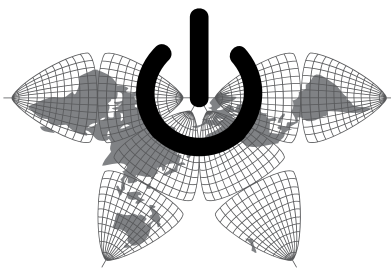




CIVICUS SUPPORT TO PEOPLE-POWERED ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE DATA REVOLUTION

**a scoping study by the engine room
april 2014**



the engine room

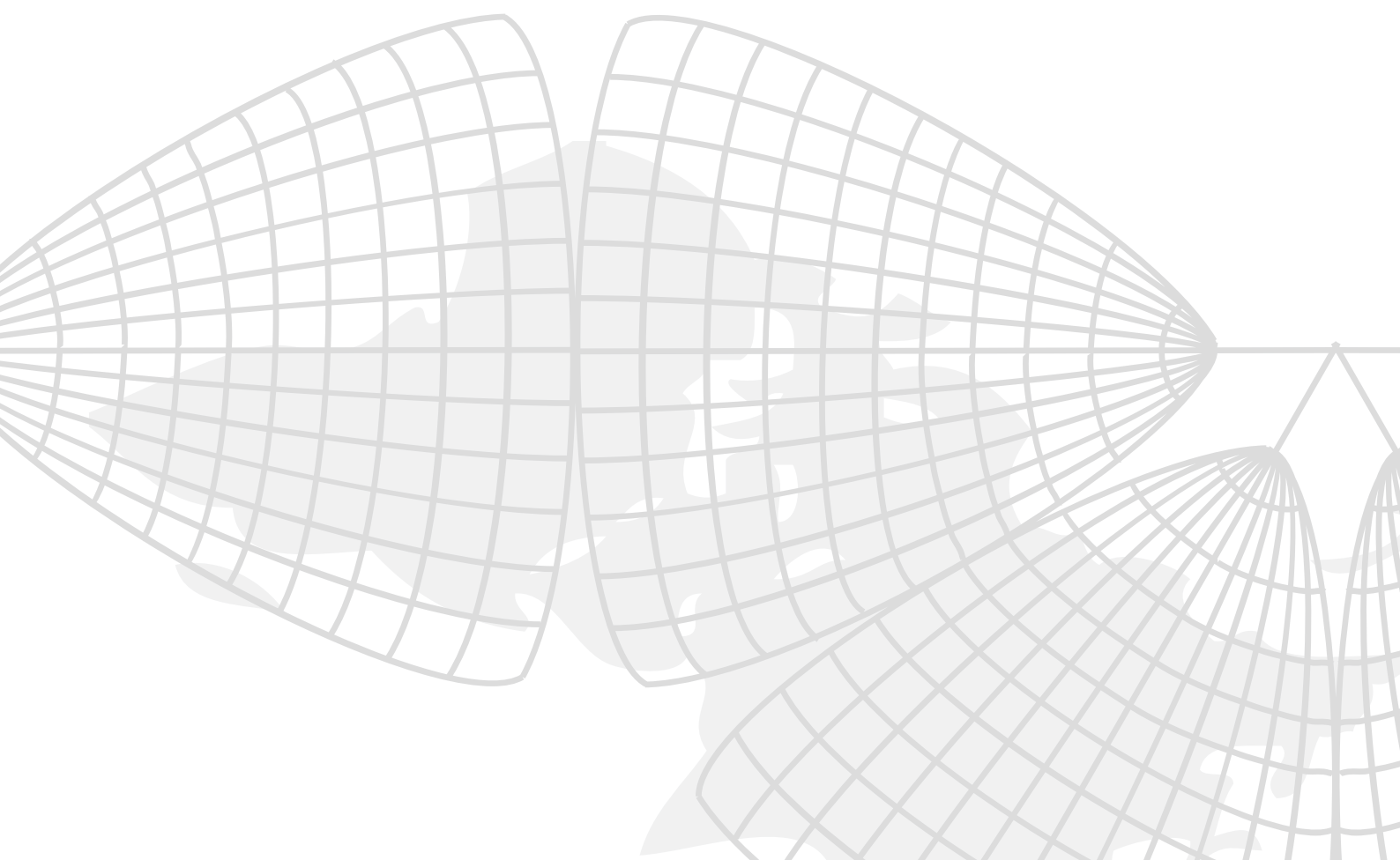
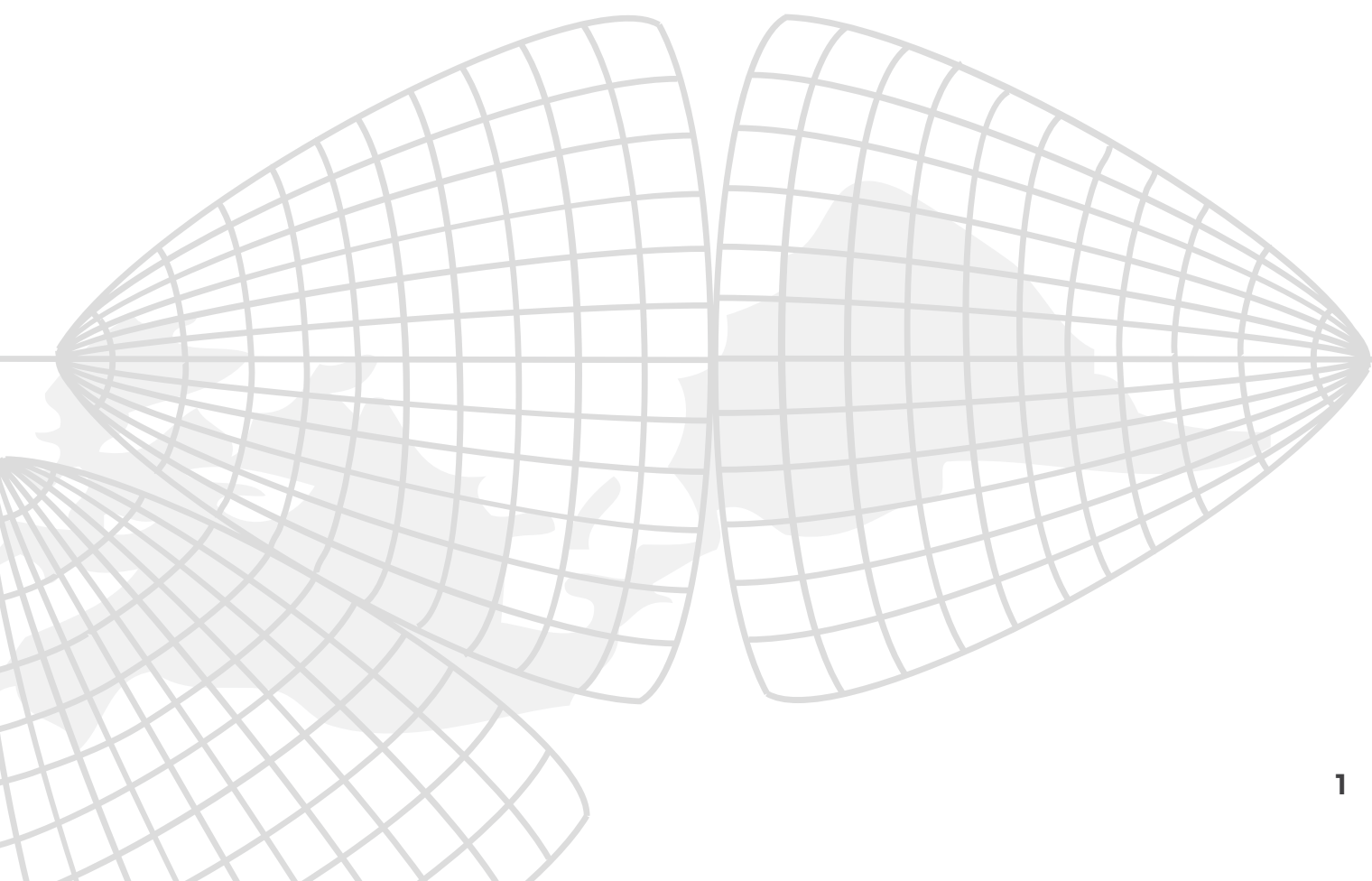




TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| SUMMARY | 2 |
| DEFINITIONS | 4 |
| BACKGROUND | 6 |
| OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW | 7 |
| METHODS AND SCOPE | 8 |
| Preconditions for a Post-2015 data shift | 8 |
| Thematic Focus | 9 |
| Stakeholder Consultations | 10 |
| Workshops | 10 |
| FINDINGS: THE STATE OF PLAY | 12 |
| Coverage: | 13 |
| Comparability | 15 |
| Campaigning | 18 |
| ANALYSIS | 20 |
| Opportunities and risks for people-powered accountability | 20 |
| Spark the change | 20 |
| Risky business | 21 |
| RECOMMENDATIONS | 24 |





SUMMARY

This scoping study was prepared to help CIVICUS understand how it can leverage the power of data and new technologies to support people-powered accountability in the Post-2015 development agenda.

