

# **Certificate Programme**

## **Civil Society Building**

### **Unit 6**

#### **Civil Society in A Globalised World**



## **Units Of Certificate In Civil Society Building**

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## **Introduction**

In this Unit we shall explore the meaning of globalisation, tracing its origins, analysing its effects and addressing some current issues related to the concept. We shall also look into the various aspects of civil society and how different groups of people perceive it differently. The Unit shall also delve into the effects of globalisation on domestic and global civil society. The positive and negative effects of globalisation in general and globalisation and civil society in particular have been examined. Current issues and future challenges related to global civil society will also be covered in this Unit. Like in the earlier units, we have included illustrations to assist your understanding of the subject matter.

## **Learning Objectives**

After completing this Unit, you will be familiar with:

- The meaning and origins of globalisation
- Its effects, both generally and in particular on civil society, at the global and local levels
- The challenges facing civil society and civil society organisations in a globalised world

## **6.1 Globalisation**

### **6.1.1 What Is Globalisation?**

Trans-national relations between people, communities, societies and nations have changed a great deal over the past decades as a result of the phenomenon known as 'globalisation'. In our own lives we see and experience some of the impacts of such globalisation, not just on our computer and television screens, but in the streets and everyday lives of our communities. It is all-pervasive.

Let us begin by looking at what the word means. As with other concepts we have examined in this course, there are many understandings and definitions.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) defines globalisation as: 'the growing economic interdependence of countries worldwide through increasing volume and variety of cross-border transactions in goods and services, free international capital flows, and more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology' (IMF, 1997, p. 45)

The International Forum on Globalisation (IFG), which will be described in more detail in a later section, defines it, from a more civil society perspective, as the international move towards an economic system that is transnational and defined by domination of supranational corporate trade and banking institutions. These bodies are not accountable to the governments of any particular country or democratic processes (IFG, 2015).

But, globalisation is not just about finance, economics, and trade. Clark (2003a) points to three dimensions and the dilemmas inherent in each:

- Economic globalisation and the growth of capitalism (where the inherent dilemmas are about efficiency, on the one hand, and fairness, on the other)
- Cultural globalisation (where the dilemmas are about homogeneity and diversity)
- Political globalisation (where the dilemmas are about the power of industrialised countries and the lack of power of other countries)

### **6.1.2 Origins Of Globalisation**

It is popular to say that the origins of globalisation can be found in the 1990s when two interrelated phenomena emerged. First is the so called 'neo-liberal' economic reform, adopted in the developed countries during the previous decade, and gave new freedom to the market sector. These resulted not just in changes within nations, but, as reforms based on the same economic tenets spread to or were forced upon other countries, enormous increases in investment flows across the world and in trans-national linkages between producers and consumers.

Second is the 'explosion' of ICT (Information and Communications Technology). The 'IT' part of this also began early in the 1980s as the ability to produce, store, and modify information broke out of the clutches of scientists and large corporations, to take the form of what quickly became known as the PC – the personal computer. The 'CT' part of ICT followed, making it possible to link these computers through the Internet. This began as purely military technology in the United States – to enable



the military complex across the country and the world to communicate within its ranks digitally as well as telephonically. But it soon leapt beyond those private bounds, into academia, government, the business/finance sector, and the general public. Even the computer-less in urban areas could use ICT through Internet café. While there were only 50 sites on the World Wide Web in 1993, by 2001 there were 350 million (Clark, 2003a). This number crossed 1 billion in 2014.

More information could be sent over a single cable per second in 2001 than was sent over the entire internet in a month in 1997. As the world became smaller with the use of ICT, at least to some people, so did the hardware of information and communications technology become smaller, more portable and, above all, cheaper. By 2012 itself, about 75% of the world's population had access to a mobile telephone (The World Bank, 2012). The advent of nanotechnology (very small scale technology) will make today's computers and mobile telephones seem as unwieldy as the original computers, which filled whole rooms, weighed tons and cost a great deal.

In recent years the astronomical rise of social media has further fuelled global connectivity among people. It is estimated that Facebook had on average 1.35 billion monthly users in 2014. Twitter claims that there are 284 million monthly active users and on an average 500 million tweets are sent per day.

But we should note that there is a longer historical context. Societies and communities linked up with one another centuries ago through trading. It could be argued that the part of globalisation that is to do with contact and exchange between people (whether in the form of goods, through trade, or lives, through war) on a truly transcontinental scale began at least 20 centuries ago. The Greek Pytheas of Massilia claimed to have reached what was either Iceland or Greenland as early as 340 BC and movements across the great oceans by primitive rafts also took place in very early times.

By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Genghis Khan was leading his horsemen out of Mongolia, as far as Egypt and Moscow, and the first European merchants, including Marco Polo, were reaching deep into central Asia by overland routes. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century the North African, Ibn Battuta, extended his hajj pilgrimage to Mecca and reached Delhi and, eventually, China. By the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, the great Chinese fleets had reached the Americas, Africa and even Antarctica, soon to be followed by successive waves of European explorers, adventurers and traders, beginning with Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama. In reality, all these were the early globalisers and their exploration and trade led in turn to colonisation and the first 'multinationals' in the shape of such bodies as the East India Company.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the world witnessed the League of Nations, a multi-national political grouping stem from World War 1. Although World War 1 was the first transnational and multinational war, World War 2 is the one that is more regarded for its truly global character. It led to new geo-political groupings, such as the United Nations, and the beginnings of what decades later would become the European Union. It also heralded the emergence of the Soviet bloc and military groupings, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact. Towards the end of the 1950s, the 'Cold War' began, and most of the world became aligned into two blocs – Soviet, or 'Western'.

Simultaneously, in the post-World War 2 period, the world witnessed a process of rapid decolonisation. Previous colonies, like India, now became young independent nation-states. At the same time the growth of multinational corporations began to sow the economic and financial seeds of modern globalisation; and the United Nations incubated what is now a plethora of inter-governmental agencies, including the WTO (World Trade Organisation), WHO (World Health Organisation) and many others. More informal voluntary political groupings among nations, including the G7, G8, G77, and others, evolved. The Commonwealth emerged from the former British colonies and the Non-Aligned Movement from newly independent countries who chose to be associated with neither the Soviet nor the Western blocs. Regional cooperative, political or economic groupings also emerged such as, in Asia, ASEAN, APEC and SAARC, and elsewhere, NAFTA, the Pacific Islands Forum and ECOWAS, to name a few. And in 1944, even before World War 2 ended, the Bretton Woods Institutions – the World Bank (originally known as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which made its first loans to assist the post-war reconstruction of Europe) and the International Monetary Fund – were established.

