CIVICUS Accountable Now Report
Reporting Period: July 2023 to June 2024

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Introduction

This report presents a comprehensive overview of CIVICUS's accountability practices, from July 2023 to June 2024. It responds to the five core accountability questions, offering a broad perspective on accountability processes within the organisation during the reporting period. The report provides a snapshot of CIVICUS's current accountability practices, showcasing examples of implementation, supporting evidence, and reflections on both challenges and accomplishments.

1. *What have your most significant achievements and impacts this year and how has this been validated with your stakeholders?*

Significant achievements drawn from Annual Report:

The reporting period covers the second year of implementation of our Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027. Building on the foundations set in the first year of implementation (including various programmatic and institutional alignment processes and a strategic review) this second year focused on accelerating the implementation of our five Strategic Objectives CIVICUS Annual Report 2023-2024. Our membership continues to grow, reflecting the growing recognition of CIVICUS as a key source of solidarity and support and a leading voice in the global civil society community. We now have over 15,000 members in 189 countries. They represent a diverse range of CSOs, activists and allies committed to protecting, defending and expanding civic and democratic space. Our alliance includes two network groups, the Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA) and the Youth Network, led by the YAT. It also includes CIVICUS-led coalitions such as Vuka! and networks initially incubated by CIVICUS and now independent, such as CHARM and the Innovation for Change (I4C) global hubs.

Our core programming continues to serve as a foundation for driving the achievement of our strategic objectives through targeted systems strengthening efforts, innovation and learning and efficient resource management. During the period our core programming contributed to the delivery of our five strategic objectives in the following:

Generating Knowledge and Analysis: The 13th annual edition of our State of Civil Society Report, released in March 2024, looked back at 2023 to identify trends in civil society action at every level and in every arena, from responses to conflicts and struggles for climate justice, democracy and inclusion to calls for global governance reform. Building on our rolling analysis and commentary initiative, CIVICUS Lens, the report was informed by the voices of civil society affected by and responding to today's major issues and challenges. It drew over 250 interviews and articles covering over 100 countries and territories. The report was covered or referenced by several media outlets, including Climate Home News and The Jurist. The CIVICUS Monitor continues to reflect the work of regional research partners who collect data from civil society activists and organisations on the ground. The credibility of its data is evidenced by its

growing use by media, civil society groups, and other key stakeholders. Monitor data in the media more than doubled from the previous year.

Coordinating Targeted Advocacy: Together with partners, we submitted reports to the Human Rights Council (HRC) ahead of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) for nine countries, significantly increasing member participation in delivering advocacy statements. We also highlighted human rights violations in various countries and supported consultations with UN Special Rapporteurs to enhance civil society participation in UN processes. Our submissions underscored key violations, such as the harassment of activists, civil society organisations (CSOs), and journalists; arbitrary detention of protesters; and the approval and use of restrictive laws. CIVICUS was mentioned as a contributor in the final report. As part of our UN engagement, we highlighted the challenges of civil society participation at the UN. As a member of the UNMute Civil Society initiative, which includes 460 civil society partners and 60 UN member states, we advocated for reforms to democratise the UN and create more space for civil society in UN-related mechanisms. More than 40 missions to the UN echoed our calls. In April 2024, we joined the Steering Committee of the 1 for 8 billion Campaign.

Ecosystem Strengthening: Our ecosystem strengthening initiatives focused on enhancing civil society resilience, promoting inclusive participation, building strategic partnerships, advocating for civic space, empowering organisations digitally, and facilitating knowledge sharing to support effective and representative civil action. Efforts were also made to support locally led development as a way of strengthening. For instance, during the year, we commissioned a study to assess the extent to which we are influencing development ecosystems with a locally led ethos. The study found evidence that messaging and strategic outreach has contributed to improved funding, the inclusion of local groups in convenings and consultations and the development of valuable guidance and resources.

Among our contributions, together with partners including the Movement for Community-Led Development, NEAR and Peace Direct, we helped develop a donor statement on locally led development which was launched in 2022 and has gained 50 signatories over the past year. Our 2019 paper on shifting power and resources to grassroots movements was also cited as influential by key bodies, including Oxfam and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. We also worked to influence the policies and frameworks of donors such as the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OECD and United States Agency for International Development. We also launched a one-year Donor Transformation Challenge to encourage funders to dismantle outdated practices and mindsets and systems of oppression, starting with five principles to make locally led development meetings more inclusive. This led to over 30 commitments.