CIVICUS is the world's leading alliance of civil society organizations, with long experience supporting national capacities to engage with development programming and advocacy, but little experience in the area of technology and data-driven programming. Seeking to understand its own role in the rapidly changing landscape of data, information and governance, CIVICUS has proposed a bold vision for placing citizen voice at the heart of development tracking, in which citizen reporting initiatives directly contribute to greater accountability within countries, while also producing data that can be compared across countries, to provide alternative metrics for measuring progress on international development goals.

To understand the risks and opportunities associated with pursuing this vision, the engine room conducted desk research, collaborative planning, consultations and participatory workshops between January and April 2014.

This research determined that CIVICUS is well positioned to promote people-powered accountability and to support citizen reporting in the Post-2015 context, and would be well received by relevant stakeholders in doing so. It also determined that there were a number of risks and unknown factors to be considered in pursuing this agenda, and identified a number of important areas that CIVICUS would need to carefully address in order to pursue this work effectively and achieve meaningful impact.

There are **three main preconditions** for achieving the bold vision that CIVICUS has advanced. In order for citizen reporting data to meaningfully support accountability within countries, and across countries as alternative development metrics, there must be significant increases in:

- **Coverage of citizen reporting initiatives** - To provide meaningful metrics on countries' progress towards development goals, the number of initiatives actively reporting on specific issues and in specific countries must increase dramatically.
- **Comparability of citizen reporting data** - To support international accountability campaigns, citizen data collected according to different methodologies in different countries must be comparable.
- **Campaigning utility** - To bring citizen voice to the heart of development planning at both national and international levels, there must be clearer dual-use cases for individual data sets in both national accountability campaigns, and international campaigns that advocate for accountability between countries.

Background research and consultations considered each of these preconditions in an attempt to understand where CIVICUS could best add value in promoting people-powered accountability. This surfaced clear opportunities in regard to increasing coverage; there are specific needs and good reasons for CIVICUS to promote the uptake of citizen reporting strategies among civil society, primarily through capacity development and coordination. The entry points for comparability and campaigning were far less obvious, largely due to lack of citizen reporting data. Solving coverage challenges seems to be a precondition for effective comparability and campaigning strategies.

This suggests that CIVICUS would do well to focus its initial efforts on supporting the increased coverage of citizen reporting initiatives, with an eye towards understanding and promoting accountability and campaign dual-utility when possible and appropriate. Supporting capacity development and strengthening community dynamics and knowledge exchange between civil society is familiar ground for CIVICUS, but not without its risks. The use of technology and data in accountability programming is a relatively new area for CIVICUS, and little understood generally. The scoping study identified several challenges that CIVICUS would face in pursuing this work.

This analysis led to a number of broad recommendations for how CIVICUS should continue exploring its value added in the promotion of people-powered accountability. The recommendations propose steps CIVICUS will need to take in order to maximize efficiency, avoid duplication, and contribute to positive development outcomes at both the national and international registers.

11 recommendations are presented in summary below. In the closing chapter of the scoping study, each recommendation includes a brief contextual analysis and a number of specific activities and action points.

1. Begin any programming with a focus on increasing reporting coverage
2. Conduct focused research to inform programming strategies
3. Build internal capacities in technology and statistics
4. Identify, engage and nurture communities as the bedrock for the data shift
5. Recognize and adopt good practice in community and capacity building
6. Develop a strategy for light touch coordination
7. Adopt an agile and iterative approach to supporting people powered accountability
8. Treat knowledge about people-powered accountability as the project's primary currency
9. Embed responsible data practice in entire data shift ambition
10. Promote more nuanced understandings about the potential of data and technology
11. Preemptively address potential conflicts over licensing and intellectual property



DEFINITIONS

Here follow explanations of how key terms are used in this study.

BIG DEVELOPMENT DATA SHIFT

This is the name given to CIVICUS' vision of a fundamental change in the way data is used to promote citizen voice and accountability in development practice. It anticipates a world in which the potential of new technologies are leveraged for more creative and effective social accountability through citizen reporting on development activities. This vision sees citizen reporting as widespread and significant enough to not only facilitate national accountability, but to enable cross-country comparability, and to bring citizen voice to the heart of international frameworks for measuring progress on the Post-2015 development goals. CIVICUS sees this shift as enabled by novel access to data and new technologies, and refers to the social and political dynamics underpinning this shift as **People-Powered Accountability**.

CITIZEN REPORTING DATA

This term is used loosely to refer to different types of data that civil society organizations might collect or generate, with the intention of representing citizen perspectives. This might consist of qualitative or quantitative data in a number of media formats, and could take the form of citizen incident reports, citizen reviews of public projects or works, citizen testimonies, responses to consultations or surveys, or citizen contributions to online information tasks, such as sorting or flagging online information.

COMPARABILITY

The capacity to compare data sets that have disparate data structures, and are produced by different civil society organizations and across countries. Increased comparability is one of the preconditions for the CIVICUS vision for a big development data shift.

COVERAGE

The degree to which citizen reporting initiatives are active in countries where Post-2015 development goals are being pursued. Total coverage would mean that civil society is collecting citizen reporting data on all Post-2015 development goals in all countries implementing the goals. Increased coverage is one of the preconditions for the CIVICUS vision for a big development data shift.

CROWDSOURCING

A method of soliciting information from an unknown group of people, this approach is common for citizen reporting initiatives that seek information from people motivated to provide that information. From a statistical perspective, this means people providing information are self-selecting, and the resulting data is statistically biased, that is, it is not statistically representative of a broader population.

DATA

Any type of structured information, including qualitative and quantitative data, in any format, including audio/visual formats.

DATA REVOLUTION

A term coined by the High Level Panel of Experts on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the

data revolution was proposed as a normative ideal, enabled by broad access to information and communication technologies, and composed of “two main objectives: 1) the integration of statistics into public and private sector decision making; 2) building trust between society and state through transparency and accountability.” See more at <http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/What-is-the-Data-Revolution.pdf>.

DUAL-USE DATA

Data that can be useful for accountability campaigns at both the national level, and at the international level.

HARMONIZATION

A technical strategy for facilitating the comparability of disparate data sets, harmonization refers to the process of organizing and developing meta-data so that different types of variables (age measured by number of years and age measured by groups of years such as “under 18” and “19-24”) can be quickly compared, without altering the actual data or structures of data being compared.

PEOPLE POWERED-ACCOUNTABILITY

The dynamics by which citizen voice and citizen reporting data drives processes of accountability, this is a term used by CIVICUS to describe the dynamics that will further a big development data shift.

POST-2015

A development discussion focused on negotiating what international development goals should follow the Millenium Development Goals, which will expire in the year 2015. The UN is currently facilitating negotiations between countries on what a new set of voluntary goals will be, and how progress towards their completion will be measured. See more at <http://post2015.org/about/>.