Tandon and Bandyopadhyay (2013) observe, 'The established global order since post-World War II is changing quite dramatically, particularly with the dawn of the new millennium. It seems the old global order characterised by the North American and European hegemony is gradually being replaced by a new global order, characterised by new forms of co-operation, across many emerging economies in the global south. New forms of alliances are emerging amongst southern nations based on varied interests ranging from regional, geo-political, security, trade, and so on... Amongst all these formations, an alliance which has caught the attention of most people and seems to be capable of changing the global order significantly is called BRICS – an alliance of five nations – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.' (p. 1)

The two phenomena that characterised the dawn of modern globalisation in the 1990s, coming as they did at the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Soviet Union and the birth, or re-birth, of newly independent democratic countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, should be seen in this historical context, in which Clark (2003a) points out the fact that transnational integration is not a new phenomenon. He says that such integration was even stronger a century ago. Some of the barriers that we have today, that prevents easy movement through national borders, were non-existent then. Passports were not required in many cases and there was free trade and in currencies. But, after the World Wars and the Great Depression (and other economic recessions), the protectionist approach to migration and international movement became popular. But, in the 1970s, tariffs are again reduced to match the level at the century's start (Clark, 2003a).

### **6.1.3 Effects Of Globalisation**

'Only 10 years ago, globalisation was seen as a contribution to the greater well-being of all. With the reducing barriers for trade across countries, with the use of new information and telecommunications technology for transfer of capital instantaneously to any market, with increasing private foreign investment in different parts of the world, with greater acknowledgement of the free market economy as a

driver for economic development in all societies, it was proclaimed that globalisation was the way to be' (Tandon, 2002, pp. 1-2).

### ***Negative Effects***

The reality is quite different, in the view and experience of many.

1. The growth of the market sector through the adoption of neo-liberal economic policies, by choice in the more developed countries and enforced by the conditionalities imposed through the Bretton Woods Institutions and/or the World Trade Organisation in the case of many developing countries, have significantly reduced the powers held by national governments. These reduced powers have not only affected economic and monetary policies, but through a 'knock-on' effect, social and development policies too. To take a simple and obvious example, when water supply is no longer a public utility, but run by a private company, quite possibly a subsidiary of a corporation based in a different country, it is priced by market forces, profits made from its sale go to shareholders, and it becomes less accessible and affordable to poor people.
2. The parallel growth of regional trading or economic blocs such as those mentioned earlier have further reduced national government powers. At the same time there are many inconsistencies and even conflicts – global WTO multi-lateral agreements are often incoherent with regional and bi-lateral trade agreements, for example.
3. Where have these reduced national government powers gone? The answer is that in large measure they have gone outwards, to the market sector of the 'trinity' and mainly to the multinational corporations of that sector. They have also gone upwards to what are commonly called the institutions of 'global governance'. Let us examine these latter bodies.

While, as discussed in previous units, democracy has become weak and governance poor at the national level in many countries, at the global-level the situation is far worse. There is no world legislature. Instead, there are many different mechanisms of political decision-making which exercise governance functions in diverse domains. At the highest level of political decision-making, the United Nations has become weaker and weaker over the years. It has always been short of resources and unable to fulfil its Charter. Since the end of the Cold War, the UN General Assembly – the nearest body we have to a 'world Parliament' – has become marginalised. Multilateralism has both withered on the vine and been spurned by the most powerful nations which often act unilaterally, or in select 'clubs'. Since the 1990s, multi-lateral international agreements have been made on social, human, and environmental matters, they have come about through global conferences on various subjects, rather than in the General Assembly.

In a globalised world where trade and economics are the driving forces, the decision-making power rests with such bodies as the WTO, IMF and World Bank. But in them, there is no democracy. Decisions that affect the entire globe are made through power-sharing or voting arrangements that give the poorer countries virtually neither. The reality is that, as far as power and

decision-making are concerned, the rich and powerful nations are dominant. They comprise what passes for a 'world legislature'.

We can also note that there is no single, coherent, world executive: each of the many global (not to mention regional) institutions has its own executive. The global executive has become a network of inconsistent, poorly coordinated, and complex bureaucracies.

The international mechanisms for the enforcement of justice are weak and inadequate. Established as early as 1945, the International Court of Justice has no means to enforce its judgments and rulings; and the International Criminal Court suffers from the fact that not all countries have agreed to abide by its jurisdiction.

4. As national governments have lost power to the emerging institutions of global governance, it follows that citizen control and influence over national governments diminished in the process.
5. The economic benefits of globalisation are spread unevenly. It has fostered the growth of the global middle classes (with new members of the class in the elite of developing countries joining their more long-standing counterparts in the North), but as with all 'trickle down' economic theories, little of the new-found wealth appears to be reaching the poorer sections of society. As a UN recent report puts it (UN- Habitat, 2003):  
'The cyclical nature of capitalism, increased demand for skilled versus unskilled labour, and the negative effects of globalisation – in particular global economic booms and busts that ratchet up inequality and distribute new wealth unevenly – contribute to the enormous growth of slums' (p. 1).

The IFG acknowledges that the greatest voice against present-day neo-liberal globalisation has been the voices of the people and the citizen movements that we have witnessed on an international scale. This re-asserts the fact that the benefits of globalisation has only reached a few elite populations and skipped most of them who really need it.

6. Sixth, an inevitable outcome of ICT in particular is what has been called the 'homogenisation of global culture'. Western (and principally American) images and brands and their associated language, mores and morals have become dominant across the world, propagated through the Internet and satellite television. As a result, the highly heterogeneous cultures that exist around the world are being steadily eroded.

