reports and narrative resources related to each key dimension of civic space is provided in Annex 7. In addition to composite index scores, it is recommended that the online platform include annually updated, country-specific links to these resources – giving users who seek a deeper understanding of the issues the possibility to easily access relevant qualitative information regarding different aspects of civic space in a given country.

77. Pros and Cons - Principal advantages associated with this approach include the following:

    - The approach saves time and money by making optimal use of existing data.
    - The composite index derives credibility by drawing on a range of established and reputable data sources.
    - This approach offers good possibilities for broad coverage and comparability across countries from Year One and at minimal cost (compared to all other options).
    - This option makes it possible to monitor trends (at the national, regional and global level) and allow for monitoring the progress made by governments over time, through annual updates.
    - By providing scores of individual dimensions and sub-dimensions, it offers users the possibility of focusing on one or a few specific issue areas.

Despite the availability of a significant amount of civic space-related data, there are nevertheless important gaps in the content and coverage of existing datasets.

78. There are also, nevertheless, significant shortcomings associated with this approach. These include the following:

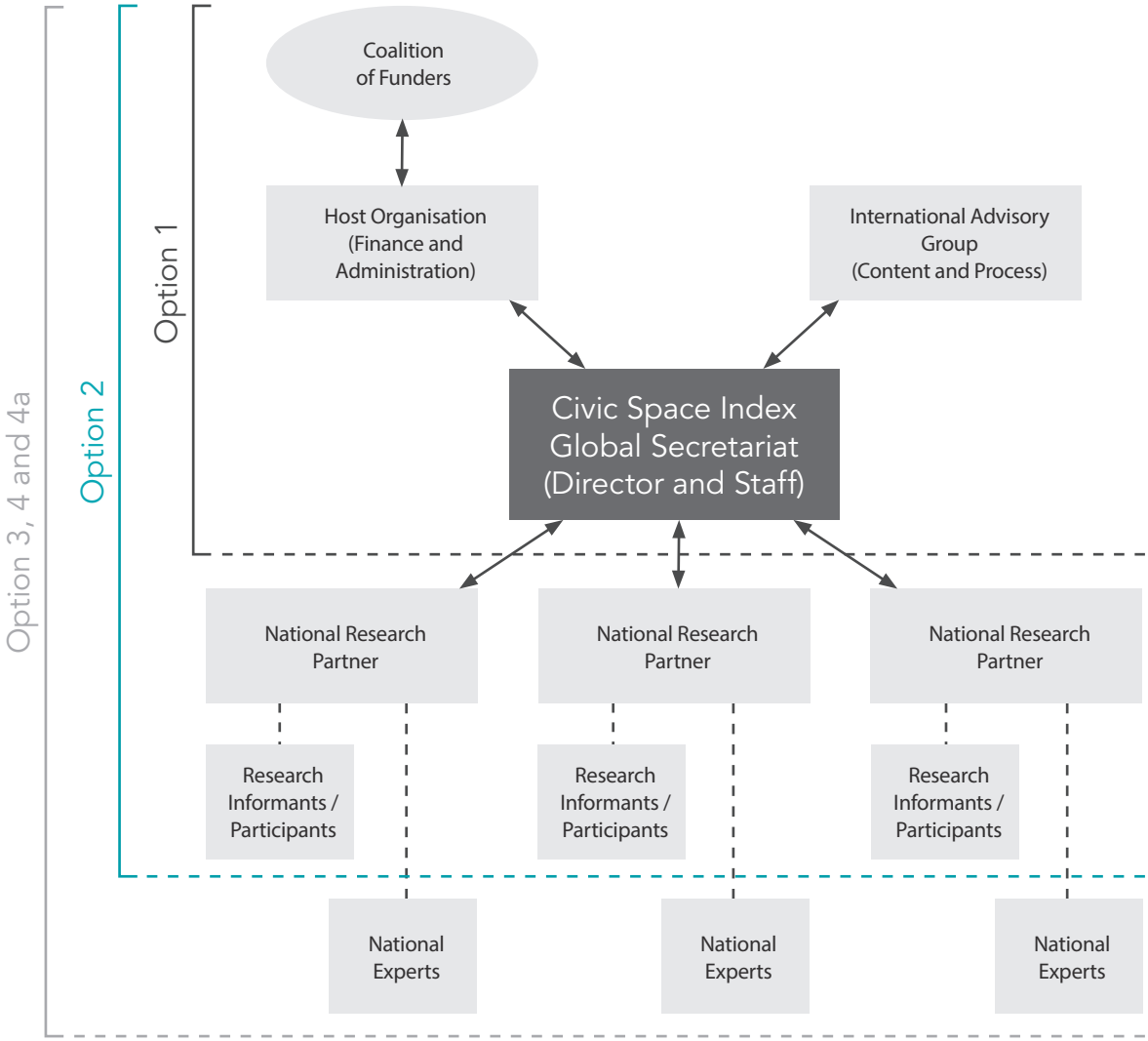
    - Despite the availability of a significant amount of civic space-related data, there are nevertheless important gaps in the content and coverage of existing datasets. As shown in Annex 6, the availability of relevant data is unequal across different dimensions and it is necessary to combine certain sub-dimensions of civic space (for a total of 11 rather than 16) due to a lack of specificity of existing measures/indicators. Also as shown in Annex 6, while on average available data for every sub-dimension covers more than 150 countries, coverage is uneven, with only 10 (out of a total of 62 indicators) offering "global" coverage of more than 200 countries.
    - Due to these data gaps, while comparability across countries can be considered as "acceptable", it is far from ideal.
    - The use of multiple data sources, while considered to contribute to the robustness of the measure, results in a lack of transparency of content for users. According to UNDP (2008, p. 21), "By aggregating many component variables into a single score or category, users run the risk of losing crucial conceptual clarity. If users can't understand or unpack the concept that is being measured, their ability to draw out informed policy implications is severely constrained".
    - While this approach provides a snapshot of the overall status of different dimensions and sub-dimensions of civic space, it provides no analysis of the underlying reasons for scores and no clear guidance to governments and other stakeholders about what specifically needs to be done to improve scores.
    - This approach fails to directly engage in-country stakeholders, thus missing critical opportunities to gather first-hand information, raise awareness, promote ownership over research results, stimulate in-country dialogue, etc.[36]
    - This approach fails to capture specific issues and developments in a timely and dynamic way. Because it is based on existing data sources, there is an inevitable time lag in the generation of findings. The results are therefore akin to looking in a rear-view mirror, rather than the current landscape.[44]
    - Other common shortcomings of composite indexes include the possibility of correlation errors, lack of reliable comparability over time, and the risk of sample bias (Arndt and Oman, 2006).

79. Implementation Arrangements and Estimated Costs - As outlined in Diagram 5, such an index could be compiled annually by a small global secretariat, hosted by an existing international organisation and guided/overseen by an International Advisory Group. See Box 3 for a summary of key selection criteria for the host organisation and international advisors. In terms of cost, Option 1 is the least expensive of the proposed options - since the proposed composite index relies solely on existing data sources and requires no data collection/analysis at the country level. Initial costs, as outlined in Annex 8 include: the detailed design of the index and, the development of the supporting database and online website.[45] Ongoing costs include: the annual compilation of results; maintenance of the website; and the drafting, publication and launch of an annual overview report.

[44] For example, CIVICUS estimates that 70% of data used to generate its recent Enabling Environment Index was two to three years old at time of publication of the Index (CIVICUS, 2013, p. 11).

[45] The use of publicly available algorithms and support platforms should help to control these costs.

DIAGRAM 5 – PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR DIFFERENT METHODOLOGICAL OPTIONS



Option 2: Create an index based on new, online in-country, experience-based surveys of civic space actors

80. Description/Justification - The second proposed option is to measure civic space by conducting an annual experience-based survey[46] of approximately 100 civic space actors in each participating country. While the detailed development of the survey will require a more in-depth design process (including consultation with in-country stakeholders), a preliminary set of sample survey questions is attached in Annex 9. While some specific survey questions seek respondents' perceptions or opinions, the survey is designed to be predominantly experience-based – in order to maximise the credibility and usefulness of survey findings.[47] The use of an online survey platform is proposed as a time and money-saving strategy, significantly reducing the costs and efforts associated with a more traditional face-to-face survey mechanism.[48]

81. The survey does not aim to be representative of the population at large (no random sampling is required) but, instead, aims to solicit the views of a broad cross-section of civic space actors (i.e. leaders and active members of a range of CSOs). Since the survey is experience-based, it is necessary to ensure that survey respondents have first-hand experience as civic space actors.[49] It also has the practical advantage of being faster and easier to implement than a general population survey. Once an in-country network of respondents is established, there is also a possibility of conducting "flash polls" on a more frequent basis or on specific issue areas (according to need).[50]

[46] Perception-based indicators rely on respondents' subjective opinions and perceptions, while experience-based indicators try to measure actual personal experience.

[47] While perception-based indicators are a frequently used measurement tool, experience-based or fact-based indicators are generally considered more credible and useful (UNDP, 2008).

[48] Where necessary, hard copy surveys can be used to complement the online survey platform (to reach areas/respondents that lack online access).

[49] For example, the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Report is based upon a similar model of an experience–based survey of primary stakeholders.

[50] Including government officials and decision-makers in the survey, in order to compare and contrast perceptions and views, could also be considered.

BOX 3 – SAMPLE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE INTERNATIONAL HOST ORGANISATION AND INTERNATIONAL ADVISORS[53]

International Host Organisation

The organisation selected to host the Civic Space Index global secretariat should:

- *Have programming and/or expertise in issues related to civic space.*
- *Have experience in social science measuring/indexing.*
- *Have a strong institutional reputation/proven track record.*
- *Have the institutional capacity to manage the global secretariat and the Civic Space Index budget.*
- *Ideally, enjoy linkages with a strong global network of in-country civic space actors, as well as knowledge of/links with national-level researchers/think tanks.*
- *Be seen as credible and legitimate by civil society, governments and the international community.*

This final criteria was considered as particularly important by participants at the consultative workshop, who underlined the need for the measurement to be (and to be perceived to be) "independent" and not "civil society driven". The workshop recommended that the international host organisation should be as "neutral" as possible - for example, a multilateral institution or an independent university, research institute or think tank; rather than an advocacy-oriented CSO. That said, given the practical need for knowledge of and links with in-country CSOs, the possibility of a partnership arrangement with a global secretariat based in a respected multilateral or research institution and drawing on the contacts and expertise of a civil society organisation (with a strong global network and practical understanding of civic space issues) could be considered.

International Advisors

The international advisory group should be made up of 7-11 people, and include civic space experts (e.g. researchers/ analysts) and representatives from civil society, government and international organisations concerned with the protection and enablement of civic space. Explicit efforts should be made to ensure gender equity and global diversity. International advisors should:

- *Have experience and expertise in issues related to civic space.*
- *Have in-depth knowledge of civic space issues in one or more specific countries/regions.*
- *Be willing to participate in 4-5 virtual meetings per year.*
- *Be willing to participate in the annual quality control process (reviewing and commenting on draft country reports.*

82. Survey findings, including resulting scores and a brief narrative report (including recommendations from survey respondents) are disseminated at country level and posted on a global website. Annual updates make it possible to monitor progress and trends (at the national, regional and global level) over time. As outlined in Diagram 5, this option requires the identification of a research partner in each participating country (to conduct the survey and disseminate results at country level) as well as a small global secretariat as described above (to provide overall coordination and to compile and disseminate results at the global level).

