

The UN system – a brief for social organizations/movements¹

A rapid look at UN history

For the 50 nations that gathered in San Francisco in 1945 to witness the birth of the UN in the aftermath of World War II, the most compelling motivation to cede a portion of their national sovereignty to a mechanism of world governance was “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. This helps to explain the predominance of the Security Council over the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in the architecture of the UN, and the selection of the five permanent members with veto powers: the winners of the war against Nazi and Nippon imperialism. In parallel, the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944 put the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) in place with a vision of “putting an end to economic nationalism” by opening markets and re-establishing monetary order in a post-war world.² Many of the specialized technical agencies of the UN system - FAO, UNESCO, WHO - were born during the same period.³ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, indisputably one of the cardinal achievements of the UN, was adopted by the General Assembly in 1948.

A seismic change in the UN occurred in the '60s/'70s with the arrival of some 100 new members – ex-colonies of the Western powers – and the emergence of the Third World on the center of the policy stage. The new Group of 77 developing countries (G77) privileged the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the technical agencies over the Security Council and the WB/IMF as forums where poor countries' votes had equal weight to those of the rich and in which their agendas on development and structural changes could be pushed. Their criticism of the 1945 world order and of the economic policies and institutions that supported it was echoed by the Communist bloc and Western radicals. The G77's numeric dominance of the GA and ECOSOC enabled it to push through a number of institutional innovations. In 1965 the UN Development Programme (UNDP) was established as a GA-controlled funding alternative to the WB. The first UN Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was held in 1964, fueled by South American “dependency” theories. In 1974 the GA proclaimed the advent of global equity in adopting its Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The G77's optimistic expectation that structural transformation was around the corner was buoyed up by the 1973 success of the OPEC countries in pushing up the price of crude oil.

This optimism was short-lived. Efforts to replicate the oil cartel maneuver in the case of other primary commodities produced in the South were unsuccessful, and the G77's capacity to control the GA and ECOSOC was insufficient to substantially affect the prevailing power balance. The Intergovernmental Commission on Transnational Corporations created by ECOSOC in the mid '70s was unable to carry out its mission of disciplining TNC conduct due to conflicts between both N/S and E/W. The oil crisis combined with the food crisis of the '70s to offer the OECD countries an opportunity to “depoliticize”, fragment, and reassert their control of the key global food and agriculture functions, up until then concentrated within FAO, with the creation of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) established within the WB in 1971 to propagate Green Revolution technology; the founding in 1974 of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) by the OECD and OPEC governments; the separation of the World Food Programme from FAO in the early '80s.

The '70s was also the period in which Southern governments accepted “generous” loans pressed on them by the WB, TNCs and Northern private banks. With the fall in prices of export commodities and the rise in interest rates of the early '80s the debt crisis erupted. This opened the way to the imposition of structural adjustment regimes by the WB/IMF throughout the South from the '80s on, only barely window-dressed in

¹ This article has been prepared in the context of a study on the UN system and social organizations/movements sponsored by the UN NGO Liaison Service (NGLS) which is being conducted by Nora McKeon with Diego Colatei, Carol Kalafatic and Mario Pianta.

² The third proposed financial institution, an International Trade Organization, was not ratified by the US Senate.

³ ILO predated the UN itself, having been established in 1919.

the early '90s by the UN's injunctions to provide "safety nets" for the victims in order to ensure "structural adjustment with a human face" and by the WB's subsequent commitment to "poverty reduction". The establishment of the World Trade organization in 1995, integrating agriculture into the world trade regulation agenda, completed the institutional dominance of the neo-liberal paradigm.