### ***Positive Effects***

Other observers of globalisation, who view it more positively, respond to the kind of critique set out above by pointing out that:

- The percentage of people in developing countries living below US\$1 (adjusted for inflation and purchasing power) per day has halved over the past twenty years;
- Life expectancy has almost doubled in the developing world since World War 2 and is starting to close the gap with the developed world where the improvement

has been smaller. Child mortality has decreased in every developing region of the world. Income inequality for the world as a whole is also diminishing

- Democracy has increased dramatically from almost no nation with universal suffrage in 1900 to 62.5 percent of all nations in 2000
- The proportion of the world's population living in countries where per capita food supplies are less than 9,200 kilojoules per day decreased from 56 percent in the mid-1960s to below 10 percent by the 1990s
- Between 1950 and 1999, global literacy increased from 52 percent to 81 percent of the world's adult population. Female literacy as a percentage of male literacy increased from 59 percent in 1970 to 80 percent in 2000
- The percentage of children in the labour force has fallen from 24 percent in 1960 to 10 percent in 2000
- There are similar trends for access to or ownership of electric power, cars, radios, and telephones per capita, as well as of the proportion of the population with access to clean water.

It is acknowledged, however, that some of these improvements may not be due to globalisation or may have been achieved in spite of it.

Recent years have also seen the emergence of a plethora of global problems that defy treatment and cure by any other means than multi-lateral ones. These include poverty and HIV/AIDS, as well as:

'...issues of human security, environmental sustainability, capital flight and human migration... The causes and solutions of these lie beyond the immediate boundaries within nation-States... There are multiple examples of issues (pollution, destruction of the ozone layer, global warming, greenhouse gas effects) affecting the ecological balance of our universe. Likewise, rapid, unaccountable and large volumes of capital flow significantly affect the valuation of companies and currencies, and it has become increasingly evident since the 1997 East Asia crisis. Human migration across countries and regions is a historical phenomenon carried out over centuries and millenniums, but in the present context, movements of people across nation-states, through both illegal and legal channels, both for employment and human rights reasons, has acquired a complex meaning, defying simple solutions...' (Tandon, 2002, p. 4).

These solutions and actions based on them can only come from multi-lateral commitments and action on a truly global scale. While it is easy to be critical of such commitments as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and of the faltering international steps thus far taken as regards HIV/AIDS, and while commitments such as the Kyoto protocols on greenhouse gases have yet to be globally endorsed, at least they represent signs that globalised efforts are emerging. This can only be regarded as a positive effect of globalisation. Much of the credit for this must go to civil society, the impact of globalisation on which is discussed in detail in Section 6.2.

#### 6.1.4 9/11 – A New Manifestation Of Globalisation

The events of September 11, 2001 gave a new face to terrorism – globalised terrorism. The subsequent events, and in particular the wars in Afghanistan and against Iraq may have defeated the Taliban and toppled Saddam Hussein, but little else has changed. Neither the perpetrators of terrorism (not just that seen on 9/11 but in many other places and forms since then) have been arrested, nor, more pertinently, the sources and roots of local and global terrorism have been adequately analysed and addressed. As Tandon notes: ‘By giving terrorism a face, it has taken away the critique from everywhere else. The conditions and forces which unleash terrorism continue to remain masked elsewhere’ (Tandon, 2002, p. 3).

Here again we see a global phenomenon – terrorism – crying out for a truly multi-lateral, globalised understanding and approach. In contrast, however, to the globalised responses to poverty, HIV/AIDS and other phenomena that have been mentioned above, this is not happening. Instead, a self-selected group of powerful nations are dealing with the problem in ways that they alone see fit, ways that seem at best to be having little effect and at worst exacerbating the problem.

#### 6.1.5 Current Views Of Globalisation

Where then do people stand now on globalisation? According to economists Said and Desai (2003, p. 66), there are five ‘camps’ with differing viewpoints:

‘**Supporters** believe that globalisation and global capitalism are the only way to combat poverty and totalitarianism and should therefore be embraced wholeheartedly by all and sundry. **Reformers** believe there is more to globalisation than capitalism. The State, according to them, is not eroded but transformed, working under new constraints of ‘overlapping sovereignties’. They do not believe that globalisation could or should be reversed; instead they call for it to be humanised. **Alternatives** reject the entire conceptual framework and are more concerned with carving out spaces where alternative paradigms can co-exist. Over the past years (since 2000) due to the resurgence of a new group we call the **Regressive** and the weakening of the Reformers, many activists are being pushed into **Isolationist** positions...’.

Even the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) commented, as long ago as 2000, and it is significant that this observation was therefore made well before 9/11 occurred, that globalisation creates:

‘.....an even wider gap between regional winners and losers than exists today. [Its] evolution will be rocky, marked by chronic volatility and a widening economic divide...deepening economic stagnation, political instability, and cultural alienation. [It] will foster political, ethnic, ideological, and religious extremism, along with the violence that often accompanies it’ (CIA, 2000).

The views of Vandana Shiva of the IFG (2005) are very similar:

‘...corporate globalisation is a project for polarising and dividing people – along axis of class and economic inequality, axis of religion and culture, axis of gender, axis of geographies and regions. Never before in human history has the gap between those who labour and those who accumulate wealth without labour been greater. Never

before has hate between cultures been so global. Never before has there been a global convergence of three violent trends - the violence of primitive accumulation for wealth creation, the violence of 'culture wars', and the violence of militarised warfare' (p. 1)

Finally, we can note that even some pro-capitalists are critical of the World Bank and the IMF, arguing that they are corrupt bureaucracies controlled and financed by states, not corporations, and have given loans to dictators who never carried out promised reforms, instead leaving others to pay the debts later. This view thus sees globalisation as too little capitalism, rather than too much!

**THINK TANK**

Think about the impact of globalisation carefully and make a list of the 'benefits' of globalisation, not to yourself, but, say, to a character you can pick from the following list (do this for more than one if you like):

- A woman from a village
- A farmer
- A young university graduate
- The owner/manager of a small company producing craft goods for export
- Or invent a character of your own!

**THINK TANK**

Ask someone from an older generation – one of your parents, or of a friend, perhaps, or if you want to be really bold, someone from entirely outside your circle of friends and acquaintances or colleagues – if they would be willing to have a 30-minute discussion with you. Ideally the person should be 45-55 years old.

Tell the person you select, "I want your views and experiences of globalisation,". If s/he asks what you mean by globalisation, explain, and add that you want specifically to find out the person's views on what features of his/her life have changed, for better or worse, over the past 20 years as a result of globalisation.

Structure the discussion – but don't be too bound by this if it is more appropriate to be very informal – so as to be able to complete the table below. Once you have done the first three columns, go through it and add the fourth column, and in it, note whether the change was in your view not due to globalisation, partly due to it, or wholly due to it.