83. A principal task of the in-country partners will be to ensure the participation of a broad and diverse set of civil society actors. Detailed guidelines will be required to help ensure that the survey covers diverse categories of CSOs (e.g. grassroots organizations, social movements, youth groups, women's organizations, trade unions, faith-based groups, rural organizations, advocacy groups, service organizations, etc.) and also seeks to ensure diversity according to factors of geography, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, socio-economic status, political affiliation, physical ability, sexual orientation, etc. This is important both to obtain a cross-cutting picture of civic space actor experiences, and also to generate disaggregated survey findings (providing valuable information about how different social groups, including poor and marginalised persons and communities, experience civic space).

84. Pros and Cons - The principal advantages of this approach are the following:

    - Although it involves in-country data collection, it is relatively fast and cost-effective (due to the use of a online platform).
    - It provides comparable, quantitative data as well as some qualitative data (in the form of direct recommendations from primary stakeholders about what actions are required to improve the current situation).
    - It is based predominantly on experience-based data (generally considered to be more credible and useful than perception-based data).
    - Data generated by the survey is much more timely and up-to-date than Option 1 (and there is a possibility of conducting "flash polls" for near immediate feedback on specific issues according to need).

[51] NB These criteria apply to the selection of the international host organisation and international advisors for all option of measurement chosen (i.e. options 1-4a) for both the field-testing phase and the full implementation phase (see section VII).

85. The principal disadvantages of this approach are the following:

    - Not all sub-dimensions of civic space are well-captured through "experience-based" data, necessitating reliance on perceptions-based data for some aspects.
    - The credibility of the results is dependent upon ensuring the participation of a broad and diverse set of civil space actors. This requires effort and commitment on the part of in-country research partners.
    - The approach allows for only superficial engagement with stakeholders (i.e. there is no opportunity for group discussion or dialogue).
    - The survey captures some qualitative data (i.e. key recommendations for improvement) but offers no detailed explanation or analysis of factors affecting civic space.

The credibility of the results is dependent upon ensuring the participation of a broad and diverse set of civil space actors.

86. Implementation Arrangements and Estimated Costs - As outlined in Diagram 5, in-country surveys are conducted by national-level research partners, guided and supported by a small global secretariat. See Box 5 for a summary of key selection criteria for in-country research partners. Option 2 is more costly and time-consuming than Option 1, given the need for country-level data collection and analysis (even though the proposed use of an online platform for data collection and analysis should serve to control costs). As outlined in Annex 8, initial costs include: the detailed development and field-testing of the survey questionnaire and methodology; the preparation of an implementation guide for country partners; and, development of the supporting global database and website. Ongoing costs include: the identification and briefing of national partners (by the global secretariat); the identification of a representative network of survey respondents and translation of the survey into national languages as necessary (by country partner); the annual implementation of the survey (i.e. data collection and analysis) and drafting and dissemination of survey results at the country level (by country partners); and, the annual compilation of results, maintenance of the global website and drafting, publication and launch of an annual overview report (by the global secretariat).

The proposed indicators aim to combine both analytical clarity and actionability, with a view to striking a balance between comprehensiveness and relevance for policy action.

Option 3: Create an index based on new participatory, in-country research

87. Description/Justification - The third proposed option is to conduct a participatory in-country research process, involving a desk study, targeted fact-finding research and discussion groups, resulting in both a quantitative scoring of civic space and an qualitative country report that describes and analyses specific strengths, weaknesses and recommended actions for improvement. Research and analysis is carried out by an in-country research partner, supported by a small group of national experts as well as the global secretariat. Relevant government actors should be informed of the research from the outset and consulted as part of the research process. Research findings - both scores and the accompanying narrative report - are disseminated at country level (by the national partner) and posted on a global website (by the global secretariat).

88. A principal advantage of this option (compared to Options 1 and 2) is that in addition to generating scores associated with each dimension and sub-dimension of civic space, it offers the opportunity to propose and score against a set of more specific principles and standards related to each sub-dimension. As discussed above, developing and building agreement around a clear set of standards is something that all concerned stakeholders considered highly beneficial – in terms of bringing operational clarity to the concept of civic space and providing government actors with clear guidance as to how to protect and enable civic space. While the finalisation of a set of core principles and standards will require further development, fine-tuning, consultation and consensus-building, a preliminary set of proposals is outlined in Annex 10. Proposed standards include a mix of both *de jure* indicators (that measure the existence and quality of institutions, rules, and procedures) and *de facto* indicators (that measure practices, results and impacts) – both of which are considered essential to gain a meaningful and actionable assessment of civic space. The proposed indicators aim to combine both analytical clarity and actionability, with a view to striking a balance between comprehensiveness and relevance for policy action. Once a final set of principles/standards is agreed, a next critical step in the detailed design of the measure will be to identify key issues and influencing factors related to each standard and, on the basis of these, to formulate a clear set of research questions related to each standard, providing in-country researchers with clear guidance and parameters. While the development of a detailed, standardised measurement framework will be essential to the successful implementation of the index, this should also provide some scope for local researchers to adapt and tailor the common framework to their particular context on a case-by-case basis (as long as an acceptable level of comparability is maintained).

89. The initial desk study serves to gather as much evidence as possible in response to the guiding questions. It covers both international resources (starting with the documents identified in Annex 7) as well as regional and national-level studies and publications. This process is supplemented, as necessary, by targeted in-country fact-finding research, interviews with key informants and discussion groups, again focused on responding to the established set of research questions. Interviewees and discussion group participants should be representative of a broad cross-section of stakeholders and should be selected to ensure a variety of different perspectives (including those of poor and marginalised groups). Typically, interviewees and discussion group participants include civic space actors (e.g. activists, community organisers, independent journalists, CSO leaders and members, NGO practitioners); state actors (e.g. elected officials, decision-makers and civil servants) and specialists (e.g. lawyers, academics, researchers, analysts) with civic space-related expertise. In order to obtain frank and honest responses, all stakeholders should be given the option to remain anonymous. Again, the detailed design of this option will include the development of a clear and comprehensive research manual to guide the in-country research process, with room for tailoring to the national context as required. Numerous initiatives have developed methodologies for in-country research to learn from and build on. Box 4 describes a few of these.

BOX 4 - EXAMPLES OF IN-COUNTRY RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

A large number of research initiatives, including several directly related to issues of civic space, use participatory in-country methodologies to collect data and analyse issues based on a common defined framework. For example, the Enabling Environment National Assessment (EENA) initiative[52] supports local research teams to measure key factors impacting the ability of CSOs to flourish in a given country. The EENA questionnaire includes factual and perception-based questions regarding ten dimensions of the environment for civil society. Data is collected through focus group discussions with key stakeholders, one-on-one interviews and desktop research. A range of stakeholders (including CSO leaders and staff, academics, journalists, government officials, politicians and donors) is involved in both data collection and consensus-based approval of the assessment findings. No comparison or ranking across countries is undertaken. The EENA methodology is currently being piloted in a dozen countries.

The Monitoring Matrix on Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development in the Balkans[53] has built consensus around 24 common standards (and 151 individual indicators) to assess: basic legal guarantees of CSO freedoms; the framework for CSOs' financial viability and sustainability; and, CSO-government relationships in eight Balkan countries. The indicators of the matrix do not aim to create scores or ranks among countries, but rather to describe each particular country context and promote productive dialogue with government counterparts. Research to monitor indicators is undertaken annually by in-country CSOs and involves a mix of desk research, expert inputs and stakeholder consultations. An important achievement of the Monitoring Matrix is that it has been taken on board by the EU Enlargement Process as a means of assessing the operational framework for CSO-government relations – creating considerable support and leverage for improving the environment for civil society in the region.

The CIVICUS Civil Society Index[54] (CSI) is an action-research project, conducted by and for civil society actors, that aims to assess the state of civil society in countries around the world. It is designed to assess and score four key dimensions of civil society (i.e. structure, external environment, values and impact) each of which is composed of several sub-dimensions and a larger number of individual indicators. In-country research and analysis is carried out by a National Index Team (that organises and conducts research) supported by a National Advisory Group (that reviews findings and assigns scores). Research involves: a review of secondary data, a social forces analysis and participatory mapping of civil society, fact-finding research, stakeholder consultations and a media review. The research process is considered important in its own right, as an opportunity for civil society networking, awareness-raising, collective reflection and capacity-building. CSI results are quantified and are designed to be comparable across countries. To date the CSI has been implemented in more than 55 countries. Results are updated only sporadically, based on individual country demand.

Other related initiatives that use participatory primary research methodologies at country level include: the USAID-supported CSO Sustainability Index (implemented annually in 63 countries), the Independent Reporting Mechanism of the OGP (implemented biennially in 65 OGP countries); Transparency International's Open Governance Scorecard (currently being piloted in five countries); and the Global Integrity Index (which no longer ranks countries, but continues to produce qualitative country reports). These various initiatives provide a rich body of both experiences and resources (e.g. defined sets of principles and standards, questionnaires, research guides and scoring matrices) to draw on and learn from in finalising the detailed design of Option 3.

[52] The EENA initiative is created and supported by the International Centre for Not-For-Profit Law (ICNL) and CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation.

[53] The Monitoring Matrix was designed and implemented by the Balkan Civil Society Development Network, with the active support of the European Centre for Not-for-Profit Law and the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law. See BCSDN, 2013.

[54] See CIVICUS, 2011.

90. On the basis of this research, the in-country partner prepares a draft country report that describes specific strengths, weaknesses and practical recommendations related to each civic space standard, and proposes preliminary scores for each standard (e.g. according to a scoring scale such as the one outlined in Annex 10). The report should compile all key evidence and information gleaned from the research (indicating whether information is derived from interviews, group discussions, third party sources, etc.). Findings will include a mix of subjective data (based on participants' perceptions and opinions) and objective data (drawn from fact-finding research) - both of which are considered as valuable and complementary (UNDP, 2008, p. 23; Arndt and Oman, 2006, pp.30-31). In order to achieve consistency and clarity in scoring, the detailed design of this option will need to include the development of explicit scoring criteria (i.e. a detailed narrative that describes and qualifies the meaning of each individual score as proposed in Annex 10). While this process will require careful reflection and consultation with in-country stakeholders, there are again useful precedents to learn from regarding the development of detailed scoring criteria, including the initiatives described in Box 4.[55] The resulting draft research report is subsequently shared with a panel of national experts that reviews the evidence and (in the context of a 1-day workshop) meets to (i) propose any modifications or additions to the report and (ii) review/validate the scores for each individual standard.[56]

Experience shows that the chances of achieving change are greatly enhanced when current shortcomings are clearly identified and described, and practical proposals for improvement are offered.

91. The final country report (including attributed scores and the accompanying narrative) is subsequently submitted (via the global secretariat) to the international advisory group for an ultimate review and sign-off.[57] Prior to publication, it is recommended that the country report also be shared with government counterparts, for their review and comment (within a determined timeframe). Research findings (including final scores and country reports) are disseminated at country level and, if possible/appropriate depending on the country context, presented and discussed in a multi-stakeholder forum. Findings are also subsequently posted on a global website (for example, in the form of the "dashboard" as shown in Diagram 4) and also disseminated in an annual global summary report (drafted and published by the global secretariat).