During the same time frame the purview and structures of the UN system progressively stretched to meet emerging issues of gender, environment, human rights. The UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) was established in follow-up to the 1972 Stockholm conference on the environment. The first World Conference on Women held in Mexico City in 1975 led to the creation of UNIFEM. The Rio Conference of 1992 brought the Commission on Sustainable Development into being and created a series of secretariats to service the Conventions it adopted. The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights recommended the creation of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The disparate commitments adopted by the series of global conferences that animated the '90s were distilled into a compendium of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the General Assembly at the Millennium Summit in 2000. There had been widespread expectations with the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 that the end of the cold war would liberate political will and resources to fight poverty and hunger, but these expectations were rapidly unmasked as illusory and by 2005 it had become apparent that the world community was incapable of attaining even the modest targets foreseen in the MDGs.

The UN system today and the reform process

Civil society actors often mistakenly tend to view the UN as a single monolithic entity. In reality, a number of important distinctions need to be made. One is between the governing bodies of the UN system, where the real political decision-making takes place, and the secretariats, which set the scene for decision-making through the information and analysis they provide and the way in which they orchestrate the deliberative process. Even the category of "governing bodies" is not univocal: different ministries relate to different UN forums and do not necessarily take the same positions on the same issues. Within the UN system itself, it is necessary to differentiate between offices, programmes and funds which fall under the direct authority of the Secretary General and the UN General Assembly/ECOSOC, on the one hand, and, on the other, the specialized agencies, like FAO, UNESCO, WHO and ILO, which have separate and autonomous governing bodies. It is important to make functional distinctions between entities which operate as normative policy forums, those whose responsibilities lie in the areas of services and/or funding, and those which do a bit of both. The international financial institutions like the WB have distinct mandates and governance mechanisms, based not on the UN one-country-one-vote rule but weighted according to levels of contributions. The WTO, outside the UN family strictly speaking, is yet another case. While its decision-making operates on the basis of "consensus", there are enormous differences in the power of rich and poor countries to influence the shaping of consensus decisions.

The labyrinth-like complexity of the UN system is one of the factors that hampers effective targeting by social organizations. A simplified listing of the UN system structure, focusing on those entities which may be of greatest interest to social organizations, is given in Annex 1. To illustrate the overlapping nature of UN jurisdictions, the issue of access to productive natural resources (land, water, biodiversity) is dealt with in substantive ways by at least fifteen different UN entities⁴.

Reform of the UN system was a priority for Secretary-General Kofi Annan from the time of his entry into service in 1997. Problems to be addressed included those of the profound changes in geopolitical power since the founding of the UN, which were not reflected in the composition of the Security Council; the incapacity of the ineffectual ECOSOC to deal with the proliferation of uncoordinated initiatives and mandates within the UN system brought about by a decade of thematic global conferences, and to bring the Bretton

⁴ UNEP, UNDP, UNHCR, DESA, the Commission for Sustainable Development, the Regional Commissions, UNRISD, PFII, FAO, World Bank, WIPO, IFAD, UNFCCC, UNCCD and UNCBD.

Woods institutions into a more productive relationship with the UN; the growing unbalance between the demands made on the UN and the diminishing resources available to it, exacerbated by the refusal of its major donor to pay its assessed contributions; inefficient intergovernmental working methods and management of the secretariat... The underlying question, as always, is that of the political will of the powerful countries and the degree to which the UN can influence the interests of its members rather than merely reflect them.

Kofi Annan adopted the mechanism of appointing “high level panels” of authoritative individuals to develop his reform proposals, a reflection of the difficulty of generating change from within the UN system itself. The major proposals were contained in two reports submitted to the GA. “In Larger Freedom” (2005) mapped out the organizational priorities of the UN – poverty alleviation, development, prevention of conflict and human rights – and proposed measures to streamline the GA, render the Security Council more representative of the realities of power in today’s world, reform the ECOSOC, replace the discredited Commission on Human Rights with a standing Human Rights Council elected by the GA, and strengthen the role of UN Resident Coordinators at country level. The report of the “High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment” (2006) elaborated more detailed recommendations including: promotion of fully unified UN-system operations at country level, overseen by a new UN Sustainable Development Board reporting to ECOSOC; more coherent international environmental governance coordinated by a strengthened UNEP; conclusion of formal agreements between the Bretton Woods institutions and the UN; establishment of a Global Leaders Forum of ECOSOC in order to heighten its political weight; strengthening the internal system-wide coordination undertaken by the UN Chief Executives Board⁵. Implementation of some of these recommendations has moved ahead, although the new Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is exercising his prerogative to submit his own reform proposals to the GA. The Human Rights Council was created on 15 March 2006. Unified UN country programmes are being piloted in 8 countries. ECOSOC has been mandated to hold annual Ministerial Reviews and a biannual high-level Development Cooperation Forum with stakeholder participation.

