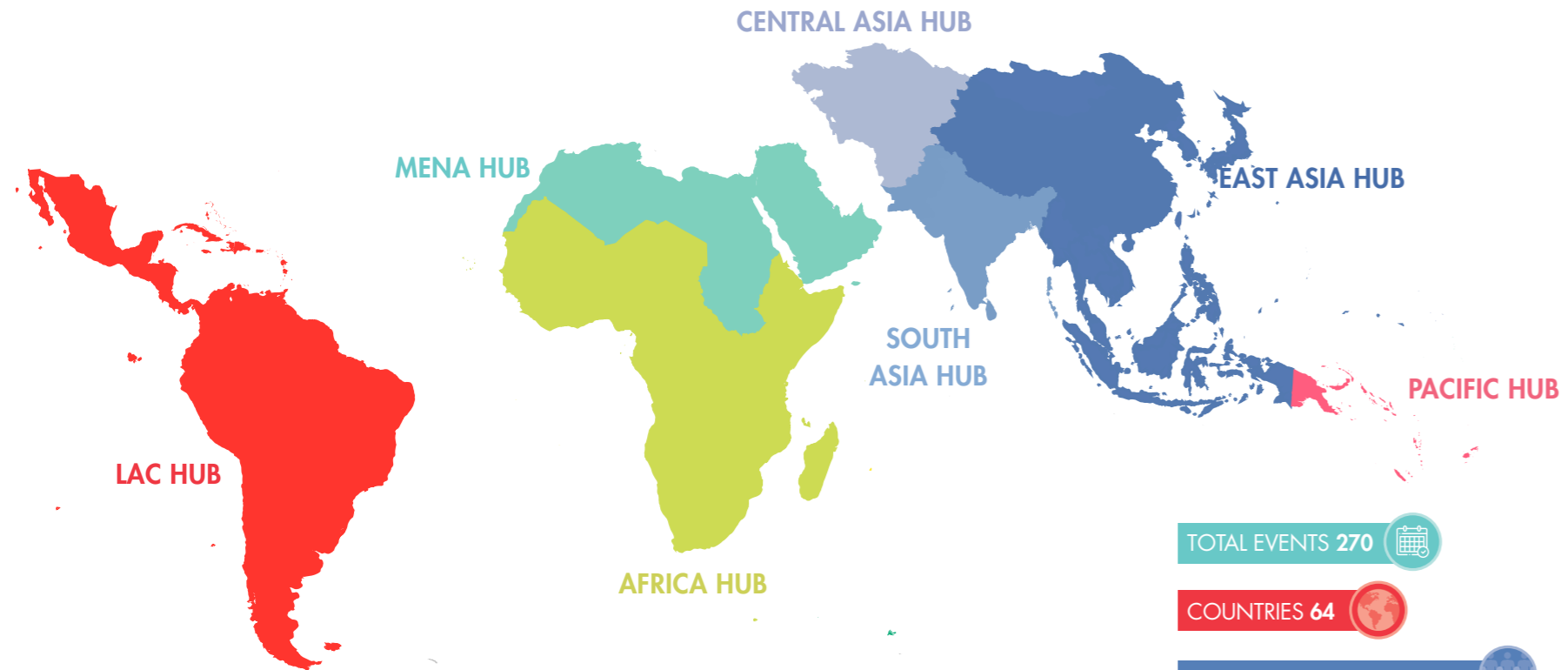# INNOVATION FOR CHANGE

WHERE PEOPLE CONNECT TO CREATE TOMORROW

COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION TO STRENGTHEN CIVIC SPACE:
A NETWORK JOURNEY

WHO WE ARE

CENTRAL ASIA HUB

MENA HUB

EAST ASIA HUB

SOUTH ASIA HUB

PACIFIC HUB

LAC HUB

AFRICA HUB

TOTAL EVENTS **270**

COUNTRIES **64**

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS **25,496**

PARTICIPANTS TRAINED **4,754**

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS **1,191**

WOMEN **5,058**

LGBTQI **90**

ENGAGED IN ADVOCACY INTERVENTIONS **711**

PRIVATE SECTOR **50**

Innovation for Change: where people connect to create tomorrow

Innovation for Change (I4C) is a global network of people and organisations who connect, partner, and learn together to defend and strengthen civic space and overcome restrictions to our fundamental freedoms of assembly, association, and expression.

We are a community-led network inspired by ideas, methods, and technologies from across different sectors. We work together on advocacy, research, network building, training, fundraising, digital literacy, and technology development.

Our seven regional hubs bring people together to exchange ideas and share their successes, challenges, and opportunities to incubate social change and build sustainable solutions. The Helper Hub provides technical support to the regional Hubs and serves as the Secretariat to the I4C Global Governance Circle, the global network's governance body.

INNOVATION FOR CHANGE

FOREWORD
Message from the I4C Global Governance Circle

"THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE I4C HUBS FEATURED IN THIS REPORT PROVIDE A SNAPSHOT OF THE WORK OF OVER **800 INDIVIDUALS** AND ORGANISATIONS ACROSS **96 COUNTRIES**."

In 2019, the number of people living in repressed states doubled to 40%; the previous year, it was 19% according to research by the CIVICUS Monitor.

Innovation for Change is based on the idea that the diverse set of individuals and organisations that work to protect and defend these fundamental freedoms that help protect human rights around the world are better able to do so when they are connected to each other, have physical and virtual spaces in which to develop innovative solutions, and when ideas are co-created locally, then tested and scaled.

The achievements of the I4C hubs featured in this report provide a snapshot of the work of over 800 individuals and organisations across 96 countries. Their work is fuelled by a commitment to equity, diversity, human rights-based approaches, innovation and co-creation. The human-centered design methodologies that have been adopted by the I4C network, allow for bottom-up decision-making, and cross-regional learning on an ongoing basis. Ideas such as ComuniDAS from the LAC region are being scaled to create Tabadol in the MENA, ensuring that our regionally-situated hubs move forward as a global network.

Going forward, we will continue to build on this impact through expanding our focus to include more capacity strengthening initiatives (Design Thinking for Civil Society Guidebook, the launch of a global Design Thinking Community of Practice, and more support for resource mobilisation); a broader target (including non-state actors); and by deepening collaboration between hubs so that hubs can learn from each other on how best to innovate in the face of additional restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 crisis.

As always, the strength of the I4C network is its members – you continue to inspire us through your work, your ideas, and your belief that thinking and doing things differently can make things better. Because of you, change is happening.