92. Pros and Cons - The principal advantages of this approach are the following:

- It scores against a clear set of principles and standards related to the protection and enablement of civic space.
- In addition to generating scores, it results in a qualitative description and analysis of civic space as well as recommendations for improvement. This is a critical advantage as experience shows that the chances of achieving change are greatly enhanced when current shortcomings are clearly identified and described, and practical proposals for improvement are offered.
- It meaningfully engages a variety of in-country stakeholders in the assessment process – as a result, contributing to the development of a shared understanding of the notion of civic space and related issues, generating more accurate and relevant data and nurturing greater national ownership over research results.
- It creates a space for the direct inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders and affected parties, including poor and marginalised persons and communities.
- By informing and involving government representatives as well as civic space actors, it lays the groundwork for subsequent multi-stakeholder dialogue and action.
- It generates timely data, offering a detailed and up-to-date picture of the current civic space landscape. Once a country-level research partner has been contracted (ideally, on a multi-year basis) and a panel of experts identified, this approach offers the possibility of conducting targeted research and/or scoring updates on a more frequent basis, for example, to monitor changing circumstances or to track specific issues - for example, by offering the country partner a small retainer to informally monitor the in-country situation on an ongoing basis, flagging any emerging problems or developments that merit immediate attention.

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[55] The principal challenge here is to formulate score descriptions that are detailed enough to ensure consistency and comparability of scores across countries while, at the same time, general enough to reflect and accommodate context-specific differences.

[56] Rather than final scores being attributed by the in-country partner/expert group (taking into account the range of available evidence and inputs), a potential alternative is that civic space dimension and country scores are based on an averaging of the ratings resulting from each individual methodology (i.e. the composite index of existing data sources, the survey of civic space actors and, the in-country participatory research process).

[57] Experience shows the importance of control mechanisms to ensure consistent quality across country report. Examples include the review of draft national reports by the International Expert Panel of the OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism; the review of country-specific scores and narratives by International Editorial Committee of the CSO Sustainability Index and the review of country reports by Expert Advisory Panels created in the context of Enabling Environment National Assessments.

93. The principal disadvantages of this approach are the following:

    - Due to the more in-depth research process at country level, it requires more time and a higher level of investment than Options 1 and 2.
    - Given the need to identify, train and support research partners in each participating country, it is likely to take significantly more time than Options 1 and 2 to bring to scale.
    - Under this option, the role of the in-country partner is more demanding, requiring more human resources and a higher level of capacity and skill than under Option 2. Demands on research partners require a considerable level of competence and commitment and could prove overwhelming for some partners.
    - The quality of research outputs is highly dependent upon the competence and credibility of in-country partners. To mitigate this risk, partners will need to be carefully selected to ensure adequate operational capacity and technical competence, as well as a strong reputation, acceptable relations with government and other stakeholders and a high level of commitment. It will also be important to ensure adequate training, guidance, technical assistance, financial support and quality control to research partners.

94. Implementation Arrangements and Estimated Costs - As outlined in Diagram 5, participatory research is conducted by national partners in collaboration with an in-country expert panel, and guided and supported by a small global secretariat. See Box 5 for a summary of sample selection criteria for national research partners and experts. Given the need for broader and deeper in-country research activities, this option is more costly than Options 1 and 2. As outlined in Annex 8, initial costs include: the detailed design and field-testing of the in-country research methodology; preparation of an implementation guide for national partners; identification of an international panel of experts; and, development of the supporting global database and website (by the global secretariat). On-going costs include: the identification and training of in-country research partners; annual implementation of the in-country research process; drafting and dissemination of research results at country level (by country partners); the annual compilation of results; maintenance of the website; drafting, publication and launch of an annual overview report; and, management of the global quality control process, including translation of country reports into English as necessary (by the global secretariat).

BOX 5 – SAMPLE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL RESEARCH PARTNERS AND EXPERTS

National Research Partners

National research partners should:

- *Have a proven track record in conducting and publishing social science research.*
- *Have a strong reputation as a credible institution (or individual researcher).*
- *Demonstrate adequate capacity and skills to carry out the assignment.*
- *Have productive working relations with both civil society and government actors.*
- *Ideally, have strong knowledge of national/local civil society and issues related to civic space.*
- *Be highly committed to the goal of protecting and enabling civic space.*
- *Ideally have previous experience in advocacy and/or action-research.*
- *Be willing to respect the research parameters and methodology defined by the initiative and to participate in any related training or briefing activities.*
- *Be seen as a legitimate and "objective" actor by both civil society and government.*

Again, this final criteria was seen as particularly important by participants at the consultative workshop, who underlined the need for the research to be perceived as professional and independent; and not as civil society-driven. In identifying national research partners, the global secretariat should reach out to advisory group members, partner organisations, donors/support organisations and peers for references, and seek to coordinate with/build on any other on going related research activities.

National Experts

It is recommended that the national panel of experts be made up of five to nine people, and include at least one knowledgeable "outsider" (e.g. an expatriate working for a national or international organisation). Explicit efforts should be made to ensure gender equity and regional representation. National experts should:

- *Have in-depth knowledge of civic space issues in their country/region.*
- *Ideally, represent a range of different perspectives and viewpoints.*
- *Be willing to review the draft country report and participate in a 1-day workshop to comment on the report and validate/propose changes to preliminary scores.*
- *Be willing to respect the scoring criteria and process defined by the research initiative.*

Option 4: Create a composite "hybrid" index that combines Options 1 – 3

95. Description/Justification - The fourth proposed option is to implement a combination of Options 1,2 and 3, resulting in a multi-faceted measure of civic space, including quantitative scores, qualitative analysis and recommendations. Under this option, a participatory in-country research process, involving a desk study, targeted fact-finding research, online survey and discussion groups is conducted annually by an in-country partner (Options 2 and 3), supported by the international secretariat that also supplies each country partner with relevant data and resources from its annual review of existing measures and indices (Option 1). All of this evidence is used by the in-country partner to draft a country report and to propose scores for each dimension of civic space, for subsequent validation by the group of in-country experts. As in Option 3, research findings, including scores and the narrative report, are disseminated at country level (by the national partner) and posted on a global website (by the global secretariat) for example, in the form of the "dashboard" shown in Diagram 4, accompanied by qualitative reports.

96. Although Option 1 is not an optimal measure of civic space in and of itself, numerous stakeholders expressed the view that even if country-level research is undertaken, some form of review and compilation of existing data sources is still a useful preliminary step - if not to generate a score, then at least to inform (and cross-check) country level research. While Options 2 and 3 each offer a potential stand-alone methodology for the measurement of civic space, they also complement one another and could easily be combined, by conducting an online survey along with the other research methodologies proposed under Option 3 as a means of engaging a broader range of stakeholders in the research process and generating a complementary source of data to inform the country report. Such a hybrid approach provides a comprehensive and multi-dimensional assessment of civic space and serves to overcome most of the shortcomings associated with each individual option.

97. Pros and Cons - The principal advantages of this approach are the following:

- By combining the various research techniques outlined above, this option consolidates the collective benefits of Options 1-3, while overcoming most of the shortcomings associated with each individual methodology.
- Because they are based on a rich range of (quantitative and qualitative) data sources, allowing for cross-checking and triangulation, the accuracy and robustness of research findings are enhanced (UNDP, 2008, p. 45).
- As a result, as outlined in Diagram 6, this option is best able to (i) reflect good practice and (ii) satisfy the varying needs of different stakeholders.

98. The principal disadvantages of this approach are the following:

- Among the various proposed options, it requires the greatest investment in terms of time and resources.
- Like Option 3, it may take considerable time to bring to scale.
- The quality of research outputs is highly dependent on competent and committed national partners. To mitigate this risk, careful selection of national partners and adequate support mechanisms will be required.

99. Estimated Time/Costs - The implementation arrangements for this option are similar to those of Option 3. As outlined in Annex 8, this is the most resource-intensive option, as it involves a combination of activities from Options 1-3. The difference in cost, compared to Option 3, however, is relatively modest since most of the fundamental costs (e.g. of establishing a global secretariat and identifying and training national partners) are already accounted for. This approach therefore builds and capitalises on those principal investments.

Option 4a: Adopt a "hybrid" approach that combines Options 1-3 (but that allows for flexibility and gradual expansion over time)

100. Description/Justification - A final proposed alternative is to aim to implement Option 4, but to adopt an evolutive approach that allows for the gradual scaling up of the measure over time. As discussed above, Option 4 provides an effective and meaningful measure of civic space but, even with adequate resources, it is likely to take a number of years before the approach can be expanded to global scale. One possible strategy for addressing this shortcoming is to design a Civic Space Index that is able to incorporate findings from Options 1, 2, 3 or 4 (offering a comparable score across countries, whether they have been able to implement one or more of the above options).

101. The result is a global, annually updated quantitative index (with scores based on findings from Options 1, 2, 3 or some combination thereof). In countries where a single methodology (e.g. Option 1) has been implemented, scores are based on those findings only. Where two or more methodologies (e.g. Option 1 plus 2 and/or 3) have been implemented, scores are averaged to produce final ratings. For countries where Options 2, 3 or 4 have been implemented, scores are accompanied by survey findings and/or a qualitative country report, that are disseminated at country level and posted on a global website. See Diagram 6 for a sample of what the "dashboard" of such an index might look like.

DIAGRAM 6 - CIVIC SPACE INDEX: A SAMPLE DASHBOARD FOR OPTION 4A

Country Name	Score	Categorisation	Individual Dimension Ratings					Research Methodologies Utilised		
			Dim. 1	Dim. 2	Dim. 3	Dim. 4	Dim. 5	Existing Data Sources	Survey of Civic Space Actors	Participatory In-Country Research
Country A	90/100	Protected	■	■	■	■	■	✓	✓	
Country B	75/100	Protected	■	■	■		■	✓		
Country C	60/100	Partly Protected	■		■			✓	✓	✓
Country D	40/100	Not Protected			■	■	■	✓	✓	
…	…	…	…					…		
…	…	…	…					…		

102. While the ultimate objective is for Option 4 activities to be implemented in all countries, a principal advantage of Option 4a is that offers the possibility to put in place a comparative, global Civic Space Index quite quickly (e.g. within 1-2 years) while allowing for the possibility of expanding and deepening the Index's measure of civic space over time (based on available resources and country priorities). This could mean, for example, implementing Option 1 across the board (and piloting Options 2 and 3 in a small number of selected countries) from Year One; expanding Options 2 and 3 to 15-20 priority countries in Year 2; and, doubling the number of countries covered by Options 2 and 3 each year until all countries (or all countries considered as "priorities" by international initiatives) are covered.

103. While comparability between scores based on different data sets is not perfect, it is considered to be theoretically justifiable and methodologically acceptable, given the use of a carefully constructed comparable framework. There is an inevitable trade-off between the need for a broad-based, comparable measure of civic space that can be applied across a large number of countries in a timely fashion, and the need for a rigorous measure of civic space that engages in-country stakeholders in a meaningful way, and offers a qualitative and in-depth assessment of civic space within a particular country context. This approach offers a potential strategy for striking a balance between these two desirable but incompatible objectives.