While the latter measures aim at building a higher UN political profile for economic and social decision-making, the rich countries continue to assert their dominion over global economic and political affairs outside of the UN system through such instruments as the G8 meetings and the OECD-promoted donor-driven “Effectiveness of Aid” initiative. Accountable global governance is also threatened by the advent of disproportionately wealthy private donors like the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation with its Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa and by the proliferation of policy networks linking sectoral policy practitioners across borders, both operating in the absence of political oversight.

Reform processes are not limited to the core of the UN. In the food and agriculture area IFAD successfully weathered an independent external evaluation (IEE) whose report was published in 2006. The results of FAO’s tempestuous IIE will be discussed at a special conference to be held in November 2008, a decisive deliberation for the future of the organization. In this context, some Northern governments are pushing for a further reduction of the specialized agencies to serve as little more than technical adjuncts of the UN secretariat, with the understanding that the financial institutions (WB/IMF) and the WTO would handle the “hard” economic/development agenda of global governance while the UN would be left with the issues of peace, security, humanitarian assistance and the “soft” agenda of human rights.

The UN system and social organizations/movements⁶

The global summits of the ‘90s, starting with the Rio Conference in 1992, opened the doors of UN policy forums to civil society to a totally unprecedented degree in terms both of quantity and of typology. The 1996

⁵ Chaired by the UN Secretary General and grouping the heads of the various UN agencies.

⁶ Social organizations are understood as organizations representing sectors of the population who are most directly and negatively affected by the impacts of the neo-liberal agenda, as distinct from NGOs, which may lobby against neo-liberal policies but are not mandated by or accountable to social constituencies.

revision of the ECOSOC rules governing accreditation of NGOs to the UN broke the longstanding monopoly of Western-based International NGOs to embrace also national associations of all regions including, in theory, social organizations. Over the past 15 years, the UN system has undoubtedly developed an extensive and effective repertoire of participation practices facilitating civil society interaction with intergovernmental policy processes. However, there have been significant limitations to this extension of civil society involvement in UN affairs. One is the fact that the UN system has not been able to integrate into its normal practices the exceptional accommodation of civil society voices that has been allowed in once-off summits. The recommendations of the High-Level Panel named by Kofi Annan to propose changes in how the UN relates to civil society as part of his vision of UN reform (2004) ranged from the highly political (e.g. opening up the GA to civil society participation) to the more operational (e.g. appointing civil society focal points in UN country teams). Not surprisingly the more political proposals have dropped off the map.

A second major limitation is the fact that UN outreach to social organizations, as distinct from NGOs, has been and continues to be exceedingly marginal, due not only to deficiencies on the part of the UN but also to the reluctance of many NGOs to share access to UN bodies with social organizations. System-wide research undertaken in 2004-2005 revealed that only three of the twenty-four UN family agencies and programmes surveyed report strong success in reaching out to social organizations.⁷ A table summarizing how various entities of the UN system interface with civil society organizations is attached in Annex 2.