REPRESENTIVITY

A loose statistical concept indicating that data points in a sample have the same characteristics as a larger population. In other words, if a survey of Guatemalan ice cream preferences shows that 75% of respondents prefer chocolate, it is representative of Guatemalans only if 75% of all Guatemalans prefer chocolate. There are several elaborate methodologies for pursuing representivity, which generally involve randomly selecting survey participants and observing stringent selection rules. Obviously, the survey example above will not be representative if it was sent to people who often buy chocolate ice cream. For similar reasons, crowdsourced data, or citizen reports, will often not be representative.

STANDARDS/STANDARDIZATION

Methodologies for collecting and structuring data within specific thematic areas, so that it may be easily compared without harmonization. Unlike harmonization, which approaches comparability from a retroactive perspective, standardization is a forward-looking approach, as standards need to be developed collectively, before data is collected.

USE CASE

Borrowed from software development, this term refers to a specific description of how a tool or piece of information will be used, including details about the person using it, their motivations for doing so, and what they require to do so effectively.



BACKGROUND

CIVICUS is the leading international alliance of civil society actors working to strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world. A member organization based in Johannesburg, South Africa, CIVICUS began exploring the potential for technology and citizen voice in early 2013, holding dedicated consultations and engaging a data scientist to begin charting opportunities and map innovative practice. This led to the idea of creating a Big Development Dashboard, which would “aggregate and curate citizen-generated reporting from across the globe to help unleash the democratizing potential of information.”

Specifically, the Dashboard was conceived in response to the Post-2015 development agenda, according to which States are currently negotiating goals to replace the Millennium Development Goals, and for which the UN High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post 2015 Development Agenda has recently called for a “data revolution.”¹ CIVICUS argued that the MDG monitoring framework was largely dissatisfactory, not in the least for its failure to incorporate citizen and civil society perspectives, and proposed the Big Development Dashboard as a mechanism to aggregate and curate citizen generated data and reporting on countries’ progress in meeting the Post-2015 Development Goals.

In late 2013, CIVICUS approached the engine room, an organization mandated to help civil society organizations use technological tools and strategies safely and effectively (<https://www.theengineroom.org>). Recognizing that such a Dashboard would rely on “the democratizing power of information” at least as much as it would express or unleash that power, CIVICUS contracted the engine room to conduct a scoping study to see how it could best promote and facilitate the development of that power among civil society actors. The subsequent study - this study - was designed and implemented in collaboration with CIVICUS, as an effort to identify opportunities for supporting increased and efficient citizen reporting among civil society actors the world over, and by extension, contributing to an environment of citizen voice and civil society data in which mechanisms such as the Big Development Dashboard really can put the citizen back at the centre of sustainable development strategies and solutions.

1 See P2015 website - <http://www.post2015hlp.org/>.



OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

This scoping study aims to identify the ways in which CIVICUS might be able to support civil society's use of data and technology, to mobilize citizen reporting as a meaningful component in the Post-2015 measurement framework, and how this might contribute to people-powered accountability more generally.

As such, this study is a **snapshot of the potential and limitations** faced by CIVICUS in defining its own role in the data revolution. It provides a frank discussion of the organization's strengths and weakness as a network and capacity development organization, and explores the risks and opportunities presented by a global information ecology in flux. It is only a starting point, however, and recommends a significant amount of additional research and exercises that CIVICUS should undertake to develop a sound approach and theory of change for pursuing a big development data shift.

After describing methods applied, this study will present contemporary discourse and practice surrounding citizen reporting and civil society-generated data for accountability, as surfaced during research and consultations (**Findings**). It will then consider what role CIVICUS might play in this context, with a focus on the risks inherent in ambition of this scope, and strategies with which to mitigate those risks (**Analysis**). The study closes by proposing some project modalities that draw on CIVICUS strengths, meet needs expressed by their constituencies, and can reasonably hope to have meaningful impact at both the national and international registers (**Recommendations**).



METHODS AND SCOPE

This study is based on a combination of desk research and mixed consultations methods with a wide group of stakeholders, including citizen representatives, national and international campaigners, data producers, government officials, donors and international experts. In order to understand the relationships between these groups and how their perspectives and practices regarding citizen reported data varied, multiple consultation formats were employed, including group consultations, online consultations, individual interviews and participatory workshops. The results of these efforts were considered together with CIVICUS project staff on a running basis, and informed strategic decisions about study implementation, as well as project strategies for the CIVICUS team.

PRECONDITIONS FOR A POST-2015 DATA SHIFT

Early phases in this scoping study focused on understanding the preconditions that would be necessary in order to achieve a data shift, in which people-powered accountability becomes common practice in national development contexts, and citizen voice is a powerful component of international development tracking. Through discussions with the CIVICUS team and early reflections on consultation and workshop results, we determined that there are at least three key preconditions that will be absolutely necessary:

COVERAGE

There are relatively few citizen voice and reporting initiatives tracking national development in a meaningful way. In order to support an international accountability mechanism, spanning 193 countries² and multiple thematic areas, the coverage of such national initiatives would need to be dramatically increased.

COMPARABILITY

There is today no easy method for comparing data collected by civil society in different countries - often collected according to different methodologies, strategic priorities and cultural and political contexts. Such comparability might be accomplished through the development of data standards for particular development goals, but this approach is likely to be at odds with the bottom-up imperatives of national campaigning, and experience from fields such as the International Aid Transparency Initiative³ suggest that such a process would demand very significant resources, time and expertise from participating organizations. Comparability might also be achieved through technical solutions for harmonizing data sets with disparate data structures.

2 This refers to the 193 UN member states that will negotiate the Post-2015 measurement framework, but citizen voice is equally important in all countries, regardless of international recognition.

3 See <http://iatistandard.org/>.

There is no existing practice to indicate how feasible this might be.

CAMPAIGNING UTILITY

In order for citizen reporting to truly meet the ambition of supporting people-powered accountability, citizen-generated data (indeed, individual data sets) need to have clear use cases and utility, both in national campaigning strategies, and in international accountability debates. It is not yet clear what data qualities such dual-utility would imply, but it is easy to imagine competing imperatives. A top-down approach to defining data structures, which prioritizes standards over national accountability priorities, risks wasting precious resources and fracturing national civil society. A bottom-up approach, driven solely by national priorities, risks frustrating cross-country comparisons, and missing opportunities for capacity development and resource sharing across national contexts. It is not clear where the middle ground between these two poles lies.

Citizen-generated data need to have clear use cases and utility, both in national campaigning strategies, and in international accountability debates

These three preconditions were used to shape and guide scoping study activities.

THEMATIC FOCUS

Given the limited time and resources allotted to this study, an early decision was made to prioritize specific thematic areas that met the following criteria:

- The thematic area can reasonably be expected to be included in the Post-2015 framework
- There are good examples of how citizen-generated data and reporting have been used in accountability programming, and innovation among civil society organizations
- There is interest among civil society groups working in this thematic area to contribute to the scoping study and CIVICUS support to people-powered accountability generally

On the basis of these criteria, results of early consultations and discussions with CIVICUS staff, this study selected a focus on gender and corruption. Gender defender and anti-harassment tech projects like HarassMap⁴, SafeCity⁵ and Blank Noise⁶, as well as anti-corruption efforts like the Investigative Dashboard,⁷ I Paid A Bribe Kenya⁸, K-Monitor⁹ and Mamdawrinch¹⁰, are examples of initiatives that made these areas a useful starting point.