104. Pros and Cons - In addition to the combined advantages of the above options, this approach:
    - Allows for flexibility in the depth and breadth of research undertaken in different countries, while maintaining a level of comparability.
    - Allows the implementation of the Civic Space Index to be scaled up over time (with an increasing number of countries implementing Options 2 and 3 each year) while allowing for comparability from the outset.

105. The principal disadvantages of this approach are the following:
    - The use of different combinations of research techniques may make it more difficult for users to understand the (multiple) data sources and methodologies behind scores. For this reason, it will be important to ensure transparency by clearly indicating which combination of methodologies has been used in the case of each set of country scores.
    - Although technically feasible and justifiable, comparability of scores may be questioned due to variations in the "breadth" and "depth" of research carried out in individual countries, damaging the credibility of the index.

106. Implementation Arrangements and Estimated Costs - Ultimately, once the objective of implementing the full set of research activities in all countries is achieved over time, the implementation arrangements and ongoing costs of Option 4a will be the same as for Option 4. A principal advantage of Option 4a, is that it can adapt to variations in available resources over time, by implementing Option 1 as a guaranteed minimum and supporting the implementation of more in-depth in-country research processes as resources allow.

Proposed implementation arrangements for Options 1 through 4a

107. An overview of the proposed implementation arrangements for each of the Options 1 through 4 is provided in Diagram 5. As indicated, Option 1 requires a relatively small global secretariat, ideally housed in an existing institution, supported by a coalition of funders and guided by a small international advisory group. Option 2 requires, in addition to the above, the identification of a national research partner (individual or organisation) in each participating country. Options 3 and 4, because they involve more in-depth country-level research and the drafting of country-specific narrative reports require, in addition to the above, a broader set of capacities and skills on the part of the national partner (See Box 5), as well as the support of a National Expert Group and the creation of a quality control mechanism, in the form of an International Expert Panel.

A hybrid approach provides a comprehensive and multi-dimensional assessment of civic space, while overcoming most of the limitations and drawbacks associated with each individual option.

Comparative assessment of each option in relation to expressed needs and good practices

108. None of the proposed options offers a *perfect* solution; each has an associated set of pros and cons. As shown by the comparative assessment in Diagram 6, some combination of the above approaches (i.e. Options 4 or 4a) best satisfies the diverse needs of different stakeholders and reflects recommended practices. Such a hybrid approach provides a comprehensive and multi-dimensional assessment of civic space, while overcoming most of the limitations and drawbacks associated with each individual option. While the resource implications of a hybrid approach are significant (see Annex 8), Option 4a offers the possibility of starting with a minimal (but broad-based and comparable) approach and expanding/deepening the research methodology over time, according to the availability of resources. The initial investment required to establish the Civic Space Index is substantial, but costs can be expected to level off over time once a network of experienced partners and a solid dataset are established.

DIAGRAM 7 – COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS 1 – 4A

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 4a
Does the option meet the expressed needs of international initiatives?					
Provides a comparable, quantitative measure of overall civic space	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Provides a comparable, quantitative measure of individual dimensions and sub-dimensions of civic space	✓*	✓**	✔	✔	✓*****
Provides a comparable, quantitative measure of a detailed set of specific principles/standards of civic space	✗	✗	✔	✔	✓*****
Covers a large number of countries	✔	✓***	✓***	✓***	✔
Includes a detailed narrative outlining specific strengths and weaknesses	✗	✗	✔	✔	✓*****
Outlines recommendations	✗	✓	✔	✔	✓*****
Does the option respect recommended good practices?					
Makes use of existing information	✓	✗	✓****	✔	✔
Meaningfully engages in-country stakeholders	✗	✓	✔	✔	✓*****
Generates information that is up-to-date	✗	✔	✔	✔	✓*****
Offers possibility for more frequent tracking/ updates	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓*****
Is relatively simple and easy to implement	✔	✔	✗	✗	✓******

Legend: ✔ = Yes ✓ = Partly ✗ = No

* Combines some sub-dimensions.
** Only dimensions (not sub-dimensions).
*** Over time.
**** Only third party narrative reports, not scores/indices.
***** For priority countries.
****** Requires significant effort in priority countries.

VII. Conclusions and Recommended Next Steps

Conclusions

109. Three principal conclusions can be drawn from this scoping report. First, it is both important and feasible for international initiatives to measure civic space. The report has shown that measuring, monitoring and protecting civic space is a necessity in order for international initiatives to effectively implement their activities, achieve their operational objectives and maintain their credibility. The study has also found that while there is no perfect measure of civic space, numerous options for the development of a useful and credible measure of civic space are possible. As concluded by Munck and Verkuilen (2002, p. 31), "Having a data set, even if it is partially flawed, is better than not having any data set at all".

It is both important and feasible for international initiatives to measure civic space.

110. Secondly, the benefits of multiple international initiatives supporting and/or using a common measure of civic space are significant. The study has found that international initiatives have much to gain from collectively endorsing and utilising a shared measure of civic space. This approach has been shown to be "win-win" from both a strategic/political and practical perspective, including benefits related to cost-effectiveness, increased leverage, enhanced objectivity and greater credibility. It is important to note that the use of a common measure of civic space, implemented by a "third party", in no way obliges international initiatives to use measurement findings in the same way. For example, while one initiative may choose to make use of scores as a formal eligibility or validation criteria, others may use measurement findings in a less formal way (e.g. drawing on qualitative findings to inform board deliberations, complaints handling or ongoing processes of multi-stakeholder dialogue and action planning; or simply using the conceptual framework provided by the measure to inform their own independent assessment activities). There is plenty of scope for each international initiative to continue to apply its own distinct strategies and policies and to draw their own "red lines" (e.g. regarding eligibility and compliance requirements).

The benefits of multiple international initiatives supporting and/or using a common measure of civic space are significant.

DIAGRAM 8 – A ROADMAP FOR MOVING FORWARD

Outreach/Consensus-Building	Design/Implementation	Resource Mobilisation
PHASE 1 (six months)		
• Establish an informal advisory group (made up of technical specialists and potential supporters/ users of the measure) to guide next steps. • Conduct a series of awareness-raising/ consultative discussions with potential supporters, implementers and users of the proposed measure of civic space. • Conduct a process to identify a host organisation to lead field-testing, and any other partners needed to contribute to detailed design and field-testing.	• Finalise report based on workshop results. • Conduct follow-up research/analysis of existing data to finalise detailed identification of gaps. • Prepare a funding proposal for detailed design/field–test. • Contract the host organisation and any other needed partners	• Mobilise resources for detailed design/ field-testing.
PHASE 2 (nine months)		
• Consult with advisory group during detailed design/field-testing process. • Conduct awareness-raising/consultative discussions with key stakeholders regarding field-test findings and recommendations. • Once field-testing is complete and the way forward clarified, conduct a transparent search to identify/clarify the long-term host organisation(s) for the implementation of the Civic Space Index.	• Undertake detailed design for Options 1-4 and pre-test as required. • Field–test and assess Options 1-4, documenting findings and lessons learned. • Prepare a funding proposal for first round implementation based on field-test findings and recommendations. • Contract the host organisation and any other needed partners	• Once field-testing is complete and the way forward clarified, mobilise resources for first three year round of implementation (ideally from a broad coalition of funders).
PHASE 3 (three years)		
• Consult with advisory group during implementation. • Conduct ongoing awareness-raising/ consultative discussions with key stakeholders regarding the implementation of the Civic Space Index and the use of findings.	• Pilot selected approach in 5-10 countries in Year 1, expand coverage to 15-20 priority countries in Year 2 and 30-40 priority countries in Year 3. • Monitor and evaluate on an ongoing basis and make modifications as necessary.	• If successful, mobilise resources for second round implementation, aiming to cover 100 countries by Year 6.

A measure based on in-country, participatory research is not the least-cost option, but offers significant added value.

111. Finally, a measure based on in-country, participatory research is not the least-cost option, but offers significant added value. As outlined above, a range of options, requiring differing levels of investment are possible. Although a hybrid approach that combines the use of existing data with original in-country research is the most resource-intensive option (Annex 8), it also best meets the expressed needs of international initiatives (Diagram 6) and offers the best potential to produce credible and useful results. Achieving a rigorous and meaningful measurement of civic space with global coverage will require significant resources and necessitate sustained long-term support. For this reason, the mobilisation of financial support from a coalition of multiple funders, and the consideration of an approach that allows for a gradual scaling-up over space are recommended.

Achieving a rigorous and meaningful measurement of civic space with global coverage will require significant resources and necessitate sustained long-term support.

Recommended next steps

112. This scoping report has concluded that it is both necessary and feasible to develop and implement a shared measure of civic space. In order to achieve this goal, further efforts by all concerned stakeholders will be required. Recommended next steps are described in Diagram 7. These include: outreach activities to engage and build support among key stakeholders; operational activities linked to the detailed design and implementation of the civic space measure; and, the ongoing mobilisation of resources to support these efforts. Diagram 7 outlines three phases of follow-up. A first (six-month) phase aims to disseminate the findings of the scoping report and to prepare for and garner support for the development of a shared measure of civic space; a second (nine-month) phase further develops, field-tests and conducts a comparative operational assessment of the various proposed methodological options; and, a third (three year) phase implements the selected methodology, expanding coverage over time, evaluating results and continuing to mobilise resources for the ongoing implementation of the measure. If the measure succeeds in helping to protect and open civic space, allowing people across the globe to exercise more fully their civil rights and contribute more actively to the healthy and just development of their society, then the investments required to undertake these recommended next steps and to sustain the implementation of the measure in the long-term will be time and money well-spent.