Feature	How changed	For better or worse	Due to globalisation

## 6.2 The Effects Of Globalisation On Civil Society

### 6.2.1 Domestic Civil Society

In the face of the trends and effects of globalisation set out in the previous section, let us now look at what their impacts have been on civil society.

To begin to answer this question it is worth briefly restating in summary form some of the effects that have been mentioned in Section 1:

- Growth of the market sector
- Reduced powers of national governments
- Citizens' power over national governments reduced
- Benefits of globalisation not accessible to majority of excluded populations
- Rise in political, ethnic and religious extremism and the violence that accompanies it
- Lack of democracy in institutions of global governance

While the effect on civil society varies from country to country, a number of general impacts on civil society at the domestic or national levels are apparent. This time, let us begin with the positive ones.

#### ***Positive Effects***

First, civil society has in general gained greater recognition and visibility as an essential player in addressing a variety of societal needs and problems – its distinctiveness and importance in the trinity of sectors/actors has become clearer. While civil society–government interaction remains problematic in many countries, as we have seen in earlier units, as governments have been forced by the structural adjustment conditionalities of the Bretton Woods Institutions to 'downsize' their bureaucracies and social/development programmes, they have been forced to rely to a greater extent on CSOs to deliver the needed services. In part, this accounts for this positive (albeit perhaps over-optimistic) view from the head of the long-standing comprehensive international research project being undertaken by Johns Hopkins University in the United States that we referred to in Unit 1.

As Salamon, Sokolowski and List (2003) observe, there seems to be a 'global associational revolution' underway. This is reflected in the sudden rise of organised, private voluntary activity in most parts of the world. They state that the rise of CSOs in virtually all parts of the world in the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, is historically as significant as the rise of the nation-state in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The project reports that in financial terms the service-delivery function of CSOs accounts for nearly two-thirds of its income in the 22 countries that have generated data for the study.



But other factors among those summarised above have also undoubtedly contributed to civil society growth, including stubborn or increasing poverty, marginalisation and exclusion, and the increasing phenomena of ethnic, religious and ideological extremism and violence. CSOs, seeing both the state and the international community either unwilling or unable to do anything about them, have not been afraid to step in to the gap. Or in other words, globalisation has not just brought new needs to which civil society has responded, but impelled new actions in new fields by civil society.

Second, therefore, as well as seeing quantitative growth in response to government retreat from social and development programmes and services, CSOs have changed qualitatively as well, in response to other aspects of globalisation. As well as ensuring access to public services, there is an increasing trend for civil society to engage with the consequences of the activities and growth of the market sector. The growth of the consumer movement is one such manifestation. The promotion of the human rights of all without discrimination has become another 'growth area' for CSOs.

Third, the alarming 'democratic deficit' in the processes and institutions of global governance (it would perhaps be more accurate to describe this as a 'democratic non-existence') has brought the nature of democracy and governance in their own backyards to the attention and action of CSOs – within their own organisations, in the communities they serve and in their own countries. Activities related to democracy and governance have, therefore, become another field of quantitative and qualitative growth among NGOs.

Fourth, globalisation has given hugely increased credibility, and in consequence impact, to what were formerly disaggregated local campaigns and causes. Opposition to dam construction by civil society in India is a good example of this. People and organisations concerned with the same issue in different countries and domestic environments have both contributed to global knowledge and solidarity, and gained from it. The same is the case with social movements, where the same two-way effects can clearly be seen: previously isolated social movements in different countries have, through globalisation, come together, again both contributing to global social movements and gaining strength and credibility at the domestic level from them. One example of this – Shack/Slum Dwellers International – is given in the following section.

Fifth, while for both the public and private sectors, globalisation has, as we have seen, largely been a 'top-down' process, whereby decisions made at the top impact, for good or bad, on those below, with civil society, the process has been very different. As noted above, it has been much more of a two-way process, with the global being informed by the local as well as vice-versa. This is clearly apparent in two of the international projects referred to in earlier Units of this course, both instigated by the Commonwealth Foundation:

- The Foundation's report 'Non-Governmental Organisations: Guidelines for Good Policy and Practice', extracts of which were used in unit 1, was the result of the gathering of knowledge and experience about NGO practices and NGO-government relationships across more than 50 countries of the Commonwealth.

Or in other words, the approach was that of using local knowledge to inform global policy.

- The Foundation's project to gather the views of 10,000 ordinary citizens about societal and governmental functioning, which led to a number of outputs, including 'Reviving Democracy', extracts of which have been used in a number of earlier units of this course, was even more 'bottom-up' in its nature, using not just 'local knowledge' to inform global understanding, but hearing the voices of individual citizens.

Sixth, regularly stimulated and invigorated by the global gatherings of civil society, such as the World Social Forum (see next section), domestic CSOs have both stimulated and been informed by the greater use of communication and information-sharing through the Internet.

Seventh, globalisation has made domestic CSOs give greater recognition to the importance of coalition-building and networking to give greater strength and credibility to their advocacy work at the national level (as discussed in Unit 5) and to pay greater attention to their legitimacy and accountability (as also discussed in Unit 5). More and more, CSOs do not just 'Think Global, Act Local' but think and act at both levels.

### ***Negative Effects***

Three negative effects on domestic civil society are clearly evident.

First, on the roles played by civil society and CSOs in development:

'A little over six decades after its 'invention' by the then American president, the 'paradigm of development' is almost extinct. This paradigm implied external technical and financial inputs to 'develop' a community, in accordance with Western standards. Official Development Assistance (ODA) (from richer countries to poorer ones) was seen as a vehicle to accomplish that. There is now a well-established pattern of decline in ODA, far below the UN standard of 0.7% of GDP... ODA as a vehicle for improving the lives of people in southern societies is almost a failed experiment... There is an increasing consensus on using Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSPs) as basic strategies of accomplishing the MDGs. Occasionally there appears to be some concerted attempt to revive development, but the bulk of the effort of the last decade has centred around dealing with countries facing conflicts internally and trans-border. In some significant way, the limits to 'enlightened self-interest' have reached among the rich of the world. Growing problems in their own backyards, continued conflicts within and across countries and large scale mismanagement of resources (including corruption) in the ODA recipient countries have created a sense of suspicion among the ruling elites of the North, (where) there is now less interest, despite rhetoric to the contrary, in contributing resources or even attention, to the well-being of 'distant others'...' (Tandon, 2002, pp. 4-6).