With thanks for all whose work and support makes I4C possible

OUR JOURNEY

September 2013

Call to Stand With Civil Society: Democratic governments, the philanthropic community, and multilateral actors, launched Stand with Civil Society, a global call to action to support, defend, and sustain civil society amid this rising tide of restrictions on its operations globally.

November 2014

Istanbul 1 Workshop: Forty-five participating organizations (international NGOs and regional groups from Africa, Latin America and Asia) developed six civil society regional innovation and support hub prototype concepts.

February – April 2016

Region-Led Consultations/Co-design: Regional incubators led additional consultations to get buy-in from other regional partners and expand the network of the initiative. Consultations also helped to finalise plans for the regional hubs and develop their pitch packages for International Civil Society Week.

April – September 2015

Co-Design Regional Workshops: Counterpart International and CIVICUS co-hosted six co-design regional workshops to capture regional input, additional ideas and existing resources using the CSI concept note as a springboard for specific planning of each regional hub. A total of 151 carefully selected influential civil society leaders from across the six regions participated, along with 47 donor representatives and ad hoc observers.

April 2016

International Civil Society Week: Regional incubators joined the Incubate Team and donors at International Civil Society Week in Bogota, Colombia to present their final ideas for the regional hubs and share their next steps to move the hubs' planning forward.

August 2016

Soft Launches: August 2016 - Innovation Hubs launch their initial activities, designed by civil society leaders to meet the needs of their own regions.

Spring 2017-present

Testing, Scaling & Network Expansion: Innovation Hubs receive small grants to operationalise, pilot, and scale-up activities

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HOW WE WORK:
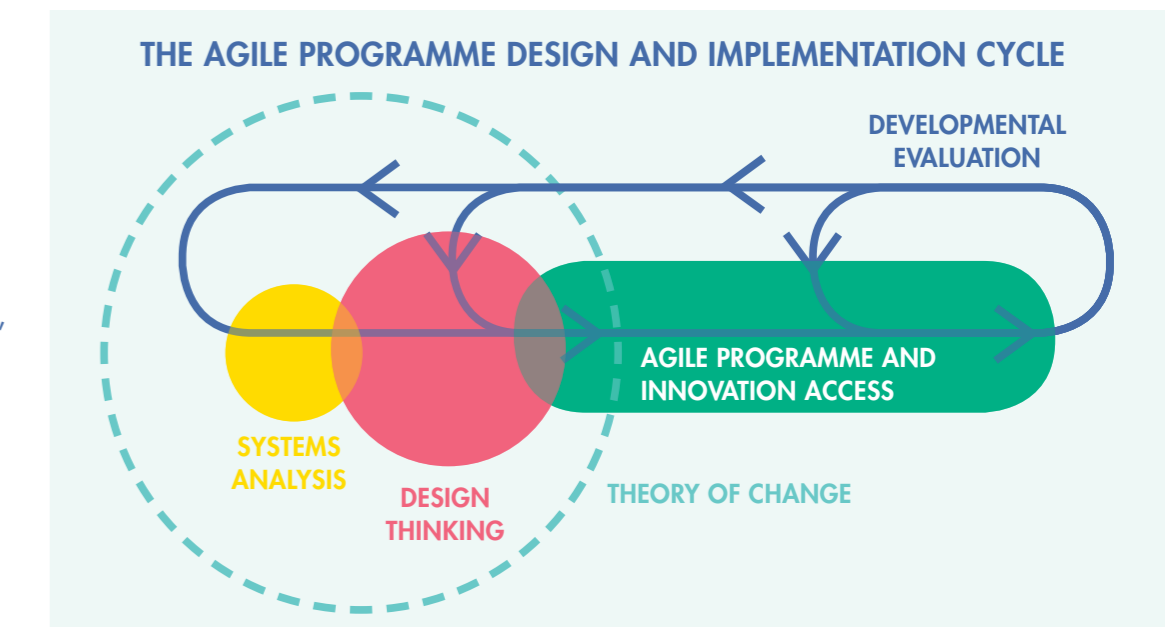### Catalysing social change through collaborative innovation

We start with a working definition of innovation as creating a new solution in a new context; applying an established solution in a new context; creating a new solution in an established context, and recombining established solutions to serve a specific objective.

We then partner with the people, communities, movements, and organisations that are most affected by restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and association. We co-create and build solutions through cross-sectoral collaboration. Depending on the context this may mean bringing together youth activists and social movement leaders, lawyers and technologists, researchers and data scientists, social entrepreneurs, and like-minded governments and businesses.

As a network, we are committed to equity, diversity, human rights-based approaches, innovation and co-design. These principles guide and shape our strategy, the design of our services and products, and our governance structures and community building processes.

We aim to create the conditions and enabling eco-system for effective and impactful collaboration and real change through Systems Analysis and Design Thinking (which ensure a holistic understanding of the context and an evidence-based approach), Developmental Evaluation (which produces regular, actionable insights that enable course correction along the way), and Innovation Acceleration (which helps scale and replicate successful innovations across the network). Together these ensure an agile approach to our work.

"DESIGN THINKING IS A COLLABORATIVE, **MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH** FOR CREATING, TESTING AND SCALING **SOLUTIONS** TO COMPLEX PROBLEMS."

THE AGILE PROGRAMME DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE

DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

AGILE PROGRAMME AND INNOVATION ACCESS

SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

DESIGN THINKING

THEORY OF CHANGE

Labs, hackathons and Social Innovation Challenges are often part of a Design Thinking and Human Centred Design approach. Post-it notes, maker pens, Mural, Signal, string, glitter, play, fun. All of these and more combine as ingredients for the magic spaces that summon from each of us that wow moment when an idea comes into being. Shaped by many hands, we produce the prototypes, establish our baselines then test and pilot, refine and go again. Co-design at these steps helps ensure that we produce solutions that directly address our network members' needs.

"INNOVATION LABS ARE SPACES WHERE **DEVELOPMENT IS FACILITATED AND VALUE CREATED** THROUGH SMALL-SCALE EXPERIMENTATION AND SOLUTION TESTING. IT IS A METHODOLOGY THAT **LEVERAGES PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY AND EXPERTISE** TO UNDERSTAND CHALLENGES HOLISTICALLY AND FORMULATE POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS THAT ARE LOCALLY INFORMED AND MAY BE SCALED NETWORK WIDE."

OUR REGIONAL HUBS

The idea for Innovation for Change began in 2015 as a response to worsening trends affecting civic space and civil society in the Global South. Today, it is a global network of thousands of individuals and organisations working together regionally and across the world to find new solutions to civic space restrictions.

