Chapter 4

Engaging civil society in cultural governance

Andrew Firmin

KEY FINDINGS

- *The Convention's goal of supporting sustainable systems of governance for culture can only be achieved through strong civil society participation.*
- *Many in civil society believe that policy-making processes lack transparency and that laws and regulations do not sufficiently enable civil society participation.*
- *A strong core of civil society is committed to playing its role in improving cultural governance and developing cultural policy.*
- *Civil society actors have responded to the Convention by convening their peers, engaging in advocacy, generating and sharing knowledge, and creating new networks.*
- *To achieve more, this civil society core needs capacity development support and resources, focusing on policy participation, communication and networking.*

Strong civil society participation is crucial for national policies and measures to contribute to

- **informed**
- **transparent**
- **participatory**

systems of governance for culture

A strong core of CSOs is already improving cultural policy through more formalized policy spaces

63% *of CSOs have contributed to national cultural policy or consultations*

70% *of CSOs feel that their organization can make a difference to the policy environment*

HOWEVER, THERE ARE SEVERAL BARRIERS TO OVERCOME:

Current laws do not sufficiently enable their participation

30% *of CSOs do not believe that laws enable them to partner with state actors*

Government consultation structures are not sufficiently open, enabling or far-reaching

40% *of CSOs do not believe that the way cultural policy is made is transparent*

Resources, capacities and networks remain suboptimal

23% *of CSOs do not regularly collaborate with other CSOs*

FOR BETTER SYSTEMS OF GOVERNANCE FOR CULTURE, GREATER EFFORT IS NEEDED TO:

- Develop continuous, regular and structured participatory processes
- Raise awareness among CSOs
- Strengthen and develop capacities
- Encourage cross-sectoral partnerships, with cultural and non-cultural CSOs

CORE INDICATORS

Enabling legislative and regulatory framework for civil society

Civil society has the capacity to participate in the design and implementation of policies

Civil society is actively involved in governance of the Convention at the national and global level

INTRODUCTION

Peruvian civil society is working to make participatory cultural governance a reality. Between 2011 and 2014, civil society convened the annual 'National Encounters of Culture' (ENCs) to develop, exchange and promote ideas on the governance of culture. After 2014, the lead organization, Culturaperu.org (now Solar), decided to go beyond exchanging ideas, offering a decentralized programme of '*Pre/Encuentros*', local and thematic meetings to propose cultural policy changes. In 2016, 77 organizations combined to hold 25 encounters in 15 regions of Peru, leading to the agreement of an 'Agenda of Shared Advocacy', validated at the fifth ENC in August 2017, and the formation of the Peruvian Alliance of Cultural Organizations to drive its implementation. The shared agenda aims to foster collaboration between government and civil society, in order to design more democratic and sustainable cultural policies, making the point that there cannot be cultural democracy without civic participation.[1]

This is just one example of how civil society can take the lead in pushing for the governance of culture to be made more open to people's participation, in order to better reflect the needs and realities of citizens. The question for this chapter is: which factors can help encourage and sustain such civil society-led initiatives, and make them a success? Hence, it will explore the extent to which implementation of the Convention has fostered partnerships between civil society and its Parties.

1. With thanks to Mauricio Delfín, Director, Solar.

It will examine the engagement of civil society organizations (CSOs) with Parties in the design and implementation of domestic-level policies, and in the promotion and international governance of the Convention.

Goal 1 of the Convention, as set out in the 2015 Global Report, is to support sustainable systems of governance for culture. This means that national policies and measures should contribute to informed, transparent and participatory systems of governance of culture. The goal can only be achieved if civil society is able to play a strong role, because civil society offers a key vehicle for people's participation and can be pivotal in asserting accountability and demanding transparency, which together make it more likely that cultural policies and measures reflect and serve the needs of citizens. Goal 1 accordingly recognizes partnerships between civil society and Parties as an essential aspect of cultural governance, building on the Convention's strong recognition of the role of civil society, notably in Articles 11 and 12.[2] The Convention's Operational Guidelines elaborate that Parties should strengthen civil society capacities and encourage civil society to participate in the implementation of the Convention. It should therefore be clear that Parties have an active duty to enable civil society participation; the quality and effectiveness of civil society partnerships are a key test of the Convention's success.

2. Article 11 States that: 'Parties acknowledge the fundamental role of civil society in protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions. Parties shall encourage the active participation of civil society in their efforts to achieve the objectives of this Convention'. Article 12, on the promotion of international cooperation, States that Parties shall 'reinforce partnerships with and among civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in fostering and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions'. Further, Article 2 affirms that cultural diversity can only be protected and promoted if human rights, including those established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are guaranteed. Among the rights set out in the Declaration are civil society's fundamental rights of association, peaceful assembly and expression.

> *The quality and effectiveness of civil society partnerships are a key test of the Convention's success*

The Convention's robust recognition of civil society makes it a potential model of good practice in other arenas of international norm-setting (Box 4.1). In particular, this could be the case in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 16's targets promise 'effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels' and 'responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision making at all levels', while SDG 17 makes the commitment to 'encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships'. These targets apply directly to cultural governance. So how well are civil society partnerships working in practice and what more could be done to intensify them?

FOCUS, SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

The focus here is on civil society actions and partnerships that seek to achieve policy influence. While this is not to deny the value of the many other civil society initiatives taken to promote the diversity of cultural expressions, policy influence is the true test of whether cultural governance is open to civil society.

Box 4.1 • *The history of civil society engagement in the Convention*

The importance that the Convention accords to civil society is no accident, reflecting civil society's strong history of involvement in the Convention's development. Learning from examples of successful civil society engagement in treaty-making, such as the 1997 Anti-Landmines Convention, civil society activists engaged with the process of the Convention's development at an early stage. This included developing and submitting drafts between 2001 and 2003, dialoguing with national ministries, recruiting wider civil society support, winning space to speak during the drafting process and defending the Convention, including its text on civil society, when necessary. Civil society's advocacy style was cooperative; it worked closely with supportive governments. Once the Convention was adopted, civil society groups encouraged swift ratification. As discussed further below, civil society bodies were also quick to participate in meetings of the Convention's governing bodies.

Civil society developed a new institutional base to enable engagement. The International Network for Cultural Diversity, formed in 1998, played an essential role in early advocacy, preparing drafts, making submissions and participating in key meetings. In a parallel move, the first national-level coalitions for cultural diversity were formed in France in 1997, Canada in 1998 and Chile in 2001, and the movement quickly grew. Founded in 2003, the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD) is still in operation today. In 2015, the European Coalition for Cultural Diversity established itself as a permanent organization.*

* Formerly the International Liaison Committee of Coalition for Cultural Diversity (ILC).

As for definitions, the Operational Guidelines describe civil society as: 'non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, professionals in the culture sector and associated sectors, groups that support the work of artists and cultural communities.' This definition is followed, while noting that it covers a small subset of the much broader civil society universe.

The 2015 Global Report proposed three key indicators for civil society partnerships: i) a legislative and financial base to support civil society; ii) civil society participates in the design and implementation of policies; iii) civil society is actively involved in the ratification and promotion of the Convention. It also suggested many means of verification, including that: Parties provide financial support to CSOs; diverse mechanisms exist for civil society to participate in policy design and implementation; CSOs collect, analyse and publish data and information; and civil society is consulted in Convention processes, including reporting processes. We have looked for new evidence on the indicators and means of verification, and also suggest and explore additional indicators that could help to assess civil society's ability to engage in partnerships.

