Status and Characteristics of **Regional Democracy** and **Rights-Promoting Networks**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AND	Asia Democracy Network
ANDE	Arab Network for Democratic Elections
ANND	Arab NGO Network for Development
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CSF	Civil Society Forum
CSO	Civil society organization
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EHAHRDN	East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network
EHAHRDP	East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project
EMHRN	Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network
EMI	European Movement International
EU	European Union
FSU	Former Soviet Union
HDR	Human rights defender
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAHRD-Net	Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network
RCNF	Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund
RDRN	Regional Democracy and Rights-Promoting Network
RedLad	Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy
RID	Inter-American Democracy Network
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
UN	United Nations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study presents an inventory of major international civil society networks working in the field of democracy and human rights, and explores ways international donors may support the work of these networks. The research was carried out by FHI 360's Civil Society and Peacebuilding Department (CSPD) in the fall of 2014.

We have focused our research on networks with three characteristics: 1) their membership consists of non-governmental organizations; 2) members are drawn from more than one country, and usually several countries in a region; and 3) the member organizations focus primarily on democracy and human rights issues. We label these bodies Regional Democracy and Rights-promoting Networks (RDRNs). Drawing on desk research, a limited-release survey and a series of key informant interviews, this paper assesses the state of RDRNs around the world and provides an overview of existing networks. It then analyzes factors that affect network success and recommends avenues for engagement.

We find that RDRNs in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Europe are relatively more robust in terms of participation and social capital, while those operating in the Middle East and North Africa are struggling with financing and political operating space. In Asia and Africa emergent groups show promise in the promotion of human rights, especially at the sub-regional level, but often struggle with institutional capacity (see Section One for regional overviews).

Our research suggests four success factors for RDRNs: sustainable funding mechanisms, legal and political operating space, effective and broad-based member support (including members that play a leadership or convening role), and impetus for collective action (see Section Two for an examination of these factors).

Finally, we present several approaches for international donors to consider when working with networks, and sort these according to the network's management structure (see Section Three for a discussion of donor engagement with civil society). External support for civil society networks is instrumental to democratic development around the world, and can empower networks to build a wider and more effective global coalition for democratic change.

INTRODUCTION

FHI 360's Civil Society and Peacebuilding Department presents this report on cross-border civil society networks dealing with democracy, governance and human rights issues. The intended audience is those working in the democracy and governance field in international development, and particularly those seeking to identify leading networks and to explore means of support.

Background

This study originally arose at the request of the Community of Democracies, a multi-state coalition of democratic countries with a Secretariat based in Warsaw, Poland. FHI 360 was not remunerated for this study. While the first version was customized to the Community of Democracies' needs, the present version is applicable to donors and development actors more generally.

For the purposes of this study, we focus our inquiry on Regional Democracy and Rights-Promoting Networks (RDRNs). We define RDRNs as networks of non-governmental, non-business civil society organizations (CSOs) from multiple countries whose primary focus is to strengthen democracy or promote and defend human rights. While most RDRNs we identified are organized regionally, some include multiple regions and several have a global scope. Also, though RDRNs can exist among organizations exclusively in developed countries, in practice they almost always include developing countries, where threats to democracy and human rights are more pronounced. Some RDRNs extend their focus to include specific issues, including women's rights, media and internet freedom, and election observation and monitoring. This study includes networks whose membership rolls combine both organizations and individuals. The study does not include networks of media outlets, academic institutions, political parties, or networks whose members are individuals only (e.g. lawyers, parliamentarians, doctors, or civil society expert academics). The study also excludes broader development-focused NGO platforms that do not directly nor primarily address democracy and governance issues as well as coalitions of donor-country NGOs.

We identified 50 RDRNs for study that met the above criteria.

Key Questions

The study attempts to answer five main questions:

1. What are the major, active, democracy and human rights-focused, cross-border civil society networks operating in the world?
2. Where are there less active or fully dormant democracy-focused RDRNs?
3. Where are there gaps where no RDRNs seem to reach?
4. What types of activities do RDRNs engage in?
5. What are the most effective ways for donors to support RDRNs?