The following stories capture different elements of the network's actions and achievements across the seven regional hubs.

REGIONAL INNOVATIONS

Africa Hub
Resource Mobilisation

South Asia
Artivism

Central Asia
Innovation Festivals

Pacific
Citizen-Generated Data

East Asia
Combating Disinformation

MENA
Digital Currencies

LAC
Innovation Labs

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

AFRICA HUB SNAPSHOT ⊕

Launched November 2017 and registered in Uganda

MISSION: TO PROTECT, RESPECT, STRENGTHEN, EXPAND, AND RECOVER CIVIL SOCIETY SPACE.

🔍 FOCUS:

The I4C Africa Hub is a pan-African organisation that fosters home-grown African solutions to civic space challenges and focusses on the following objectives:

- To help unite civil society, human rights defenders and activists to create a common voice across the continent, bringing all of Africa together to fight for an open operating environment
- To be a multi-stakeholder platform for innovation, that emphasises new ideas, practices, creativity, insight, empowerment and services
- To establish a community of practice that brings together all actors for experience and knowledge sharing

Nigeria
Uganda
DRC
Tanzania
Botswana

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

🧍 Human Rights Defenders 12% 🧍 Formal Civil Society (NGOs) 41% 🧍 Informal Civil Society (movements, grassroots, protest leaders) 8%
🧍 Social Entrepreneurs 3% 🧍 Technologists 2% 🧍 Private Sector 5% 🧍 Journalists 2% 🧍 Youth 8% 🧍 Women 10% 🧍 LGBTI 3%

Highlights 2018-19

- We-Account Social Innovation Challenge- Local Ideas that Go Pan-African!: a civic acceleration program to scale-up solutions that foster transparency, accountability, and natural resource management. In 2018, the Hub supported five ideas that are now scaled to other countries: SEMA (Uganda), Kinara Youth (Tanzania), Freshmarte GS (Nigeria), Dream Factory (Botswana), Tobongisa Technologies (Democratic Republic of Congo).
- Advocacy campaigns: *Unmask Them in Egypt* to revoke NGO Law #70, and *Jeunes Nous Pouvons* to promote youth participation in the DRC 2018 Election
- We-Protect! Legal Support for human rights defenders: This included the Legal Innovation Lab where 33 lawyers, technologists, and campaigners designed solutions and three legal products/services to support human rights lawyers.

2020/21 programme

- We-Share: CSO resourcing research and action report
- We-Engage: A diagnostic tool for CSOs working on Policy and Advocacy
- We-Protect: Strengthening the Rule of Law and Legal Support for human rights defenders (HRDs)
- Advocacy campaigns to address re-strictive NGO laws

AFRICA: Guiding the development of alternative funding models

MEMBERS ACROSS 30 COUNTRIES

Finding new and innovative solutions to diversify civil society's resources across Africa was a key focus of Africa Hub's work in 18/19.

In November 2018, in partnership with the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), the hub brought together 25 people from organisations across Africa, Latin America, and Europe to discuss and co-design alternative funding models for civil society. The gathering revealed achievements, areas for improvement,
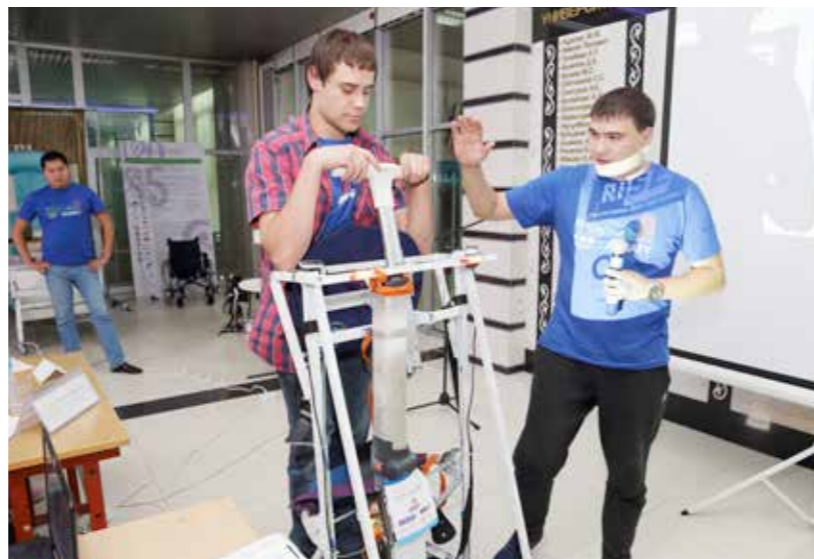
the various roadblocks preventing civil society from becoming fully sustainable, and an effective mechanism for organising civic action. Also, it resulted in developing the Alternative Funding Model Guidebook for Civil Society Organisations in Africa – were published in French and English. In partnership with the Nottawasaga Institute, the Hub is conducting mapping and assessments to understand national-level legal and policy frameworks that will support organisations to put tailored alternative funding models in place.

CENTRAL ASIA HUB SNAPSHOT
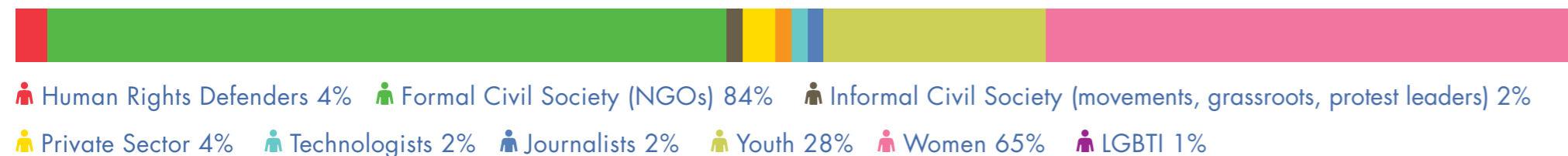
Launched 2016

VISION: TO CREATE A SPACE WHERE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOS) PLAY AN EFFECTIVE ROLE IN IDENTIFYING THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY IN CENTRAL ASIA.

MISSION: TO CREATE AND WIDEN CIVIC SPACES BY FOSTERING CONSTRUCTIVE CSO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, STRENGTHENING THE EXPERTISE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, AND IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT WITHIN AND BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS.

"THE FESTIVAL RESULTED IN A SERIES OF **CROSS-SECTOR EXCHANGES** BETWEEN TRADITIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY, **YOUTH AND TECHNOLOGISTS**."