Firstly, there is a need to articulate why civil society may enter into partnerships. The Operational Guidelines indicate some roles that civil society can play: articulating citizens' concerns, bringing in excluded voices, promoting values, exercising accountability, advocating for Convention ratification and implementation, innovating, developing cultural capacity, fostering cooperation, inputting into reports and helping to collect data. But while useful, these suggested roles are essentially instrumental, indicating a top-down reading of how civil society adds value to state-led processes. From a civil society perspective, the key motivation to partner is, we suggest, to achieve influence. Influence helps advance a CSO's mission. There are also secondary objectives, such as securing resources.

Our analysis therefore considers both the demand and supply side of partnerships. The supply side refers to the spaces and opportunities provided by governments and intergovernmental organizations that enable civil society actors to add value to official efforts. These include what can be characterized as 'invited spaces', in which civil society participates at the behest of organizers. The demand side consists of the means by which civil society organizes itself to seek influence, including by taking advantage of spaces and expanding these where possible, and also by creating its own spaces and initiating partnerships. Understanding the demand side entails not only examining the existence of partnership spaces and opportunities, but also the extent to which civil society can take advantage of them and its capacities to partner to its satisfaction. The current indicator framework's focus on the legislative and financial support base of civil society is therefore insufficient: even with enabling laws and financial resources, civil society may lack the capacity to partner fully. This suggests a need to revise indicators to reflect demand side factors, discussed in this chapter's conclusion.

> *"Policy influence is the true test of whether cultural governance is open to civil society*

The capacity to partner is determined by many different factors. Research (CIVICUS, 2011) suggests positive correlations between the existence of civil society networks and the involvement of CSOs in advocacy, and between the stability of a CSO's human resources and its impact. This suggests a need to explore two further aspects of the capacity to partner, which can contribute to the stability of human resources and staff commitment, and which seem amenable to intervention: i) levels of networking and civil society connections and ii) the skills and capacities of civil society personnel.

METHODOLOGY

Because it is important to recognize and uphold civil society's autonomy, we have sought direct civil society input, unmediated by Parties. It was also necessary to supplement the limited information in the Quadrennial Periodic Reports (QPRs), which are patchy in their coverage of civil society and its impact. Other issues relate to the timeframe (it is not always clear how recent reported activities are) and attribution (it often cannot be said to what extent activities are framed in relation to the Convention). Hence the search for direct civil society inputs included:

- a survey carried out between February and March 2017, with 166 respondents, mostly from different organizations;
- email and phone interviews with six leaders of CSOs, conducted in April 2017;[3]
- interviews with four people involved in UNESCO's Expert Facility missions, carried out in March 2017; and
- the regular CIVICUS questionnaire of members of its Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA), a network of national-level civil society membership and coordination bodies, responded to by 16 organizations between December 2016 and February 2017.[4]

We also worked with data provided by UNESCO, particularly on civil society participation in QPR and international processes, and CIVICUS analysis on the broader conditions for civil society.

The geographic breakdown of respondents was: Europe and North America (40%), Asia and the Pacific (25%), Africa (16%), Latin America and the Caribbean (12%) and Arab States (2%), with the remaining 5% describing themselves as having an international base.[5]

3. With thanks to Inés M Pousadela, Research Specialist, CIVICUS, for assistance with translation.

4. With thanks to Patricia Deniz, former AGNA Coordinator, CIVICUS, for assistance with the AGNA survey.

5. All percentages in this chapter are rounded off.

More responses came from the global South (51%) than the global North (47%), with the remainder indicating they operate globally. Most respondents classified themselves as cultural networks (16%), non-governmental organizations (19%), non-profit organizations (14%) or professional associations (9%), indicating that they represent organizations that closely adhere to the Operational Guidelines' core definition of civil society.

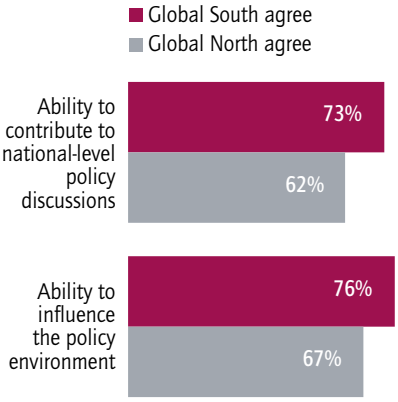
Some caveats should be offered about these survey responses. The distribution list drew strongly from existing UNESCO contact lists, as well as cultural contacts identified by the author. Following snowball sampling approaches, respondents were encouraged to circulate the survey through their networks. This made the pool likely to be skewed towards those with strong existing knowledge of the Convention and UNESCO, as can be seen in the finding that 85% of respondents are aware of the Convention. This approach has its benefits: it offers informed views from CSOs that are closest to the Convention and cultural governance issues. However, the responses may tell us little about the thinking, challenges and needs of other segments of civil society that are less strongly engaged with the Convention.

FINDINGS ON DOMESTIC POLICY ACTION

This section relates to the 2015 Global Report indicator 1 on the legislative base to support civil society, and indicator 2 on civil society participation in the design and implementation of policies. The picture is one of considerable activity. There is an active core civil society constituency that is participating in cultural governance. Respondents are on the whole confident about their ability to participate in policy debates: 66% agree or strongly agree that they feel able to contribute to national-level policy discussions, and 70% that their organization can make a difference to the policy environment.

Figure 4.1

Global South and global North perspectives on CSOs participation in cultural governance



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

Responses (Figure 4.1) suggest that global South CSOs feel more able to contribute (73% vs 62%) and make a difference (76% vs 67%) than global North CSOs.

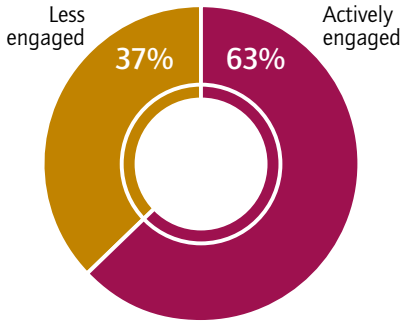
> *Some 63% of respondents say they have contributed to some kind of cultural policy consultation*

Some 63% of respondents say they have contributed to some kind of cultural policy consultation – usually by participating in meetings or making written submissions to government or parliamentary processes – in the last five years. For the purpose of further analysis, this 63% is described as the 'actively engaged' group, compared to the 37% reporting no recent activity, characterized as the 'less engaged' group (Figures 4.2 and 4.3). Not surprisingly, the 'actively engaged' group is most aware of the Convention (90%), has contributed to discussions on the Convention's implementation (82%) and has been involved in projects to promote the Convention (80%).

The 'actively engaged' group has also worked more to promote gender equality in cultural production and participation, at 62%, compared to 46% of the 'less engaged' group and 56% of all respondents. Some further significant differences between these two groups are discussed below.

Figure 4.2

CSO participation in cultural policy consultation



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

Across respondents as a whole, there is a relatively small gap between the 63% engaging on cultural policy issues in general and involvement in advocacy in particular, implying that much activity has the aim of achieving influence: 58% of respondents have taken part in advocacy with the aim of improving laws, regulations and policies. This picture of activity is affirmed by the QPRs, which offer many more examples of demand side civil society-initiated actions than supply side state-led actions, indicating that civil society is taking the initiative to participate in cultural governance. Civil society-led advocacy activity is cited in 24 QPRs.[6]

According to survey responses and QPRs, key means by which civil society pursues advocacy are by organizing meetings, holding public events (including rallies and campaigns), submitting written inputs, informal lobbying and taking part in policy dialogues with governments and parliaments. The intent of these strategies is to build consensus on a position, communicate that it is important and bring the issue into decision-making circles. The inference is that often outsider strategies – in which civil society builds and focuses public pressure – and insider strategies – in which civil society cultivates relationships for influence – are pursued simultaneously.