Methodology and Limitations

This study uses several methods to approach the above questions, including a desk review of available information on RDRNs, key informant interviews and a brief, limited-release survey. Research was conducted between September 8, 2014 and November 26, 2014.

For the desk review, we examined websites and documentation on RDRNs available online. We looked primarily at current levels of network activity and engagements beyond national borders, and gathered evidence on management and technical capacity to run the network and to carry out activities and advocacy with target governments.

Furthermore, we conducted 17 in-depth interviews with experts and practitioners from a variety of organizations working in the fields of democracy, governance and human rights.[1] Participants were selected based on experience and expertise in supporting RDRNs, status as active members of an RDRN, and through snow-ball sampling.

We also deployed a survey to 40 active RDRNs identified in the desk review. The survey included questions on network characteristics, management and fundraising practices, and challenges faced. The survey yielded 24 responses and also led to the identification of seven key informant interviewees. Over the course of our interviews and subsequent research, we identified an additional 10 RDRNs, bringing the study's total to 50 networks.

This methodology limited our research to networks with enough institutional formality to have a presence on the internet or a point of contact. While some networks in this study have very little institutional formality, all have at least some form of management and most serve to coordinate more substantive support activities in addition to merely sharing information among members.

This report is intended to provide neither an exhaustive list of RDRNs nor a scientific examination of their characteristics and practices. Instead, the report aims to generate a working list of active RDRNs and present the major challenges these networks face at the organizational and regional levels. It should be noted that the networks included in this report are not mutually exclusive. Not only do several networks contain overlapping membership, but some entire regional networks are in turn members of global networks.

[1] High-level representatives from the following networks and organizations were interviewed for this study: Asian People's Forum, CIVICUS, Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development of Canada, East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project, Ford Foundation, Freedom House, Freedom of Information Advocates Network, International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy, Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency, LEND Network (Community of Democracies), National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, Opening Parliament, Open Society Foundations, and World Movement for Democracy.

SECTION ONE • *Regional Overview of Existing Networks*

Latin America and the Caribbean

Regional Assessment

The Latin American and Caribbean region has a relatively strong set of RDRNs. A likely reason is the vibrancy of Latin America's civil society ~~writ large~~. In CIVICUS's 2013 Enabling Environment Index, a measure of the conditions that influence citizens to participate in civil society, Latin America and the Caribbean scored the highest among all regions on social and cultural conditions, including propensity to participate, tolerance, trust, and giving and volunteering.[2] According to the report, a tradition of strong civil society presence in many parts of the region facilitates the creation of new outlets through which groups can organize.

Nevertheless, the political and economic situation in Latin America is becoming more polarized. As several leftist governments embrace authoritarian tactics (e.g. Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua), and many populations remain deeply politically divided (over 30% of Mexicans and Colombians consider themselves "far-right" or "far-left"[3]), finding a common civil society platform for strengthening democracy and protecting human rights grows increasingly more challenging.

Existing Networks

A number of noteworthy RDRNs in Latin America and the Caribbean work to advance democracy and promote human rights in the region. The primary example is the **Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy (RedLad)** which unites more than 480 civil society organizations, networks, activists, academics, representatives of trade union and business sectors, social, youth and political society in Latin America and the Caribbean movements.. RedLad serves multiple functions for member organizations: (1) it operates an alert system through which it publicizes human rights abuses brought to its attention by its members at regional and global institutions and media outlets; (2) it sends election observation experts from member organizations to conduct long-term training of election authorities and monitor election processes; (3) it provides assistance to activist groups defending the rights of vulnerable social groups, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI), indigenous and Afro-descendent communities; and (4) it sends volunteer missions to respond to humanitarian situations like the earthquake in Haiti.

RedLad has several strengths as a network:

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[2] "State of Civil Society 2013: Creating an Enabling Environment." *CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation*, <https://web.archive.org/web/20141229224721/http://socs.civicus.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/2013>.

[3] Cárdenas, Mauricio. "Political Polarization in Latin America." *Brookings Institution*, November 6, 2009, <https://web.archive.org/save/http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2009/11/06-politics-latin-america-cardenas>.