4 <http://harassmap.org/en/>

5 <http://www.safecity.in/>

6 <http://blog.blanknoise.org/>

7 <http://investigativedashboard.org/>

8 <http://ipaidabribe.or.ke/>

9 <http://k-monitor.hu/index.html?plang=en>

10 http://www.mamdawrinch.com/?l=en_US

This study's methodology was developed in collaboration with CIVICUS, first on the basis of interviews and workshops conducted with staff in Johannesburg, and then iteratively on the basis of findings and ongoing activities. This final product is based on the engine room's desk research and broad experience supporting civil society organizations to adopt and effectively implement technological tools and data-driven strategies. It is particularly informed by the stakeholder consultations and thematic workshops conducted as part of the study, which are described in greater detail below.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

A consultation framework and list of stakeholder groups were developed in collaboration with CIVICUS. This framework identified key audiences and appropriate consultation mechanisms, and also provided interview scripts and considerations for specific groups, so that consultations could be conducted directly by CIVICUS staff. The consultation framework was then deployed through multiple mechanisms, including online surveys with 103 national campaigning organizations, approximately 50 structured interviews with various individuals, and consultative workshops with international actors participating in Post-2015 policy debates.

WORKSHOPS

CIVICUS and the engine room convened four participatory workshops between February and April 2014. Workshops were structured to simultaneously meet the following objectives:

- Provide participants with concrete tools, strategies and guidance that would be useful for their work supporting citizen voice and accountability
- Identify participant needs for information, skills or resources, which CIVICUS might be able to meet while promoting people-powered accountability
- Understand how CIVICUS is perceived as an international support actor, and what expectations national and international accountability actors have regarding CIVICUS' ambitions
- Identify risks and opportunities for CIVICUS in promoting people-powered accountability, through support to national citizen reporting initiatives.

A description of each workshop follows.

ACCOUNTABILITY WORKSHOP, 25 APRIL 2014, ISTANBUL

This first workshop convened a broad group of grassroots organizations, citizen reporting initiatives, practitioners and policy makers. The inception-style workshop aimed to identify the necessary conditions for citizen voice to assume a meaningful role in the Post-2015 measurement framework. The workshop also aimed to understand differences in perspectives and communication streams between national accountability organizations and international civil society organizations engaged in Post-2015 policy advocacy.

GENDER DEFENDER WORKSHOP, 01 FEB 2014, ISTANBUL

This workshop convened activists and organizations using data and citizen reporting to combat harassment, gender discrimination, gender-based violence and sexual assault. The workshop focused on testing potential for increased comparability of citizen data, especially with an eye toward communities of practice and standard setting for gender data.

CORRUPTION DATA EXPEDITION, 2 FEB 2014, LONDON

The Corruption Data Expedition followed a model pioneered by Open Knowledge Foundation's School of Data,¹¹ who also co-organized and co-facilitated the workshop. This was the first of two consecutive workshops intended to analyze the comparability process from a retroactive perspective, treating data sets as "found objects" to be compared and analyzed. The expedition gathered national transparency and anti-corruption campaigners to work with specific data sets from four countries, to better understand the potential utility of cross-country comparability in national accountability processes.

CORRUPTION COMPARABILITY WORKSHOP, 3 FEB 2014, LONDON

Building on the data expedition, this workshop convened data wranglers, coders and technicians to explore and begin prototyping technical solutions for comparing disparate data sets, such as harmonization schema and heuristics. Activities in this workshop built on use cases and specific comparability challenges identified in the data expedition.

¹¹ <http://schoolofdata.org/>



FINDINGS: THE STATE OF PLAY

Data and technology feature prominently in the way that development and campaigning organizations talk about governance and accountability. This isn't because these tools have dramatically improved governance in countries,¹² but rather stemming from the **powerful techno-optimism** that these tools tend to convey. The raw and unbounded potential of technology holds a powerful allure. The promise of cheap and easy access to data, evidence, documentation strategies and global audiences is increasingly apparent to civil society organizations, even those working with the most limited access to information technologies¹³. This may be due in part to the fact that online initiatives are by their very nature highly visible, and when also novel and innovative, are quick to capture the imagination of international networks

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and conference circuits. Easy access to popular platforms such as **Ushahidi** and **Frontline SMS** also contribute to this; the simplicity of making a map can easily distract from the difficult project strategizing and political heavy lifting that goes on behind any impactful mapping endeavour.¹⁴

But notwithstanding the potential costs of technology “hype”, and how little we actually understand about technology’s potential to strengthen transparency and accountability initiatives, it seems clear that data and technology are a game changer for how civil society, governments and the donor community conceptualize governance and accountability. Ideas about the ownership of information have been changed irrevocably. The norm of “open” is apparently here to stay. Presumptions about government obligations to provide transparent and real time information on its activities are just as fundamental for many practitioners as they are novel, when compared to norms just two decades ago.

That this shift in perceptions is often accompanied by broad enthusiasm and unrealistic expectations regarding the potential of data and technology is understandable, but also critically important to anticipate. Throughout research and consultations, and across each of the preconditions, **this study uncovered a tension** between optimistic anticipation of data’s potential, and skepticism as to what it could actually deliver and at what cost.

12 There is significant interest in understanding what impacts actually follow from technology and accountability initiatives (see for example recent initiatives by the World Bank [<http://blogs.worldbank.org/ic4d/call-for-feedback-how-to-note-on-a-framework-for-evaluating-the-impact-of-ict-programs>] and Making All Voices Count (<http://www.makingallvoicescount.org/why/>), but there is no clear evidence. Anecdotally, when clear wins can be attributed to technology or data, they tend to be manifest as transparency outcomes, where the actual impact on governance and power relationships is less certain).

13 See for example, results from the first TechScope research model, presented at <https://www.theengineroom.org/piloting-civil-society-and-technology-assessments-new-techscope-report/>.

14 Ushahidi’s seminal formulation is that 90% of any technology driven project should have nothing to do with technology. See <http://blog.ushahidi.com/2010/05/19/allocation-of-time-deploying-ushahidi/>.

CIVICUS is confronted with an imperative to understand how stakeholders anticipate the role of technology in accountability processes, how they are already using technology for citizen reporting, and what their capacities and limitations are for bridging that divide. Only a clear understanding of these factors will allow CIVICUS to facilitate meaningful and sustainable outcomes for national and international accountability.

To pursue that understanding, this section will consider these two factors (how stakeholders anticipate technology and how they are already using technology) as surfaced in background research, consultations and participatory workshops. It will present them according to the three preconditions of coverage, comparability and campaigning utility.

COVERAGE:

In order for citizen monitoring to provide a meaningful counterpoint to official metrics for the Post-2015 development goals, such initiatives will need to actively collect significant amounts of machine readable data in a large number of countries where the goals are being actively pursued and reported on. Significant coverage across countries is equally important for supporting normative and policy arguments about the importance of citizen and civil society monitoring on the global stage. At the time of writing, this is far from the case. Indeed, without a more precise definition of such initiatives (indeed without knowing the precise nature of the goals), it is difficult to estimate, but there appear to be relatively few initiatives currently using technological tools to collect citizen perspectives on themes relating to the Post-2015 development goals.

Brief reviews of relevant tools and communities of practice (such as the TA Bridge Initiative, the Mapping and 311 communities, the Open Spending and Parliament communities¹⁵) surface a limited number of active projects compared with the number of countries in which international development goals will be implemented. A cursory survey of countries in which some of the most well-known technology for transparency and accountability initiatives are based (Chile, Egypt, Great Britain, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, South Africa, USA) indicates that even in many of these countries, there are relatively few active initiatives, and civil society-generated data often focuses on specific thematic or institutional areas.

The prospects for **increasing coverage** are also unclear. While mobile

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¹⁵ Respectively, <http://tech.transparency-initiative.org/strategy-session/>, <http://blogs.openstreetmap.org/> & <https://wiki.ushahidi.com/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=294916>, <http://blog.okfn.org/2014/01/06/mapping-the-open-spending-data-community/>, <http://www.openingparliament.org/organizations>.

National campaigners consistently emphasized the importance of capacity development for increasing citizen reporting initiatives, and expressed skepticism towards such initiatives in terms of concrete strategic challenges

phones, internet access and dedicated platforms decrease barriers of entry for civil society to engage in citizen monitoring activities, methodological capacities remain a constant (if less obvious) impediment to the collection of credible and comparable data. It is unclear if the types of trainings likely to be provoked by widespread donor interest will address these capacities, or whether more novel approaches to capacity development, such as School of Data Expeditions or online webinars, will be able to do so.