Strengthening Civil Society Narratives: CIVICUS Lens published 256 interviews and 90 articles, focused on the right to protest, with analysis that covered all regions and prioritized voices from the Global South and excluded groups, including women, Black and Indigenous people, and other people of colour. We published in multiple languages and targeted outreach resulted in increased global media interest in our publications.

Targeted and strategic outreach efforts resulted in increased global media interest in our publications. The 2024 State of Civil Society Report was covered or referenced by several media outlets, including [Climate Home News](#) and [The Jurist. The](#) report's authors gave interviews to the BBC and VOA, as well as local media, in English and Spanish languages.

In addition, media partnerships resulted in over 50 articles being published by the global news agency Inter Press Service (IPS), along with 12 CIVICUS-authored articles published by the online magazine Release Peace. Our stories often made IPS's 'most read' list and were republished several times by media around the world, often in translated versions.

CIVICUS Monitor findings, watchlists and downgrade announcements were also referenced by multiple global media outlets, including [Al Jazeera](#) and [The Guardian.](#) National coverage of CIVICUS Monitor findings was recorded in Georgia, Germany, Ghana and India. In Kyrgyzstan, the Monitor report was used by the BBC and RFE/RL to challenge an Ombudsperson's statement that civic space had improved. Members and partners around the world, including a student organisation in Germany, used Monitor findings to inform their internal deliberations. Our media outreach efforts increased the visibility of Monitor findings around key dates such as International Women's Day, the 30th anniversary of democracy in South Africa and major UN events.

In February 2024 Devex, a leading independent news organisation covering global development, [included](#) CIVICUS in its list of 24 influential global development organisations expected to make a significant impact in 2024.

Building Counterpower: Our efforts to build counterpower focused on defending and promoting the freedom of peaceful assembly (FoPA), an internationally recognized fundamental human right currently under threat. Together with partners, we launched the WeRise! campaign to support local protest movements and facilitated discussions among activists to strengthen transnational advocacy. Successful campaign experiences included organizing several peaceful protests in Togo, one of which attracted more than 4,000 participants, and creating the first digital library on FoPA in the Middle East and North Africa region, established by the Lebanese organisation HuMENA.

CIVICUS held Defenders and Diplomats Dialogues across regions. In Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, engagements focused on deepening understanding and

engagement on key policy issues in southern Africa. In Latin America, we held dialogues with HRDs in Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Peru, contributing to strengthening the transnational advocacy of activists and HRDs in exile.

We are also working with members and partners affected by the attacks on civilians in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories to support actions and responses for peace. Over 60 CIVICUS members, including several directly affected groups, participated in our open session on developing a response, held via the CIVICUS online community. The discussion reinforced our calls for greater accountability from UN member states and for community members, particularly women, to be at the centre of negotiations and decision-making processes.

Stakeholder validation and feedback:

CIVICUS is committed to ensuring that information on achievements and impact claims is accessible and adapted to meet the needs of its diverse stakeholders, particularly grassroots communities. We presented our [2023-2024 Annual Report](#) in inclusive and user-friendly formats, such as infographics and translated summaries. By leveraging digital platforms, and in-person engagement sessions, the organisation ensures that members, funders, and partners can easily access and interpret key findings. Furthermore, CIVICUS fosters participatory validation, inviting local organisations and civil society actors to review and confirm reported project-level outcomes, ensuring that achievements align with real stakeholder experiences. Beyond accessibility, we integrate feedback loops and adaptive learning mechanisms to enhance the relevance of our impact reporting. By prioritizing two-way communication and continuous adaptation, CIVICUS not only strengthens accountability but also empowers communities to use impact insights for advocacy and action. For example, CIVICUS promoted two-way communication and continuous adaptation by regularly updating the Theory of Change (ToC) of its Locally Led Learning (LLL) initiative with local partners. This approach kept projects relevant, flexible, and responsive to emerging challenges. By treating the ToC as a living learning tool, CIVICUS not only strengthens accountability but also empowers stakeholders to leverage impact insights for advocacy and action, fostering transparency, trust, and sustainable change. Through these approaches, the organisation ensures that reporting is not merely a top-down exercise but a collaborative and evolving process that reflects the voices and needs of the people it serves.