- *Inclusion of groups from a broad array of political ideology and marginalized groups.* By including members from the left, right and center of the political spectrum, indigenous and LGBTI communities, as well as other relevant social movements, RedLad not only expands its reach, but also increases its legitimacy and the weight its advocacy platforms carry among target audiences.
- *Independent and flexible with an ad-hoc decision-making capacity.* While RedLad is, like most CSOs and CSO networks, donor-funded, it was not established by a donor organization, nor is it dependent on any one donor for funding. Instead, it leverages the activities its members are already implementing and coordinates and utilizes them where needed.
- *Broad geographic and thematic scope*. RedLad is able to coordinate CSOs from 27 different thematic areas (e.g. Afro-descendants, Political Affairs, Youth, Human Rights, Justice, etc.) as well as across five sub-regions. The network is clustered by these thematic and geographic areas with coordinating teams for each to facilitate knowledge sharing and cooperative behavior. This high level of organization allows organizations with common interests to coordinate independently, allowing them to remain focused while benefitting from the resources of a large network.

Other RDRNs in the Latin America and Caribbean region include the Regional Alliance for Access to Information and Freedom of Expression, Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency, Joint Table of National Associations and Regional Networks of NGOs in Latin America and the Caribbean (Mesa de Articulacion), and Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM) (*see below for a brief overview of these networks*).

Select Regional Networks in Latin America and the Caribbean

Network	Topic Area	Members	Structure	Status	Activities
Regional Alliance for Access to Information and Freedom of Expression	Freedom of Information, Freedom of Expression	24 CSOs, 6 universities and 34 individual experts/opinion leaders from 18 countries in the region	Annual Assemblies and common activities coordinated by executive secretariat	Formerly very active, level of activity since 2011 is uncertain	Building "horizontal cooperation" through technical assistance, trainings, strategic advocacy missions and research studies. In 2007-2008, 83 activities were coordinated that reached an estimated 2,521 beneficiaries (including lawyers, journalists, NGOs, students and government officials).

Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency	Legislative Transparency	23 CSOs from 11 countries in the region	Activities coordinated by Advisory Council	Active	Publishes *Index of Legislative Transparency*, provides recommendations on how to increase legislative transparency standards in the region, promotes national initiatives that raise awareness of the need for more transparency, and coordinates knowledge-sharing between CSOs who engage with their national legislatures.
Joint Table of National Associations and Regional Networks of NGOs in Latin American and the Caribbean (Mesa de Articulación) http://mesadearticulacion.org/	Wide array of development issues, including public sector reform, regional integration, civic engagement, press freedoms, transparency, accountability and democratization	19 national platforms and 5 regional networks	Platform for advocacy coordination	Active	Coordinates civil society's role in expanding democracy, citizen participation and sustainable development in the region by publishing research studies and reports and issuing joint declarations. It also manages a Regional Project that aims to build the capacity of its members to engage their national governments more productively, influence policymaking, become more financially sustainable, share knowledge more effectively, and increase their presence at the regional level.
Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM)	Women's Rights	15 national networks comprised of 80 organizations and around 250 individuals)	Regional Assembly coordinates National Offices, which in turn coordinate local networks of member organizations	Active	CLADEM monitors government commitments, presents findings and recommendations at UN events, publishes country reports and position papers, lobbies for women-friendly legislation, submits amicus curiae briefs in relevant litigation, and provides trainings in conjunction with educational institutions to increase gender sensitivity among key stakeholders.

Middle East and North Africa

Regional Assessment

The MENA region lacks the organized transnational democracy and human rights networks that exist in other regions. This relative dearth of RDRNs reflects the harsher political climate in the MENA region and the civic stagnation affecting some countries with long histories of authoritarian rule. While the lack of legal space and grassroots institutional capacity may be sources for this regional gap, it is also possible that social schisms and sectarian geopolitical realities have made broad-based regional movements for democracy harder to realize.

Existing Networks

Two large RDRNs exist in the MENA region, the **Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)** and the **Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)**. ANND is a large platform of CSOs from Arab countries, established in 1997 and based in Beirut. The network works in 12 Arab countries and consists of 23 NGOs and nine national-level NGO networks that consist of 250 CSOs from different backgrounds. While ANND also addresses issues of regional trade and investment, it places particular emphasis on promoting social and economic rights in the region and on public policy reform. ANND regularly hosts events and conferences to coordinate advocacy platforms and promote regional networking. These forums support the sharing of information and research materials, promote active monitoring of public decisions and the implementation of commitments, and develop the capacity of members to advocate for their constituents' interests to influence public policy through horizontal learning.