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

👤 Human Rights Defenders 4%   👤 Formal Civil Society (NGOs) 84%   👤 Informal Civil Society (movements, grassroots, protest leaders) 2%

👤 Private Sector 4%   👤 Technologists 2%   👤 Journalists 2%   👤 Youth 28%   👤 Women 65%   👤 LGBTI 1%

FOCUS:

The Central Asia Hub is working to implement innovative ways to combat restrictions faced by civil society groups operating in the region and focuses on the following objectives:

- To bolster an enabling and inclusive environment for human rights and freedoms
- To support a new generation of civic space activists
- To enable civil society to proactively act and respond to global and inter-regional challenges to civic space through improved monitoring, transparency and accountability

Highlights 2018-19

- 550 civil society leaders trained in using new civic technologies
- 25 regional events, with more than 10,000 participants
- Tech to raise the digital literacy and innovation capacity of civil society
- A Civil Society Innovation Index for assessing the level of innovation of CSOs
- Digital Transparency Index to assess the government digital transparency and promotion of the right to information

2020/21 programme

- A Global South-led civil society Think and 'Can-do' Tank
- Innovation Festival 2020: Community of Exchange and Networking
- A Public Policy School to supply CSOs and activists in tackling civic space issues, and mobalising for action
- Trainings of young human rights defenders with innovative tools
- Digital Security Workshops across the region

CENTRAL ASIA: Building trust and opening spaces expanding through innovation

MEMBERS ACROSS 7 COUNTRIES

Bringing the region together for the Central Asia Innovation Festival was a key component of the hub's work in 18/19.

Hosted in Almaty in June 2019, the Festival brought together over 300 people from 13 countries to share skills and ideas and co-design new responses to civic space restrictions. It also included the largest event dedicated to civil society development in Central Asia.

The highlight of the Innovation Exchange was the Amazing People Awards, featuring the efforts of activists from across Central Asia to raise awareness of innovative projects within the region. The festival resulted in a series of cross-sector exchanges between traditional civil society, youth and technologists. It raised awareness about innovative civil society projects and provided a space to share the impact of such efforts.
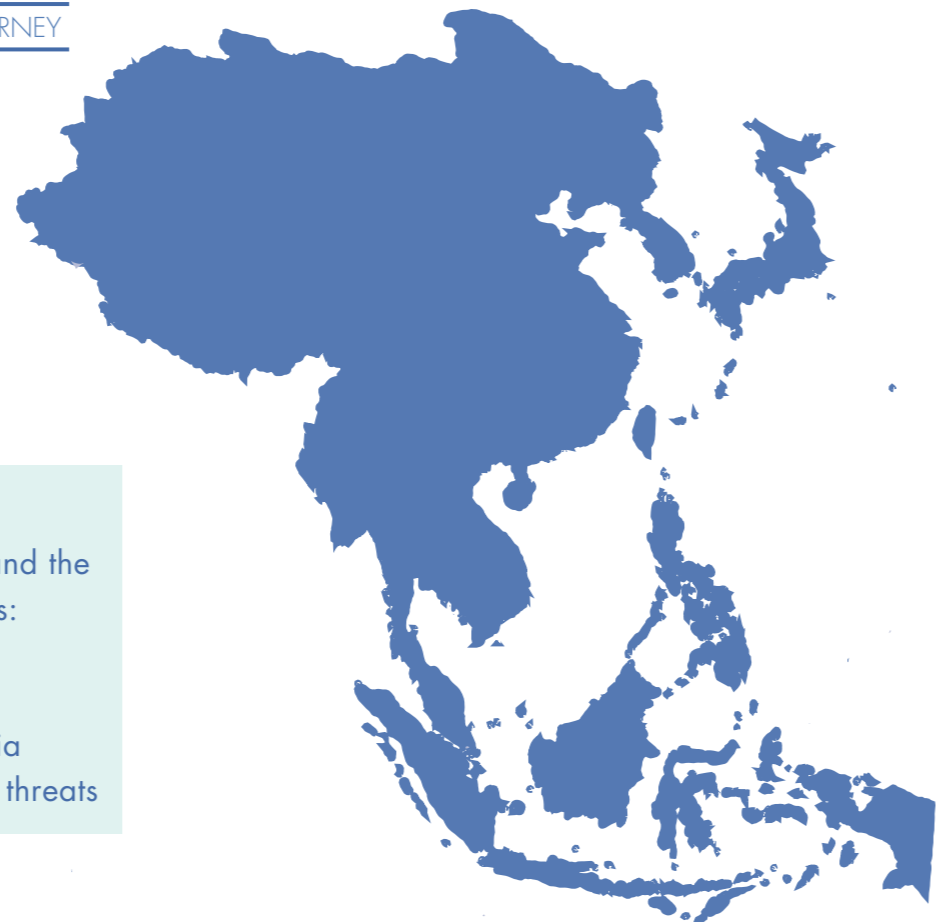
EAST ASIA HUB SNAPSHOT ⊕

Launched 2018

MISSION: TO PROVIDE VIRTUAL AND REAL SPACES TO DEFEND, EXPAND, AND CREATE CIVIC SPACE.

FOCUS:

The East Asia Hub works to broaden public awareness of human rights, and the shrinking civic space in East Asia, and focuses on the following objectives:

- To improve digital security among the Innovation for Change network
- To convene business-civil society dialogues and learning exchanges
- To broaden awareness of thepublic on shrinking civic space in East Asia
- To identify and promote new approaches to respond to the civic space threats

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

- 👤 Human Rights Defenders 32%   👤 Formal Civil Society (NGOs) 1%   👤 Informal Civil Society (movements, grassroots, protest leaders) 20%
- 👤 Private Sector 1%   👤 Technologists 7%   👤 Journalists 9%   👤 Youth 8%   👤 Women 55%   👤 Academia Researchers/Think Tanks 5%
- 👤 LGBTI 8%   👤 Artists 4%

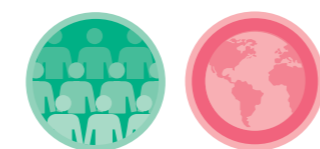Mothers of Dragons
龍母 Ibu Naga 용맹한 엄마들

Highlights 2018-19

- Workshops on disinformation and digital security
- Community Leaders Exchange held between civil society leaders and democracy activists in Malaysia, Thailand and Myanmar.
- *Mothers of Dragons*, a video series featuring stories of hope, courage, and persistence from mothers, rights defenders, and activists. Malaysia's Mothers of Dragons: "We can't keep quiet anymore", "Taiwan's Mothers of Dragons: I Won't Turn Back", and Mothers of Dragons - Korea
- Civic Innovation Fair to promote social innovation successes against closing civic space in the region

2020/21 programme

- Community Leaders Exchange
- Research on disinformation practices
- Civic Innovation Fair 2020
- Digital Quotient - Youth Digital Media Literacy
- Asian Peoples ' Summit

EAST ASIA: Engaging the public to combat disinformation

NETWORKS ACROSS 10 COUNTRIES

Because of the wide use of smartphones and simultaneous decreasing public trust in media and government, 'fake news' and disinformation in digital and non-digital spheres is increasingly influencing public opinion around the world. In East Asia, the impact of disinformation has been significant – it has catalysed prejudicial violence against activists and misled voters, likely changing election outcomes.