Advocacy is taking place on many different fronts. Key themes include IP address and copyright laws, the resourcing of culture, creative industry development, enhancing cultural policies, issues of creative freedom and the status of the artist. A key area of advocacy for global North CSOs in particular is the protection of culture in international trade deals recently under negotiation (see Chapter 7). While most advocacy is focused at the national level, there are also reports from several survey respondents and interviewees of European Union (EU)-level engagement on cultural policy issues, including urging the EU to give culture higher priority. For example, an interviewee from a European network advocates for stronger EU policy on music industry diversity.

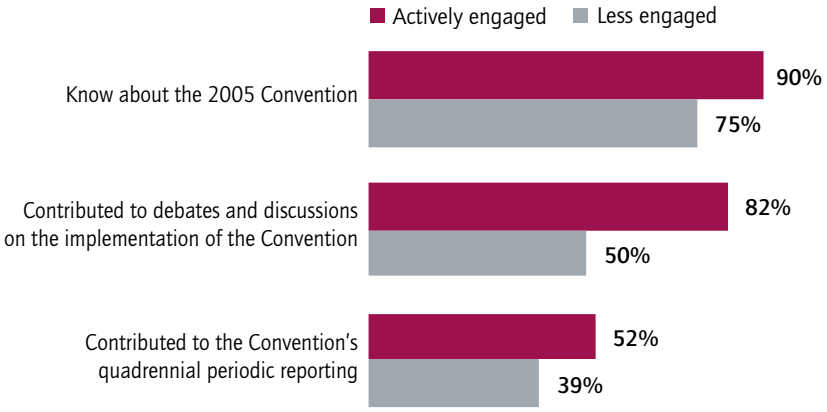
> *58% of respondents have taken part in advocacy with the aim of improving laws, regulations and policies*

The research inputs shed light on the major means by which civil society acts, emphasizing convening as the key civil society action. As the opening example from Peru suggests, civil society bodies convene meetings, including workshops, seminars and public discussions, as part of advocacy, awareness raising and coalition building. Civil society-led convening is reported in 27 QPRs, and in many survey responses. In one example, in May 2017, Tanzanian civil society built on its recent experience of developing policy positions to convene East Africa's first creative economy impact investment conference.

The generation and sharing of learning, on the Convention and cultural issues, is another major response, reported in 16 QPRs. This typically involves civil society publishing online and in print with objectives such as raising the visibility of civil society concerns and of culture in broader policy processes, promoting the Convention and civil society's actions, encouraging debate and fostering exchange.

Figure 4.3

Forms of participation in policy consultation for 'actively engaged' and 'less engaged' CSOs



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

6. 62 QPRs were submitted in 2016 and 2017, from 61 States Parties plus the European Union.

Box 4.2 • *Successful advocacy in Chile*

Chilean civil society has a strong track record of advocacy. For more than eight years, the Chile Coalition for Cultural Diversity, one of the longest-established coalitions, has engaged with the government, including the Presidency and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to uphold the objectives and principles of the Convention in the trade deals that Chile has negotiated. After years of work, they were successful in ensuring that a cultural clause was written into Chile's trade agreement with the USA. As well as dialogues with the relevant state agencies, their campaign of advocacy included meetings that brought civil society together, the issuing of declarations and media statements and a letter-writing campaign signed by over 500 creative professionals. The Chilean experience highlights how a combination of different methods can contribute to successful advocacy. Civil society also helped to develop a national book policy and inform a law establishing a national radio music quota, and was further involved in proposing a Performing Arts Act, which at the time of writing is being considered by the National Congress. Following these successes, the engagement continues: the Coalition meets every four months with Chile's Culture Council to discuss cooperation on cultural policies. Civil society still seeks to improve on this, however, urging more frequent and regular meetings with a wider range of ministries to bring issues of culture further into the mainstream.

Source: Interview with Mane Nett, President of the Chile Coalition for Cultural Diversity and International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (2017)

Box 4.3 • *A new civil society vision for culture in Burkina Faso*

New space for civil society discussion, organizing and action was created in Burkina Faso by the 2014 citizen uprising. Civil society, including from the cultural sphere, was a key force in the uprising, and has continued to participate in governance and improve the policy environment. The Coalition of Artists and Intellectuals for Culture, founded in 2010, took advantage of the new opportunity in 2015 to bring together different voices from the cultural sphere to offer fresh perspectives on the role of cultural actors in building a new Burkina Faso, and the need for improvements to cultural policies and the resourcing of culture. Published in 2015 as 'Governance for and through culture', their publication demonstrates how civil society can take the initiative, when new opportunities open up, to discuss, consult, develop fresh thinking and bring these to new audiences. The hope and expectation of Burkina Faso civil society is that the document now offers a platform to inform and influence cultural policy making.

Source: Coalition of Artists and Intellectuals for Culture, Burkina Faso (2017).

Civil society-led research and data generation is a related key response, noted in 16 QPRs. Some of these are mappings and baseline surveys to encourage better-informed policy, including in Rwanda, Tunisia and Viet Nam, while subjects covered elsewhere include cultural employment, audience development and the social impact of culture. In QPRs and survey responses, gender-related research is reported by Austria, Denmark and Switzerland – on access to public film funding, salary gaps and funding gaps respectively. In Tanzania, civil society worked with the National Arts Council to collect citizens' views for input into the country's new national arts policy.

While the QPRs offer fewer examples of state-led supply side actions, the most common opportunity provided by Parties, noted in 29 QPRs, is the invitation of civil society bodies to meetings with public officials, generally to share information or consult. Encouragingly, 21 QPRs give examples of more formalized and ongoing policy spaces, whether existing or planned, in which civil society actors have opportunities for regular consultation with state agencies. These are often in the form of advisory bodies or working groups, and include representation in public-private working groups in Côte d'Ivoire, sectoral dialogue panels in Ecuador and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) advisory council in Germany. Recent consultations have been held on new laws in Madagascar and Tunisia, and new structures are being proposed in Greece, Kenya and Namibia, where civil society has advocated that a new national committee on the Convention be established.

> *High levels of activity do not always produce correspondingly high levels of impact*

Structured and ongoing policy spaces can be valuable for civil society because they provide opportunities to develop relationships with policy makers that can yield influence over time. At the same time, there are challenges. Such spaces may offer the form of consultation but not the substance: dialogue may be superficial and not lead to civil society concerns being taken seriously and influence being achieved.

Challenges in the quality of dialogue opportunities are noted in several QPRs, including poor state-civil society relations and an absence of structured opportunities. A further concern relates to who is invited to participate, and who is not: consultation may include CSOs in existing and favourable relationships with the state, and the largest, best-known and centrally-located CSOs, while excluding others. As one survey respondent expresses it:

'It would be necessary for representatives of civil society to be genuinely taken into account... not marginalized according to their size, weight and political influence. It is often the organizations close to States that are heard and recognized.

The field associations and real laboratories all too often go to the background. They can be consulted, but they are still too rarely recognized and treated on an equal footing with more institutional organizations.'

As for impact, survey responses identify cases in which civil society intervention has helped to get cultural policy agreed, or improved existing policy. For example, in Chad, civil society participation was critical in agreeing a cultural policy framework. In Slovakia, civil society engagement in a working party led to a breakthrough declaration on the status of the artist. The setbacks experienced by negotiations of trade treaties, such as TTIP in 2016, also attest to the impacts that broad-based campaigns – in which civil society from this sphere was active – can achieve. However, more advocacy initiatives that fell short of expectations are reported than successful ones. For example, although survey responses give examples of civil society engagement in SDG drafting processes, efforts to get the SDGs to foreground issues of culture ended in disappointment. Several respondents report long-term advocacy efforts that are yet to achieve a breakthrough. High levels of activity do not always produce correspondingly high levels of impact.

