

# International Civic Forum

## Solidarity in Times of Scrutiny

<b>Date</b>	29 October 2019
<b>Time</b>	09:00 – 18:00, followed by dinner
<b>Location</b>	Exact location tbc, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## Concept Note

Since 2016, the International Civic Forum (ICF) convenes leaders from civil society, media, philanthropy, government and business who are at the forefront of protecting and advancing civic space around the globe. It is the annual civic space platform to develop face-to-face contacts, build trust and identify opportunities for collaboration. In 2019, the Forum will assess existing and new **solidarity response mechanisms** that come into effect when there is a moment of systematic clampdown on civil society organisations (CSOs). The ICF 2019 will kick off the process of developing a global solidarity playbook that will inform and help to improve the solidarity mechanisms.

### Improving our resilience

Over recent years, many CSOs, particularly networks, around the world have looked more systematically at how to respond to governmental clampdown. Organisations have come up with their internal resilience strategies, but they have also forged coalitions to stand together in a moment of crisis. With the aim of learning from these mechanisms, improve our understanding of what works well, strengthen the mechanisms and elevate our resilience to the next level, the ICF 2019 will focus on the following two dimensions:

- 1) Learning from existing solidarity and resilience mechanisms:** In preparation for the ICF, the Centre will review several existing solidarity and resilience mechanisms - both on internal organisational and coalition level - to understand what makes internal and collaborative approaches effective and what gaps become apparent. At the ICF, participants will discuss these learnings and gaps and identify approaches to implement corresponding solutions. Participants will further explore how other stakeholders from friendly governments, media, philanthropy or the business sector can help forging strong solidarity coalitions.
- 2) Kicking off the development of a Global Solidarity Playbook:** Building on these analyses and considerations, a discussion around developing a Global Solidarity Playbook for CSOs will be initiated. After the ICF, the Centre will establish a working group to work on this effort throughout 2020. This Solidarity Playbook will provide suggestions for CSO coalition response mechanisms that consider all forms of support, from solidarity messaging to sharing resources in the field of financial, legal or even medical aid.



## Focus and Formats

Participants will discuss the results of the study and their insights. They will focus in the following questions:

- What learnings can we draw from internal resilience mechanisms?
- What have we learned from the work of response coalitions?
- How effective are calls for public proclamation of solidarity and where are solidarity response mechanisms going beyond these calls, initiating other supportive measures?
- How could we better involve stakeholders from friendly governments, media, philanthropy or the business sector?

Following these initial discussions and assessments, participants will dissect the below question and identify a way forward:

- How can we build on strengths, bridge gaps and address the weaknesses of our existing solidarity and resilience mechanisms?

During the day, we will alternate between different formats to enable rich and outcome oriented discussions. Formats will include plenary, action-building workshops and peer-to-peer advice sessions.

## Participation

We invite ICSO and CSO professionals who are working on response mechanisms of their organisations as well as those who are working within coalitions that specifically work on joint efforts to counter undue clampdown on civil society. We also invite individuals from foundations and bilateral donors with an interest in these mechanisms as well as academics and representatives from businesses.

## The ICF in the context of Global Perspectives

In 2019, the International Civic Forum is taking place in conjunction with the *Global Perspectives* conference (30 October – 01 November). Under the title “Let’s Make Lemonade: Legitimacy and Impact in Times of Scrutiny”, the conference will focus on challenges around integrity and accountability and how we can turn these challenges into opportunities for greater impact. Participants from the ICF are invited to participate in *Global Perspectives*. If you are interested to find out more about *Global Perspectives* visit <https://globalperspectives.online>. Please note that *Global Perspectives* is a paid event.

## Registration

[Please register for this side event here](#). Please note that we will inform you if your registration was approved within one week of your registration.

For further information or ideas for the ICF, please contact Miriam Niehaus, Project Manager, at [mniehaus@icscentre.org](mailto:mniehaus@icscentre.org) or +49 30 20 62 46 97 15.