The I4C East Asia Hub and the wider network have focused on tracking and exploring ways to counter disinformation. Research work began in 2018 with a Combatting Disinformation workshop jointly organised with Open Culture Foundation, the Southeast Asian Press Alliance, and EngageMedia.

50 heads of civil society organisations, independent media practitioners, digital rights activists and fact-checking communities working to address disinformation in the region came together to discuss how disinformation is impacting countries in East Asia and share information about effective efforts to counter it – from applied research to campaigning and technology tools. The workshop sparked the creation of a comprehensive collective strategy on disinformation and established joint fact-checking approaches. It also served to build trust and create connections for the future that will allow for informed and accurate reporting on civic space issues.

The first outcome of the workshop was an online public engagement campaign powered by a series of powerful infographics.

LAC HUB SNAPSHOT

Launched 2016

MISSION: TO PROVIDE SPACE AND SUPPORT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY LEADERS, TECHNOLOGISTS, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS, AND ACADEMICS TO CO-CREATE SOLUTIONS TO THE REGION'S MOST COMPLEX SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

FOCUS:
The LAC Hub works to influence the overall social good ecosystem in the region to address civic space concerns and focuses on the following objectives:
- To create an ecosystem recognised by civil society leaders, technologists, academia, the private sector, and others
- To serve as a stage to come together to solve some of the region's most complex social, political, and economic problems
- To serve as the "go-to" place for social activism in Latin America and the Caribbean

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

- Human Rights Defenders 72%
- Formal Civil Society (NGOs) 79%
- Informal Civil Society (movements, grassroots, protest leaders) 24%
- Private Sector 8%
- Social Entrepreneurs 12%
- Technologists 28%
- Journalists 16%
- Youth 33%
- Women 71%
- LGBTI 14%
- Artists 9%

Highlights 2018-19
- CommuniDas.org platform
- Ciudades x Jóvenes (Cities by Youth) Campaign to mobilise youth in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) – the United Nation's roadmap for urban development
- Analysed a dataset provided by Change.org to see how citizen campaigns in Latin America aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals
- Research into Alternative Finance Models for CSO

2020/21 programme
- Innovation Labs and prototyping sessions
- Big data for social change project
- Design Thinking for Campaigning and Programme design
- Investment platform for the private sector
- Virtual trainings on Digital Security and Mental wellness in light of the COVID-19 pandemic

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:
Hacking change through a Lab
MEMBERS ACROSS 20 COUNTRIES

Some of the challenges faced by civil society organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean are: operational capacity, a lack of cooperation between organisations, limited trust and collaboration between civil society organisations and the private sector, a weak philanthropic culture, and a decrease in funds and uneven distribution of funds invested in the region.

One part of the I4C LAC Hub's response has been the creation of Innovation Labs – physical spaces that bring together civil society leaders, technologists, social entrepreneurs, and academics to co-create solutions to the region's social, political, and economic

challenges. These spaces allow participants to work collaboratively to test and scale solutions and exposes them to new partners and ideas they then take back into their environments.
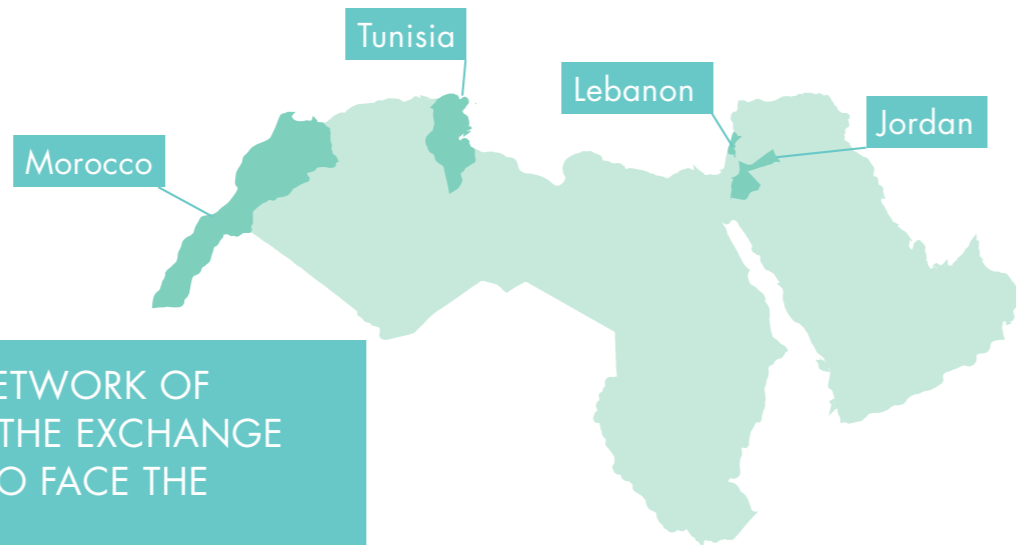
Among the success stories brought about by the Labs' way of working – ideation and rapid prototyping – is ComuniDAS, an open-source software,, and platform aimed at allowing civil society organisations to access resources when donor funding and aid is inaccessible. It has since expanded to facilitate skill and service exchange between 78 civil society organisations across the LAC region.

MENA HUB SNAPSHOT

Launched July 2018

VISION: TO CREATE A FREE AND SECURE CIVIC SPACE.