Second, within this overall trend, there have been others which have an impact on CSOs:

- Increasingly, ODA funds come in the form of contracts (to deliver programmes and services specified by the fund providers). While, as noted above, this has increased CSO incomes, it has made aid-recipient governments and CSOs contractors rather than grant recipients
- Since 9/11, not only have the general rights and freedoms which are needed for civil society to function been reduced by the responses of many governments to global terrorism, but such responses have also been characterised by shifts in resource priorities, and these shifts have also adversely affected many CSOs

Third, new ideas and practices within or affecting civil society developed in the countries of the North, such as corporate social responsibility and government-civil society 'compacts' (as discussed in Unit 2) are being deemed by some as approaches that should be adopted in the countries of the South, regardless of their relevance to domestic conditions and cultures.

### ***Differential Effects***

We saw in Unit 5 how the capacities needed by any particular CSO depend very much on what its purposes and functions are. The impact of globalisation on any particular organisation also varies according to its purposes and functions. Using once again the classification we set out in Unit 1, the table below attempts to show some of the differential effects.

**Table: Differential Effects On Different Types Of CSOs**

CSO type	Purpose	Effects of globalisation	
		Positive	Negative
<b>1. Traditional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in regulation of social relations of families &amp; communities</li> <li>• Governance and protection of natural resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatened by homogenisation of culture</li> <li>• Threatened by globalised corporations exploiting natural resources</li> </ul>
<b>2. Religious</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charity, assisting the poor and social service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More involvement of faith groups in wider civil society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater polarisation, growth of 'extremism' tendencies/ factions within major faiths, association of certain faiths with terrorism</li> </ul>
<b>3. Social Movements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reform of society, initiations and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Galvanised and trans-national linkages</li> </ul>	

	governance	developed between formerly separate and isolated local/ national social movements	
<b>4. Membership associations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping their members</li> </ul>		
<i>4a. Representational</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent and advance common interests of particular category of citizens vis à vis the state;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade unions seeing themselves as an integral part of civil society and becoming more involved in it</li> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weakened by growth of corporate globalisation</li> </ul>
<i>4b. Professional</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To advance their professional/ occupational identity</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for exchange/ support to members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> </ul>	
<i>4c. Socio-cultural</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the social, cultural recreational needs of their members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatened by homogenisation of culture</li> </ul>
<i>4d. Self-help</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address problems facing their communities</li> <li>• Some also serve the needs of their members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased demand for services among poor and marginalised, yet resources unchanged or decreased</li> </ul>
<b>5. Intermediary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To advance a wider societal cause or broader public good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet,</li> </ul>	

		etc.	
<i>5a. Service delivery</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide services, like education and health care, drinking water, sanitation, micro-credit, etc.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased demand for services among poor and marginalised</li> <li>• Increased demands from government on NGOs for service delivery, but fewer resources</li> </ul>
<i>5b. Mobilisational</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise and empower local communities and marginalised sections</li> <li>• May also include service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> <li>• Galvanised by global concerns</li> </ul>	
<i>5c. Support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support to other CBOs or other intermediary organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> </ul>	
<i>5d. Philanthropic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide resources to other CSOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened by increased corporate social responsibility and by the growth of affluent middle classes</li> </ul>	
<i>5e. Advocacy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocating on a particular cause</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> <li>• Galvanised by trans-national issues and trans-national working</li> </ul>	
<i>5f. Networks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend their collective voice and strength</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened as trans-national linkages developed through Internet, etc.</li> </ul>	

### **6.2.2 Global Civil Society**

Over ten years ago, soon after its establishment by a number of prominent CSO leaders, CIVICUS (The World Alliance for Citizen Participation) came forth with the opinion that the same processes that make problems global could also be the source for making their solutions global. It acknowledged the fact that the market and governance that has gone global could only be made democratic and accountable to the people through global civic action. Thus, demands for deeper democracy and human development, which have been successfully carried out in many countries, need to be taken to the international platform (CIVICUS, 1994).

More than two decades later, it is appropriate to ask: what is the current state of 'global civil society' and to what extent has this 'global citizen action', whether concerted or not, occurred?

Global civil society has six main features:

#### **(i) Infrastructure**

International NGOs (INGOs) are commonly believed to comprise the main organisational 'infrastructure' of global civil society. The top ten among them are, according to Clark (2003a), CARE, World Vision, Save the Children, Oxfam, Plan International, Medecins Sans Frontieres, WWF, Red Cross, Aproder and CIDSE. Together, these ten account for 80% of all international aid flowing to civil society. Interestingly, all of them are based in the North.

#### **(ii) Voice**

International social movements, sometimes called trans-national civil society, focused on issues of global concern, are seen to be the dominant voice of global civil society. The most visible of these movements are organised around the themes of environment, shelter, human rights, gender justice and peace. Many find specific expression through focused campaigns on matters that include nuclear non-proliferation, landmines, anti-dam struggles, women's rights, and reproductive health. Unlike the INGOs, many of the social movements have southern CSOs at their heart.

Edwards and Gaventa (2001) opine that international social movements are, in their present form, a web of networks that are present internationally. They are usually headed by INGOs although this need not be the case always.

### **Illustration 1: Transnational Social Movement – Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI)**

In 1975, 70,000 residents of Janta Colony, Mumbai were threatened with eviction. Jockin Arputham, a local resident, took on a leadership role in the struggle that followed, and the experience also prompted him to form the National Slum Dwellers Federation of India (NSDF). In 1985, NSDF entered into a partnership with another NGO in Mumbai, the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC) that had been founded in 1984 to work with pavement dwellers. By 1986, NSDF and SPARC had established the first women's pavement organisation, *Mahila Milan*, and the three organisations worked in alliance with one another. In 1989 a new regional network, the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, organised a regional meeting in Seoul, when 2,000 people had been evicted from their homes for the Olympic Games.

During the early 1990s this began to evolve into an international network. In 1991, NSDF was invited to South Africa and in 1994 the South African Homeless People's Federation was formed. In 1996, civil society leaders from Cambodia, India, Namibia, Nepal, South Africa, Thailand and Zimbabwe met together in South Africa. They decided to launch SDI. From the beginning the network believed that SDI's function was to strengthen local activities by creating an international movement marked by innovation and diversity, rather than to manage the activities of members. By 2004 SDI had members in 14 countries and by 2014 in 33 countries spanning Asia, Africa and South America.