Not only does CIVICUS include stakeholders in validation of outcomes and achievements, co-creation and collaboration is a key approach across all our programmes. One example of this is the CIVICUS Monitor, a collaborative research initiative that tracks the state of civic space across 198 countries and territories. The Monitor relies on data collected from civil society activists and organisations on the

ground, ensuring that the information reflects real-time experiences and challenges faced by communities. This participatory approach not only enhances the accuracy of the data but also empowers local stakeholders to contribute directly to the global narrative on civic space conditions. We are also taking steps to strengthen our advocacy efforts by facilitating direct participation of our members and partners in international forums. Notably, during the reporting period, 51% of statements at the Human Rights Council sessions were delivered by CIVICUS members and partners, a significant increase from 25% in the previous year. This shift underscores our dedication to amplifying grassroots voices, allowing those directly impacted by civic space restrictions to present their experiences and validate the organisation's impact claims on prominent global platforms.

In the next year, we plan to intensify our outcome inventory, a platform to create and externally substantiate authentic and tangible stories of our unique value-add in strengthening civil society action to claim fundamental civic rights and resist oppressive power. It will be a publicly available repository to show – not tell – how and who CIVICUS works with to contribute to positive change.

2. *How have your organisation's accountability processes been impacted by significant internal or external changes over the reporting period?*

During the reporting period, CIVICUS experienced notable internal changes that directly impacted accountability processes. In January 2024, five new Board members[1] began their three-year terms, including Blessing Ewa, Paulina Ibarra, and Yi Kang Choo. Following Lysa John's departure as Secretary General, the Board met in June 2023 to ensure a smooth transition. While the Board Search Committee leads the recruitment for a new Secretary General, Claire Nylander (Chief Operations Officer) and Mandeep Tiwana (Chief Officer for Evidence and Engagement) are currently serving as interim co-leaders from October 2024 to June 2025 to maintain stability. Another significant occurrence was an investigation into a complex anonymous whistleblowing allegation against five staff members. The investigation concluded that the allegations were malicious, and not genuine whistleblowing. This event prompted a review and enhancement of accountability policies and processes. Additionally, CIVICUS extended the pilot period for the **Collective Management Forum (CMF)** to break down silos, promote collaboration, and embed leadership behaviours aligned with organisational values. Furthermore, **six Brown Bag sessions** were held to socialise the unified Code of Ethics framework and familiarise staff, leadership and the Board, with the organisations

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[1] CIVICUS has a 12-member Board, elected by the membership to provide strategic direction. It is currently led by Dylan Mathews as Chair and Sonia Kwami as Vice-Chair.

enhanced policies targeted at providing CIVICUS with a more robust framework for ensuring ethical conduct and accountability practices.

Reflections on the (Potential) Impact of these Changes on Accountability Practices:
These changes have had a direct impact on how accountability is understood, practiced, and reinforced within CIVICUS:

- *Whistleblowing Policy Reforms:* The refinement of the whistleblowing policy, introduction of preliminary screening for malicious reports, and the planned inclusion of independent third-party oversight will strengthen the integrity of the reporting process and ensure impartial investigations.
- *Restoring Trust and Reputation:* The facilitation of open platforms led by the Board to share investigation outcomes and provide well-being support, including counselling and recovery time, demonstrated transparency and responsibility to those falsely accused and the broader organisation.
- *Cultural Shift through CMF:* The CMF fostered a more collaborative and values-driven leadership approach by aligning behaviours with accountability principles and promoting cross-team engagement. This forum encouraged teams to unlearn siloed working patterns and adopt more transparent and inclusive practices.
- *Ethics Familiarisation through Brown Bags:* The Brown Bag sessions have improved staff awareness of the unified Code of Ethics, reinforcing accountability standards and ethical behaviour expectations across the organisation.

Incorporation of Stakeholder Feedback into Changes:

Stakeholder feedback played a central role in shaping these accountability enhancements:

- *From the Whistleblowing Investigation:* Staff feedback on the need for impartial investigations informed the proposal to introduce independent third-party oversight. Concerns about reputational damage led to the implementation of open platforms for sharing investigation outcomes and providing support for those impacted.