A further challenge for advocacy can come when policy development does not lead to adequate implementation. As one respondent puts it, 'in our experience, cultural policy does not necessarily lead to cultural action.' Another respondent expresses the view that,

'*It is important to monitor the extent to which policy is implemented effectively. Policy development is usually an expensive exercise, but may not result in changes in delivery unless there is an effective implementation plan and an adequate budget. An effective system for monitoring and supporting activities should be developed.*'

It is often difficult to translate international agreements into domestic law. These viewpoints serve as a reminder that advocacy for policy shift, even when successful, is only part of a process for achieving change.

> *Laws may be complex, enable excessive state interference, out of date with the present-day reality of civil society, or involve burdensome compliance procedures*

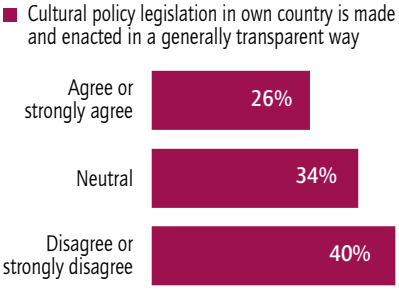
Ongoing civil society-led work to monitor policy processes and state agencies, noted in 10 QPRs, and to track implementation issues, needs to be further encouraged and researched.

If advocacy is failing to achieve impact, flawed or obstructed processes of decision making may be one reason: only 26% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the ways in which cultural policy legislation is made and enacted are generally transparent – where it is easy for a wide range of civil society to understand, access or track processes – compared to 40% who disagree or strongly disagree. Similarly, only 35% agree or strongly agree that laws and regulations enable them to partner well with state agencies, with 30% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing (Figures 4.4 and 4.5). Several QPRs also state that laws and regulations are not sufficiently enabling of civil society's work. Challenges here may include those of laws on the formation, registration, resourcing and reporting of CSOs, as well as laws and regulations that require CSOs to obtain prior permission before holding activities. Laws may be complex, enable excessive state interference, out of date with the present-day reality of civil society, or involve burdensome compliance procedures (CIVICUS, 2017*a*).

Clearly, there is room for improvement, given that even the most tentative and inadequate form of supply-side policy engagement, the holding of meetings, is reported in only 45% of QPRs. It can only be concluded that the Convention's intention to actively enable civil society participation is being only partly realized, which means that Goal 1 is not being fully met, and potential to model good practice on SDG 16 is being missed. There is a need for policy processes that are more open, transparent and enabling.

Figure 4.4

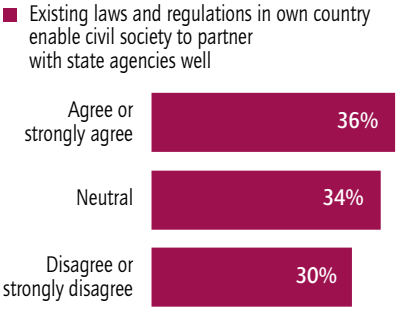
Views on the transparency of cultural policy making



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

Figure 4.5

Views on national legislative support for civil society participation in cultural policy making



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

Another key challenge identified by QPRs is the seemingly enduring one of low levels of awareness and understanding of the Convention and its related issues, among the public, but also within civil society. This is mentioned in 13 QPRs, making it the most frequently raised challenge. The implication is that the strong knowledge of the Convention shared by most respondents, particularly the highly active group, does not extend deeper into civil society.

As some survey respondents indicate, political shifts can also be decisive. The ability of civil society to engage with Parties has changed dramatically, for better or worse, following recent changes of government, even though cultural governance is rarely an issue debated in elections.

This suggests that civil society and its engagement in this sphere is vulnerable to larger current trends, in which some political leaders strongly oppose major parts of civil society (CIVICUS, 2017*c*).

FINDINGS ON PARTICIPATION IN CONVENTION PROCESSES

This section addresses the 2015 Global Report indicator 4.3 on civil society involvement in the ratification and promotion of the Convention.

The Operational Guidelines on civil society were approved in 2009, following the first exchange session between civil society and Parties, in which around 100 CSOs participated. Since then, 11 sessions have been held, on civil society's role in the ratification process, the Convention's implementation and the elaboration of QPRs. The Operational Guidelines, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Convention's two governing bodies, state that CSOs may participate as observers at the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) and the Conference of Parties (CP). As observers, CSOs may speak and make written contributions.

Since 2009, the footprint of participation has gradually grown. According to UNESCO data, 39 CSOs participated in the IGC in 2016, well up from 7 in the first IGC in 2007, and the lowest number of 5 in 2009. Participation in the CP was steadier, with a low of 9 civil society participants in 2015 and a high of 15 in 2007 and 2011, before an increase to 51 participants in 2017, reflecting changes discussed below.

Every IGC session has made at least one decision relating to the engagement of civil society in decision-making processes, and decisions agreed at the 2015 IGC should enhance participation opportunities. Civil society is now a permanent item on the IGC's agenda, and CSOs are invited to present a report on the contribution of civil society towards the implementation of the Convention, with the first CSO report presented to the IGC in December 2017.

Many civil society organizations have been able to draw from the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions to support the emergence of the creative sectors.

Civil society organizations have revolutionized the way we access cultural goods and services by placing the role of the individual, as a creator and consumer, at the centre of their approach. Their advocacy contributes to enriching creativity, encouraging production and co-production platforms, and promoting the mobility of artists and cultural professionals, in a framework of solidarity and cooperation.

Through their initiatives, inspired by the Convention, they have become actors and an indispensable force for the elaboration and implementation of cultural policies. Governments, in turn, are called upon to promote local systems of governance, which actively involve civil society actors.

This is the case for Arterial Network's 'African Creative Cities' and 'Artwatch Africa' programmes, which are based on the involvement of all social actors, the recognition of artists' rights to creative and artistic expression and their active participation in the socio-economic development of the territories.

Civil society recognizes that art is a tool that opens a field of possibilities. 'Art is change, art is the future'. By combining forces with public authorities and through investment in youth and culture, the qualitative leap towards the emergence of a new governance in Africa is becoming a reality that ultimately contributes to the strengthening of social cohesion, a creative economy and the well-being of citizens.

Mamou Daffé

Chairperson, Arterial Network

A CSO forum now takes place before each CP, in addition to a meeting between civil society representatives and the Convention Bureau before every IGC meeting, at which civil society can put forward its concerns on issues to be discussed. Civil society bodies that may participate include professional organizations and individual practitioners, potentially increasing participation beyond the regular CSOs. Ahead of the first CSO Forum in June 2017, efforts were made to involve CSOs that had not previously participated, particularly on issues of artistic freedom. The objective of this first forum was to enable CSO representatives to structure their participation, define cooperation activities and mobilize support for the preparation and presentation of their first report. Clearly, these enhanced opportunities for civil society participation should be further developed and successes and challenges documented.

> *Enthusiasm at the national level does not always convert into international engagement*

Some 72% of survey respondents reported that they have contributed to debates and discussions on the Convention's implementation. While the number of respondents to the follow-up questions is lower, this level of interest seems to translate into active participation in activities fuelled by the Convention among a critical mass of CSOs: 69% of those who responded are involved in programmes, projects or events to raise awareness of the Convention.