The only on-going interface mechanisms between UN entities and CSOs in which social organizations are well-represented or dominant are the International Civil Society Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC), IFAD's Farmers' Forum, the Commission on Sustainable Development's Major Group system, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) and ILO. ILO is in a category on its own because of its tripartite governing structure integrating workers' and employers' organizations with governments at all levels. The PFII is also a unique case, as an entity established by and reporting to ECOSOC and composed of both indigenous people-nominated and government-nominated members. Of the others, the only completely autonomous CS mechanism is the IPC. The Farmers' Forum is co-managed by IFAD and a steering committee of rural peoples' organizations according to agreed principles. The Major Group system has been subject to strong criticism because of the intergovernmental predefinition of the categories into which civil society is expected to fit and the obligation to develop consensus positions within Major Groups like "farmers" in which very different interests are present.⁸ In all other cases throughout the UN system the selection of civil society interlocutors is strongly in the hands of the secretariat and/or a nucleus of well-established NGOs with the result that social organization participation is marginal or non-existent. A good example was the Civil Society Development Forum held in conjunction with the launch of the new ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum in July of last year at which out of 96 civil society interventions only 2 were made by what could be called social organizations: indigenous peoples (the Tebtebbe Foundation) and trade unions (ITUC). Equally preoccupying is the CSO Advisory Committee to the Administrator of UNDP, composed of 15 people named by UNDP in their personal capacity to "set the context for policy partnerships with civil society." Only two of the 15 members are from social organizations, the same ones that participated in the ECOSOC Development Forum. The UNDP Advisory Committee is currently being replicated at country level by the UN Resident Coordinators, an improper invasion of national policy space that ought to be occupied by national governments and social organizations with the UN playing only a discrete facilitating role.

Some conclusions and issues for consideration

Social organizations are advocating structural and paradigmatic changes which are resisted or opposed by the most powerful members of the UN, the international financial institutions (IFIs) and corporate interests.

⁷ Nora McKeon, *Legitimizing Global Governance: The United Nations, NGOs and Social Movements* (forthcoming). The three UN entities are FAO, IFAD and ILO.

⁸ The Major Group system is taken as a reference point by other UN entities like UNEP, which has recently developed guidelines for enhancing civil society participation in its governance.

What factors need to be taken into account in developing strategies whereby the UN can function as an arena in which to effectively present, defend and – if possible - win acceptance for alternatives to the dominant neo-liberalization agenda considering that, for all its weaknesses, the UN presents greater political legitimacy and leveragability than any other existing global governance forum?

1. *Situate strategic reflection in the context of careful analysis of the prevailing political environment.* Some cracks appear to be opening up in the neo-liberal paradigm and global governance system which social organizations could exploit in their approaches to the UN: the stalemate of the WTO Doha Round; the difficult waters in which the WB is navigating; the probability of a change in the US administration; the challenges posed by governments of the South in, for example, establishing the Banco del Sur (South America) or refusing to meet the EU's deadline for signing Economic Partnership Agreements (West Africa); the explosion of global crises – climate change, rise in food prices – that are undeniably generated by the neo-liberal development model; and, of course, the persistent and insistent mobilization of social movements around alternatives and rights.

2. *Develop a system-wide analysis and strategy,* distinguishing among the functions of different UN entities that intervene in a particular area such as food and agriculture, mapping how they interact and how their policies are influenced by member states and corporate/financial lobbies, and identifying the most promising entry points. Although reform of the UN as such is not the primary concern of social organizations, it could be useful to reflect on what spaces (e.g. a more powerful ECOSOC with meaningful access for social organizations) could be worth advocating.

3. *Formulate realistic expectations and objectives* based on an understanding of the different identities and roles of social organizations, on the one hand, and UN entities (distinguishing between secretariats and governing bodies) on the other. UN agencies will not themselves become militant advocates of structural policy change. What they can provide is political space at all levels; normative discourse on human rights and common goods and validation of social organizations' experiences and expertise; programmatic support for building the capacities of social organizations and their bases.

4. *Build and maintain an autonomous capacity for reflection.* If the interaction between social organizations and the UN system is situated essentially on UN terrain it is extremely difficult to break out of the strait jackets of intergovernmental language and calendars. It is essential that social organizations maintain their own spaces of reflection (e.g. Nyéléni forum on food sovereignty, social forums) and bring the fruits of this reflection to bear on UN processes.