The most significant impediment to a meaningful degree of citizen reporting coverage, however, must remain the sheer number of initiatives to be launched and meaningfully implemented, in order to facilitate data comparison across 193 countries, for several thematic areas.

Despite the imposing nature of these challenges, the scoping study surfaced widespread enthusiasm for efforts to foster citizen reporting on development initiatives. Among international policy, advocacy and donor stakeholders, support was largely expressed in normative terms, emphasizing the importance of citizen voice in national and international processes. This was distinct from the responses of national accountability initiatives, most of whom had some experience collecting citizen data, and most conducted offline surveys and consultations which they subsequently digitized.

Among national campaigners, support for people-powered accountability was expressed in terms of concrete activities and outputs (linking different types of data they collect, building credibility with communities, using specific technologies). It is also worth noting that this group consistently emphasized the importance of capacity development for increasing citizen reporting initiatives, and expressed skepticism towards such initiatives in terms of concrete strategic challenges (incentivizing citizen participation, reaching populations with limited media access, prohibitive cost and technical resources). This reinforces the need for a highly contextualized approach to capacity development in different countries and localities, different thematic areas, and different technological platforms and strategies.

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

Some **specific lessons** also surfaced regularly among those civil society organizations with experience using data and technology:

- Technology and data need to be treated as means to an end. This is especially important for funding and capacity development initiatives, and requires the allocation of resources, continual interrogation of data-driven practices against strategic context, and deep contextualization of programming modalities. Some respondents noted that this perspective

is especially dangerous for NGOs that may not be aware of the role that technology and data can play in supporting their existing activities, but will embrace these tools in independent programming.

- Similarly, data and technology should be treated as components in larger programming toolbox, and should be integrated throughout organizational activities and programming in order to achieve their greatest impact. Many respondents also complained about the siloing of NGO data, and the failure to integrate data and evidence into mainstream development practice.
- Data and technology initiatives tend not to be sustainable. Whether due to funding cut-offs, failure to develop and apply effective and realistic theories of change, or specific contextual circumstances, there was widespread agreement that technology and data-driven efforts often conclude or are terminated before meaningful change is concluded. Some argued that this challenge required a new approach to capacity development, which focused more on long-term engagement, than on introductory workshops and trainings. Other respondents noted the irony of the fact that in many countries civil society fails to engage with a burgeoning technology, start up or civic hacking communities, which could conceivably facilitate precisely this kind of long term sustainability and capacity strengthening.

There was general agreement in consultations that civil society organizations had a tremendous need to increase their data and technology capacities, and that doing so could dramatically increase the efficiency or potential impact of most accountability initiatives. Respondents also agreed that there were significant risks attached to poorly designed capacity development exercises, and that it was impossible to generalize about the specific needs and opportunities across project and country contexts.

COMPARABILITY

Comparability of citizen reporting data, and civil society-generated data in general, remains a prominent obstacle to promoting citizen voice in international monitoring. Citizen reporting initiatives, to be meaningful at the national level, will necessarily be shaped by highly specific local priorities and contextual pressures. These factors will in turn consistently and necessarily impact programmatic and methodological aspects such as sample size, data type, data structure, specific indicators, frequency and media platforms. Differences in these aspects will frustrate efforts to compare data sets in any meaningful way, even if citizen reporting collects information about the same type of “thing” (targets for poverty goals may be expressed in terms of “dollar a day” measures, for example, but civil society actors may feel that access to specific services is a more appropriate indicator of poverty in specific contexts). Semantic differences

Respondents also agreed that there were significant risks attached to poorly designed capacity development exercises, and that it was impossible to generalize about the specific needs and opportunities across project and country contexts

further complicate cross-national comparability. Broad terms such as “bribe”, “adequate” or “illness” can expect vastly different interpretations across cultural divides.

These challenges are brought into stark relief when considering contemporary citizen reporting data generated by civil society organizations on corruption, arguably the most mature field for civil society governance data. Initial mappings identified three main types of citizen reporting data, including:

- Citizen reports on corruption, which may be reported through multiple media, and which may or may not include geographic data, time data, identification of specific institutions or individuals, type of event or financial amounts.
- Citizen perspectives, which may be collected through structured and representative surveys, through exit surveys and points of public service delivery, through online comments to specific themes, legislation or institutions.
- Citizen reports and categorization of suspicious public information, such as procurement announcements or contracts.
- Citizen monitoring of project and public work completion against public budget allocations, to identify instances of institutional corruption.
- Crowdsourced information on public figures, including assets, activities and relationships.
- Unstructured data, such as audio-visual recordings, images and narrative testimonies, which can often be powerful in local campaigning.

It is far from obvious how one would compare these types of data within a single country, much less how such data would be compared with official metrics on combatting corruption. It is even less clear how they would be compared across country contexts where data structures and data types are unlikely to match and the definition of a “bribe” may vary substantially.

Local priorities and contextual pressures will consistently and necessarily impact programmatic and methodological aspects such as sample size, data type, data structure, specific indicators, frequency and media platforms

These considerations prompted several respondents to assert that comparability wasn't worth significant investments of time or financial resources - for some it was simply impossible. Some international policy responses to consultations went so far as to suggest that comparability of individual citizen data sets to official tracking metrics for development goals was itself a doomed exercise, given the lack of rigor with which civil society data was bound to be collected.

There was, nevertheless, broad interest in comparing civil society-generated data across countries. In international advocacy and policy responses, this was expressed as a general desire, but no clear use cases were expressed. There seemed rather to be an

expectation that being able to compare the data would reveal how that data could be used.

Responses from national accountability actors, on the other hand, offered a number of concrete uses to which they would like to put cross-country comparable data on development goals, including:

- benchmarking national performance against other countries' performance,
- inducting a sense of solidarity between regional neighbors performing poorly on specific goals, and
- facilitating the sharing of best methodological practices and capacity development between civil society organizations.

It is worth noting that no civil society organizations consulted had any active systems in place for sharing data or interoperating data with other organizations. No respondents offered concrete ideas on how their capacities to interoperate or harmonize data might be strengthened.

In order to explore the potential for comparing disparate civil society-generated data sets, a data expedition and a harmonization workshop were organized. The data expedition and harmonization workshop aimed to produce specific tools and strategies for harmonizing disparate, "found" data sets on corruption. The activities focused on specific data sets from 4 countries, and relied on the efforts of national campaigners, software engineers and database managers. Efforts to produce harmonization schema and heuristics both failed broadly, due to limited time, limited data and limited familiarity with the data sets at hand. Contributions during the workshop suggest that the dramatic heterogeneity of corruption data sets, coupled with the fact that there are so few, will likely frustrate additional efforts, and that without a broad collection of specific data sets from multiple countries, it is difficult to anticipate the types of technical challenges will actually be posed to comparability and harmonization efforts.¹⁶

The very low data management capacities of most civil society organizations also recommends waiting to pursue harmonization strategies. Several respondents mentioned the challenge of attempting to clean and order data sets, a preliminary measure that is miles ahead of efforts to interoperate or compare disparate data. Generally, respondents expressed confidence that efforts towards standardization could be productively built into capacity development exercises. Participants also welcomed the idea of

Some international policy responses to consultations went so far as to suggest that comparability was itself a doomed exercise

without a broad collection of specific data sets from multiple countries, it is difficult to anticipate the types of technical challenges will actually be posed to comparability and harmonization efforts

¹⁶ It is important to point out that, while the workshops failed to deliver schemas and heuristics, the participants eagerly stepped up when it came to defining possible best practices and suggestions to move forward, suggesting methods for defining advocacy narratives around anti-corruption data collection, or specific strategies for national capacity building programs. See Annexes 3 and 4

developing communities of practice that could both train on specific skills, and work towards enhanced comparability through standard setting.