However, there is a gap between involvement in these activities and engagement in the Convention's formal processes: only 44% have participated in a meeting of the governing bodies, and slightly fewer, 40%, have submitted written information to governing bodies (Figure 4.6). While the 'actively engaged' group are more involved in these processes than the 'less engaged' group, their levels of interaction with governing bodies are still much lower than their activity in general: only 53% of the 'actively engaged' group have participated in governing body meetings, and 52% have submitted reports.

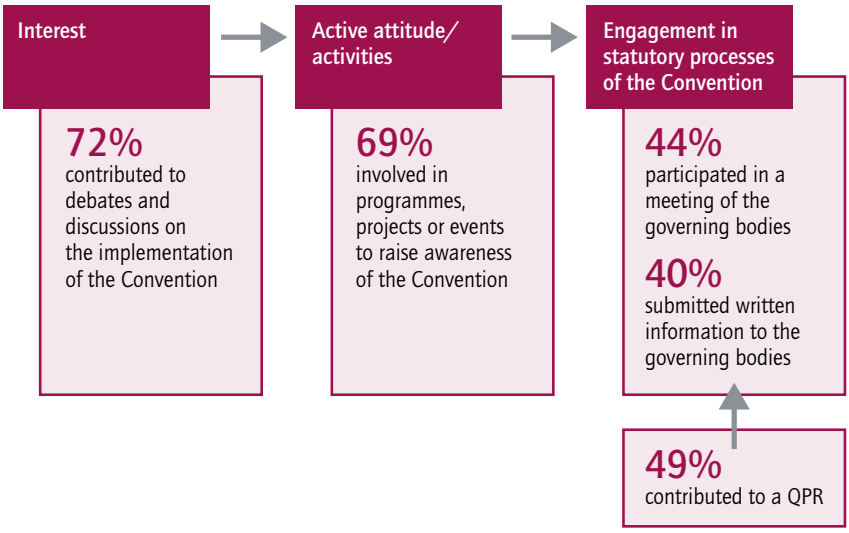
Given the assumption that those who responded to the survey represent the civil society constituency with the strongest interest in the Convention, the implication is that enthusiasm at the national level does not always convert into international engagement. Despite the efforts of the Convention Secretariat to broaden the pool, the circle of those who participate internationally appears to have remained narrow, suggesting untapped potential. Taking into consideration responses to survey questions, the barriers to be addressed may include limited resources, a lack of awareness about how to participate, and limited connections between those who participate and those who do not.

Another means by which civil society can engage in Convention processes comes at the domestic level, through involvement in QPR preparation. The QPRs contain a dedicated section on civil society, and within this, a section to be completed by civil society, while processes to develop the QPRs are expected to be consultative. Of the 64 QPRs in this round, 51 (80%) show some evidence of opportunities for civil society input, with 13 (20%) giving no clear indication of civil society involvement. Frequently cited consultation methods include inputs sought by emails and questionnaires, drafts shared for comment, meetings with civil society, civil society membership of working groups tasked with preparing reports, and the use of civil society-led research and data.

In some cases, processes applied for the QPRs were new and may have introduced ways of working of further value: for example, the Lithuania QPR states that the working group approach adopted for its development could be maintained as an ongoing collaborative space. Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Colombia, Indonesia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe are also reported to be planning to establish permanent consultation mechanisms to build on the process of developing their QPRs. Looking forward, it would be helpful to document and share new practices learned from engagement forged around the QPRs, particularly to aid Parties that report little or no civil society consultation.

Figure 4.6

Interest and engagement of CSOs in Convention statutory processes



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

> *The barriers to be addressed may include limited resources, a lack of awareness about how to participate, and limited connections between those who participate and those who do not*

In general, hardly any information is available about the quality of QPR processes, but analysis of the reports suggests some room for improvement. It is not always possible to determine when QPRs directly represent civil society's voice, although several clearly do. For example, Slovakia's includes a section completed by the Slovak Coalition for Cultural Diversity, which details civil society's work to promote the Convention, advocate for improved policy and promote debate on issues of cultural governance. Overall, our assessment is that 14 QPRs (22%) provide substantive and useful information about civil society's policy engagement, with strong direct civil society input.[7] Two QPRs provide no information on civil society, while most – 48 (75%) – sit somewhere between these two poles. The implication is that existing consultation processes do not always generate high quality civil society input.

Further, consultation processes did not always reach a wide variety of civil society, with some indications of processes being limited to umbrella bodies and national commission members. Survey responses further indicate that consultation was limited: only 49% of respondents report having been in some way involved in the preparation of QPRs, with the figure only slightly higher for the 'actively engaged' group, at 52%. If almost half of those CSOs that are highly active on cultural policy issues are not participating in these crucial reporting opportunities, good opportunities for input are being missed. Clearly, outreach should be broadened.

The Government of Sweden provided funding for 12 Parties to develop QPRs through technical assistance missions, under the Expert Facility.[8]

Interviews with four experts, as well as feedback gathered by UNESCO, shed further light on civil society's roles in QPR processes. Challenges identified include a lack of capacity among both civil society and public officials. Government departments that work on cultural policy tend to be understaffed, and in some contexts this capacity is reducing as budgets are being cut. Civil society's involvement in the QPR process, and engagement with civil society more generally, are among many competing priorities that public officials may sideline as more urgent issues arise. There may also be a lack of understanding among public officials about what civil society is, how it works and how to engage with it; these can connect to broader country-specific politics and cultures of limited engagement with civil society, which is seeing the space for action becoming increasingly restricted in many contexts (CIVICUS, 2017*b*). As one interviewee describes it, civil society is not always seen as an equal partner, and the ideas and initiatives that emerge from it may not be recognized as having the same validity as those from Parties. When civil society initiatives are not directly framed as a response to the Convention, they can be missed even though they address Convention priorities, particularly at the local level: there are instances where civil society activity reported through survey responses is not covered by QPRs. At the same time, some civil society actors may not see value in participating in reporting processes; some may be concerned about being seen to legitimize processes that appear to offer consultation but not the opportunity for genuine influence, particularly in conditions where there is little trust between governments and civil society.

7. In the opinion of the author, the 14 QPRs that provide substantive information on civil society and evidence of direct civil society input are those of Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Palestine, Portugal, Slovakia, Switzerland, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

8. Under the 'Enhancing fundamental freedoms through the promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions' project (2014–2018), 12 countries received support: Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Colombia, Cuba, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. All countries submitted their QPR. It should be noted that the assistance provided focused on many other aspects besides civil society engagement, and civil society capacity and knowledge is not a specific domain of expertise for Expert Facility.

Box 4.4 • *New collaborations created by QPR processes*

Evaluation of the 12 countries that received support from 2014–2018 suggests some new collaborations were brokered between civil society and the state, and that cooperation on the QPRs led to some new spaces and platforms for policy dialogue. For the first time, the Government of Cuba invited CSOs, culture and media workers, and UNESCO to discuss issues related to the Convention, the status of artists, intellectual property rights, cultural indicators and the challenges of the creative economy. In Cambodia, the project contributed to the organization of the country's first ever Arts Forum in September 2016, bringing together representatives from civil society, the private sector and the state. Following this, the Ministry of Culture established a task force of government and civil society personnel to convene further such meetings.

In Ethiopia, the project provided the first opportunity for civil society to engage directly on the Convention and meet with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Civil society is now forming Ethiopia's first professional association for design. New networks are also reporting as having formed in Rwanda. The governments of Burkina Faso and Senegal also included a significant number of media professionals in the consultation and drafting of their QPRs, offering new spaces for dialogue not only between the government and civil society but also between culture and media professionals.

Source: UNESCO (2017).