MISSION: TO BUILD A COLLABORATIVE INNOVATIVE NETWORK OF ACTIVISTS AND CSOS IN THE REGION, TO FACILITATE THE EXCHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT OF EXPERTISE AND RESOURCES TO FACE THE SHRINKING OF CIVIC SPACE

Tunisia
Lebanon
Jordan
Morocco

FOCUS:

The MENA Hub works to enhance regional solidarity and collaboration among CSOs in the region to face the closing of civic space and focuses on the following objectives:

- To establish a collaboration model between CSOs, social entrepreneurs and technology experts in the MENA region
- to initiate and test several innovative services and tools related to digital advocacy and activism
- to ensure the collaboration, independence and sustainability of MENA hub members by leveraging member resources
- to increase MENA hub members awareness on how to secure organisations and activists digitally.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

- Human Rights Defenders 26%
- Formal Civil Society (NGOs) 65%
- Informal Civil Society (movements, grassroots, protest leaders) 6%
- Private Sector 1%
- Journalists 2%
- Youth 26%
- Women 41%
- LGBTI 1%

Highlights 2018-19

- 463 people participated in 17 digital security trainings & sharing sessions
- Trained 63 participants on advocacy and campaigning.
- A sharing economy platform called Tabadol.
- Accountability Dashboard, a tool to track government projects and initiatives. Civil Rights Campaign reached more than 50,000 People
- 2 assessments of digital funding options for CSOs in open, closing, and closed societies.

2020/21 programme

- Regional Campaign: Digital Security Awareness
- The MENA Hub Communities of Practice Bootcamp
- Supporting transparency and integrity through the implementation of the "Integrity Icon" programme
- Women Human Rights Defenders Summit
- Regional and National Campaigns to change the narrative around Human Rights

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA):
Leveraging digital currencies to support activists

MEMBERS ACROSS 18 COUNTRIES

Due to geopolitical, economic, and regulatory constraints in the MENA region, some civil society organisations struggle with establishing mechanisms to ensure their long-term financial sustainability. Many are turning to alternative funding sources; the MENA Hub has concentrated its work on spreading information and supporting research on financial distribution, and funding support, with a particular focus on leveraging digital currencies in those countries whose civic space is narrowed, obstructed, repressed, or closed.

In early 2018, the Hub launched a first round of research on digital currencies and crowdfunding in Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Lebanon. In January 2020, Innovation for Change MENA (I4C MENA), SimSim-Participation Citoyenne, and Youth Without Borders launched national campaigns in Morocco and Tunisia, and developed policy influencing plans to support the draft of national crowdfunding bills. In Morocco, this effort resulted in suggesting a total of 17 amendments, and the signing off on 10 amendments in the Crowdfunding Law. In Tunisia, the research was used as a document of reference to pass the country's first-ever Crowdfunding Law.

PACIFIC HUB SNAPSHOT

Soon to launch: The Pacific Hub is the newest I4C Hub and came together after a youth co-design workshop concluded in Fiji during International Civil Society Week 2017.

MISSION: TO CREATE A CULTURE OF EXPERIMENTATION IN CIVIL SOCIETY TO DESIGN, TEST AND PROTOTYPE NEW IDEAS TO ADDRESS THE SECTOR'S MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES AND INNOVATE OPPORTUNITIES TO SUSTAIN THE CSO MOVEMENT.

FOCUS:
The Hub is a youth-led network and focuses on the following objectives:
- Mobilise, coordinate and facilitate resource mobilisation and next generation youth leaders to sustain the CSO movement.
- Identify gaps within the Pacific civil society space and build the innovative capacity on approaches to activism
- Create a collaborative ecosystem between diverse actors such as civil society, technologists, private sector and social entrepreneurs
- Build the capacity of civil society in capturing citizen-generated data to increase the sector's accountability and legitimacy as an intermediary between citizens and governments.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

- Formal Civil Society (NGOs) 52%
- Informal Civil Society (movements, grassroots, protest leaders) 24%
- Journalists 16%
- Anti Corruption Movements 3%
- Climate Change Organisations 6%
- Youth 15%
- Women 15%
- LGBTI 3%
- Regional Disability Organisations 33%

Highlights

A pilot study conducted by I4C Pacific Hub into the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and natural disasters like Cyclone Harold in the region's urban centres has shown the dual crises will have a dramatic impact on some young people's future, for instance in terms of them being able to complete their education.

Of the 45 participants surveyed, only 13% said that their family has so far not lost their job or had their work hours reduced because of COVID-19 restrictions. Respondents believed that the number of people completing their education will drop dramatically as families are unable to meet the costs of transport, school lunches and internet due to a lack of income. They suggested that a number of students will drop out altogether given the disruptions to the school year and loss of interest after a prolonged absence from classes.

The research was conducted using Talanoa or "storying", an indigenous way of gathering information that can involve formal or informal conversation, for instance participants lying on a mat or consuming "yagona" (kava).

The study is an extension of the Hub's previous work in partnership with the Pacific Youth Council, which featured an online discussion with psychologist Dr. Gaylene Osborne-Finekaso in Fiji on coping skills for young people in times of stress and uncertainty. A factsheet was produced on this and distributed across the Pacific Islands region following the talk.

2020/21 programme
- Citizen Generated Data & Climate Finance Accountability project
- Pacifika Think Tank, an online marketplace of youth experts to provide technical assistance to members and partners
- Pacific Youth Camp skills shares and solution co-design

PACIFIC: Harnessing citizen-generated data for climate accountability

MEMBERS ACROSS 3 SUBREGIONS

The Pacific Hub operates across the three Pacific sub-regions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. It is I4C's newest hub whose inaugural pilot programme focuses on increasing transparency and government accountability on climate financing through citizen-generated data. Through a Social Accountability and Climate Finance Innovation Lab, the hub is bringing together civil society organisations to monitor financial expenditures on climate in order to ensure fair distribution and ensure funds reach those communities with the greatest need. By building an evidence base using data gathered from fellow citizens, the sector will be better equipped to advocate and lobby government. Long term, the aim is to strengthen the Pacific region's collective capacity to hold the governments accountable and to build trust in the sector.

SOUTH ASIA HUB SNAPSHOT

Launched 2018

MISSION: TO PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE FOR STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY, CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT, CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITH EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION TOWARDS A JUST AND PEACEFUL SOCIETY IN SOUTH ASIA.