5. *Develop alliances with other CSOs.* Getting new issues on the agenda is the first step in intergovernmental lobbying, followed by the development of instruments to address them. Social organizations need to build alliances with CSOs who respect their political protagonism and can contribute the technical knowledge and lobbying experience that social organizations often lack. Some of the most effective impacts that social organizations have had on important pieces of the UN system – WB and WTO in particular - have been the fruit of outside social organization mobilization combined with inside CSO lobbying.

6. *Build upwards from the South.* It appears increasingly evident that the most promising route to changing the political balance in UN forums passes through political change in the South whereby social organizations seek and obtain the accountability of their governments to the interests of their citizens. It is important to articulate national, regional and global advocacy and to explore the possible contribution of the UN system to opening up political space for social organizations at various levels.

7. *Inventory and generalize virtuous principles and experience.* Principles for and experiences of correct engagement between social organizations and UN entities exist. They include respect for the autonomy and right to self-organization of social organizations, recognition of the diversity of positions among different organizations, commitment to respect the preconditions to meaningful consultation and mobilize the resources required to ensure it. These principles need to be inventoried and generalized throughout the UN system as a basic platform for engagement with social organizations.

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Annex 1: Simplified listing of UN system entities

UN Organs

- a) General Assembly and entities that report to it.
 - *Programmes and funds*: UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Development Programme (UNDP; includes UN Development Fund for Women-UNIFEM), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).
 - *UN Research and Training Institutes*: UN research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)
 - *Other UN entities*: Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNCHR), UN University (UNU), Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).
- b) Secretariat
 - Office of the Secretary-General (OSG)
 - Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
 - UN Offices at Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi
- c) Economic and Social Council
 - *Functional Commissions*: Human Rights, Science and Technology for Development, Sustainable Development, the Status of Women, Population and Development, Social Development.
 - *Regional Commissions*: Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).
 - *Other Bodies created by and reporting to ECOSOC*: Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII), UN Forum on Forests.

Specialized Agencies and Funds (autonomous organizations working with the UN through the coordinating machinery of ECOSOC) : International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank Group (including the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research - CGIAR), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

UN Treaty Bodies-Rio Conventions: UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD).

Related Organizations: World Trade Organization (WTO)

Annex 2: How selected UN system entities relate to civil society⁹

UN secretariat departments and programmes

Department of Public Information (DPI)

Global forums involving civil society: regular seminars, briefings and commemorations involving CSOs; annual DPI/NGO Conference.

Outreach capacity at country level: Access to over 60 UN Information Centres and Services, most of which have an NGO focal officer. Reliance on UNDP country offices as well.

Activities at country level: information dissemination.

Civil society interface mechanism: The 1500 accredited NGOs have elected an 18 member Executive Board which partners with the secretariat.

Division for Advancement of Women (DAW), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

Global forums involving civil society: Commission on the Status of Women, Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Outreach capacity at country level: not applicable (no separate field offices or staff; works through UNDP).

Activities at country level: policy advice, technical assistance programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: The interface mechanism is a self-organized NGO Committee on the Status of Women.

Financing for Development Office (FFD), DESA

Global forums involving civil society: Follow-up to International Conference on Financing for Development including Special high-level meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods Institutions and the WTO as well as High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development.

Outreach capacity at country level: none

Activities at country level: none

Civil society interface mechanism: Following the Monterrey Conference various CSOs have established an International Facilitating Group on Financing for Development. The business sector and parliamentarians have also developed their own independent interface mechanisms.

Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), DESA

Global forums involving civil society: UN Commission on Sustainable Development, International Meeting on Small Island Developing States, World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Outreach capacity at country level: not applicable

Activities at country level: not applicable

Civil society interface mechanism: Adopts the classification of civil society into 9 Major Groups as defined in Agenda 21. Interface was initially with a CSD NGO Steering Committee. Now with Major Group Organizing Partners, self-selected major group organizations that have agreed to collaborate with the Bureau through the secretariat to facilitate input from Major Groups world-wide into the work of the CSD.