- *From Leadership Forums:* Feedback from leadership forums on siloed working patterns and unclear decision-making processes led to the extension of the operational period of the CMF, ensuring further learnings and practise of collective leadership and shared accountability.

- *From Brown Bag Sessions:* The Brown Bag discussions provided a platform for staff to voice concerns and offer input on ethical standards, which were subsequently reflected in updates to the Code of Ethics framework.

These internal changes driven by the whistleblowing allegations and the extension of the operational period for the CMF, combined with stakeholder engagement through Brown Bags, have collectively strengthened CIVICUS' accountability processes. These initiatives reflect the organisation's commitment to learning from challenges, adapting processes to align with values, and embedding accountability into organisational culture.

3. *How has your organisation learned from reported incidents, complaints and grievances received in the past year?*

During the period CIVICUS received 19 external complaints and feedback in all: Feedback and Complaints Dashboard. This is significantly higher than the 5 complaints and feedback received in the previous year. These comprised 5 suggestions for improvements, 4 on request for funding, 3 complaints, 1 appreciation and 6 other requests. One notable complaint received during the year is a whistleblowing incident which sought to incriminate some staff of wrongdoing. All the complaints above were resolved in line with our feedback policy, and learnings have been used to inform the revision and expansion of our feedback policy to improve clarity between mechanisms and conflict of interest.

CIVICUS has learned several critical lessons from the complaints received during the year under review. Below are some of the lessons learned from the recent whistleblowing incident, shedding light on various challenges and implications for the organisation. These insights emphasize the necessity for a well-defined and balanced whistleblowing framework to prevent misuse and mitigate harmful consequences.

Misunderstanding of Whistleblowing: One of the most prominent lessons learned is the widespread misunderstanding of what constitutes a legitimate whistleblowing claim. Many staff members lack clarity on the distinction between valid concerns of wrongdoing and grievances related to workplace disagreements or personal conflicts. This gap in understanding underscores the need for comprehensive training and guidance to ensure that whistleblowing mechanisms are not misused or misinterpreted.

Disproportionate Targeting of Women Leaders & BIPOC Women: The incident reaffirmed the troubling reality that women in leadership, particularly BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) women, are disproportionately targeted in whistleblowing allegations. Research supports this finding, demonstrating that such individuals face increased scrutiny and unjustified accusations. This pattern highlights the importance of addressing biases within organisational cultures and ensuring that whistleblowing processes do not inadvertently reinforce systemic inequities.

Resistance to Investigation Outcomes: Despite an independent legal firm conducting a thorough and impartial investigation, the anonymous complainants refused to accept the findings. The results did not align with their desired outcomes, leading them to share the complaints—many of which contained defamatory language—with all staff members. This resistance to objective investigation outcomes poses a significant challenge, as it undermines the integrity of whistleblowing mechanisms and damages organisational trust.

Severe Organisational Consequences: The incident revealed the catastrophic implications of false whistleblowing allegations, affecting multiple aspects of the organisation:

- *Defamation and Reputation Damage:* Accused staff members suffer both personal and professional harm. Despite the support provided to those targeted by debunked complaints, they continue to express residual feelings of hurt and betrayal. Many have also voiced disappointment that simply fulfilling their professional roles has led to significant personal costs, affecting their well-being and that of their families.
- *Organisational Factionalism:* Internal divisions arise between staff members who support the allegations and those who do not. Rebuilding a united workforce requires time, concerted efforts, and a multi-faceted approach to restore trust and cohesion.
- *Burnout and Psychological Harm:* Staff involved in the investigation experience high levels of stress and emotional exhaustion while still managing their regular duties. This added burden further exacerbates workplace tension and fatigue.
- *Board and Leadership Relations:* The incident necessitated careful management of relationships between the Board and organisational leadership. It was crucial to ensure that trust and support were not entirely eroded during this difficult period.
- *Post-Investigation Work Environment:* A lingering risk remains for re-traumatization among those falsely accused, especially if complainants continue to spread false narratives. Establishing safeguards to prevent further harm is essential for maintaining a healthy work environment.
- *Whistleblowing as a Cover for Performance Issues:* Another concerning trend identified is the misuse of whistleblowing as a means to deflect from personal performance issues. Some staff members resort to whistleblowing when faced with discomfort arising from their own lack of psychological safety due to underperformance. This misuse not only undermines genuine whistleblowing cases but also complicates efforts to address legitimate workplace challenges.