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Annexes

Annex I: Overview table of selected existing civic space-related indices and measures

Measure/Index	Purpose	Coverage & Updates	Relation to Civic Space
1. Bertelsmann Stiftung Foundation's Sustainable Governance Indicators (BSF)	Assesses quality of governance and policy-making.	41 OECD countries, every two years	Quality of Democracy section covers: civil rights and political liberties; rule of law; electoral processes; access to information.
2. Bertelsmann Stiftung Foundation's Transformation Index (BSF)	Analyses and evaluates the quality of democracy, a market economy and political management.	129 countries, every two years	Political Transformation portion covers: stateness; political participation; rule of law; stability of democratic institutions; political and social integration.
3. Better Life Index (OECD)	Compares well-being across countries, in the areas of material living conditions and quality of life.	36 countries, annually since 2011	Includes a "Civic Engagement" Indicator based on voter turnout and consultation on rule-making.
4. Cingranelli-Richards Human Rights Data Project (CIRI)	Rates the level of government respect for 15 internationally recognised human rights.	195 countries, annually 1981 to 2011	Covers: physical integrity rights; civil liberties; workers' rights; women's equal treatment.
5. Civil Liberties Index (Fraser Institute)	Measures human liberty (economic freedom and personal freedom).	123 countries in 2008, future assessments unclear	Personal freedom sub-index covers: security and safety; freedom of movement; freedom of expression; relationship freedoms.
6. Civil Society Organisations Sustainability Index (USAID)	Assesses the sustainability (defined as the overall strength and viability) of civil society.	63 countries, annually since 1997	Covers: legal environment; organisational capacity; financial viability; advocacy; service provision; infrastructure; public image.
7. Democracy Index (Economist Intelligence Unit)	Measures the state of democracy.	165 countries and territories, every 1-2 years since 2013	Covers: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; functioning of government; political participation; political culture
8. Enabling Environment Index (CIVICUS)	Measures conditions affecting the capacity of citizens (individually or collectively) to participate and engage in civil society.	109 countries, one-off (2013)	Covers: governance environment; socio-cultural environment; socio-economic environment.
9. Fragile States Index (The Fund for Peace)	Measures a range of risk factors affecting overall state stability.	178 countries, annually since 2005	Includes, among others, primary indicators on: group grievance (discrimination, powerlessness and violence among different groups); uneven economic development (e.g. ethnic, religious, regional, socio-economic disparities); state legitimacy; human rights and rule of law
10. Freedom in the World (Freedom House)	Assesses global political rights and civil liberties, drawn from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.	209 countries/ territories, annually since 1972	Covers: political rights (free and legitimate elections; free participation in the political process; accountable representatives) and civil liberties (freedoms of expression and belief; freedoms of assembly and association; rule of law, social and economic freedoms)

Measure/Index	Purpose	Coverage & Updates	Relation to Civic Space
11. Freedom of the Press (Freedom House)	Measures media independence by assessing the degree of print, broadcast, and internet freedom.	197 countries/ territories annually since 1980	Covers: legal environment; political environment; economic environment.
12. Freedom on the Net (Freedom House)	Assesses the degree of internet and digital media freedom around the world.	60 countries, annually since 2009	Covers: obstacles to access; limits on content; violations of user rights.
13. Gallup World Poll (Gallup)	Measures public opinion and attitudes on a broad range of political, social, and economic issues.	160 countries, every 1-2 years (since 1935)	Covers: broad range of issues including: law and order, and citizen engagement.
14. Gender Equity Index (Social Watch)	Measures the gap between women and men.	169 countries, every 2-3 years.	Covers: education, the economy and political empowerment.
15. Gender Inequity Index (UNHDI)	Measures gender gaps in major areas of human development.	187 countries, annually.	Covers: reproductive health (maternal mortality ratio, adolescent birth rates); empowerment (secondary education, proportion of female parliamentarians); economic status (women's economic participation).
16. Global Barometer Surveys (ASEP/JDS)	Measures attitudes and values toward politics, power, reform, democracy and citizens' political actions.	55 countries, approximately every 3 years.	Areas covered include: democracy; governance; elections; poverty; social capital; conflict and crime; and participation.
17. Global Integrity Index (Global Integrity)	Assesses the existence and effectiveness of mechanisms that prevent abuses of power, promote public integrity and give citizens access to government.	Last edition in 2011.	Covers: civil society, public information and media; voting and citizen participation; government accountability, administration and civil service; oversight mechanisms; rule of law.
18. Global Rights Index (International Trade Union Confederation)	Assesses trade union rights violations.	139 countries annually.	97 indicators to assess trade union rights violations.
19. Global Right to Information Rating (Centre for Law and Democracy and Access Info)	Rates the strength of each country's legal framework for guaranteeing the right to information according to international standards.	93 countries, updated regularly.	Covers: right of access; scope; requesting procedures; exceptions and refusals; appeals; sanctions and protections; promotional measures.
20. Index of Philanthropic Freedom (Hudson Institute)	Measures philanthropic freedom by examining barriers and incentives for individuals and corporations to donate money and time to CSOs.	13 countries in 2013, 260 countries foreseen in 2015	Covers: civil society regulation; domestic tax regulation ; cross-border flows regulation.
21. Institutional Profiles Database (Centre for Prospective Studies and International Information)	Measures countries' institutional characteristics.	143 countries, every 3 years since 2001	Covers a range of institutional characteristics including: political institutions; security, law and order, control of violence; public administrations; coordination of stakeholders; openness; social cohesion.
22. Media Sustainability Index (International Research and Exchanges Board)	Rates the quality of independent media.	38 countries	Based on several criteria including: legal norms, professional standards and supporting institutions.

Measure/Index	Purpose	Coverage & Updates	Relation to Civic Space
23. Media Barometer (FESmedia) since 2011).	Measures freedom of expression and media freedoms.	27 countries, updated approximately every 2 years.	Covers: freedom of expression; media freedoms; diversity, independence and sustainability of media landscape; broadcasting regulation; professionalism.
24. Monitoring Matrix on the Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development (Balkan CSDN and ICNL)	Measures the health of the legal, regulatory, and financial environment in which CSOs operate.	8 countries	Covers: basic legal guarantees of freedoms; framework for CSOs' financial viability and sustainability; government-CSO relations.
25. Open Budget Index (IBP)	Measures how much budget information a government makes publicly available.	100 countries, every two years (with monthly updates for 30 countries)	Measures budget transparency including: the amount, level of detail, and timeliness of budget information governments are making publicly available.
26. Open Governance Scorecard (Transparency International)	Aims to monitor open governance standards through a scorecard.	Under development. Piloted in five countries, with plans to scale up.	37 standards related to transparency, accountability and participation.
27. Participatory Local Democracy Index (Hunger Project/UNDEF)	Assesses and compares the effectiveness of local government.	52 countries in 2014; 35 countries in 2013	Covers: active citizenry; political decentralisation; administrative decentralisation; fiscal decentralisation; multi-sectoral planning.
28. Political Terror Scale (U of North Carolina and Arizona State U)	Measures levels of state sanctioned political violence.	181 countries, annually.	Uses 1-5 level terror scale, based on Amnesty International and US State Department Country Human Rights Practices Reports.
29. Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders)	Measures the degree of freedom enjoyed by journalists, news organisations and netizens.	180 countries, annually.	Covers: pluralism; media independence; environment and self-censorship; legislative framework; transparency; infrastructure.
30. Women, Business and the Law Database (IFC, World Bank group)	Highlights differentiations on the basis of gender.	143 countries.	Includes sections on gender differentials in: accessing institutions and going to court, and protecting women from violence.
31. World laws pertaining to homosexual relationships and expression (Wikimedia Commons)	Measures the extent to which national legal frameworks protect lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender (LGBT) human rights	Over 200 countries, updated regularly.	Scores countries based on the extent to which legal frameworks protect LGBT human rights (range from legalised same-sex marriage to death penalty for homosexuality).
32. Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank)	Measures the quality of governance.	215 countries, annually since 1996.	Covers: voice and accountability; political stability and absence of violence; government effectiveness; regulatory quality; rule of law; control of corruption.

Annex 2: List of interviewees

1. Alan Hudson, Global Integrity, Executive Director
2. Anna Neistat, Amnesty International, Senior Director - Research
3. Asmara Klein, PWYP , Programme Coordinator
4. Babatunde Olugboji, Human Rights Watch, Deputy Programme Director
5. Brian Tomlinson, Aid Watch Canada, (GPEDC Task Team Member)
6. Catherine Shea, ICNL, Vice-President
7. Claire Melamed, Overseas Development Institute, Director - Growth, Poverty and Inequality
8. Cornelius Hacking, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands, (GPEDC Task Team Member)
9. Dani Kaufmann, NRGI, President (EITI Board Member)
10. Dyveke Rogan, EITI, Regional Director
11. Emanuele Sapienza, UNDP
12. Erica Westenburg, NRGI, EITI Policy Officer
13. Faith Nwadishi, PWYP Nigeria (EITI Multi-Stakeholder Group Member)
14. Finn Heinrich, Transparency International, Research Director
15. Francesca Recanatini, World Bank, Senior Economist
16. Gubad Ibadoglu, Azerbaijan Economic Research Centre, Senior Researcher (EITI Board Member)
17. Hanna-Mari Kilpelainen, OECD
18. Hazel Feigenblatt, Global Integrity, Managing Director
19. Igor Vidacak , Government of the Republic of Croatia, Director of Government Expert Services
20. Jacqueline Wood, GPEDC Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, Secretariat
21. Joe Foti, OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism, Programme Director
22. Joe Powell, OGP Support Unit, Deputy Director
23. Jonas Moberg, EITI, Head of Secretariat
24. José Marin, Transparency International, Manager Open Government Scorecard
25. Julie McCarthy, OSF, Director
26. Julie Seghers, OECD
27. Karin Fallman, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Department for Partnerships and Innovation, Civil Society Unit, Senior Policy Specialist
28. Kevin Bohrer, Hewlett Foundation, Programme Officer
29. Linda Frey, OGP Support Unit, Executive Director
30. Loe Schout, Hivos, Head of Bureau Culture, ICT & Media
31. Mandeep Tiwana, CIVICUS, Head of Policy and Research
32. Marinke van Riet, PWYP, International Director
33. Martin Tisne, Omidyar Network, Director - Policy
34. Nathaniel Heller, Global Integrity, Former Executive Director
35. Neva Frecheville, CAFOD, Lead Analyst Post-2015
36. Nilda Bullain, ICNL, Vice President - Operations
37. Paul Maassen, OGP Support Unit Civil Society Section, Director Civil Society Engagement
38. Richard Ssewakiryanga, The Uganda National NGO Forum, Executive Director
39. Subarna Mathes, OSF, Programme Officer
40. Suneeta Kaimal, NRGI, Deputy Director (Civil Society Co-chair of OGP)
41. Tanja Hafner-Ademi, Balkans Civil Society Development Network
42. Thomas Kaye, Transparency International, Global Security Manager
43. Tiago Peixoto, World Bank, Governance Specialist
44. Yuko Suzuki, UNDP
45. Vitalice Meja, Reality of Aid, Africa Coordinator
46. Warren Krafchik, International Budget Partnership, Executive Director (Former Civil Society Co-chair of OGP)

Annex 3: List of participants in consultative workshop on "The measurement of civic space by international initiatives" (10 February 2015)

Name	Organisation
Alejandro Gonzalez	GESOC (Gestión Social y Cooperación)
Ali Idrissa	ROTAB (Publish What You Pay - Niger)
Asmara Klein	PWYP (Publish What You Pay)
Brendan Halloran	T/AI (Transparency & Accountability Initiative)
Brian Tomlinson	AidWatch Canada
Carmen Malena	Consultant/Presenter
Cornelius Hacking	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Govt of the Netherlands
Dani Kaufmann	NRGI (Natural Resource Governance Institute)
Eddie Rich	EITI (Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative)
Fabby Tumiwa	Institute for Essential Services Reform
Faith Nwadishi	PWYP (Publish What You Pay)
Gareth Sweeney	Transparency International
Gavin Hayman	Open Contracting Partnership
Gubad Ibadoghlu	Economic Research Center
Hanna-Mari Kilpeläinen	OECD (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)
Hazel Feigenblatt	Global Integrity
Iva Dobichina	OSF (Open Society Foundations)
Jacqueline Wood	GPEDC Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, Secretariat
Jean Claude Katende	PWYP (Publish What You Pay)
Jean Ross / Rakesh Rajani	Ford Foundation
Jeff Thindwa	World Bank
Joe Foti	OGP (Open Government Partnership)
Julie Seghers	OECD (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)
Kathrin Frauscher	Open Contracting Partnership
Kevin Bohrer	The William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
Mandeep Tiwana	CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
Marinke van Riet	PWYP (Publish What You Pay)
Martin Tisne	Omidyar Network
Modibo Makalou	Development and Cooperation Initiative
Neva Frecheville	CAFOD (Catholic Agency For Overseas Development)
Nilda Bullain	ICNL (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law)
Paul Maassen	OGP (Open Government Partnership)
Petter Matthews	CoST (Construction Sector Transparency Initiative)
Quinn Mckew	Article 19
Richard Ssewakiryanga	CPDE (The CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness)
Shaazka Beyerle	UNCAC Civil Society Coalition Coordination Committee
Steve Pierce	USAID
Suneeta Kaimal	NRGI (Natural Resource Governance Institute)
Tess Tabada	Bantay Kita
Vanessa Herringshaw	T/AI (Transparency & Accountability Initiative)
Vitalice Meja	Reality of Aid Africa Network
Warren Krafchik	IBP (International Budget Partnership)
Yuko Suzuki	UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)