EMHRN is distinctive in that its scope covers both the MENA region and the European continent. The EMHRN's 89 CSO and individual members are divided fairly evenly across these two regions, with 26 Regular Members coming from European countries and 33 coming from MENA. In addition to these Regular Members, six regional alliances ("Regional Members"), seven global NGOs ("Associate Members"), and 17 individual activists and experts ("Honorary Members") participate. EMHRN's focus areas, adopted at the 2012 General Assembly in Copenhagen, are: (1) Democratic Transition, Legislative and Judicial Reform; (2) Conflict Situations and the Respect for Human Rights, International Law and International Humanitarian Law (IHL); (3) Gender Equality and Women's Rights; (4) The Fight against Discrimination; (5) Migrants' and Refugees' Rights; and (6) Economic and Social Rights. EMHRN coordinates advocacy campaigns on these issues and others related to democracy and human rights in both Europe and MENA. It also conducts information-sharing conferences and leads capacity development of members.

ANND and EMHRN also work on the promotion of economic and social rights. This emphasis is perhaps a result of the prominence of socio-economic issues in the political unrest currently affecting the region.

Another RDRN in the MENA region is the **Arab Network for Democratic Elections (ANDE)**, closely associated with the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE). ANDE is a network of CSOs in the region that observe and monitor elections and maintains a pool of experts in electoral issues who are leveraged for this purpose. ANDE electoral observation and assessment missions have been sent to Mauritania, Lebanon, Tunisia, Sudan, Egypt, Kuwait and Jordan.

The **Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI)** is an online clearinghouse that collects publications and statements from over 140 human rights organizations in the region and republishes them to update and inform the public at large of new developments.

Europe/Eurasia

Regional Assessment

Western Europe contains a relatively large number of civil society networks, reflecting the longer history of organized civil society in the region as well as the recent political and economic integration the region has experienced. However, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, sub-regions where formalized civil society organizations did not even exist until the last 25 years, have also begun to organize, both with assistance from their Western neighbors and independently.

Perhaps the number of RDRNs in Eurasia is a result not only of the political opening that occurred in the early 1990s, but also the marked democratic backsliding in many Eastern European and newly independent states that has occurred since then. While this closing political space undoubtedly makes operating civil society networks harder, it also creates greater impetus for networking. The RDRNs listed below provide mechanisms by which CSOs can gain strength in numbers and through which donors interested in bolstering democracy can assist those standing up for their rights in harsh political environments. The geographic proximity of donor countries and the political integration efforts underway in the region ease the creation of these networks as well.

RDRNs in Eurasia also tend to have more complex organizational structures. This perhaps reflects the rich web of institutional linkages due to integration as well as the relative prevalence of information and communications technologies that ease coordination among a large number of actors in a network.

Existing Networks

While the concept of organized civil society networks is arguably more mature in Western Europe, RDRNs are primarily focused in the former communist countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, where governance issues are more pronounced and democratic development more threatened. Often, Western European countries have facilitated the creation of these networks in the east, and in some cases actively coordinate them. One such RDRN is the **Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum's Working Group on Democracy, Human Rights, Good Governance and Stability**.

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) is an initiative launched by the European Union (EU) in 2009 in order to foster better ties with the countries of Eastern Europe, including on issues of democracy and governance. The Civil Society Forum (CSF) was established at the first EaP Summit in Prague as a network of NGOs, labor and business associations, think-tanks, foundations and networks from EaP countries that would better allow them to exchange information and coordinate amongst themselves and with their respective governments in ways that would benefit their respective political transitions. The EaP CSF has held five Annual Assemblies in which over 700 CSO representatives have participated. In addition, a Steering Committee meets four times a year and a permanent Secretariat established in 2012 now sits in Brussels year round.