NGO Section, DESA

Global forums involving civil society: ECOSOC and its various segments, international meetings, General Assembly Special Sessions and Special Events, Ministerial roundtables at ECOSOC, various commissions and forums of ECOSOC (e.g. Forum on Indigenous Issues)

Outreach capacity at country level: no autonomous presence

Activities at country level: formulation of country frameworks, technical assistance programmes, capacity building,

Civil society interface mechanism: Adopts the classification of NGOs into 3 categories of Consultative Status. Overall interface mechanism is the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO).

⁹ Based on replies to 2004-2005 survey.

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UN HABITAT)

Global forums involving civil society: Governing Council, World Urban Forum, Commission on Sustainable Development

Outreach capacity at country level: no country offices. The four regional offices (Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe) act as civil society focal points. Human Settlements Programme Officers stationed in some UNDP country offices.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, technical assistance programmes, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building, gender and youth programmes

Civil society interface mechanism: Has an Advisory Committee to the Executive Director with one civil society member.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Global forums involving civil society: UNCTAD Quadrennial Conferences, Trade and Development Board and its commissions, Expert Meetings, UNLDCs Conference.

Outreach capacity at country level: no field offices

Activities at country level: not applicable

Civil society interface mechanism: Cooperation is with international organizations and self-organized networks. No global interface mechanism.

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

Global forums involving civil society: Executive Committee and its three Standing Committees (Annual NGO Consultation prior to ExCom).

Outreach capacity at country level: 220 field offices; each has a civil society focal point.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: Formal interface conducted through annual NGO consultations and through NGO umbrella groups and their forums.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Global forums involving civil society: annual Global Civil Society Forum in conjunction with Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, preparatory regional forums, ad hoc civil society meetings in connection with ad hoc intergovernmental meetings

Outreach capacity at country level: 6 regional offices, each with a civil society focal point, and about 10 outposted offices. 32 UNEP national committee, mostly in Europe.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: No formal global interface mechanism. An effort is made to engage all potential stakeholders beyond the Major Groups identified in Agenda 21. Host CS committees established at country level in connection with Governing Council meetings.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Global forums involving civil society: none

Outreach capacity at country level: 137 field offices. 2 Regional Hubs (Pretoria and Bratislava) and 1 governance centre (Oslo) have CSO advisors

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, investment programmes, technical assistance programmes, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: Has established a CSO Advisory Committee to the Administrator with 15 members appointed in their individual capacity to advise and guide UNDP in its substantive policy areas

World Food Programme (WFP)

Global forums involving civil society: Executive Board Session

Outreach capacity at country level: 82 field offices, of which each has at least an informal civil society focal point

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: Annual consultation conducted with some 25 major NGO partners and networks.

Specialized UN agencies

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Global forums for which the unit manages civil society participation: FAO Conference and Council and standing Technical Committees and Commissions, Regional Conferences, special global forums (e.g. World Summit, International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development).

Outreach capacity at country level: 5 regional offices, 5 sub-regional and 5 liaison offices, all with an informally named civil society focal point; 78 country offices.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, investment programmes, technical assistance programmes, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: Two self-organized global interface mechanisms. The International NGO/CSO Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) emerged from the parallel forums to the World Food Summit and its +5 review. It groups some 50 constituency, regional and thematic focal points concerned with food and agriculture, with emphasis on facilitating involvement of social movements in the South (peasant farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, pastoralists, agricultural workers). The Ad Hoc Group of representatives of INGOs in formal status with FAO is a forum of Rome-based representatives of these INGOs.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Global forums involving civil society participation: International Labour Conference

Outreach capacity at country level: about 50 field offices, about half of which have officers specifically responsible for activities targeting employers' and workers' organizations.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, technical assistance programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: In a special category because of its tripartite structure which fully involves workers' and employers' organizations in governance. Maintains a Special List of other categories of NGOs.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Global forums involving civil society participation: UNIDO policy-making organs which foresee civil society participation, conferences, forums and meetings

Outreach capacity at country level: 30 field offices, none with civil society focal points.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, investment programmes, technical assistance programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: No formal interface mechanism. Consultation with CSOs conducted through seminars, workshops and conferences.