Important vehicles for learning and knowledge creation within SDI are its 'community exchanges'. These take place within and between cities, across countries and regions. Through the exchanges, local groups lose their isolation and gain solidarity. In particular, CSO leaders step aside, so that the poor avoid being beneficiaries and instead become agents of change.

SDI has had considerable impact on official housing policies at city and national level and has been able to influence policies at the international level too. The World Bank has opened its tendering system beyond construction companies to NGOs and community federations. The Secure Urban Tenure Campaign was launched in 2000 by UN-Habitat with the help of SDI. SDI has suggested the idea of a venture fund for poor communities which many European bilateral donors have agreed to give resources for. This venture would fund poor communities to experiment and develop pro-poor, community-led and controlled infrastructure projects in urban areas.

By 2007 SDI with the support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Norwegian Government, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Cities Alliance, Rockefeller Foundation and Sigrid Rausing Trust created a global fund called Urban Poor Fund International (UPFI). It is a SDI governed international financial facility that provides capital through member national urban poor funds to local savings collectives for undertaking housing and other urban improvement projects. The goal of UPFI is to enable the urban poor to have direct control of the capital for undertaking housing and related projects. It is assumed that UPFI capital allows federations to negotiate with potential implementing partners and leverage resources from the public and private sector. Through implementing these projects and negotiations with different actors, the federation strengthens partners and also influences policy.

(Batliwala, 2004)

### **Illustration 2: International Network – Third World Network**

The Third World Network (TWN) is an independent, non-profit international network of organisations and individuals involved in issues relating to development, the Third World and North–South relationships.

Its objectives are to conduct research on economic, social and environmental issues pertaining to the South; to publish books and magazines; to organise and participate in seminars; and to provide a platform representing broadly southern interests and perspectives at international fora, such as UN conferences and processes.

Its recent and current activities include: the publication of the daily ‘SUNS (South–North Development Monitor)’ bulletin from Geneva, Switzerland, the fortnightly ‘Third World Economics’ and the monthly ‘Third World Resurgence’; the publication of Third World Network Features; the publication of books on environment and economic issues; the organising of various seminars and workshops; and participation in international processes, such as UNCED and the World Bank–NGO Committee.

The TWN's international secretariat is based in Penang, Malaysia. It has offices in Delhi, India; Montevideo, Uruguay (for South America); Geneva; and Accra, Ghana.

The Third World Network has affiliated organisations in several Third World countries, including India, the Philippines, Thailand, Brazil, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Peru, Ethiopia, Uruguay, Mexico, Ghana, South Africa and Senegal. It also cooperates with several organisations in the North.

(TWN, 2015)

### **(iii) Public face**

A number of ‘public protest initiatives’ have gained visibility, particularly since those that occurred at the time of the WTO meeting in Seattle in 1999. Further protests took place at the G8 Meeting in Italy, at the World Bank/IMF spring meetings in Washington, DC, and at the WTO Ministerial Meetings in Doha and Cancun, to name but a few. This form of direct action by individuals from many countries has attracted great publicity, not necessarily positive in its nature, and has therefore come to be the public face of global civil society.

### **(iv) Communication**

The communication mechanism of global civil society is the Internet, where its sites have been described, by Clark (2003a), with the use of the term ‘dot cause’. This refers to any citizen group which works primarily through the Internet to mobilise support and promote social causes. He brings to our attention how such structures of mobilisation are very crucial for the future of social movements. ‘Dot causes’ play an important role in attracting new support (of mostly young citizens). They offer an ideology that largely rejects the structures of global capitalism and global



governance. Networking through the Internet is extremely efficient and has the capacity of bringing together similar voices and opinions from different corners of the globe. It is also a mechanism through which traditional media is subverted and bypassed. Mobilisation for large scale events like protests and days of actions is possible through the Internet, into which individual groups of activists can plug their actions (Clark, 2003a).

The International Forum on Globalisation is a good example of website-based communication.

### **Illustration 3: Website-based Network – The International Forum on Globalisation**

The International Forum on Globalisation (IFG) is a North–South research and educational institution composed of leading economists, scholars, civil society activists and researchers (60 organisations in 25 countries) providing analyses and critiques on the cultural, social, political and environmental impacts of economic globalisation.

Formed in 1994, the IFG came together out of shared concern that the world's corporate and political leadership was rapidly restructuring global politics and economics on a level that was as historically significant as any period since the industrial revolution. Yet there was almost no discussion or even recognition of this new 'free market', or 'neoliberal' model, or of the institutions and agreements enforcing this system – the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the North American Free Trade Agreement and other such bureaucracies. In response, the IFG began to stimulate new thinking, joint activity and public education about this rapidly rising economic paradigm.

The IFG is based in San Francisco, USA and it works through an active international board of key citizen movement leaders, a small staff team and a network of hundreds of associates representing regions throughout the world on a broad spectrum of issues. Its work is closely linked to social justice and environmental movements, providing them with critical thinking and frameworks that inform campaigns and activities 'on the ground'.

The IFG produces numerous publications; organises high-profile, large public events; hosts many issue-specific seminars; coordinates press conferences at international events; and participates in many other activities that focus on the myriad consequences of globalisation.

During the last few years, the IFG has launched a programme that focuses on alternative visions and policies to globalisation that are more just, equitable, democratic, accountable and sustainable for people and the planet.

(IFG, 2015)

#### **(v) Meeting places**

The meeting places of global civil society are gatherings that take place periodically. Of particular importance is the World Social Forum (WSF), first held in 2001, and taking place every year since then. The most recent WSF was held in Tunis in 2014. Other kinds of civil society gatherings take place at the time of, and alongside, international conferences and governmental meetings, most prominently the series of major UN conferences that have taken place on various subjects during and since the early 1990s. These began with the environment conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the human rights conference in Vienna in 1993, the population conference in Cairo in 1994, the first social summit in Copenhagen in 1995, the women's conference in Beijing in 1995, and the Habitat II conference in Istanbul in 1996. Since then, a number of '+5' and '+10' conferences have taken place. Said and Desai (2003) point out that there is a movement from 'parallel summits' that happen alongside meetings of governments and international organisations to global civil society gatherings that are independent. They say that such events have increased in size with 55% of them having more than 10,000 people and 8 events having demonstrations participated by more than 50,000 people. This growth in size and independence means that such gatherings have been able to better co-ordinate and articulate the economic and political aspects of development while also demanding for peace and democracy.