The Working Group on Democracy, Human Rights, Good Governance and Stability is the largest of CSF's five Working Groups, with over 50 participants attending their most recent meeting in June 2015. The Working Group is further divided into eight Subdivisions: Public Administration Reform, Visa Facilitation, Fight Against Corruption, Media, Human Rights, Election Monitoring, Judiciary Reform, and Regional Cooperation and Confidence Building. Activities differ between the various subdivisions, but the most common activities are lobbying governments, monitoring their commitments, training local public officials, and developing mechanisms to institutionalize civil society input into reform processes.

In contrast to many bottom-up RDRNs that suffer from a lack of centralized structure, the EaP CSF is a formalized and complex institutional network established by an inter-governmental initiative (the EaP) and funded through regional mechanisms (e.g. the EU Eastern Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility). This model of RDRN is less flexible but benefits from direct and permanent channels of communication with regional decision makers and national platforms, which ensures it a degree of influence not always achieved by RDRNs.

Another prominent RDRN in this region is the **European Movement International (EMI)**. EMI is the largest pan-European civil society network, founded in 1948 to promote European political, economic and social integration. Its stated goal is to "contribute to the establishment of a united, federal Europe founded on the principles of peace, democracy, liberty, solidarity, and respect for basic human rights. It seeks to provide a structure to encourage and facilitate the active participation of citizens and civil society organisations in the development of a united Europe."

Membership in EMI consists of 34 international associations (CSOs, political parties, trade and labor unions, and interest groups), 39 National Councils (national-level chapters), and three supporting members. According to EMI, this diversified membership reflects a conscious decision to "welcome all types of cultural, political, economic and social orientations at the heart of the European Movement." EMI's large geographic scope allows it to connect those working in the EU with groups from the Balkans, Turkey and the Caucasus. An initiative is currently underway to further engage Ukrainian groups to build on the pro-European momentum the country has experienced in the wake of its recent revolution.

EMI seeks to provide a link between European citizens and institutions by promoting civil society-government dialogue at the regional level and engaging European publics in decision-making processes. EMI works with its members to encourage their participation in transnational projects and to facilitate the exchange of information between them. For example, EMI provides grant proposal and project implementation support and sometimes suggests member participation in related initiatives. EMI's work is divided into three Committees: (1) the Committee on Democracy, Rights and Freedom; (2) the EMI Political Committee on Jobs, Competitiveness and Sustainable Growth; and (3) the EMI Political Committee on "Europe in the World." Plenary and Steering Committee meetings and the work of the Communications task force are all coordinated directly by EMI.

EMI's Committee on Democracy, Rights and Freedom organizes an alliance of over 40 organizations called "Europe+ Civil Society for the Renewal of European Democracy." Founded on July 8, 2014, this group mobilizes action around working to enhance democratic institutions and civic engagement throughout Europe.

One challenge EMI experiences is a closing of political space in some of the countries in which its members operate (particularly in the Caucasus). Funding is also an issue for many member organizations, as tenders for project implementation are often awarded to larger and more established consultancies.

In addition to the two RDRNs listed above, the European/Eurasian region contains several other notable networks, listed below:

Select Regional Networks in Europe/Eurasia					
Network	Topic Area(s)	Members	Structure	Status	Activities
European Platform for Democratic Elections (EPDE)	Election observation, electoral rights	14 CSOs from Eastern Partnership countries	Network coordinated by small Coordination Council/ Secretariat	Active	Organization of volunteer campaigns and election observation missions. Advocacy campaigns aimed at strengthening civil society outreach of independent observation missions. Tailored long- and short-term training of domestic election observation networks. Peer-to-peer training programs and internet-based information and communication tools. Presentation of election observation reports to EU and OSCE institutions. Expert roundtables on best practice in election observation. Coordination with existing structures like the Eastern Partnership Facility of the Council of