Annex 4: Overview of four highlighted international initiatives

	Open Government Partnership	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation	Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals
What is it?	A voluntary, multi-stakeholder, international initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.	A global coalition of governments, companies and civil society working together to improve openness and accountable management of revenues from natural resources.	An inclusive political forum bringing together a wide range of countries and organisations from around the world that are committed to strengthen the effectiveness of development co-operation.	A set of time-bound and quantified international development goals adopted by United Nations member states.
Vision	More governments become sustainably more transparent, more accountable, and more responsive to their own citizens, ultimately improving the quality of governance and public services.	There is full disclosure of taxes and other payments made by oil, gas and mining companies to governments.	Nations, business and organisations work better together to end poverty.	A world of prosperity, equity, freedom, dignity and peace is achieved.
Coverage	65 countries	46 countries	161 Governments and 56 organisations	All UN member states (193 countries)
Commitments/ Requirements	**Open Government Declaration** 1. Increase the availability of information about governmental activities. 2. Support civic participation. 3. Implement the highest standards of professional integrity. 4. Increase access to new technologies for openness and accountability.	**EITI Requirements** 1. Effective oversight by the multi-stakeholder group. 2. Timely publication of EITI Reports that include contextual information and full government disclosure of extractive industry revenues and payments. 3. A credible assurance process applying international standards.	1. **Global Partnership Principles** Ownership by developing countries. 2. Results as a focus of development efforts. 3. Partnerships for inclusive development. 4. Transparency and accountability to one another. Eligibility Criteria - Applicants must endorse the Busan Partnership Agreement.	**17 proposed Sustainable Development Goals** aim to: (i) end poverty, (ii) end hunger; (iii) ensure healthy lives and well-being; (iv) ensure quality education; (v) achieve gender equality; (vi) ensure water and sanitation; (vii) ensure affordable and sustainable energy; (viii) promote economic growth and decent work; (ix) build resilient infrastructure and sustainable industrialisation;

Commitments/ Requirements	Eligibility requirements: 1. Fiscal transparency (publication of the executive's budget proposal and audit report) 2. Access to Information (RTI law) 3. Public Officials Asset Disclosure (asset disclosure law) 4. Citizen engagement (EIU Democracy Index "civil liberties" indicator)	4. EITI Reports are comprehensible, actively promoted, publicly accessible, and contribute to public debate. 5. The multi-stakeholder group takes steps to act on lessons learned and review the outcomes and impact of EITI implementation.		(x) reduce inequality; (xi) make cities safe and sustainable; (xii) ensure sustainable consumption and production; (xiii) combat climate change; (xiv) conserve oceans and marine resources, (xv) protect terrestrial ecosystems; (xvi) promote peaceful, inclusive, just and accountable societies; and (xvii) strengthen the global partnership for sustainable development.
Current Monitoring	Annual self-assessment reports. Biennial assessments by Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM).	"Validation" process (to assess compliance with the EITI Standard) conducted through an external, independent assessment every 3 years.	Global Monitoring Framework, whereby national self-assessment reports are validated and analysed at global level and presented in periodic global progress reports.	National databases, annual progress reports and annual ministerial review.
Civic Space Aspects	OGP Declaration refers to: access to information (including budget transparency); public participation (in decision-making, policy-making, monitoring and evaluating government activities); equal participation of women; protecting media and civil society freedoms (of expression, association and opinion); allowing/ enabling CSOs to function; rule of law; whistleblower protection; and, promoting access to technology.	EITI Requirement 1.3 calls for: government commitment to work with civil society; active and effective civil society engagement in the EITI process; an enabling environment for civil society participation; respect for the fundamental rights of civil society representatives; no obstacles to civil society participation in the EITI process; open public debate regarding the EITI; freedom of speech on transparency and natural resource governance; right of stakeholders to operate freely and express opinions about the EITI without restraint, coercion or reprisal.	Indicator 2 (of 10 GPDC monitoring indicators) seeks to ensure that: "Civil society operates within an environment that maximises its engagement in and contribution to development". The development of a methodology for monitoring Indicator 2 is currently being undertaken by the GPDC Support Unit, with the support and assistance of the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment.	Draft Goal 16 aims to "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels". Sub-goals 16.6 and 16.7 seek to "Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels" and "Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels".

Annex 5: Summary of the expressed needs of the four highlighted international initiatives regarding a measure of civic space

Open Government Partnership

- To clarify the concept of civic space and build consensus around a core set of principles/standards.
- To potentially replace the current "civic engagement" eligibility indicator.
- To provide governments with specific recommendations about what actions/reforms to include in national action plans.
- To identify and highlight good practices.
- To monitor ongoing compliance of member countries with OGP principles and values, potentially triggering an inquiry or other action as provided for in the recently adopted Response Policy.
- To inform the IRM (Independent Reporting Mechanism) process, in particular, to inform the final section of IRM country reports that assesses the government's respect for OGP values/principles and the overall relevance of the national action plan.
- To provide CSO partners with objective information and evidence to advocate for improvements (or to back-up complaints).

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

- To clarify the concept of civic space and build consensus around a core set of principles/standards.
- To inform Board discussions and decisions regarding candidature and validation.
- To provide governments with specific recommendations about what types of actions/reforms are necessary to comply with Requirement 1.3 (i.e. the creation of an enabling environment for civil society participation; respect for the fundamental rights of civil society representatives; etc.).
- To help monitor compliance with Requirement 1.3.
- To inform the monitoring of the new Civil Society protocol (for which indicators and a road map are currently being developed).
- To inform the work of the Rapid Response Committee.
- To provide CSO partners with information and evidence to advocate for improvements (or to back-up complaints).

Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

- To clarify the concept of civic space and inform ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue around core principles and standards.
- To provide governments with specific recommendations about what types of actions/reforms are necessary to create an enabling environment for CSOs.
- To identify and highlight good practices.
- To inform the monitoring of the implementation of Indicator 2 (on enabling conditions for CSOs).
- To inform the ongoing work of Voluntary Initiative 12 (that seeks to define and promote an enabling environment for CSOs).
- Also seek to assess the development effectiveness and accountability of CSOs.

Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals

- To clarify the concept of civic space and build consensus around a core set of principles/standards.
- To provide governments with specific recommendations about what types of actions/reforms are necessary to achieve sub-goals 16.7 ("ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels") and 16.10 ("ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms") including poor and marginalised people and communities.
- To identify and highlight good practices.
- To potentially contribute to the monitoring of the implementation of Goal 16.
- To inform the Universal Periodic Review.
- To inform actors involved in the broader emerging Post-2015 "accountability framework" (comprised of both "horizontal" peer review and "vertical" watchdog functions).

Annex 6: Proposed data sources for the creation of a composite index to measure civic space

Sub-dimension	Data Source	Covers…	Updated….
Dimension 1: Freedoms of Information and Expression			
Access to Information	Access to Information Laws (Right2Information)	100+ countries	Regularly
	Legal Framework for Right to Information (Global Right to Information Rating)	93 countries	Latest data 2013 (frequency of updates unclear)
	Public Officials Financial Disclosure (World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators)	215 countries	Annually
Freedom of Expression	Freedom of Expression (Bertelsmann Transformation Index - BTI)	129 countries	Every 2 years
	Freedom of Expression and Belief (Freedom House, Freedom in the World)	209 countries	Annually
	Freedom of Speech (Cingranelli-Richards Human Rights Data Project - CIRI)*	195 countries*	Annually (1981-2011)
Media Freedoms	Press Freedom Index (Reporters without Borders)	180 countries	Annually
	Legal Environment (Freedom House, Freedom of the Press)	197 countries	Annually
	Political Environment (Freedom House, Freedom of the Press)	197 countries	Annually
	Media Barometer (FES Media)	27 countries	Every 2 years
	Freedom of the Press (World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report)	134 countries	Annually
	Freedom of the Press (Institutional Profiles Database) (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Media Sustainability Index (International Research and Exchanges Board - IREX)	80 countries	Latest data 2012-2104 (frequency updates unclear)
Internet Freedoms	Freedom on the Net (Freedom House, Freedom on the Net)	60 countries	Annually
	Freedom of Access, Navigation and Publishing on Internet (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
Dimension 2: Rights of Assembly and Association			
Assembly and Association Rights	Associational and Organisational Rights (Freedom House, Freedom in the World)	Annually	Annually
	Association/Assembly Rights (BTI)	129 countries	Every 2 years
	Freedom of Assembly/Demonstration (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Freedom to Establish Organisations; Autonomy of Organisations (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Freedom of Association (EIU)	165 countries	Every 1-2 years
	Freedom of Assembly and Association (CIRI) *	195 countries*	Annually (1981-2011)
Enabling Environment for CSOs	Legal Environment (USAID)	63 countries	Annually
	Index of Philanthropic Freedom (Hudson Institute)	60 countries (as of 2015)	Foresees every 2 years
	Trade Union Freedoms and Independence (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Trade Unions Rights Violations (Global Rights Index)	139 countries	Annually