THEMATIC APPROACHES:

The South Asia Hub pools a reservoir of diverse skills and knowledge that enable members to create linkages, exchange services and tap into the expertise of the South Asia region to focus on the following approaches :

- To connect beyond CSOs by mobilising and engaging journalist and artivism networks
- To improve the financial sustainability of CSOs through introducing innovative funding models
- To strengthen regional advocacy and campaigning efforts
- To create online and physical safe spaces for human rights defenders
- To design civic technologies to promote and protect civic space in the region

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

- Human Rights Defenders 63%
- Formal Civil Society (NGOs) 16%
- Private Sector 1%
- Social Entrepreneurs 11%
- Technologists 2%
- Journalists 23%
- Youth 53%
- Women 57%
- LGBTI 8%
- Artists 10%

Highlights 2018-19

- Training on financial models such as local fundraising and social enterprises.
- Innovation Labs in rural areas to connect marginalised communities to civic space innovations.
- Hosted Arts Lab for Social Change to bring together youth, technology, music, arts and civic engagement.
- Campaigns to improve civic space: See Me, Beyond Headlines and IYouWe.

2020/21 programme

- Early Warning System
- Beyond Civil Society Campaigns
- Social Media & Creative Department services
- Legal Aid App
- Social Enterprise Accelerator for Youth
- Holistic Safety Trainings
- Artivism Magazine

SOUTH ASIA: Engaging youth and art to inspire change

MEMBERSHIP ACROSS 8 COUNTRIES

Art is a powerful tool to mobilise action. A principal focus for the South Asia hub is using art to engage young leaders to build coalitions that address key social justice and civic space challenges.

In September 2018, in Colombo, the South Asia Hub brought together 45 youth activists, filmmakers, artists, singers, dancers and actors from Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, and Sri Lanka for the first #YouthSpaceSouthAsia artivism Lab.

The objective of the three-day event hosted by the Afghan social movement ArtLords, was to co-design new art-powered ways of protecting civic space. The workshop also helped participants create effective digital campaigns through musical content. Led by Indian rapper Sofia Ashraf, discussions explored how musical forms including hip-hop can deliver powerful social messages and motivate action. Participants also composed and performed songs about social change. In addition, a Street Theatre for Social Change component built participant skills in storytelling and explored ways in which public spaces and the streets can be used as platforms to communicate social messages and engage audiences to take action.

The #YouthSpaceSouthAsia artivism Lab sparked the creation of a new network of young 'artivists' in the region who regularly engage with each other to create social justice-focused works.

PROTECTING CIVIC SPACE AMID COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic upends societies and economies, civil society and activists are experiencing a dramatic shrinking of civic space, and an increase in human rights violations and restrictions from governments. The Innovation for Change network has been mobilising to support our members and civil society groups across the seven regions.

The Middle East And North Africa: Digital Security Checkup Application: MENA Hub has created an interactive online Digital Security Check-up Quiz that helps users discover the weaknesses of their online presence, provides data protection tips, and identifies different online security risks. The quiz highlights the simple steps that can be taken by users to protect their data. Based on user answers, users will receive a list of customised recommendations and suggestions on how to protect their online presence (accounts, privacy, data, etc).

South Asia: Using Civic Technology to share critical information about COVID-19 The South Asia Hub is setting up small scale, community-operated, interactive voice response (IVR) units connected to the internet that can serve as an asynchronous two-way communication medium for remote and vulnerable groups in low literacy and low income regions.

Central Asia: Countering Misinformation about COVID-19 – Organising the Public Awareness Capacity Building Workshop to fight rumours and avoid fake news regarding COVID-19, empower media and civil society with fact-checking skills required to detect and combat disinformation about the pandemic, join forces to mitigate the worst threats of misinformation, and build a culture of integrity and solidarity that contributes to the global fight against misinformation.

East Asia: Reimagine a Post COVID-19 future for civil society - the pandemic has revealed stark inequalities as well as the myriad challenges wrought on civic space around the world including laws limiting freedom of movement and unchecked misinformation and/or disinformation. To this end, the East Asia Hub will organise three co-creation workshops to bring together the hub's members, activists, and rights defenders to collectively go through a process of envisioning a Post-COVID future.

Latin America And Caribbean: Innovation Labs to face the impact of COVID-19. The LAC Hub will conduct 4 Virtual Innovation Labs across the region that focus on Covid-19 and its effects on civil society and civic space including how human rights have been affected by the pandemic, transparency in the use of resources, CSO resilience, and migration-related issues.
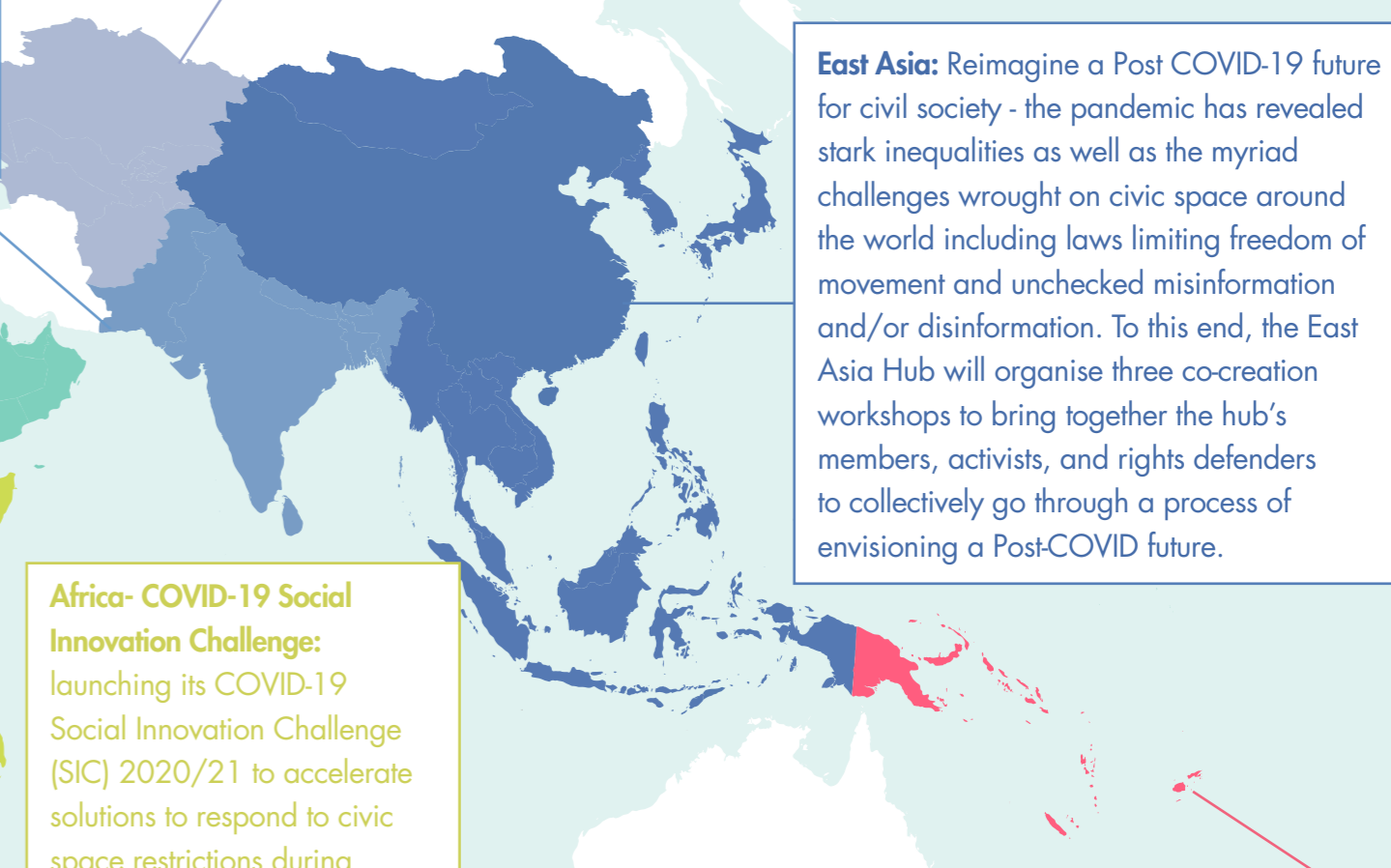
Africa- COVID-19 Social Innovation Challenge: launching its COVID-19 Social Innovation Challenge (SIC) 2020/21 to accelerate solutions to respond to civic space restrictions during COVID-19. It focuses on three key themes: Government Accountability & Transparency, Supporting Marginalised & Vulnerable Communities, and Community Rights & Resilience.