					Europe, ENEMO, Election Observation Working Group of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, and EU-Russia Civil Society Forum. Member of Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM).
European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations Initiative (ENEMO)	Election Observation, electoral rights	21 CSOs from 17 countries in Eastern Europe/ Former Soviet Union	Long-term election observation missions and short-term election monitoring teams from member organizations	Active	To date, ENEMO has organized 21 international Election Observation Missions to seven countries. The EOM for the Local Elections 2015 (October) was the 10th election observation mission to Ukraine.ENEMO members have observed more than 200 elections and trained more than 200,000 election monitors. ENEMO also has its members sign on to various international election observation standards. Member of the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM).
Policy Association for an Open Society (PASOS)	Democracy and Human Rights, Good Governance and Open Economy, Sustainable Development, International Cooperation	58 policy centers from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Work is divided into 7 capacity building working groups and 7 thematic working groups (includes group on Democracy and on Governance)	Active	Formerly the OSI-funded Related Centres Network (RCN). Organizes conferences, workshops, and seminars, engages its members in advocacy campaigns, and acts as a resource for joint programming. Last year it held NATO training sessions for university students and has delivered open government recommendations to the Albanian government.
Human Rights House Network (HRHN)	Press Freedoms, International Law, Human Rights Defense	A community of human rights defenders from over 100 independent organization's operating in 16 networks ("Human Rights Houses") in 13 countries.	Overseen by International Advisory Board, Secretariat and Norwegian Board, which meets bimonthly and monitors the Secretariat. Members meet at annual conference.	Active (as of 2013)	Each Human Rights House carries out its own projects and have varying levels of activity. However, the Human Rights House Foundation, the network's Secretariat, also coordinates regional projects. These projects have included Electronic Human Rights Education for Lawyers, the South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders, Observatory of the Freedom of Media in Poland, and other advocacy and legal capacity building activities. All but one House operates in the Europe/Eurasia region (one operates in Uganda).

Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN)	Human Rights	50 European NGOs in the fields of democracy, human rights, and peacebuilding	Coordinated by a governing "troika" of three representatives from member organizations who are elected by the entire membership during the annual general meeting	Active	HRDN's activities are divided into three working groups: European Parliament, Funding for Human Rights and Democracy, and EU Internal Human Rights Policy. It carries out advocacy actions, monitors EU policies and co-operates with other NGO networks on issues related to human rights and democracy. The European Parliament Working Group engages with the EP's Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI), Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), Human Rights Action Unit and the EP Friends of Human Rights group of MEPs. The Funding for Human Rights and Democracy Working Group works to increase the effectiveness of EU funding of human rights and democracy promotion CSOs in the region and the EU Internal Human Rights Policy Working Group advocates a common framework for the EU to promote democracy and human rights among its member countries.
Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe's Centers for Pluralism	Democracy and Governance (some Centers focus on specific themes like corruption or human rights)	20 Centers and 16 Partner Organizations	Originally founded and coordinated by IDEE, now independent national networks	No longer a formal network, but still some degree of coordination	From 1993-2003, the Centers coordinated information exchange, knowledge sharing, and joint projects addressing common issues associated with their political democratization, with the IDEE providing small grants funding to support their local networks. Since the network's funding ended, activities are now less coordinated and the level of activity varies between the Centers.

Asia-Pacific

Regional Assessment

Asia is another region where civil society space has expanded rapidly in certain pockets and where new democracy and human rights networks are being established. Asian RDRNs tend to engage rather frequently with regional inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), namely the Association of South East Asian Nations and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. The level of engagement shown by these two institutions is an encouraging sign that a region once marked by widespread authoritarianism is now accepting the positive role CSOs can play in communicating citizens' interests to regional forums. However, as in other regions, these networks are limited to the political spaces in which they are allowed to operate; China, the largest Asian nation, remains notably absent.

Existing Networks

A notable and new RDRN in the region is the **Asia Democracy Network (ADN)**. ADN was first envisioned at the annual Assembly of the World Movement of Democracy in 2012 and the Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies in 2013. A task force led by the Korea Democracy Network then organized the Founding Assembly, held in Seoul on October 21-22, 2013, when a Steering Committee and Secretariat were established. The ADN is a civil society-led multi-stakeholder forum that is committed to building a "just, equitable and sustainable community of democratic societies in Asia, where all human rights of all individuals, groups and peoples are fully respected and realized." Thus far, the ADN has attended many regional international conferences, issued joint statements, and provided online resources (e.g. publicizing training and funding opportunities). The ADN contains several other RDRNs as members and may defer to them for more programmatic work.