How did these lessons impact CIVICUS' accountability practices:

In response to these lessons, CIVICUS took decisive steps to refine its accountability processes:

- *Policy Clarifications:* The organisation reinforced clear distinctions between whistleblowing, grievances, and performance-related concerns.
- *Screening Mechanisms***:** Preliminary assessments were introduced to filter out false or bad-faith whistleblowing claims.
- *Enhanced Transparency:* The outcomes of investigations were openly shared through Board-facilitated platforms to ensure staff understood the findings.
- *Support for Those Falsely Accused:* Counselling services and time away from the office were made available to help affected individuals recover.
- *Cultural Shifts Through Leadership Forums:* The extension of the pilot period for the Collective **Management Forum (CMF)** created a space for leadership to foster trust, psychological safety, and accountability.

How CIVICUS adapts its accountability processes in response to these changes:
CIVICUS adapted its accountability framework by:
- *Providing Clearer Guidelines on Whistleblowing***:** Training staff on what qualifies as a whistleblowing case versus a grievance or a performance issue.
- *Introducing a Learning Component to Leadership Development:* Ensuring that leaders model accountability-aligned behaviours and build a culture of trust.
- *Strengthening Support for Leadership and Governance***:** Implementing measures to maintain alignment and trust between the Board and Senior management to ensure that complaints are collectively managed.
- *Enhancing Workplace Climate Management***:** Proactively addressing internal tensions and mitigating post-investigation hostility by intentionally providing answers to questions asked and repeatedly reinforcing the outcomes of the investigation.

How stakeholder feedback was incorporated into changes:
Stakeholder feedback played a central role in shaping CIVICUS's response:
- *Staff Concerns***:** Interest by in staff knowing more about the investigation outcomes led to more transparent reporting of findings.
- *Leadership Feedback:* Identified the need for structured leadership training to navigate complaints and maintain team cohesion.
- *Board Input:* Led to a more structured approach in managing post-investigation work environments, ensuring ongoing support for falsely accused individuals.

These lessons have strengthened CIVICUS' accountability processes, ensuring that whistleblowing remains a legitimate mechanism for reporting wrongdoing while protecting individuals from its misuse.

4. Internally, how has your organisation practised a more dynamic approach to accountability?

The CIVICUS secretariat is a diverse team of over 80 people spread across more than 30 countries, so developing a shared understanding of our values and enhancing cross-functional collaboration is key. Over the past year, our human resources initiatives have steered the organisation towards an improved leadership culture and integrated programme and operational practices, bridging gaps between internal forums to foster a cohesive leadership environment.

We refined our internal processes through feedback mechanisms such as exit interviews, focus groups and surveys, and developed a Unified Code of Ethics, which is now in its feedback and socialisation phase to ensure everyone is aware of and adheres to the enhanced ethical standards.

Between November 2023 and January 2024, we addressed challenges arising from complaints received through social media and anonymous whistleblowing channels. Following a rigorous investigation that found these allegations were unfounded, our focus shifted to strengthening trust and transparency in our complaints and grievance procedures.

Our Learning and Development Framework helped us deliver on our strategic objectives effectively. It incorporated leadership best practices that promoted a unified organisational identity, including by establishing a Collective Management Forum in response to assessments that identified the need to address siloed working practices. Secretariat leaders also collected input through surveys and engaged staff through open space sessions and discussions to respond to staff needs.

In fulfilling our commitment to racial equity, we increased the number of Black Africans and people of colour among our line managers. Now 69 per cent of our line managers come from these groups, a significant improvement from 2021, when the figure was 50 per cent. As part of our partnership with Democracy International, we provided fully funded training and development opportunities in Germany to two South African graduates.

Our updated performance management system has driven improved ownership and accountability across the organisation. New probation templates introduced in October 2023 have been used by 25 staff members, resulting in a more structured, efficient and accountable process to integrate new staff and increased staff ownership of their probationary journeys.