Pacific- Civic and Human Rights in the Pacific aimdst COVID-19: The Pacific Hub is undertaking research into how COVID-19 is impacting civic and human rights in the region. The research will include a comparison of countries and the laws in each country that negatively affect human rights. The research will also document human rights violations and communities affected by the pandemic.

SCALING

WORKING AND ADAPTING ACROSS REGIONS

A key long-term objective of the global network is to ensure that innovative solutions, once ideated and prototyped in the regions, are replicated and scaled. Two recent success stories include scaling the LAC Hub's sharing economy platform in the MENA region and replicating LAC Hub expertise to improve access to impact funding in Africa and the Middle East.

Tabadol: Bringing a sharing economy approach to the Middle East

Building on the LAC Hub's ComuniDAS platform, the MENA Hub is developing the second iteration of the sharing economy platform to enable the exchange of services in civil society across the region. The ultimate mission is to strengthen the capacity of the sector and encourage dynamic fundraising that enables civic activism across the MENA.

The MENA version of the platform, Tabadol – which means exchange in Arabic – will incentivise users to exchange resources on the platform, primarily through a community digital currency based on blockchain technology. Tabadol users will be able to earn tokens for their collaborative work that can be traded for access to different resources and services on the platform, and users will be able to rate each other on completion of tasks. Based on the ComuniDAS model, Tabadol will promote the exchange of services and knowledge through a series of marketplaces:

- A talents marketplace will connect skilled graduate and undergraduate students with NGOs and start-ups in the region, thereby creating opportunities for young people to gain professional experience
- A resources marketplace will facilitate information sharing and collaboration
- A spaces marketplace will allow members to exchange and share physical space
- A pro bono legal marketplace will pilot a regional matchmaking system to connect users with legal advisors

"THE **ULTIMATE MISSION** IS TO STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF THE SECTOR AND **ENCOURAGE DYNAMIC FUNDRAISING** THAT E**NABLES CIVIC ACTIVISM** ACROSS THE MENA REGION."

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INNPACTIA:
Adapting a LAC model for greater access to social impact funding in Africa and the MENA region

Innpactia is an online platform that facilitates the sharing of resourcing opportunities and develops the capacities of users to access those resources. This platform will be scaled to the Africa and MENA Hubs with the aim of fostering collaboration around resourcing opportunities and mitigating competitiveness in the sector to access civil society resourcing. Over the last four years in Latin America, Innpactia has supported 600 social projects with 4.2 million dollars in funding.

Due to similarities in roadblocks for civil society organisations applying for social impact funding such as: unequal access to information, gaps in expertise, and poorly designed bidding mechanisms – the Africa and MENA Hubs have developed a collaboration model to adopt the Innpactia approach, working closely with the Moroccan Center for Innovation and Social Enterprise (MCISE) and the Innpactia tech team to implement the model.

LESSONS:
Collaborative Innovation in the Face of Closing Space

As the network progresses toward consolidation, the challenges being faced by CSOs appear to be escalating globally in addition to the impact of COVID-19. According to the CIVICUS Monitor's People Power Under Attack report published in December 2019, 40% of the world's population now live in repressed countries – in 2018, it was 19%.

This troubling escalation has necessitated that Civil Society groups and human rights defenders find new solutions to civic space challenges and adapt solutions to rapidly changing contexts.

I4C'S UNIQUE JOURNEY SO FAR PROVIDES SEVERAL KEY INSIGHTS ABOUT HOW AND WHAT WE NEED TO CHANGE TO RESPOND TO EVOLVING THREATS:

1 **Experimentation:** Building a culture of experimentation is a critical step to ensure the resilience of CSOs in the face of increased restrictions. Spending less time planning and more time prototyping interventions, managing a portfolio of solutions, letting go of what isn't working and scaling successes. Innovation is impossible without making mistakes, sensing, and testing. We should not be afraid to try doing things differently.

2 **Diversity:** Co-creation is about inclusivity, and action beyond solidarity. Through its different methodologies, co-creation builds an accessible, inclusive, and trust-based ecosystem that connects civil society with each other and across sectors and helps to foster unorthodox collaborations and actions. A network must reflect the diversity of the stakeholders concerned with the issue at hand. Bringing together a diversity of voices, has been fundamental to our innovation work. Forming a diverse hub, representing a variety of thoughts, sectors and perspectives, has been essential when ideating solutions to the shared challenge of shrinking civic space. "Bringing the same people to the table, results in the usual ideas for potential solutions".

3 **System:** Cross-regional collaboration and a globally distributed structure offers a new systemic dimension to ideas and initiatives developed in collaborative innovation. It allows us to ideate solutions and engage funders with efforts that go beyond dealing with part of a problem. Instead, we are able to address the root causes of civic space challenges, piece by piece, region by region.