Meanwhile, other more established RDRNs exist in the region as well, listed below:

Select Regional Networks in Asia-Pacific					
Network	Topic Area(s)	Members	Structure	Status	Activities
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)	Human Rights, Democracy	58 human rights-related CSOs from 19 countries in the region	7-member Executive Committee supervises work of Secretariat	Active and growing	Works with human rights and democracy promotion groups in South, East and Southeast Asia to promote coordination, build capacity and facilitate advocacy at the SAARC, ASEAN and UN. Also hosts a knowledge exchange initiative among human rights and women's rights defense groups and promotes the establishment of national human rights institutions for this purpose. The Human Rights Training program attempts to bolster these groups' knowledge and

					skills through trainings and resource materials.
Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL)	Election Observation, Electoral Rights	23 CSOs	Secretariat divided into three divisions: Election Observation, Capacity Building, and Advocacy and Campaigns	Active	Election Observation Division conducts election observation missions, gathers electoral stakeholders to discuss electoral issues, and promotes electoral transparency. Capacity Building Division develops trainings for election monitoring groups, media outlets and other watchdog organizations, leads electoral reform awareness and advocacy campaigns, organizes study tours, and hosts need-based workshops. A member of the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM), which is supported by National Democratic Institute (NDI).
Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)	Women's Rights, Human Rights Law, Gender-Sensitive Development	110 CSOs from 25 countries in the region	Secretariat, Program and Management Members, and Regional Council Members (2-year terms) oversee the network	Active	Participates in regional civil society campaigns, organizes Asia Pacific Feminist Forum and implements projects on Feminist Development Justice, Feminist Law and Practice, Labour and Migration, Grounding the Regional and Global International Mechanisms, Rural and Indigenous Women, Women and Climate Justice, Women in Power, and Women Human Rights Defenders. The Human Rights Defenders project has created a Women Human Rights Defenders Coalition and has published a guidebook on the subject. Other projects have overseen the creation of other fora (e.g. Southeast Asia Women's Caucus on ASEAN). The most common activities are building the skills and knowledge of relevant CSOs and engaging decision-making institutions through joint campaigns.
Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA)	Media Law, Internet	11 CSOs working on media freedom in 7	Governed by Board of	Active and growing	Monitors freedom of expression and issues Alerts through its networks when concerning developments warrant emergency action. Also organizes

	Freedom, Safety of Journalists	countries in the region	Trustees, elected from membership. Board sets overall policy direction, reviews work of Secretariat, manages the executive director.		advocacy campaigns, funds joint investigative journalism research through the Annual Journalism Fellowship, and conducts other journalist exchanges, regional forums and conferences, thematic trainings for journalists and a regional training of trainers program. A member of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange.
Asian People's Forum (APF) (formerly ASEAN Civil Society Conference)	Peace, Justice and Human Rights, Development, Democratization	Over 1,500 participants attended the annual conference in Kuala Lampur, April 2015	Annual conference held, planned by National Organizing Committee in country hosting ASEAN Summit in conjunction with other Regional Participants. The organizing committees are reconstituted each year. Many organizations coordinate over the course of the year, but there are no formal mechanisms outside of the annual event.	Active	CSOs bring up their concerns on issues regarding human rights, development, trade, environment, youth, and culture affecting many countries in the region. The APF also features a forum through which participants can better understand the host country from the perspective of civil society. This forum includes workshops on issues of democratization in Southeast Asia through which civil society consensus is sought and recommendations are put forward to ASEAN.
South Asia Forum for	Human Rights, Peace and Reconciliation	25 CSOs from the region and 4	3 Regional Secretariats in	Unclear	Forum for South Asian human rights CSOs to exchange ideas, communicate, and raise awareness of human rights abuses in the region. Also develops

Human Rights (SAFHR)		international NGOs	Nepal, India, and Pakistan		human rights courses for activists, capacity building for women's and media groups, peoples' forums for conflict resolution, and advocates at SAARC for mechanisms that protect human rights. They also "audit" border dispute dialogues/partitions. Online portal of resources is still available, but status of activities since 2013 is unclear.
World Forum for Democratization in Asia (WFDA)	Democracy Promotion, Human Rights	Partners with over 150 democracy and human rights CSOs in the region . This includes has 22 international NGOs and 7 regional networks	Unclear	Unclear	Hosts biennial meetings at which CSOs network with one another and participate in Strategy Development workshops to develop common agendas. The Forum has also organized election observation missions and Solidarity and Democracy missions, which facilitated capacity building support to CSOs, formalized dialogue mechanisms and proposed new avenues of civil society-government partnership. Last Biennial Meeting listed on website was held in 2009.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Regional Assessment