Here it should be noted that there are signs that the 'parallel' meetings, of officials and ministers on the one hand, and of civil society on the other, are showing signs of coming together, at least for brief periods of dialogue and discussion. For example, meetings of Commonwealth ministers as various as education, health, youth affairs, women's affairs and even finance now have dialogues with civil society representatives as part of their agenda. Before each G8 meeting, the Montreal

#### **Illustration 4: Meeting places – World Social Forum**

The World Social Forum (WSF) is not an organisation, but rather: '...an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and inter-linking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neo-liberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a society centred on the human person' (p. 1).

The WSF was created to provide an open platform to discuss strategies of resistance to the model for globalisation formulated at the annual World Economic Forum at Davos by large multinational corporations, national governments, IMF, the World Bank and the WTO, which are the foot soldiers of these corporations.

The first WSF was held in 2001 in the southern Brazilian city of Porto Alegre. It was here that the WSF's Charter of Principles was adopted to provide a framework for the forum. The annual forums in 2002 and 2003 saw the movement grow rapidly, as the WSF came to symbolise the strength of the anti-globalisation movement and became a rallying point for worldwide protest against the American invasion of Iraq. At WSF 2002, it was proposed that the next forum be held outside Brazil. This shift represents the need that the WSF process must reach out in a larger way to the African-Asian region, where two-thirds of the world's population lives. The WSF process reached a crescendo in Mumbai in January 2004, when 75,000 delegates expressed their belief that 'Another World Is Possible'. Since 2001, a total of 14 Forums have been organised; the last one was organised in Tunis.

(WSF, 2006)

International Forum has organised a meeting between civil society leaders and officials organising the summits. Similarly, Civil 20 (C20) was organised in Russia in 2013 and in Australia in 2014, before the official G20 summits.

Specific initiatives have grown out of such global civil society gatherings, the most well-known example being Social Watch.

#### **Illustration 5: Global Initiative – Social Watch**

Social Watch is an international network informed by national citizens' groups aiming at following up on the fulfilment of internationally agreed commitments on poverty eradication and equality. These national groups report, through the national Social Watch report, on the progress or regression towards these commitments and goals.

Social Watch groups are organised on an ad hoc basis and have a focal point in each country that is responsible for promoting the initiative; submitting a national report for the yearly publication; undertaking lobbying initiatives before the national authorities to hold them accountable for the policies in place regarding the agreed commitments; promoting a dialogue about national social development priorities and developing an active inclusive strategy to bring other groups into the national group.

The international secretariat of Social Watch is hosted by the Third World Institute in Uruguay.

As well as an annual 'Social Watch' report that brings together thematic and national reports, Social Watch publishes 'The Big Issues' – a long and continuing series of discussion papers.

(Social Watch, 2014)

#### **(vi) Leadership**

Finally, while global civil society, to summarise the foregoing, has wide reach and considerable depth, it lacks clear and purposeful focal points and leadership. While government leaders meet, at the very most in their hundreds, and more often in handfuls, in their own summits and institutional meetings, and while the market sector has its own high-level gathering – the annual World Economic Forum at Davos in Switzerland – civil society has no equivalents. Instead, the nearest it has to a 'summit', the World Social Forum, is a huge-scale gathering with very little in the way of a focal point, attended by anyone who can afford to get there and, hence, as will be discussed, neither representative of nor reflecting by any means the true breadth and depth of global civil society as a whole in both the North and South. Global civil society is fractured not just along thematic and issue-based lines, but also internally, among personalities and organisations. Global civil society is, in other words, essentially anarchic in its character, reflecting its very nature.

## 6.3 Current Issues And Challenges For The Future

### 6.3.1 Work-in-progress

Given the impacts on civil society that have been outlined, a further question arises: does global civil society exist? According to Tandon (2004), the answer is 'No' but qualified in this manner. He says that the process of this formation is a work-in-progress. There are still many aspects that need to be looked into before a definite global civil society emerges.

He goes on to list these 'caveats and problematiques' (Tandon, 2004).

First, whose voice is actually being heard on the global civil society platforms? Whose voice represents global civil society in response to the democratic deficits evident in global governance? As noted earlier, the 'infrastructure' of global civil society is dominated by INGOs and global associations largely based in and financed by the North, and concentrated in particular areas. One sees that most centres of the global civil society are either in Europe (particularly Western Europe) or in North America (particularly in the region between Montreal and New York and Washington) (Said & Desai, 2003).

This has led Tandon (2004) to observe that what people think is the representation of the voices of the civil society and the grass-roots is, in many instances, not. These voices, primarily North American and West European are not able to clearly articulate the issues of the grass-roots and this disconnect is becoming increasingly visible. It is now obvious that many of the global voices are not accountable to the grass-roots and do not share a mutually symbiotic relationship with them.

Or, in simple terms the democratic deficit is not only to be found in the world of global public institutions, but in global civil society itself. Here, part of the way forward may lie in one of the constituent parts of global civil society – the social movements.

Batliwala (2004) observes this democratic deficit in global civil society. He says that there has been a rise in citizen-action and social movements that is international in character. These movements have raised their voices on the issues within the so-called global civil society pertaining to their lack of accountability, disproportionate representation, etc. He highlights the fact that the rise of the social movement that is both strongly grounded in grass-roots issues as well as connected through global networks is an important phenomenon. The leadership of such movements arise from the poor and hence are more representative and could be the future of global civil society.

The second problematique relates to the dominance of the global media and its representation of global civil society. Such global media as CNN, BBC or Al Jazeera have made the protests referred to in the previous section seen as the only public manifestation of global civil society. As a result, much of the essence of what happens within civil society remains out of the purview of media. The works of grass-roots civil society actors and positive solidarity actions of millions of organisations

and individuals to find efficient solutions to problems of the people remain invisible and unrecognised (Tandon, 2004).

The third problematique concerns the meaning and implications of 'citizenship' in a globalised world. Around the world, 'citizenship' is equated with, and defined in, the framework of the nation-state. Citizenship is granted by the government of a country on the basis of its laws and constitutions. Its 'grant' gives the citizen rights and responsibilities. Global civil society can have no real substance unless 'global citizenship', and its rights and responsibilities, are clearly defined.