Dimension 3: Citizen Participation			
Free and Fair Elections	Free and Fair Elections (BTI)	129 countries	Every 2 years
	Electoral Process and Pluralism (EIU)	165 countries	Every 1-2 years
	Electoral Process (Freedom House, Freedom in the World)	209 countries	Annually
	Confidence in Honesty of Elections (Gallup)	160 countries	Annually
	Freedom of Elections at National Level (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Flaws in Electoral Processes (IPD)	143 countries	Every 4 years
Citizen Participation	Political Participation (EIU)	165 countries	Every 2 years
	Participation in Policy (BTI)	129 countries	Every 2 years
	Transparency of Government Policy-Making (World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report)	134 countries	Annually
	Accountability of Public Officials (EIU)	165 countries	Every 1-2 years
	Open Budget Index (IBP)	100 countries	Every 2 years
	Communication/Public Debate of State Economic Policy (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Coordination of Stakeholders, Strategic Vision, Innovation (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	CSO Advocacy (USAID)	63 countries	Annually
	Political Culture (EIU)	165 countries	Every 1-2 years
	Democratic Accountability (Political Risk Services International Country Risk Guide)	140 countries	Monthly
	Freedom of Political Participation (CIRI)*	195 countries*	Annually (1981-2011)
	Political Pluralism and Participation (Freedom House, Freedom in the World)	209 countries	Annually
	Representativeness (Global Insight Country Risk Indicators)	213 countries	Annually
	Participatory Local Democracy Index	52 countries	Latest data 2013 (frequency of updates unclear)
Dimension 4: Non-Discrimination/Inclusion			
	Gender Inequality (UN Human Development Index)	187 countries	Annually
	Gender Equity Index (Social Watch)	169 countries	Every 2-3 years
	Equal Treatment/Solidarity (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Respect for the Rights and Freedoms of Minorities (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Extent of Discrimination; Equal Treatment by the State (IPD)	143 countries	Every 3 years
	Group Grievance (Fragile States Index)	178 countries	Annually
	Uneven Economic Development (Fragile States Index)	178 countries	Annually
	Legal Protection of LGBT Human Rights. (Wikimedia Commons)	200+ countries	Regularly
	Dialogue between Government and Rural Organisations (IFAD Rural Sector Performance Assessments)	90 countries	Annually
Dimension 5: Human Rights/Rule of Law			
Human Rights	Political Terror Scale (based on Amnesty International and US State Department Reports)	181 countries	Annually
	Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights (Freedom House, Freedom in the World)	209 countries	Annually
	Human Rights (Fragile States Index)	178 countries	Annually
	Human Rights (Economist Intelligence Unit)	165 countries	Every 1-2 years
	Political Stability and Absence of Violence (World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators)	215 countries	Annually
	Physical Integrity Rights Index (CIRI)*	195 countries*	Annually (1981-2011)
Rule of Law	Rule of Law (World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators). *Composite measure based on 23 data sources.*	215 countries	Annually
	Independence of the Judiciary (CIRI) *	195 countries*	Annually (1981-2011)

*Future availability of CIRI data is uncertain.

Annex 7: Sample list of regularly updated narrative reports related to the assessment of key dimensions of civic space

1. Freedoms of Information and Expression	• IFEX Alerts (International Freedom of Information Exchange) • Freedom of the Press annual country updates (Freedom House) • Freedom on the Net annual country updates (Freedom House) • Global Information Society Watch annual country updates and country/thematic reports (GIS Watch) • Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression annual report (UNHRC)
2. Rights of Assembly and Association	• Freedom in the World annual country updates (Freedom House) • Special Rapporteur on violations of Rights of Association and Assembly annual report (UNHRC) • Civil Society Watch regular updates on civil society threats (CIVICUS) • CSO Sustainability country reports (USAID) • NGO Law Monitor/Country Profile Reports on issues related to freedom of association and the NGO legal framework (ICNL) • Enabling Environment National Assessments (ICNL/CIVICUS) • Civil Society Index and Civil Society Rapid Assessment country reports (Environment dimension) (CIVICUS) • Philanthropic Freedom country reports (Hudson Institute) • Trade Unions Rights Violations annual country reports (ITUC)
3. Citizen Participation	• BSF Transformation Index annual country reports (Bertelsmann Stiftung Foundation) • Open Budget annual country summary reports and recommendations • Freedom in the World annual country updates (Freedom House)
4. Non-Discrimination/ Inclusion	• Social Watch national reports (Social Watch) • Human Development Report country profiles (UNDP) • State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples annual report (Minority Rights Group International)
5. Human Rights/ Rule of Law	• Human Rights Treaty Bodies reports (UN Universal Periodic Review) • Human Rights annual country reports (Amnesty International) • Human Rights annual country reports (US State Department) • Front Line Defenders annual report (Front Line Defenders) • Human Rights Watch world report and other related publications (HRW)

Annex 8: Estimated minimum costs of the proposed methodological options (in USD[58])

Option 1 - Creating a composite index based on existing data

	Year 1 (100 countries)	Year 2 (100 countries)	Year 3 (100 countries)
Initial costs			
Detailed design and field-testing of the survey questionnaire and methodology; preparation of an implementation guide for national partners	$40,000	--	--
Development of the supporting global database and website	$25,000	--	--
Ongoing costs (annual)			
Annual compilation of results; maintenance of the website; drafting, publication and launch of annual overview report (by the global secretariat) *(Equivalent of one full-time staff position plus direct costs and overhead)*	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000
TOTAL	$200,000	$150,000	$150,000
3 Year TOTAL	**$500,000**		

Option 2 - Conducting an online in-country, experience-based survey of civic space actors

	Year 1 (20 countries)	Year 2 (40 countries)	Year 3 (60 countries)
Initial costs			
Detailed design of the composite index	$25,000	--	--
Development of the supporting global database and website	$25,000	--	--
Ongoing costs (annual)			
Identification of a representative network of survey respondents; translation of the survey into national languages as necessary (by national partner)	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000
Annual implementation of the survey; drafting and dissemination of survey results at the country level (by country partners)	$50,000 *($2,500/country partner/year)*	$100,000	$200,000
Identification and briefing of national partners; annual compilation of results; maintenance of the website; drafting, publication and launch of annual overview report (by the global secretariat) *(Equivalent of two full-time staff positions in Year 1, three in Year 2 and four in Year 3, plus direct costs and overhead)*	$225,000	$300,000	$375,000
TOTAL	$360,000	$420,000	$595.000
3 Year TOTAL	**$1,375,000**		

[58] Please note that these are low-end estimates based on an international host organisation based in the global South. Depending on the location and nature of the host organisation and final implementation arrangements, costs could be significantly higher.

Option 3 - Conducting a participatory, in-country research process

	Year 1 (10 countries)	Year 2 (20 countries)	Year 3 (40 countries)
Initial costs			
Detailed design and field-testing of the in-country research methodology; preparation of an implementation guide for national partners; identification of an international panel of experts (by the global secretariat)	$85,000	--	--
Development of the supporting global database and website	$25,000	--	--
Ongoing costs (annual)			
Training of national research partners (direct costs of 3 day training event)	$30,000	$60,000	$120,000
Annual implementation of the in-country research process; drafting and dissemination of research results at country level (by national partners)	$100,000 *($10,000/country partner/year)*	$200,000	$400,000
Management and support of country partners; annual compilation of results (scores and narrative reports) on a global website; maintenance of the website; drafting, publication and launch of annual overview report; management of the global quality control process, including translation of country reports into English as necessary (by the global secretariat) (Equivalent of three full-time staff positions in Year 1, four in Year 2 and five in Year 3, plus direct costs and overhead)	$300,000	$375,000	$425,000
TOTAL	$535,000	$635,000	$945,000
3 Year TOTAL		**$2,115,000**	

Options 4 and 4a[59] - Adopting a "hybrid" approach that combines the first three options.

	Year 1 (10 countries)	Year 2 (20 countries)	Year 3 (40 countries)
Initial costs			
Detailed design and field-testing of the composite index, the survey questionnaire and the in-country research methodology (including preparation of an implementation guide for national partners); identification of an international panel of experts (by the global secretariat)	$140,000	--	--
Development of the supporting software, database and online site	$25,000	--	--
Ongoing costs (annual)			
Training of national research partners (direct costs of 3 day training event)	$30,000	$60,000	$120,000
Identification of a representative network of survey respondents and research informants; translation of the survey and research questions into national languages as necessary (by national partner)	$20,000 *($2,000/country)*	$20,000	$40,000
Annual implementation of the in-country research process; drafting and dissemination of research results at country level (by national partners)	$110,000 *($11,000/country partner/year)*	$220,000	$440,000
Management and support of country partners; annual compilation of research findings (scores and narrative reports) on a global website; maintenance of the website; drafting, publication and launch of an annual overview report; management of the global quality control process, including translation of country reports into English as necessary (by the global secretariat) *(Equivalent of three full-time staff positions in Year 1, four in Year 2 and five in Year 3, plus direct costs and overhead)*	$300,000	$375,000	$425,000
TOTAL	$625,000	$675,000	$1,025,000
3 Year TOTAL		**$2,325,000**	

[59] The costs of option 4A are the same as Option 4. The difference is that under Option 4a, coverage is 100 countries from Year 1 (based on Option 1 composite index findings), with more in-depth research findings (based on Option 2 survey findings and/or Option 3 in-country research findings) becoming available over time. Option 4a could also adapt to a lower level of available resources by phasing-in in-country research at a slower rate (i.e. fewer countries over a longer period) while relying on Option 1 and 2 findings to maintain coverage across 100 countries.

Annex 9: Preliminary sample questionnaire for in-country survey of CSO leaders/members

Dimension 1: Freedoms of Information and Expression

1. a. To what extent are you able to access the information you seek (including financial information) from government sources? (1 = Fully, 2 = To a reasonable extent, 3 = With some difficulty, 4 = With significant difficulty, 5 = With great difficulty, 6 = Not at all, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

2. a. To what extent are you able to freely express yourself in public without fear of retribution? (1 = Fully, 2 = To a reasonable extent, 3 = With some difficulty, 4 = With significant difficulty, 5 = With great difficulty, 6 = Not at all, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

3. a. To what extent are you able to freely use the internet (to both access information and communicate)? (1 = Fully, 2 = To a reasonable extent, 3 = With some difficulty, 4 = With significant difficulty, 5 = With great difficulty, 6 = Not at all, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

Dimension 2: Rights of Assembly and Association

4. a. To what extent are you able to organise/participate in public assemblies or demonstrations without fear of retribution? (1 = Fully, 2 = To a reasonable extent, 3 = With some difficulty, 4 = With significant difficulty, 5 = With great difficulty, 6 = Not at all, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

5. a. To what extent is your CSO able to function independently and free of government interference? (1 = Fully, 2 = To a reasonable extent, 3 = With some difficulty, 4 = With significant difficulty, 5 = With great difficulty, 6 = Not at all, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

6. a. To what extent does the government facilitate the funding of your CSO (for example, through tax incentives, facilitating foreign transfers, direct support)? (1 = Provides direct support or fully facilitates, 2 = Facilitates to a reasonable extent, 3 = No support/remains neutral, 4 = Imposes some undue restrictions, 5 = Imposes significant undue restrictions, 6 = Blocks funding, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

Dimension 3: Citizen Participation

1. a. To what extent are you (as a CSO representative or citizen) able to freely engage in advocacy activities without fear of retribution? (1 = Fully, 2 = To a reasonable extent, 3 = With some difficulty, 4 = With significant difficulty, 5 = With great difficulty, 6 = Not at all, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

2. a. To what extent are you (as a CSO representative or citizen) able to participate in processes of deliberation and decision-making on issues that are important to you (for example, through public consultations, joint committees, processes of participatory planning or policy-making, etc.?) (1 = Fully, 2 = To a reasonable extent, 3 = With some difficulty, 4 = With significant difficulty, 5 = With great difficulty, 6 = Not at all, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

3. a. To what extent are you (as a CSO representative or citizen working collectively with others) able to influence the outcome of processes of political deliberation and decision-making? (1 = Frequently; 2 = Quite often, 3 = From time to time, 4 = Rarely; 5 = Almost never, 6 = Never, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

Dimension 4: Non-discrimination/ Inclusion

4. a. In your experience, to what extent do women have equal access to civic space? (i.e. Are women's rights protected? Are they equitably represented as civic actors and leaders?) (1 = Equal rights/access; 2 = Close to equal rights/access; 3 = Present but under-represented in civic space, 4 = Limited access to civic space, 5 = Largely marginalised, 6 = Completely marginalised, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

5. a. In your experience, to what extent do poorer/economically disadvantaged social groups have equal access to civic space? (i.e. Are the rights of economically disadvantaged social groups protected? Are they equitably represented as civic actors and leaders?) (1 = Equal rights/access; 2 = Close to equal rights/access; 3 = Present but under-represented in civic space, 4 = Limited access to civic space, 5 = Largely marginalised, 6 = Completely marginalised, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

6. a. In your experience, to what extent do ethnic/sexual/religious/cultural minorities have equal access to civic space (i.e. Are minority rights protected? Are minorities equitably represented as civic actors and leaders?) (1 = Equal rights/access; 2 = Close to equal rights/access; 3 = Present but under-represented in civic space, 4 = Limited access to civic space, 5 = Largely marginalised, 6 = Completely marginalised, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

Dimension 5: Human Rights/ Rule of Law

7. a. In your view, to what extent are human rights respected in your country? (1 = Fully, 2 = Mostly, 3 = Moderately, 4 = To a limited extent, 5 = To a very limited extent, 6 = Not at all, 7 = Don't know/Not applicable)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

14. a. In your view, to what extent is your country free from political terror? (1 = Fully, 2 = Mostly, 3 = Moderately, 4 = To a limited extent, 5 = To a very limited extent, 6 = Not at all)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

15. a. In your view, to what extent is there effective rule of law in your country? (1 = Fully, 2 = Mostly, 3 = Moderately, 4 = To a limited extent, 5 = To a very limited extent, 6 = Not at all)

   b. Can you recommend one specific action the government could take to improve this situation?