CAMPAIGNING

At the core of CIVICUS' ambition towards people-powered accountability is the idea that citizen reporting data can promote enhanced accountability at both the national and the international register. This idea of "dual use data" relies fundamentally on at least four premises:

1. that citizen reporting initiatives are developed on the basis of national strategic priorities and contextual pressures, in essence that they are "bottom up";
2. that citizen reporting is conducted according to rigorous and credible methodologies that will withstand interrogation of skeptics trained in statistical methods;
3. that initiatives are well strategized and build on credible theories of change that enable actual impact; and
4. that data coverage and comparability are sufficient to enable comparative analysis and advocacy at the international register.

None of these conditions are in place in any global sense, and while the scoping study consistently provoked assertions that citizen reporting data could be useful at both of these registers, it did not surface any examples of how a single data set could contribute to both.

There was, moreover, some resistance to the utility of citizen reporting data, especially among government representatives, who expressed uncertainty about how citizen-generated data would compliment official data, and concern that such efforts would distract from the important role of official data collection and statistics. This perspective can be interpreted as an inclination to defend statistical turf and access to funds. But it also indicates a more

While the scoping study consistently provoked assertions that citizen reporting data could be useful at both of these registers, it did not surface any examples of how a single data set could contribute to both

deep seated methodological argument, which is entirely valid. For all civil society's sudden access to data, small organizations remain largely without the training and expertise that defines statistics as a scientific discipline, and the vast majority of civil society-generated data is not, cannot be, statistically sound. The resources are simply not available to the vast majority of civil society organizations that work with monitoring and accountability.

This challenge to the methodological rigor and credibility of civil society is most prominently manifest in discussions of representativity. By its very nature, crowdsourced data will never be representative, because it relies on motivated individuals to self-select and report data, rather than drawing on random samples of an entire population. As crowdsourcing methodologies are arguably the most accessible to civil society initiatives, this presents a significant challenge to getting citizen reporting data accepted by

the statistical community.

When this issue was raised in consultation, it provoked few insights beyond the assertion data needs either needs to be representative to be credible, or not. Nor has background research for this scoping study uncovered any ongoing dialogues to explore the ways in which non-representative data produced by civil society might compliment official statistics.

Disregarding questions of representativity and the merit of citizen data relative to official statistics, national campaigning organizations had no difficulty describing the utility of citizen data for national campaigning and accountability efforts. As expected, respondents noted the importance of citizen data for identifying shortfalls and fact checking official narratives, for applying public pressure and motivating political actors, for personalizing political issues, for advocating on the basis of solidarity, and for lending credibility to campaigns. Interestingly, when asked to discuss the challenges and opportunities of using data, national campaigners consistently referenced difficulties in acquiring data (collection processes, methodologies, costs, technical difficulties), and opportunities and benefits of data once the data was acquired.

Consultations also reemphasized the importance of country context, and several respondents described situations in which a type of citizen data was powerful and enabling in one country context, but not so in others. Respondents also emphasized the importance of identifying campaigning strategies and use cases before producing or collecting citizen reporting data.

Small organizations remain largely without the training and expertise that defines statistics as a scientific discipline, and the vast majority of civil society-generated data is not, cannot be, statistically sound



ANALYSIS

OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS FOR PEOPLE-POWERED ACCOUNTABILITY

The data revolution process is well underway - and presumably inevitable, whatever it means and whatever development outcomes will provoke. CIVICUS finds itself compelled to adapt to this context, if only to effectively fulfill its mandate. Civil society's increasing production of data as evidence also implies that in order to effectively represent civil society in global fora, CIVICUS needs to understand the tools being used, and be able to manage and present that data. As civil society initiatives around the globe continue to adopt technology and data-driven strategies on an ad hoc basis and according to specific contextual demands, the increasing proliferation of disparate data will further complicate efforts to aggregate and represent civil society perspectives, especially in statistics-heavy fora such as the Post-2015 measurement framework.

SPARK THE CHANGE

The most efficient means by which CIVICUS can maintain its own capacity in this regard may well be through substantive engagement with civil society organizations in the process of developing projects, coordinating data and developing capacities.

It is also worth noting that stakeholders consulted for this scoping study were widely positive regarding CIVICUS' ambitions to foster people-powered accountability and bring citizen voice to the centre of international development monitoring. Donors, IGOs, international campaigners, government representatives and national organizations alike all generally welcomed CIVICUS' intentions. Skepticism tended to focus on specific project modalities or concerns about a top-down, standards-heavy approach to

the CIVICUS brand appears to be well placed to engage in this kind of work, and is perceived as neutral, representative, issue-agnostic, and firmly rooted in the Global South

data comparability, and were surprisingly absent regarding the feasibility of a global dashboard to track non-existent data. Generally, the CIVICUS brand appears to be well placed to engage in this kind of work, and is perceived as neutral, representative, issue-agnostic, and firmly rooted in the Global South, which appears to lend significant credibility to many different types of stakeholders.

CIVICUS also enjoys a number of advantages. Well-versed in bridging national and international policy dialogues, the organization may well be uniquely positioned to convene different types of stakeholders. This convening capacity may well prove to be critical for helping national campaigners to develop resilient networks to sustain monitoring activities over time, as

well as policy focused efforts, such as beginning a dialogue between the statistical and the accountability community on the complementary role of non-representative data to official statistics and development metrics. Lastly, it should be noted that CIVICUS is institutionally well structured to manage large global projects, especially when performing a coordination function, processing large baskets of funding, or mobilizing political debate on the international stage.

RISKY BUSINESS

This study has surfaced significant opportunities for CIVICUS to promote people-powered accountability, and widespread support for them to do so. The devil is, however, in the details, and there are a number of concerns regarding how such support would be implemented, and concrete risks not only that such efforts could fail, but that they could misalign resources, disempower civil society actors, or otherwise do harm to communities or accountability efforts.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY EFFORTS

There is a **lack of vertical feedback loops** between civil society organizations promoting development accountability agenda in international policy circles and those working at the front lines of national accountability. Scoping study activities such as the Campaigning Workshop were in many respects a novel approach to initiating such dialogues, and surfaced several **differences of opinion and strategic priorities** between the two groups. These differences tend to be obscured by common accountability rhetoric, but may represent very real differences in the types of data each group will find useful.

CREDIBILITY AND SOFT STATISTICS

A heavy focus on civil society innovation in data runs the risk of negatively affecting CIVICUS' standing with members of the statistical community. This can limit opportunities to convene actors across measurement communities such as civil society and national statistical offices in countries, and can also negatively affect CIVICUS' ability to lobby for the inclusion of citizen voice in official measurement negotiations.

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

It can be tempting to assume that technology and data will provide magic bullet solutions to intractable problems, and international accountability advocates can be just as prone to **unrealistic expectations** as national accountability campaigners. Effective adoption of technological tools is, moreover, almost never without opportunity costs or financial and resource demands.

INTERNAL CAPACITIES

Technological capacities within CIVICUS are today quite limited, and many of the heuristics and good practices for capacity development that were surfaced in the scoping study are applicable to CIVICUS as well. Should CIVICUS initiate significant support to civil society without first developing its own capacities to collect and manage data, there is a danger of failing to effectively identify appropriate capacity development mechanisms, and to quickly lose credibility with stakeholders.

SCOPE CREEP

The people-powered accountability agenda runs the risk of attempting to be **all things to all people**. A universal thematic focus (all Post-2015 development goals in all countries) risks stretching organizational capacities and expertise too thin, failing to identify and apply important domain and contextual knowledge for the successful implementation of technology and data-driven projects, and thereby failing broadly to meet the expectations of national and international stakeholders.

COORDINATION CHALLENGES

The data revolution and Post-2015 have recently become very popular among civil society, and there are a host of new agendas, projects and collaborations seeking to address them. CIVICUS runs the risk of being one of many initiatives in a limited funding pool, contributing to a competitive rather than a collaborative dynamics, which will ultimately frustrate its aims.