Edwards and Gaventa (2001) say that global civil society needs to raise some fundamental questions regarding the relationship between global civil society and global citizenship. To what extent can one expect the participation of civil society in the global arena? How does one understand the intersection of the rights and responsibilities as a global citizen with other rights and responsibilities related to the household, local and national governments and the marketplace? Also, how can the voices of citizens be articulated in such a way as to promote a sense of equality and democracy in global civil society?

### 6.3.2 Challenges

Each of the problematiques presents a challenge for the future. If they are not addressed, global civil society will remain 'work-in-progress' for some time to come.

But there are other challenges as well. Firstly, concerning the ways in which CSOs working in the global arena are structured and governed.

Clark (2003b) feels that a movement from national/domestic issues to international concerns would also invite a change in the very structure and governance of civil society and CSOs. To make this shift, Clark argues that six challenges need to be faced by CSOs seeking to work globally:

- **Adopting the right structure:** For some global tasks, a loose network may be appropriate, but for others a more coherent, centrally organised one will be needed
- **Adopting and following bold policies:** For this to occur, decision-making needs to be inclusive but nonetheless swift, and leadership needs to be visionary
- **Ensuring North–South harmony:** This requires, among other things, northern CSOs to act ethically with respect in their relationships and working arrangements with southern CSOs
- **Overcoming geography:** In particular, by using new technology creatively
- **Networking to promote internal as well as external change:** In particular, networks need to engage in frank debates about CSO standards of ethics and conduct. If they do not, their criticisms of the ethics and conduct of other actors will be weakened
- **Contributing to internal democracy:** In particular, CSOs need to demonstrate their own democratic credentials if they are to be able to make such contributions credible

The goal, Clark (2003a) argues, should be what he calls 'ethical globalisation' which implies equal distribution of power, opportunity and resources in the process of globalisation. Such a form of globalisation would have to be driven by civil society and its actors.

Quoting Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, he adds:

'The real debate on globalisation is ultimately not about the efficiency of markets nor about the importance of modern technology. The debate is, rather, about the inequality of power, for which there is much less tolerance now in the world than emerged at the end of the Second World War' (Sen, 2000, p. 1).

In conclusion, there are three other challenges, which, if faced by CSOs, will further enhance the impact they have on the emerging shape of the globalising world.

Firstly, to revise Gandhi's famous statement, if CSOs are to be able to think and act at the global level, they must do so on the basis of the experience they have in thinking and acting at the local level. This means more than being 'bullet-proof' in terms of having impeccable credentials concerning their own ethics, conduct and democratic governance. It means basing what they do and say at the global level on their practical working experience at the local level. Too often, so-called 'civil society activists', have no such experience.

Secondly, as an extension of this point, advocacy, if it is to be effective, has to be credible and, in turn, if it is to be credible, it must be based on fact rather than mere personal opinion. That means CSOs founding their arguments as well as their actions on research and practical experience.

Thirdly, and finally, civil society actors need to work purposefully to create a truly coherent global civil society. As has been noted here and in previous units, civil society is highly heterogeneous, consisting of groups and groupings as diverse as development and other NGOs, trade unions, professional groupings, community-based organisations, religious and cultural associations, social enterprises, and many others. There is yet to emerge a coherent voice among them: too many parts of the sector are pursuing too many separate agendas. Creating a coherent voice as a sector is a major, perhaps the major challenge, for global civil society. At the same time, there is a parallel need to build bridges and links with people and institutions in related fields who share the concerns and views of civil society – in academia and in the media, particularly.

If these major challenges are faced, civil society and its cherished and vital values, principles and belief in the common public good can become the driving force behind a globalisation that does indeed contribute to the greater well-being of all.

## Note Bank: Civil Society @ Crossroads

About two decades ago, a series of events began to dramatically change the world order. Three trends seemed to coalesce simultaneously around the world – the rise of democracy, the globalisation of economy and the voice of civil society. In this backdrop, the research report 'Civil Society @ Crossroads: Shifts, Challenges, Options?' highlighted several lessons and patterns:

1. In the past years a number of citizen protests erupted in many parts of the world. These citizen protests reflect the disconnect between their expectations and the performance of public authorities.
2. In recent years many new forms of civil society have emerged. These new civil society actors are organised differently than NGOs, expressing alternative values of inclusion, participation and innovation.
3. In the past, formal segments of civil society have been tentative about engaging with the media. In many countries, domestic media, newspapers and radio/television were largely controlled by governments; open advocacy through such media channels was restricted or non-existent. However, new forms of civil society actions, from mobilisation to devising and coordinating actions, have found new ICT very user friendly. As a consequence, partnership of civil society with the old and new media both have expanded and regulated outreach and impacts.
4. The role of CSOs has expanded in many countries in the last half of the twentieth century. However, in many developing countries, the amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA) began to decline and to shift in focus during the past decade. This contracting resource base is reshaping civil society roles and relationships with government and business sectors.
5. Around two decades ago, civil society regained public presence as a consequence of democratic upsurges in many parts of the world. As new democratic governments began to get institutionalised, citizens began to demand their rights from them. As a consequence, political space for civil society and its relations with political society are simultaneously contracting and expanding. There is now a very wide span of such engagements between them – 'constructive engagement', 'mutual influence', 'mutual castigating and political opposition' and 'co-option'.
6. Historically, international NGOs used resources from their societies and governments to support the local work of southern NGOs. Few northern NGOs working overseas recognised the work of local civil society in their own countries, or explored connections between their domestic contexts in the North and poverty in the South. Now, the blurring of distinctions between North and South is having several new impacts on civil society. This blurring of North-South boundaries calls for reassessing civil society roles and realigning their relationships within and outside their countries.
7. Civil society focus on service delivery through donor resources has been driving results-based, quantifiable definitions of success. As public resources for aid and social welfare decline, there is increasing pressure to show visible results and 'value for money' in the short term. Such short-term, project-focused and quantifiable measures of success focus attention on immediate, concrete results, but they may distract attention and resources from larger values and systemic changes that lie at the heart of civil society missions. Measuring the impacts of civil society actions entails expanded definition of success over the longer term.

## **Summary**

Unit 6 provided an orientation towards the meaning and origins of globalisation. We discussed what the various opinions on globalisation were, both the positive and the negative. Similarly, we analysed what were the effects of globalisation generally on the economic and political landscape. But, in more depth and detail, we discussed how globalisation, of the neo-liberal variety and the way we see it today, has effected and transformed, to a certain extent, the functioning of CSOs. Finally, we discussed what are the challenges faced by CSOs in a globalised world.



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