Annex 10: Preliminary sample set of proposed principles and standards/indicators for in-country research

Principles	Standards/Indicators
Dimension 1 - Freedoms of Information and Expression (Score 0 to 36)	
Principle 1: Access to information is guaranteed by law and respected in practice. (Score 0 to 10)	• Right to information legislation exists and reflects international standards. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Public institutions and civil servants have the capacity to adequately implement right to information provisions. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • The state publishes all draft legal/strategic documents. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • The state publishes all essential budget documents. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, interested citizens and CSOs are able to access public information without undue difficulty or delay (i.e. the process of obtaining government information is transparent, smooth, sufficiently easy to navigate, and based on the rule of law). 2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)
Principle 2: Freedom of expression is guaranteed by law and respected in practice. (Score 0 to 8)	• Freedom of expression legislation exists and reflects international standards. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There is no sanction for critical speech, in public or private, under the penal code. (2 = Yes, 0= No) • CSOs are protected in their ability to speak critically about government law or policy, and to speak favourably about human rights and fundamental freedoms. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are no reported cases of encroachment of the right to freedom of expression for all. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)
Principle 3: Media freedoms are guaranteed by law and respected in practice. (Score 0 to 10)	• Legislation regarding media freedoms exists and reflects international standards. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Diverse independent media actors exist and are able to function without state interference. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Broadcasting regulation is transparent and independent. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, there is no state censorship of media actors. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are no cases of violations of press freedoms or intimidation/harassment of journalists. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)
Principle 4: Internet freedoms are guaranteed by law and respected in practice. (Score 0 to 8)	• Legislation regarding internet freedoms exists and reflects international standards (i.e. legal restrictions are exceptional, limited and based on international human rights law). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, citizens and CSOs are able to freely communicate and access any source of information via the internet and ICTs. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are no cases in practice where restrictions are imposed on accessing any source of information (including the Internet or ICT) or of unjustified monitoring by the authorities of communication channels. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are no cases of police harassment of members of social networking groups. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)

[47] The standards/questions proposed here draw on and are inspired by a variety of different sources including: The Public's Right To Know: Principles on Freedom of Information Legislation (ARTICLE 19, 2012); the Monitoring Matrix on Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development Toolkit (Balkan Civil Society Development Network, 2013); International Principles Protecting Civil Society (World Movement for Democracy and International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law, 2013); Enabling Environment National Assessment Draft Research Guide (ICNL and CIVICUS, forthcoming); General Principles on Protecting Civic Space and the Right to Access Resources (Community of Democracies, 2014); Global Charter on Right to Participation in Local Democratic Governance (Logolink, 2013); Public Participation in Fiscal Policy: Principles and Practices (GIFT, 2014).

Principles	Standards/Indicators
Dimension 2 - Rights of Assembly and Association (Score 0 to 32)	
Principle 5: Rights of assembly are guaranteed by law and respected in practice. (Score 0 to 8)	• Legislation regarding rights of assembly exists and reflects international standards (i.e. any group of people, without discrimination, can assemble where and when they wish in line with legal provisions). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are no reported cases of encroachment of the freedom of assembly. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Organisers of assemblies are not required to obtain permission to do so. If advance notification is required, rules are not onerous and denials are reasonable and legally justifiable. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • No excessive force is used by law enforcement bodies in the context of peaceful protests. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)
Principle 6: Rights of association are guaranteed by law and respected in practice. (Score 0 to 12)	• Legislation regarding rights of association exists and reflects international standards. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • All individuals and legal entities are free to create, join and participate in informal and/or registered CSOs. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • CSO registration is not mandatory. (2= Yes, 0 = No) • Registration rules are clear and implemented in a fair, objective, apolitical, transparent and consistent manner. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, registration procedures for CSOs are quick and accessible (i.e. there are no excessive, administrative, financial or practical barriers to establishing a CSO). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • CSOs are legally able to form partnerships and coalitions with other CSOs, both domestic and foreign. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)
Principle 7: CSOs are able to function independently and free of government interference. (Score 0 to 6)	• The legal framework provides guarantees against state interference in internal matters of CSOs. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Laws and regulations governing CSO operations are implemented and enforced in a fair, objective, apolitical, transparent and consistent manner. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are no reported cases of unwarranted state interference in internal matters of associations (i.e. no practices of invasive oversight, burdensome reporting requirements, excessive audits or inspections). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)
Principle 8: There is an enabling fiscal environment for CSOs. (Score 0 to 6)	• Legislation allows CSOs to engage in economic activities and to receive individual and corporation funding from both domestic and foreign sources. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, CSOs can freely seek and secure financial resources from various domestic and foreign sources to support their activities (i.e. there are no significant administrative or practical barriers to accessing funding). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • CSOs enjoy favourable tax treatment (i.e. there are tax incentives for individual and corporate donations to CSOs, and income sources of CSOs are tax exempt). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)

Principles	Standards/Indicators
Dimension 3 - Political Participation (Score 0 to 24)	
Principle 9: Elections are free and fair. (Score 0 to 6)	• All adult citizens have the right to vote. (2 = Yes, 0= No) • Multi-party elections are held regularly and are considered free and fair. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Citizens have the right to monitor, advocate and participate in electoral practices (including delimitation of constituencies, preparation of electoral lists, educating the electorate, etc.). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)
Principle 10: The government facilitates the participation of citizens and CSOs in processes of public deliberation and decision-making. (Score 0 to 10)	• The government has effective mechanisms for reporting to citizens and seeking citizen feedback on their conduct and performance on a regular basis. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • The government routinely invites all interested members of the public (including CSOs) to comment on new draft laws and policies. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are institutionalised mechanisms for citizens and/or CSOs to participate in decision-making processes on a regular basis (e.g. through open hearings, public consultations, joint committees, multi-stakeholder working groups). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, all citizens and CSOs (including those who are critical of the government) are able to participate in such processes. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are examples of citizens/CSOs meaningfully influencing the outcome of processes of political deliberation and decision-making through these mechanisms. (2 = Yes, 1 = Very few, 0= No)
Principle 11: The government recognises and respects the legitimate role of citizens and CSOs as advocates, watchdogs and development agents. (Score 0 to 8)	• The state recognises, through laws, policies or official statements, the legitimate role of civil society as a watchdog of the state. (2 = Yes, 0= No) • In practice, all citizens and CSOs (including those who are critical of the government) are able to freely engage in advocacy and lobbying activities with no/minimal restrictions. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are examples of citizen/CSO advocacy influencing a government decision or action. (2 = Yes, 1 = Very few, 0= No) • There are effective mechanisms for CSOs to dispute or appeal against certain government decisions. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)

Principles	Standards/Indicators
Dimension 4 - Non-discrimination/Inclusion (Score 0 to 28)	
Principle 12: Women have equal civic rights and equal access to civic space. (Score 0 to 8)	• Women have equal rights to men under law. (2 = Yes, 0= No) • There are no legal barriers to women's participation in civic space. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, women are equitably represented as civic actors and leaders. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are policies, rules and mechanisms to promote gender equity in public consultations and decision-making processes. (2 = Yes, 1 = Very few/not effective, 0= No)
Principle 13: Minority groups have equal civic rights and equal access to civic space. (Score 0 to 10)	• Minority groups (e.g. ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic and sexual minorities) have equal rights under law. (2 = Yes, 0= No) • There are no laws or regulations preventing specific groups from organising public assemblies or forming associations on the basis of their beliefs, agendas, orientations or civic status (e.g. non-citizens, members of the LGBT community, people living with HIV/AIDS). (2 = Yes, 0= No) • In practice, no specific groups are prevented from organising public assemblies or forming associations on the basis of their beliefs, agendas, orientations or civic status. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, members of minority groups are equitably represented as civic actors and leaders. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • There are policies, rules and mechanisms to ensure the representation of minority groups in public consultations and decision-making processes. (2 = Yes, 1 = Very few/not effective, 0= No)
Principle 14: Marginalised groups have equal civic rights and equal access to civic space. (Score 0 to 10)	• By law, non-citizens enjoy the same civic rights (of information, expression, assembly, association and participation) as citizens. (2 = Yes, 0= No) • There are policies and practical provisions in place to ensure that people with physical disabilities are able to participate in elections and public consultations. (2 = Yes, 1 = Very few/not effective, 0= No) • CSOs exist that actively promote the interests of poorer, less powerful and marginalised social groups (i.e. civic space is not dominated by elite groups). (2 = Yes, 1 = Very few/not effective, 0= No) • There are policies, rules and mechanisms to ensure that representatives from poorer and less powerful social groups (e.g. youth, elderly, unemployed, indigenous/tribal groups, people with disabilities) are included in public consultations and decision-making processes. (2 = Yes, 1 = Very few/not effective, 0= No) • There is an independent review mechanism available to those who consider they have been unjustifiably excluded from participation. (2 = Yes, 1 = Not effective, 0= No)
Dimension 5 - Human Rights/ Rule of Law (Score 0 to 18)	
Principle 15: Basic human rights are guaranteed by law and respected in practice. (Score 0 to 8)	• All relevant international human rights treaties and agreements have been endorsed and ratified. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Human rights are respected in practice (i.e. there are no human rights violations and no reprisals against human rights defenders). (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • The country is free from political terror. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • In practice, the State supports and enables the effective functioning of human rights organisations. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)
Principle 16: There is effective rule of law. (Score 0 to 10)	• The judicial system is independent and impartial. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • The judicial system offers effective means of appeal and remedy. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Government officials do not use public office for private gain. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Government officials are sanctioned for misconduct. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No) • Human rights violations and abuses against civil society actors do not go unpunished. (2 = Yes, 1 = For the Most Part, 0= No)