Challenges are also identified in connection with the expert visits themselves, including mixed levels of knowledge and understanding, and there are questions of representativeness, echoing the broader challenges of consultation noted above: those present may not broadly represent a country's relevant civil society, including geographically and thematically, and in conditions of limited space for civil society, more critical voices may not be invited. Interviewees also note that it was not always possible to give as much follow-up support to missions as might be desirable.

Nevertheless, interviewees broadly feel that their visits were valuable in starting conversations and brokering connections that might not otherwise have been made. As a whole, the outreach might therefore be described as valuable, but on its own, insufficient.

> *Civil society is not always seen as an equal partner, and the ideas and initiatives that emerge from it may not be recognized as having the same validity as those from Parties*

Asked how practice could be improved, interviewees indicate a need to foster stronger engagement outside capital cities. They observe that personal connections helped to extend the footprint of interventions. They point to the need to build time and space into workshops to develop trust and defuse suspicions and conflicts over positioning, visibility and attribution, and suggest that more ways are needed to recognize civil society's role in and contribution to the process. Finally, interviewees call for more cross-border civil society networking.

FINDINGS ON FUNDING

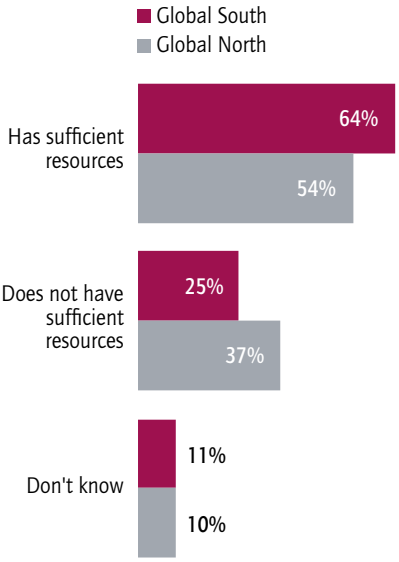
Survey respondents are, at first glance, sanguine about the financial resources they have for engagement: 58% of respondents believe their organization has sufficient resources to partner with state agencies and take part in cultural policy opportunities and processes, compared to 30% who do not. Somewhat surprisingly, and perhaps reflecting differing expectations, CSOs based in the global South are more positive here, at 64%, than those in the global North, at 54% (Figure 4.7).

The survey also provides fresh data about the sources of funding that civil society bodies most rely on (Figure 4.8). The key sources are: membership fees (35% of respondents received these in the last year); central government (27%); grant-making institutions (25%); individual giving (24%); fees for services (24%); and private sector donations (21%). Far fewer CSOs generate commercial income (10%), and bilateral donors are not major sources of support (9%), presumably reflecting the fact that few such donors have a specific focus on issues of culture.

Some clear distinctions emerge between the global South and the global North. Global North CSOs seem more reliant on membership fees than their global South counterparts: 45% of global North CSOs receive membership income compared to 25% of global South CSOs. Central government support is also more critical for global North than global South CSOs (39% compared to 16%). These patterns of support are consistent with the greater levels of professionalization of cultural industries in the global North and the resources available to states. In comparison, global South CSOs, at 29% of respondents, are accessing individual donations more than global North CSOs, at only 16%. UN institutions, including UNESCO, are also more important sources of support for global South CSOs, at 27%, compared to global North CSOs, at 11%, reflecting the Convention's development orientation.

Figure 4.7

Global South and global North perceptions on own organization's financial resources to participate in cultural policy making



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

In open-ended survey responses, support from the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) is acknowledged as important. One recent use of IFCD funding saw ZimCopy, a Zimbabwean CSO, supported to identify gaps in copyright legislation and make recommendations for improvements, which informed a new national strategy on copyright and the formation of a forum for policy review. Voluntary commitment of civil society personnel is also recognized as an important and under-acknowledged resource.

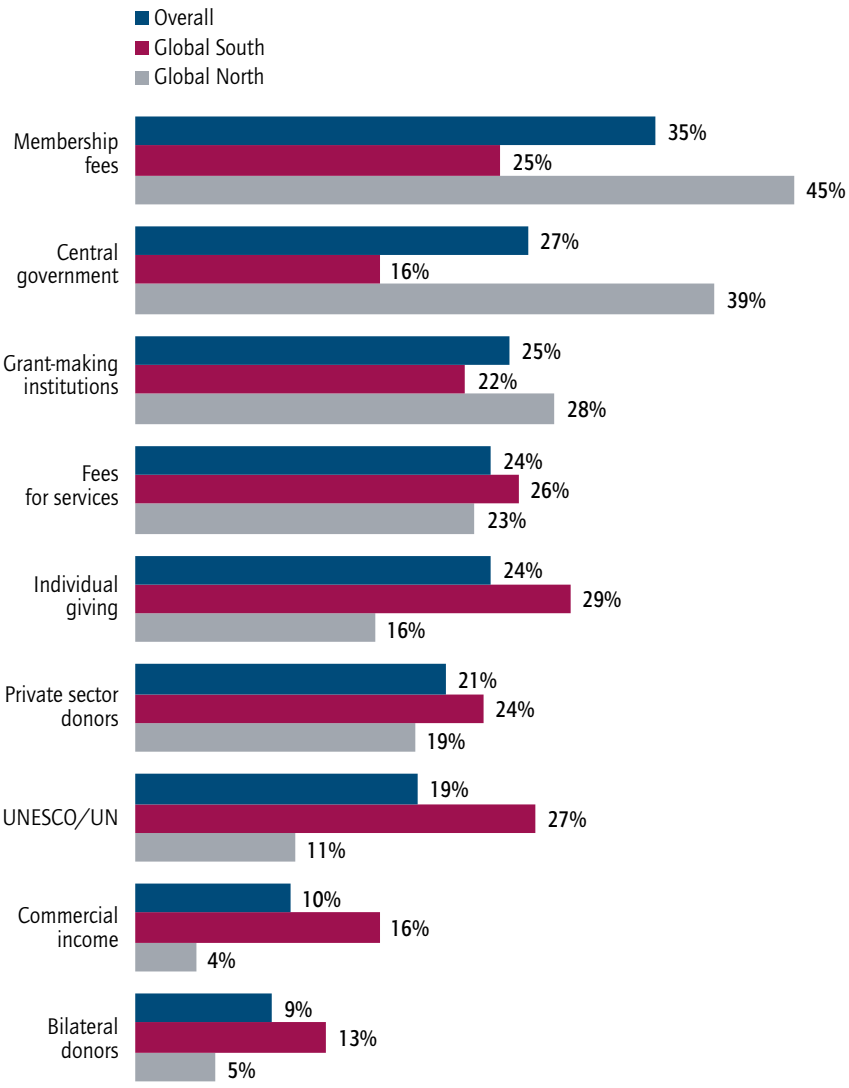
Beyond the survey's optimistic headlines, open-ended responses indicate some of the resourcing challenges CSOs face. The question of resources is the issue most commonly raised in the open space provided, while a lack of resources is the second most frequently cited challenge in QPRs, mentioned in 12 reports. Further, when asked how their funding sources have changed in the last three years, the most common observation among respondents is that funding has declined.

Only a handful report any increase, suggesting broadly that where funding has not declined, it has plateaued. This is consistent with broader research on the funding challenges facing civil society (CIVICUS, 2015). Interviewees also tend to report an enduring struggle to secure resources. As one puts it, 'it is evident that every day it becomes more difficult to obtain resources.' This suggests that when CSOs report adequate resources, they may have enough to sustain their core functions, but funding may still be below a level that enables them to play more expansive roles. Further, while individual CSOs may be relatively happy about their levels of resourcing, they may see challenges across civil society as a whole.