World Health Organization (WHO)

Global forums involving civil society participation: World Health Assembly and Executive Board

Outreach capacity at country level: 28 field offices, none of which have civil society focal points

Activities at country level: policy advice, technical assistance programmes, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building

Civil society interface mechanism: No single global mechanism. Relations are maintained with various categories of NGOs: academic, scientific, professional, development, special interest (youth, women, patient, consumers, trade unions, local authorities, parliamentarians.)

International Financial Institutions

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Global forums involving civil society participation: Annual meeting of Board of Governors

Outreach capacity at country level: 24 field offices, nearly all with civil society focal points

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, investment programmes, technical assistance programmes, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: No global advisory committee Works through existing CSO networks like the NGO Forum on ADB. Some country-level Resident Missions hold regular meetings

African Development Bank (AfDB)

Global forums involving civil society participation: Annual meeting of Board of Governors

Outreach capacity at country level: 8 field offices, none of which have civil society focal points.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, investment programmes, technical assistance programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: African Development Bank – CSO Committee.

Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)

Global forums involving civil society participation: none

Outreach capacity at country level: 26 field offices, all with a civil society focal point

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, investment programmes, technical assistance programmes, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: No global interface mechanism. Civil Society Advisory Councils exist in about half of the 26 country offices.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Global forums for which the unit manages civil society participation: Governing Council (and Farmers' Forum held in conjunction with it).

Outreach capacity at country level: no field offices.

Activities at country level: policy advice, investment programmes, technical assistance programmes, capacity building.

Civil society interface mechanism: In the past an IFAD/NGO Consultation Steering Committee has facilitated preparation of biennial IFAD/NGO Consultations. More recently, steps have been taken to develop a forum of representatives of small-scale farmers and indigenous peoples' organizations which interacts with the Governing Council and oversees an effort to replicate such dialogue at country level.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Global forums involving civil society participation: IMF Annual Meetings (joint with World Bank)

Outreach capacity at country level: 88 field offices, none with civil society focal points.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, technical assistance programmes, capacity building, financing for balance of payments support.

Civil society interface mechanism: No formal interface.

World Bank (WB)

Global forums involving civil society participation: WB-IMF Annual and Spring Meetings and associated WB-Civil Society policy dialogue sessions, regional and sectoral forums.

Outreach capacity at country level: approximately 100 field offices of which 70 have civil society focal points. Regional civil society teams cover the other countries.

Activities at country level: policy advice, formulation of country frameworks, investment programmes, technical assistance programmes, humanitarian/emergency programmes, capacity building,

Civil society interface mechanism: Wide range of constituency and thematic mechanisms for consultation at all levels, using also new technologies like video conferencing. Interface conducted with CSOs on global

policy reviews (e.g. indigenous peoples, environmental safeguards). World Bank-Civil Society Joint Facilitating Committee, an outgrowth of the former World Bank NGO Working Group, established to explore transparent and effective mechanisms for dialogue and engagement between civil society and the World Bank at the global level.

Other

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Global forums involving civil society participation: Annual civil society OECD Forum in conjunction with OECD Council meeting, sectoral forums.

Outreach capacity at country level: 4 OECD centres (Germany, USA, Japan, Mexico). Heads of centres act as civil society focal points.

Activities at country level: policy advice

Civil society outreach mechanism: Formal Business and Industry and Trade Union Advisory Committees created at the same time as OECD. No formal mechanism for other CSOs.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

Global forums involving civil society participation: WTO Ministerial Conferences, NGO briefings on meetings of major WTO bodies, Public Symposia

Outreach capacity at country level: no field offices

Activities at country level: technical assistance programmes, capacity building

Civil society outreach mechanism: Works with informal business and NGO advisory bodies.