

Since its origins working with communities in the South Pacific over 50 years ago, Counterpart International has been a global leader of civil society strengthening (CSS). Today, it offers project design, implementation, and technical assistance that focuses on organizational capacity and performance, civic advocacy, and collective action. This framework and the inclusive and equitable activities which flow from it are effective at local and national levels, in fragile and stable political contexts, and across development sectors. Counterpart co-creates solutions with community and government stakeholders -- engaging in the broad civic space to launch networks and coalitions while providing transformational support that enhances CSOs' technical capacity, financial self-reliance, and mission impact.

THE VISION: DIVERSE, ENGAGED, AND CAPABLE CIVIL SOCIETIES THAT REPRESENT ALL CONSTITUENCIES

Counterpart's efforts to improve the broad civic space fall under the broader umbrella of our **Inclusive Social Accountability (ISA)** framework, a critical approach formalized in 2019 for countries on the journey to self-reliance. ISA fosters durable solutions by engaging governments to make policy and service delivery improvements while ensuring that all voices are included in creating these solutions. As ISA is implemented in the broader civic environment, Counterpart customizes CSO-focused work to each organization's needs by applying our **Organizational Capacity and Performance (OCP)** framework and approaches.

These frameworks -- and the tools, approaches, and methodologies they underpin -- are relevant in stand-alone governance programs and when integrated into projects across technical sectors. Further, given the importance of civic engagement in conflict settings, Counterpart has learned and adapted conflict-sensitive methods through long-term programs in Afghanistan, Yemen, the Sahel, and socially fragile areas of Central America. Across development contexts and while leading from behind, Counterpart fosters a vibrant civic space in which a broad system of capable CSOs advocate for inclusion and accountability from governments, businesses, and other relevant social institutions.

TOOLS & APPROACHES: FOSTERING INCLUSIVE SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN CIVIC SPACES

The ISA framework includes 32 tools refined through practical applications globally, including:

- *Civil Society Network Development Methodology* is an integral part of our tailored analysis and capacity development for local, national, and global networks.
- *Network Capacity Process Tool* and its supporting materials strengthen networks through evaluation tools, a manual of useful templates, and trainings.
- *Inclusive Political Economy Analysis (IPEA)* allows stakeholders to uncover the dynamic factors affecting a development challenge or change process, including findings from the Missing Voices Analysis tool.
- *Gender and Social Inclusion Analysis* describes social and economic factors that drive exclusion based on gender, economic status, and other factors.
- *Advocacy Framework* addresses situations where local priorities require collaborative advocacy efforts to influence national or regional policies.
- *Templates for Social Contracting* enable improved services when public sector capacity is insufficient.
- *Community Scorecards* provide an opportunity for citizens to engage local authorities to identify issues and solutions, and then collaborate to implement them.

TOOLS & APPROACHES: ENHANCING CSOS' ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND PERFORMANCE

Driven by each CSO's unique needs, Counterpart applies a combination of 34 OCP tools, including:

- *Participatory Organizational Development Assessment (PODA)* is a self-guided diagnostic tool where CSO leadership and staff evaluate their structure, performance, and resources using a quantitative checklist of indicators. The *PODA Diagnostics Library* houses dozens of customized PODA metrics for different development contexts and CSO types.
- *Financial Sustainability Action Planning Toolkit* supports financial sustainability planning with manuals covering grant writing, fee-for-service, and other revenue generation strategies.
- *Information Security Toolbox* is a collection of trainings, checklists, and software products to assist journalists, CSOs, and civic activists to protect sensitive information and be able to utilize technology in restrictive political environments.
- *Social Enterprise Library* has guides, tools, and templates to launch and manage social businesses.

PROJECTS WORLDWIDE WITH REAL LOCAL IMPACTS

- **Global Civil Society Strengthening Leader with Associates** (USAID, \$350M ceiling, 2009–2017) served as the global mechanism for innovative CSO capacity building and civil society strengthening projects and leadership across development sectors.
- **I4C: Innovation for Change** (USAID, \$6M, 2015–2020) has a community-led global network of citizens and organizations defending and strengthening civic space to overcome restrictions to basic freedoms of assembly, association, and speech. Regional hubs are expanding, representing over 200 CSOs across 84 countries.
- **ISC: Information Safety and Capacity** (USAID, \$24M, 2016–2020) supports CSOs, human rights activists, and journalists worldwide by working with stakeholders to expand effective ICT-based service provision from information security firms.

AFRICA

- **Malawi:** *Supporting the Efforts of Partners* (USAID, \$16M, 2014–2019) strengthens a more effective and vibrant civil society to be accountable to constituencies and contribute to national development through training, capacity building, and linking experts from civil society with Parliament staff to improve budget analysis, fiscal reporting, and evidence-based policymaking.
- **Mauritania:** *Community Action, Nutrition, and Livelihoods* (USAID, \$39M, 2006–2013) partnered with the Ministry of Health and local partners in 160 communities to strengthen health, hygiene, and nutrition by improving community capacity to plan, implement, and monitor their own development.
- **Morocco:** *Civil Society Strengthening Program* (USAID, \$16M, 2015–2019) strengthened CSOs and coalitions that engage in advocacy while improving collaboration between civil society and government institutions. CSSP provided technical assistance in policy advocacy, legal framework development, government-civil society dialogue, and tailored capacity-building to local government and CSOs.
- **Niger:** *The Participatory Responsive Governance –Principal Activity* (USAID, \$18M, 2016–2021) improves civic dialogue with public sector officials to better focus on priority citizen needs. Community mobilization committees mitigate mistrust while reducing social and political tensions.
- **Zambia:** *Fostering Accountability and Trans-parency* (USAID, \$6M, 2014–2020) engages in many governance areas including natural resources management by facilitating CSO coalitions and leading public information campaigns.



LATIN AMERICA

- **El Salvador:** Counterpart implements the *Rights and Dignity Project* (USAID, \$15M, 2017–2022), which strengthens governmental and civil society-based human rights protection systems emphasizing security, policing, and anti-discrimination.
- **Guatemala:** The *Participación Cívica* project (USAID, \$18M, 2015–2020) furthers more inclusive governance to combat corruption and improve the safety and livelihoods of citizens. Through trainings and the Open Governance Partnership, it builds public sector capacity to address transparency and accountability, including with ICT solutions.
- **Honduras:** *Impactos* (USAID, \$15M, 2011–2017) worked in 67 municipalities to build community capacity to collaborate with municipal authorities, the private sector, CSOs, and local councils to deepen public transparency and accountability.

MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA

- **Afghanistan:** *Civic Engagement Program* (USAID, \$79M, 2013–2019) increases CSO and the media's expertise in democratic governance and expands civic engagement by providing grants to a large and diverse network of CSOs at the provincial, regional, and national levels. ACEP is active in 30 of 34 provinces, strengthening hundreds of CSOs.
- **Bangladesh:** *Promoting Advocacy and Rights* (USAID, \$7M, 2018–2023) has the overall goal to strengthen the enabling environment for CSOs to advance good governance and citizen participation.
- **Timor-Leste:** *Ba Distrito* (USAID, \$5M, 2013–2017) grew institutional and human capacity at local levels to administer elections, improve access to justice, and provide basic services more effectively.
- **Yemen:** The *Responsive Governance Project* (USAID, \$36M, 2010–15) strengthened civil society's capacity to participate effectively during political transitions while advancing women's political participation. RGP trained 151 CSOs from 16 governorates and provided management training for 90 nascent rural CSOs.