5. How has your organisation worked towards being dynamically accountable to your external stakeholders (i.e. partners, communities, programme participants, etc.)?

Over the past year, CIVICUS has sustained active engagement with its members through diverse communication channels, including newsletters, social media

platforms, and its website. As part of the 2022-2027 strategy to reimagine engagement, the organization introduced Membership Engagement Month, running annually from 10 November to 10 December, to foster knowledge sharing, transparency, and accountability. The 2023 edition featured regional membership meetings, the CIVICUS board meeting, the Members' General Assembly, and the launch of the CIVICUS Monitor annual report, alongside the 16 Days of Action campaign to end violence against women. Complementing these efforts, CIVICUS has continued to host civil society convenings and networking opportunities, including the EU-funded multi-year program to strengthen member-led networks, launched in Latvia.

CIVICUS remains committed to amplifying grassroots voices and fostering civic engagement through data-driven insights and advocacy. Platforms such as the State of Civil Society Report and CIVICUS Lens provide timely analysis on human rights, civic activism, and governance, drawing from 250+ interviews and articles across 100+ countries. The CIVICUS Monitor, covering 198 countries, serves as a critical tool for tracking civic space restrictions and advocating for protective measures. Initiatives like the Local Leadership Labs (LLL) facilitate direct collaboration between civil society organizations and policymakers, ensuring that local actors play a central role in shaping policy solutions tailored to their communities.

To safeguard civic space and protect human rights defenders, CIVICUS provides direct assistance and advocacy support. Through the Crisis Response Fund, the organization issued 29 grants to groups navigating civic space restrictions in regions such as Afghanistan, Sudan, and Venezuela. Additionally, the ≠Stand As My Witness≠ campaign played a key role in securing the release of political prisoners, including Guatemalan prosecutor Virginia Laparra. Defenders and Diplomats Dialogues further strengthened transnational advocacy, fostering dialogue between civil society actors and policymakers in Latin America and Southern Africa. These initiatives ensure that at-risk activists receive both financial backing and international recognition.

Recognizing the importance of digital security and advocacy capacity, CIVICUS continues to empower grassroots organizations with tailored resources. The Digital Democracy Initiative (DDI) has supported 430 grassroots actors across six global regions, enhancing online security and civic engagement. To address challenges in funding accessibility, the organization introduced the Donor Transformation Challenge, securing 30+ funder commitments to shift toward more inclusive and flexible funding models. These actions reinforce CIVICUS's dedication to equipping local movements with the tools, funding, and support needed to sustain their advocacy in an evolving global landscape.

At the international level, CIVICUS ensures that civil society voices shape key decision-making spaces. Advocacy at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) has enabled grassroots participation in global forums, contributing to nine country reports on civic space restrictions. The UNMute Civil Society Initiative has further advanced efforts to increase civil society representation in UN deliberations, ensuring that voices from the Global South and marginalized communities are actively included. Additionally, the WeRise! campaign—developed in partnership with regional organizations—continues

to champion protest rights and peaceful assembly, reinforcing the global defence of civic freedoms.

CIVICUS has embedded accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) principles into its engagement, funding, and leadership structures. Through initiatives such as DDI and LLL, the organization prioritizes women, LGBTQI+ individuals, youth, and people with disabilities, ensuring their active involvement in policymaking and advocacy. The Crisis Response Fund has directly supported 29 grassroots organizations, including those working on gender rights, LGBTQI+ protections, and human rights defence. The Youth Action Team (YAT) has also led research on youth activism, informing UN reports on child and youth human rights defenders. These efforts highlight CIVICUS's commitment to shifting power towards historically marginalized communities, ensuring that their voices shape, lead, and drive the organization's initiatives.

By actively listening to partners, incorporating feedback, and adapting strategies, CIVICUS has strengthened its advocacy, funding, and engagement models. In response to calls for more accessible funding, it secured commitments from 30+ donors to support locally led initiatives. It also expanded digital access and security through DDI, benefiting 430 grassroots activists. The organization has enhanced direct civil society participation at the UN, ensuring 51% of advocacy statements came from grassroots partners. Through LLL and WeRise! campaign, CIVICUS continues to protect civic space and empower activists worldwide. These initiatives reflect a broader commitment to inclusive, accessible, and impactful global engagement, reinforcing CIVICUS's role as a leading advocate for civil society.