TIMING AND FOCUS

The Post-2015 development goals have not yet been defined, and building up a global project framework risks investing in thematic areas and dynamics that might not be included in the final framework. Simultaneously however, there is clear need to initiate activities as soon as possible, in order to have meaningful monitoring mechanisms in place when work towards the goals begins.

ETHICS, PRIVACY AND SECURITY

With great data, comes great responsibility: to protect the privacy and security of the people who provide and are reflected in data, but also to ensure that they are able to exercise agency over how their data is used, shared and reused. This is a challenging area for development and advocacy, and an area in which simple mistakes can ruin relationships with communities, damage the credibility of advocacy communities, and even provoke economic and physical harm to individuals.

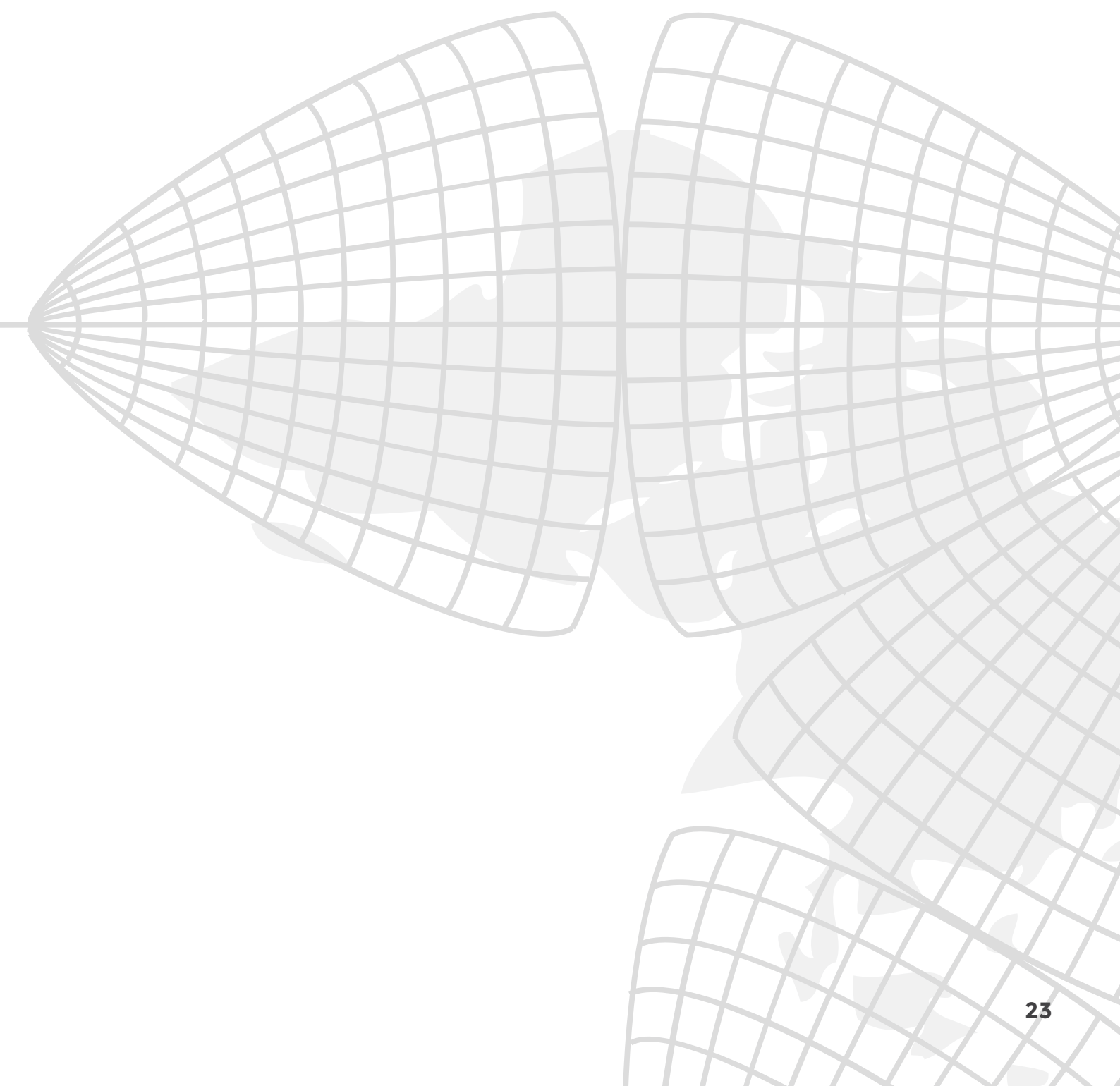
OWNERSHIP AND LICENSING

Increasing coverage of citizen reporting initiatives will be accompanied by

complex questions about who owns the collected information. Clear and explicit guidelines will be needed at the national level, in order to avoid conflicts between civil society organizations, government agencies who wish to use and share data, and most importantly, citizens who provide and are reflected in data.

BLINDMAN'S BLUFF

CIVICUS is entertaining ideas for broad and expansive programming, which will imply a serious (and likely expensive) shift in the organization's focus and activities. There is no guarantee, however, that any of it will work. At the end of the day, it's not clear what impactful use of data and technology for accountability efforts would look like, and even less is known about the potential for harmonizing and comparing data towards accountability in international development fora.





RECOMMENDATIONS

This scoping study suggests a clear opportunity: CIVICUS is well positioned to promote people-powered accountability in the Post-2015 context, and would be welcomed by peers and stakeholders in doing so. The question seems less to be whether CIVICUS should be working towards a big development data shift, but how, and what steps need to be taken in order to do so effectively.

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This is a question that CIVICUS will need to answer for itself in phases, drawing from initial lessons and challenges, in developing its capacities to support people-powered accountability. The recommendations that follow should be seen as first steps in a long journey: a guide for discovery and learning, to be re-evaluated as CIVICUS' efforts begin to bear fruit.

Each recommendation begins with a brief presentation of the issue, and is followed by several concrete activities and action points that may support the recommendation. Not all of these action points will need to be pursued for each recommendation. Reviewed together, however, they should provide a useful entry point for concrete activity planning, and provide useful checklists for smart project design.

BEGIN ANY PROGRAMMING WITH A FOCUS ON COVERAGE

Coverage was the precondition for which this study was able to discern clear opportunities and project modalities. The potential for increased comparability and campaigning dual-utility remain poorly understood, and may well require a larger number of concrete initiatives and data sets in order to determine concrete risks and opportunities. Increasing coverage will support this, and should be CIVICUS' primary focus in early stages.

- develop a clear theory of change for supporting capacity development and uptake of citizen reporting activities
- identify appropriate thematic areas, reporting modalities and geographies for piloting support
- develop a set of benchmarks and learning mechanisms to dictate when and how further exploration of comparability and campaigning utility are appropriate

CONDUCT FOCUSED RESEARCH TO INFORM PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES

This scoping study provides an initial assessment of risks and opportunities for promoting people-powered accountability. Further research is required to understand how CIVICUS can best leverage its position and resources in

this regard.

- map specific use cases for data sets in national and international advocacy, and test the opportunities for dual-use data with specific data sets and campaigning agendas
- conduct research and consultations to anticipate and mitigate specific risks (especially coordination challenges, strategic divergence between national and international campaigners, and the potential of non-representative data to complement official statistics and measurement metrics)
- conduct research and consultations on the potential for developing data and methodological standards for citizen reporting in thematic areas
- produce case studies and research on best practices, with which to inform trainings and community development activities
- invest in a collaborative theory of change exercise with partners from national and international campaigning¹⁷

BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITIES IN TECHNOLOGY AND STATISTICS

Project staff require basic familiarity and expertise with the technology, data and methodologies that are expected to drive a data revolution. These capacities will be essential for delivering efficient and meaningful support to campaigning organizations, and for maintaining CIVICUS' credibility in a rapidly changing field.