The main reasons given in the survey and interviews for recent funding decreases include: changing government or donor priorities, sometimes linked to political shifts; shifting government priorities towards working with civil society in general, linked to growing tendencies for public bodies to administer funds directly; and struggling or stagnating national economies. The QPRs, while outlining some new funding lines that have been introduced, also offer some evidence of recent cutbacks, which exacerbate longstanding civil society capacity challenges, as well as examples of legal and regulatory environments that make it hard for CSOs to receive resources. Many of the examples of civil society initiatives cited in this chapter were funded by foreign state donors, and would probably not continue if donor support was withdrawn.

Figure 4.8

Main sources of CSOs financial resources – global South and global North



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

> *It is evident that every day it becomes more difficult to obtain resources*

In several contexts, civil society personnel believe that governments have little interest in supporting participatory cultural governance. For an interviewee at a Europe-based national civil society network, the low levels of priority given to cultural policy and the Convention by their government limits opportunities, as few funding streams are available. Alongside this, several responses suggest that fundraising is becoming harder and more time-consuming: for example, donors are placing greater emphasis on the need to demonstrate impact, something that is not always easy to do with policy-oriented work. As one respondent puts it:

'We strongly feel that we have to produce more tangible outcomes than before, whereas our main aim as a network is to observe and comment on political developments, as well as to pass on information to our members. It is not always possible to present this time-consuming work in tangible outcomes.'

A related issue noted by several respondents is the strong project orientation of much of the funding; it may be possible to obtain funds to implement specific projects, but not for the core funding that helps to sustain a CSO and enables it to define its mission.

Several respondents cite increased bureaucracy around funding and opaque processes for funding decisions. In some cases, while the level of funding is relatively stable, the variety of sources is declining. This gives cause for concern, given that analysis (CIVICUS, 2015) suggests the robustness of a CSO is closely linked to its ability to access resources from multiple sources, and to have a funding mix that combines short-term and long-term support and core and project-based support.

> *Enduring and new resourcing challenges are preventing civil society from making its full potential contribution*

The survey suggests that, while such revenue sources remain low, some CSOs are developing greater streams of commercial income, membership fees, and corporate and individual giving. An interviewee from a Latin American national civil society network is also urging the government to contribute to the IFCD to create new opportunities for civil society. However, another interviewee from an international network, who states that it is getting harder to obtain resources, points out that attempts at funding diversification may be thwarted by a lack of skills, which themselves cannot be developed due to a shortage of financial resources. The network has attempted to diversify its resource base by seeking more individual paid members and obtaining fees for services, but lacks the specialist skills to sustain this.

Overall, therefore, it can be said that the picture is not entirely pessimistic, but enduring and new resourcing challenges are preventing civil society from making its full potential contribution.

One lingering question posed by an interviewee is whether models from broader civil society have something to offer the cultural sphere. Mass membership-based CSOs, such as Amnesty International and Greenpeace International, since they are able to secure adequate funds from individuals, feel free to turn down potential governmental or corporate support; they make their refusal part of their appeal to individuals. Is it possible to envisage similar movements in the field of culture?

FINDINGS ON SKILLS AND CAPACITIES

Respondents confirm the survey's overall picture of civil society self-confidence when asked whether their organization has sufficient skills and expertise to engage in cultural policy making. An overwhelming 76% report that their organization does, with the 'actively engaged' group standing higher still, at 81%. Given high levels of civil society activity but with varying impact, this confidence in skills suggests that other factors, such as the legislative and resourcing environments, may more strongly inhibit impact.

At the same time, the highly positive response may indicate a somewhat defensive reaction to the question; few of us, if asked, would admit that we lack essential skills for our work. More nuance is provided in open-ended responses and interviews. In these, close connections are made between financial resources and skills and capacities, as in the comment cited above. Five QPRs also cite low CSO capacity or weak organizations as a challenge. Interviews tend to suggest that CSOs might have skills to sustain their core work, but not to develop new plans and projects. Another frequently raised issue is a lack of funding for training. Among the capacity development needs most identified are skills in policy engagement; a lack of such skills hampers advocacy impact. A further key skill gap identified is communication skills, including for promoting the work of CSOs and increasing the visibility of the Convention. In addition, given staff turnover, challenges of how to retain knowledge and induct new personnel are identified.

For example, one interviewee from a national-level network indicates: 'Our principal officers have adequate skills, but it is important to develop the next generation. Funds to support interns, or mentoring schemes attached to our organization, would sustain our work and grow the expertise necessary for the future.' Networks and connections are also identified as important, as they open up potential for peer learning.

Overall, while CSO personnel are confident about their skills, the landscape suggested is one of a somewhat understaffed civil society, dependent on continuing high levels of voluntary commitment, that will struggle to create or take advantage of new opportunities.

FINDINGS ON CONNECTIONS AND NETWORKS

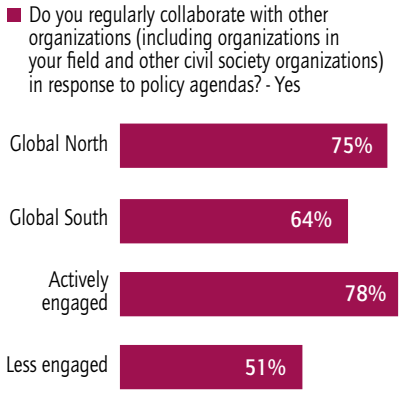
Networks are important because they can enable shared initiatives, including advocacy, which is more powerful when CSOs present a common voice backed by the commitments of many organizations. They also enable peer support, learning and the sharing of resources, and avoid the duplication of work. Given the distinction between the 'actively engaged' and 'less engaged' group, stronger connections and networks have the potential to bring more CSOs into active engagement and grow the constituency of those partnering in cultural governance at national and international levels. In order to bring issues of culture into other arenas, and to learn from broader practice and experience, two types of connections may be important here: those between different CSOs active on cultural issues, and those between CSOs working in this field and wider civil society. Both national and international-level networks can be important.

Survey respondents recognize the value of networking, with 69% reporting that they regularly collaborate with other CSOs, although it is perhaps surprising that 23% do not, suggesting some still untapped collaboration potential.

Survey respondents often see collaboration as an essential part of advocacy. Predictably, the 'actively engaged' group strongly collaborate, at 78%. Global North CSOs emerge as stronger networkers, with 75% doing so compared to 64% of global South CSOs. This is a possible reflection of greater resources for collaboration, and the fact that many international networks are headquartered in the global North, or of the less formalized nature of civil society in some global South countries (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9

Levels of collaboration with other CSOs in response to policy agendas



Source: BOP Consulting (2017).

Eleven QPRs provide evidence that new groups and networks have formed in recent years to work on cultural governance issues. For example, the Estonian Chamber of Culture was established in 2011 and was one of the key organizations involved in discussions on the country's new cultural policy. Since its formation in 2013, the Creative Economy Working Group in Kenya has continued to interact with the government. Eleven institutions founded the Palestinian Performing Arts Network in 2015, with one of its aims being to influence cultural policies. There is also evidence, in 19 QPRs, of international-level networking. This typically involves continental-level connections, and to a lesser extent bilateral links between global North and global South countries. Notable networking practice documented by QPRs includes strategic partnerships between Brazil's Cultural Diversity Observatory and similar institutions in Latin America and globally, which enables joint research and the exchange of personnel. In addition, partnerships between the Canadian Coalition for Cultural Diversity and four Francophone African countries – Burkina Faso, Gabon, Niger and Senegal – develop the capacity of civil society, civil servants and elected representatives on cultural policy matters. The IFCCD is highlighted as a network of enduring importance for civil society in eight QPRs and several survey responses, not least for its role in building awareness about the Convention and cultural governance issues, and in sharing learning. Interviewees and survey respondents in Europe further pointed to the value of European-wide coalitions that have formed to engage on EU-level policy.