6. Annex 1: Core Questions and Guidelines

Core questions are reported on by **all members annually**. They enable a broad overview of accountability processes within an organisation in a particular year; responses to core questions provide a snapshot of where a member is at with their accountability practices overall. A common set of questions also ensures joint vision and commitment towards accountability across the membership.

Responses to all five core questions **should not exceed 5 pages in total,** members can decide which questions warrant more or less detailed responses given their respective situations.

Responses should aim to provide **examples of how different practices loofi in practice, evidence of implementation, reflections on challenges** and **accomplishments, and next steps** (if any). For more information on what to include in your report, please see the **Reporting Guidance.**

Below you will find core questions and their respective guidelines:

No.	Core Reporting Questions	Guidelines for responses
1.	What have been your most significant achievements and impacts this year and how has this been validated with your stakeholders?	Main achievements/impacts including any financial commitments are listed or links to relevant documents are provided (annual reports, financial statements, evaluations etc).
		Descriptions of how information on achievements and impact claims are made accessible to and adapted for the needs of the organisation's target stakeholder groups (especially communities).
		Processes of how relevant stakeholders (especially communities) have *actively* validated the organisation's relevant achievement and/or impact claims are provided.
		The processes described are adapted to the differing needs of stakeholders across different projects/the organisation.

No.	Core Reporting Questions	Guidelines for responses
2.	*If applicable -* How have your organisation's accountability processes been impacted by significant internal or external changes over the reporting period?	Descriptions of significant internal (strategy, personnel, policies, funding, etc) and/or external (social, economic, environmental, political macro level, etc) changes are provided.
		Reflections of the (potential) impact of these changes on accountability practices/processes are provided. If the changes are not perceived to impact accountability, please provide an explanation.
		Reflections of why and how the organisation has adapted their accountability processes to these changes are provided.
		Descriptions of how stakeholders' feedback will be/have been incorporated into the changes made are provided.

3.	How has your organisation learned from reported incidents, complaints and grievances received in the past year? (These may include safeguarding, fraud, corruption, whistleblowing, integrity violations, etc.)	A summary of <u>only</u> the categories and numbers of reported incidents, complaints and grievances over the reporting period is provided <u>or</u> links to relevant public documents are provided.
		Reflections about what the organisation learned from the incidents reported are provided.
		Reflections about how the organisation aims to improve and adapt according to incidents reported are provided. Complainants' feedback regarding the handling process is also taken into account.

4.	Internally, how has your organisation practised a more dynamic approach to accountability?	Response shares how the organisation is implementing dynamic accountability practices with different internal stakeholders (e.g from staff, volunteers, national chapters/offices, etc). Dynamic accountability practices can potentially include: being open and accessible, creating spaces for input, fostering inclusion, listening, closing the feedback loop, continuous learning, among others. *Organisations may choose to focus on one or two, or all stakeholder groups - depending on needs.*
		Response shares a summary of the feedback received internally over the reporting period.
		Response includes **how** the organisation has responded to the feedback received and what changes may have been made as a result.
		Reflections and commitments towards improvements are provided. Feedback from internal stakeholders are shown to shape these commitments. *Commitments provided will be reassessed in the following year by the IRP.*

5.	How has your organisation worked towards being dynamically accountable to your external stakeholders (i.e partners, communities, programme participants, etc)?	Response shares how the organisation is listening to, being responsive, and collaborating with its partners and/or the communities that it wishes to serve. *Organisations may choose to focus on one or two, or all stakeholder groups each year - depending on needs.*
		Response includes how partners and/or communities have been engaged in line with values of accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion. For example, this may include how the organisation is making its listening, responses and collaborative processes more accessible to different groups (i.e women, children, the LGBTQ= community, people with health conditions or impairments, etc).
		Response includes a set of feedback, comments, evaluations, etc, that the organisation received from external stakeholders such as partners, communities, etc. Response furthermore shares what has changed as a result of the feedback received.
		Commitments to improvements are provided. Feedback from partners and/or the communities are taken into account in shaping these commitments. *Commitments provided will be reassessed in the following year by the IRP.*