- Allocate staff and resources to enable regular communication with stakeholders, in order to stay abreast of how its constituents are using technology and data for people-powered accountability;
- Allocate staff time to activities (reading articles, participating in online discussions) that will keep staff up-to-date on what tools, strategies and trainings can be most impactful for campaigning
- Build internal capacity in statistical methods, in order to be able to speak authoritatively to the role of citizen voice in statistical frameworks.
- Engage in a comprehensive review of internal capacities regarding data and technology, in order to identify weak points and necessary measures.

IDENTIFY, ENGAGE AND NURTURE COMMUNITIES AS THE BEDROCK FOR THE DATA SHIFT

Community networks are the backbone and arteries for sustainable and meaningful people-powered accountability. In **local** contexts, CIVICUS

¹⁷ Theories of Change are analytical tools for understanding project causality and identifying strategic assumptions. For a general introduction, see <https://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/>. The Aspen Institute has produced a practical guide to Theories of Change and community development exercises, which may match well with the CIVICUS context, available at <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/rcc/rcccommbuildersapproach.pdf>.

should identify and support networks that convene traditional campaigning actors with technological and methodological expertise, in order to foster sustainable ecosystems for promoting citizen reporting within countries. On **regional** and **global** levels, CIVICUS should identify and engage with networks and communities that are capable of sharing strategies, tools and expertise across country contexts.

- Prioritize **a light touch** when engaging with communities and networks. It should foster their internal incentives for collaboration,
- **Avoid bureaucratic** and institutional incentives that might distract from actual community activities.
- Be aware of communities' **context-specific strengths**, in order to empower their brilliance within what they do best,
- Be cautious of efforts to expand the scope of community activities beyond the thematic or geographic agendas they have set themselves
- Position CIVICUS as a **clearinghouse for knowledge** on people-powered accountability, where relevant experiences and lessons can be shared across a broad network of communities and citizen reporting initiatives
- Explicitly prioritize collaborating with active communities, and **avoid duplication** of functioning networks.

RECOGNIZE AND ADOPT GOOD PRACTICE IN COMMUNITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING

This scoping study surfaced a number of requests, concrete lessons and good practices for developing the capacities of national campaigning organizations. While all of these will not be appropriate in every instance, they provide a useful checklist for project design, to ensure that such activities build on knowledge in the field and avoid wasting resources or disempowering local actors.

- Ensure that all support activities have a sustainability component, such as regular check-ins and monitoring after trainings, incorporating training of trainer methodologies, or identifying ambassadors or local champions to continue capacity development after initial support
- Ensure that all activities adopt a holistic approach to technology and data, understanding these tools as components in larger strategic frameworks, which are most effective when integrated into programming activities and throughout organizational processes
- For each context explore the need for training in complementary areas, such as
 - statistical literacy
 - research methodologies
 - communication strategies

- Use trainings and engagement to gauge utility of, and when appropriate, to inform the development of resources and knowledge products, such as
 - online tutorials
 - custom training
 - guides on existing tools and resources
- Complement capacity development with access to resources, such as commercial and proprietary databases

DEVELOP A STRATEGY FOR LIGHT TOUCH COORDINATION

The tremendous amount of interest commanded by the data revolution threatens to waste resources and introduce negative competitive dynamics among global civil society. This suggests a need for coordination, but at the same time, it is important to avoid stifling the types of innovation and community mobilization that make the data revolution a burgeoning reality. To balance these imperatives, CIVICUS will need to adopt a light-touch approach to community engagement, adopting a needs-driven approach to coordination and prioritizing facilitation over implementation.

- engage promptly with relevant international actors and initiatives, to determine early on what role for CIVICUS would be most productive in supporting a big development data shift
- Map needs and priorities among peers and stakeholders, in order to identify opportunities for complementary programming
- prioritize light-touch coordination mechanisms, with a minimum of governance structures and bureaucracy, in order to enable flexible adaptation and cooperation between partners.

ADOPT AN AGILE AND ITERATIVE APPROACH TO SUPPORTING PEOPLE POWERED ACCOUNTABILITY

Large organizations and global networks can find it **challenging to keep abreast** of the innovative strategies and cutting edge tools in the fast moving world of technology and accountability. However, it is **crucial for efficient support delivery** — especially when supporting organizations in dramatically different political, technological and strategic contexts, and in a field that is still poorly understood.

- Design **project management** structures to allow for dedicated and regular communications with stakeholders
- Design project proposals and work plans to allow for **course-corrections** as new lessons and insights emerge.
- Develop project strategies and timelines according to **small, iterative pilots** that focus on specific thematic areas, project modalities and/or geographies.

- Incorporate dedicated **evaluation and learning components** that can inform strategic pivots, and provide insights to the broader tech and accountability community.

TREAT KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PEOPLE-POWERED ACCOUNTABILITY AS THE PROJECT'S PRIMARY CURRENCY

CIVICUS should understand its role in terms of sharing the contacts, strategies and knowledge that will enable accountability initiatives to pursue their own strategic priorities, rather than executing or designing project modalities. Policies and procedures that facilitate knowledge sharing should be adopted and promoted across organizational activities.

- Adopt and promote open source software solutions, to minimize cost, maximize sustainability, provoke engagement with the open source software community, and to remove platform obstacles to sharing of resources
- Adopt and promote open knowledge standards and licensing regimes for knowledge products, including data, guides and methodologies, in order to encourage sharing and collaboration
- Incorporate knowledge sharing explicitly in project descriptions, partnership documents and staff ToRs.
- Build and maintain a central online repository for information on all funded and facilitated projects and their data (subject to responsible data considerations)

EMBED RESPONSIBLE DATA PRACTICE IN ENTIRE DATA SHIFT AMBITION

It would be fundamentally irresponsible to promote the uptake of citizen reporting capacities without helping initiatives to understand and mitigate the ethical, privacy and security risks that can arise in citizen reporting. CIVICUS should take a lead in working to understand these risks and provide concrete tools to mitigate them.

- Consult with active initiatives to identify common risks and feasible mitigation strategies
- Embed responsible data practices into all capacity development activities
- Embed responsible data practices in communication with partners and CIVICUS' own data management
- Actively promote responsible data approaches in all international advocacy and policy discourse

PROMOTE MORE NUANCED UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OF DATA AND TECHNOLOGY

Unrealistic expectations about the role and potential of technology and data have been cited as a prime cause of resource waste and failed initiatives. Simultaneously, there exists dogmatic resistance to innovative data collection in the statistical community. CIVICUS has a key role to play in promoting a realistic, contextualized and balanced approach to understanding these potentials.

- Integrate training on how to **realistically assess the costs and benefits** of adopting new tools and strategies into all capacity development efforts
- conduct research and convene dialogues on the role that civil society data can play to complement official statistics and measurement metrics
- identify and widely disseminate cases that illustrate common fallacies about the potential and limitations of citizen reporting data
- identify common ethical, privacy and security risks that surround citizen reporting initiatives, and integrate methods for mitigating those risks into all capacity development and community building activities

PREEMPTIVELY ADDRESS POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OVER LICENSING AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Perceptions about data ownership and intellectual property can be expected to vary dramatically across country contexts. In order to promote citizen agency over the data citizens provide, and to avoid potential conflicts (between civil society and citizens, and between data use in national and international campaigns), CIVICUS needs to identify adopt appropriate policies ahead of data collection.

- Consult with civil society on perspectives regarding data control and ownership, to identify areas of potential conflict between national and international advocacy agendas
- Explore options for an appropriate licensing regime, which will provide open access for appropriate parties, while meeting civil society needs for attribution or control
- Promote appropriate licensing as an integrated component of capacity development approaches

Based on a series of consultations, participatory workshops and desk research, this study offers recommendations for how CIVICUS could facilitate people-powered accountability in the Post-2015 measurement framework, and better understand its role in the data revolution. These recommendations outline key risks and opportunities for developing civil society capacities, nurturing and engaging national and international networks, and progressing the global dialogue on citizen voice and accountability.



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