It is clear that networks need resources, including funds and staff time, and given strained resources, this is a challenge. Cooperation does not occur without a conscious effort and supportive conditions, not least because when resources are limited, CSOs may focus tightly on their core missions, viewing networking as a luxury. Respondents and interviewees also suggest that networks need clarity around objectives and a shared sense of purpose; they offer enhanced value to civil society when they represent an opportunity for clear interface with, and therefore influence towards, state agencies. Among the suggestions put forward was that there should be more collaboration around research and connections with academia, greater sharing of information and documentation, and better shared communication for civil society as whole.

> *Networks are important because they can enable shared initiatives, including advocacy, which is more powerful when CSOs present a common voice backed by the commitments of many organizations*

Box 4.5 • *Ten years of Arterial Network*

2017 marked a decade of existence for the Arterial Network, a pan-African civil society network that makes strong connections between culture, development, human rights and democracy, and works through means such as advocacy, capacity building and knowledge management. It also has a track record of engagement in UNESCO processes.

The network grew rapidly following its inception, and has now consolidated with members from 50 African countries. It has also achieved impact through training programmes that made cultural practitioners more aware of their status and rights, and by proposing international and regional policies to promote and protect such rights. Its members have successfully advocated to influence national-level policy.

However, its work has not been easy. As it grew, it faced considerable challenges in connecting across different languages and subregions with little history of working on a continental level, and in developing a governance structure to match its growth. It has faced several funding crises and has had to put some projects on hold as a result. It remains dependent on donors, and generates little funding from the continent itself. In short, its story shows that networks can add value and last over time, but they take ongoing energy, commitment and resources. Prospects of such networks becoming self-sustaining still seem slim.

Source: www.arterialnetwork.org.

A further issue identified is the difficulty that smaller and local-level groups may face in networking. Some believe their organizations may be too small to participate in or benefit from collaborations and that larger and more prominent CSOs will dominate networks, crowding out a diversity of civil society voices. Another challenge identified is mission drift; organizational and network priorities may fall out of alignment. Curiously, an element little reported on was the extent to which new technologies are underpinning civil society networking or giving rise to new opportunities, suggesting a potential line of enquiry for future research.

> *There should be more collaboration around research and connections with academia, greater sharing of information and documentation, and better shared communication for civil society as whole*

While the responses indicate a broad commitment to networking within the cultural sphere, little connection with broader civil society is noted; according to the QPRs, this has only come recently in relation to trade deals, an issue with a strong cultural dimension that has risen in political salience (see Chapter 7). Further evidence that civil society active in the cultural sphere does not strongly connect with broader civil society comes from CIVICUS's survey of national-level CSO membership and coordination bodies. Only two, in Finland and Mexico, report a strong representation of culture-oriented CSOs. While several others report having some CSOs with a culture focus within their membership, these are mostly development and governance-oriented CSOs that use culture-based methods in instrumental ways to reach and serve constituencies. Most CIVICUS respondents do not have any cultural CSOs within their membership.

An interviewee at a national-level culture network also states that it connects only with other cultural organizations, and not with broader civil society. Another interviewee from a European network that works to connect with broader civil society on issues, such as the SDGs and recent political shifts in Europe, raises the challenge of getting established CSOs to take issues of culture seriously and include culture on their agendas. The implication is that on both sides of the equation there remains a disconnect between CSOs working in the cultural field and their counterparts in wider civil society, suggesting a need to address issues of misunderstanding and prioritization on both sides. The challenge may be exacerbated by increasing restrictions on the space for civil society, which impact most strongly on CSOs that engage in advocacy, accountability and rights-oriented work (CIVICUS, 2017*b*).

The landscape therefore seems characterized by two gaps: between civil society entities working on issues of culture that engage strongly in cultural governance efforts and those that do not; and between civil society in this sphere and broader civil society. Looking forward, the test of networks and collaborations will be how they bridge these two gaps to unlock potential for policy influence.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our evidence suggests that there is a rich variety of national-level civil society activity framed by or addressing issues relevant to the Convention, backed by high levels of interest and engagement among the circle of civil society closest to issues of cultural governance, and great civil society self-confidence about its skills and ability to make a difference. Civil society is working to bring together different actors, engage in advocacy through insider and outsider channels, generate and share learning, and establish new groups and networks. However, this vigorous activity does not always translate into impact on policy.

Further, intensive engagement at the national level is not always carried forward into international-level participation, and connections to broader civil society, which has a limited understanding of cultural governance, are still largely lacking. Some key barriers identified are that consultation structures and practices are not sufficiently open, enabling and far-reaching; civil society laws and regulations can inhibit the full range of civil society activities; and civil society resources, capacities and networks remain suboptimal.

In response, there need to be greater efforts to develop continuous, regular and structured participatory processes, at the national level, which enable civil society to develop, advocate, implement and monitor policies. To enable participation, more attention should also be made to the broader legal and regulatory environment in which civil society energies in general take shape and function. There should also be more documentation of and learning from good practice in participatory cultural governance.

> *Civil society is working to bring together different actors, engage in advocacy through insider and outsider channels, generate and share learning, and establish new groups and networks*

At the level of the Convention, efforts need to be sustained and accelerated to bring a wider diversity of CSOs into its governance and QPR processes, and to use participation around QPRs as opportunities to incubate longer-term dialogue between CSOs and policy makers.

The gaps that CSOs identify in their capacity to partner, particularly around their skills to participate in policy processes, communicate and network, need to be addressed with targeted outreach and resourcing strategies.

Networks offer still unrealized potential to enable peer support and encourage action among that part of civil society that is less engaged, and to connect with broader civil society to take issues of culture into other arenas. New efforts need to be made to articulate what participatory cultural governance is and why it is important in fresh ways that a broader civil society constituency finds urgent and appealing, and to galvanize cross-civil society action, particularly in light of major civil society engagement in the SDGs.

In order to monitor future progress, it is suggested that the indicators established for civil society partnerships in the 2015 Global Report be revisited. Indicator 1 could be reworked into two separate indicators: a supply-side indicator that examines whether laws and regulations at the national level are sufficiently enabling of civil society, framed around standards based on identified good practice; and a second that focuses on the demand-side aspects of the capacity to partner, based on civil society perspectives on the adequacy of resources, skills and networks.

> *There need to be greater efforts to develop continuous, regular and structured participatory processes, at the national level, which enable civil society to develop, advocate, implement and monitor policies*

Indicator 2 could look in particular for evidence of ongoing policy processes that go beyond consultative meetings and consider civil society's assessment of its ability to monitor policy, as well as participate in policy design and implementation. Indicator 3 could be revised to recognize that civil society's roles in the Convention go much further than participation in encouraging ratification and promoting awareness; these instrumentalized roles do not recognize the potential motivations of civil society, and the value of its autonomous contributions. In particular, it would be helpful to identify examples of civil society interventions that enhance the governance of the Convention. The precedent we have established of seeking direct civil society input through a range of means should be continued and extended, and questions should focus as much on how civil society is taking the demand-side initiative as on how it is participating in supply-side processes. Gender-disaggregated data, including on the participation of civil society specializing in gender issues, should be collected for all three indicators.

In closing, it should be clear that civil society is helping to bring the Convention to life and keep it relevant. The potential remains to convert commendable effort into far greater impact.