

Power Shift 2022

Accelerating Inclusive Power Shift



Dates and Locations

Mini Lab: 29–31 March (virtual)

Curated conversations (various topics): June - December

Community gathering: November (Berlin, Germany or virtual)

The International Civil Society Centre will continue its Power Shift initiative to strengthen international civil society organisations' (ICSOs) impact by accelerating inclusive distribution of powers, roles and responsibilities in their governance, specifically by strengthening the voices of the communities they serve.

International civil society organisations striving towards inclusive governance models

Since 2018, the Centre's Power Shift Labs have addressed the problem of power imbalances between Northern and Southern, but also between large and small, rich and resource-scarce entities of International Civil Society Organisations (ICSOs), and an increased emphasis on partner relations and inclusion of the communities they serve. This work is based on the notion for continuous improvement of relevance and legitimacy of ICSOs' work and setup, challenged internally and externally, and standing in the way of these organisations to achieve their mandates.

Very often, "traditional" governance models which are process-heavy and geared towards donor accountability, limit the involvement of communities from engaging in decision-making processes, not getting a say or a steer in organisations' strategies and principal decisions. For organisations with a specific mandate on vulnerable groups or minorities, **the gap of involving them in governance processes** in a meaningful way is even bigger, for many reasons including accessibility.

In the Power Shift Labs of the Centre, ICSO leaders from around the globe review the inter-relationship of power dynamics, organisational intent and governance reform. Over the past four years, a growing community explored the questions of how to overcome barriers and lead the necessary transformational power shifts in governance. Many participating organisations have advanced on their ambitions in putting the people they serve at the centre of their governance. Most have identified paths to success but also encountered hurdles and blockages. Through the use of systematic tools and peer exchange, progress was made and valuable learnings happened.

In 2021, a **systematic review of the journey** was conducted, in order to document the progress so far (attached for ease of reference). From 2022 onwards, the Centre's power shift work will



accelerate the ambitions of its key ICSSO stakeholders to improve inclusiveness and legitimacy, and widen the committed group including partners, progressive donors and critical parties.

Preceding the various events, and serving as a basis for reflection, the Centre will conduct a **benchmarking study** in February and March 2022, to provide an overview of current governance structures and processes in the Centre's community and like-minded organisations. It shall provide insight into how governance transformations are addressing inclusiveness and legitimacy, and outline key steps being undertaken or planned in shifting power in governance. Ideally, it will allow for future exchange and learning from each other's practices based upon comparable observations and will help calibrate the next phase of the initiative.

We will continue mutual exchange and learning through the first event in 2022, a **governance / power shift lab** focused on the inclusion of partners, communities and people we work for. Based on last year's discussion we will explore two main themes:

- a) How do we consider and integrate voices of partners, staff, local communities in governance?
- b) How is knowledge gathered, shared, and valued, particularly information coming from local entities?

Making meaningful progress

In order to accelerate learning, we will thereafter organise curated conversations around particularly relevant themes, like equitable partnerships, donor policies and practices, and re-imagined mandates of ICSSOs. We will link up with relevant initiatives like Pledge for Change and RINGO in order to create synergies.

A 3-step approach will be taken as follows

- 1) **A Virtual Lab (29–30 March)** on power shift progress to date: Participants will share their progress against ambitions and reflect on successes, hard decisions and failures. They will be exposed to inspiring examples of more inclusive governance and learn more about feedback mechanisms and horizontal accountability.
A first look at benchmarking results will orient their various efforts against progress in the sector.
We will also include creative ways of overcoming blockages through a light touch change execution clinic **on 31 March** (this will be an additional module and offered to a limited number of interested parties)
At the end of the lab we would hope to have maintained momentum of mutual learning, have included new perspectives and a clear way forward on themes relevant for continued conversations.
- 2) **A number of curated conversations (June – December)** on themes of equitable partnerships, donor roles and ICSSO mandates, including the continuation of discussion amongst and between stakeholder groups (as initiated in the Hard Talk event of 2021). Curated conversations will be on invitation to ensure a trustful environment, but the circle of invitees will go beyond stakeholders of the Virtual Lab to include key stakeholders and ensure diversity of perspectives.



- 3) **A (hopefully in-person, or hybrid) community gathering** of the involved organisations and Lab cohort in Berlin, as part of the November 'Global Perspectives' engagement month, reflecting on ambitions and progress, and connecting with relevant other initiatives in the sector.

Lab Participants

Attendees at the Lab will be **(Deputy) CEOs** and **Senior Leaders** in charge of governance, **Board Members** as well as **leaders from Southern national or regional chapters**. Each participating organisation will bring at least two participants from different entities with the aim to bring at least one peer from a partner, implementing organisation or chapter from the Global South.

Existing cohort(s):

2021 active: World YWCA, CARE International, Alliance 2015, SOS Children's Villages, CBM Global, Transparency International, Plan International, HelpAge International, NDWA;
Organisations who have expressed interest; YMCA, Wikimedia Foundation, Oxfam International, Voluntary Service Overseas, Terre des Hommes, ChildFund International, WaterAid, Solidaridad, Rights CoLab;
Partner organisations: tbd by Lab participants

Meeting Details

The **Power Shift Mini Lab** will take place on 29–30 March 2022 virtually. Participation will be by invitation only. 31 March is reserved for the optional Change Execution Clinic.

The subsequent **curated conversations** will be scheduled for the second half of 2022.

The **community gathering** will be part of the Centre's 'Global Perspectives month in November, and will be conducted either in person in Berlin or virtually.

The detailed programs for Mini-Lab, Curated Conversation, Community Gathering will be developed in consultation with participants.

Terms

There will be **no participation fee** for the Centre's shareholders and (Trial) Core supporters to attend the Mini-Lab. Interested organisations from outside the Centre's community will be charged € 1,000 (early bird by 28 February) or € 1,200 for each organisation, which will cover two participants each. The change execution clinic will be offered to 3-5 organisations only (concept attached), applications will be considered on a first come first basis.

The Mini Lab and Change Execution Clinic is held with support by <https://conneradvisory.com/>.



Agenda

DAY 1 SHARING INSIGHTS ON PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES

13.00–13.45	Welcome, Objectives, Expectation setting, status check
13.45 - 14.15	Environmental Scan – Initiatives that are out there
14.15 - 14.45	Benchmarking – first insights
14.45 - 15.15	Break
15.15 - 16.30	Report outs from previous lab participants on the progress they have made, the challenges they encountered and the lessons they learned.
16.30–16.45 CET	Break
16.45 - 17.30 CET	Inputs from new participants focusing on where they stand in relation to power shifts, intents, difficulties in their organisations
17.30 - 18.00 CET	Summary of themes were identified previously or which emerged from the various report-outs.

DAY 2 FEEDBACK LOOPS AND UPWARD ACCOUNTABILITY

13.00 - 13.45	Welcome and Agenda of the day Energizer, recap, community building Ambitions and strategizing way forward
13.45 - 14.45	Loop (https://www.talktoloop.org/home) Citizen Monitoring (Integrity Action - citizen monitoring using tech for development) Development Alternatives https://restlessdevelopment.org/the-development-alternative/ What can we learn from tools and approaches in the sector?
14.45 – 15.15	Reflection and deep dive in smaller groups
15.15 - 15.45	Break
15.45 - 16.45	Status Check: a) How do we consider and integrate voices of partners, staff, local communities in governance? b) How is knowledge gathered, shared, and valued, particularly information coming from local entities?



- 16.45 – 17.30 Why is all this difficult: A conversation on managing overload
- 17.30 – 18.00 Wrap out and outlook to day 3

DAY 3: LEADING CHANGE IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES

14.00 - 17.00 A Change Execution Clinic *Ed Boswell*

15.15 - 15.45 *Coffee Break*

17.00 Wrap-up