Sub-Saharan Africa has fewer RDRNs than some of the regions covered in this report. The networks that do exist have several commonalities. First, RDRNs in Sub-Saharan Africa consist of primarily human rights defense organizations. Second, most are organized at the sub-regional level (North Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, Southern Africa, and East Africa). These groupings may be the natural result of the region's large size and the relatively larger barriers to transportation and communication among network members. Lastly, of the networks surveyed, most were hosted by an existing CSO. While hosting networks at existing organizations can save on in-kind resources during the network's early development, it can also hinder networks because secretariat staff must split its time between administering the network and administering its own CSO.

Existing Networks

The **East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network (EHAHRDN)** is an RDRN that works on protecting and supporting human rights activists and organizations in the region. The EHAHRDN is coordinated by the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP), which also coordinates the larger **Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network (PAHRD-Net)**. The Pan-African network includes the EHAHRDN, the **West African Human Rights Defenders Network (ROADDH)**, the **Central African Human Rights Defenders Network (REDHAC)**, the **Southern African Human Rights Defenders Network** (hosted by the International Commission of Jurists), and the **Northern Africa Human Rights Defenders Network** (hosted by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies).

These sub-regional networks work to develop common strategies in protecting human rights defenders (HRDs) and monitor ongoing cases to determine how best to provide assistance. The EHAHRDN, based in Kampala, primarily works to improve the physical security of human rights advocates, build advocacy coalitions, and support the growth of national forums for human rights defense. The network includes over 70 CSOs from 11 countries, by far the largest and most active of the African Human Rights Defense Networks. It works primarily to protect HRDs by providing medical assistance and temporary relocation services, to organize national and regional advocacy activities (e.g. at the African Commission of Human and People's Rights), and to implement capacity building projects as needed. After the East and Horn of Africa network, the Northern and Southern African networks are the more active networks, with the Central African network based in Kigali and the West African network based in Lome having fewer members and a lower level of activity.

PAHRD-Net's role is to enhance communication between networks, provide them with technical assistance as needed, assess gaps, formulate responses, leverage lessons learned to improve the newer networks, and secure new channels of funding. The PAHRD-Net provides resources for these activities and awards one HRD from each sub-region a grant to support their individual work. In addition, the PAHRD-Net provides risk assessment trainings to regional secretariats, who will then in turn train their member organizations. This initiative is meant to help organizations analyze how they can reduce vulnerability to government human rights violations such as office break-ins, and already shows signs of having a positive impact in preventing incidents of this practice. This franchise model has only been operating since PAHRD-Net was established in 2012, but holds promise as a model for structuring other RDRNs. Having a common umbrella through which to communicate and share information can greatly strengthen the efforts of sub-regional human rights networks in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The EHAHRDP has helped to reinforce and launch the newer sub-regional branches. However, the EHAHRDP Secretariat does not interfere with the activities of other members of the PAHRD-Net, but instead assists the other sub-regional branches to emulate its model in their own contexts. EHAHDRP recently received funding from the EU to provide technical assistance to the secretariats of the other four sub-regional networks to build their management capacity and will host a meeting in Kampala in the coming months to determine their various needs. Challenges that have affected these

networks include a limited capacity among sub-regional secretariats to handle large grants (an issue in the Central African network) and a preoccupation with domestic political pushback (an issue in the North African network).

Other Sub-Saharan Africa RDRNs are listed below:

Select Regional Networks in Sub-Saharan Africa					
Network	**Topic Area(s)**	**Members**	**Structure**	**Status**	**Activities**
Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)	Media Freedoms, Freedom of Expression, Access to Information, Gender Justice	11 national chapter networks (total of over 100 organizations and 1,700 individuals)	Each chapter is a network of organizations and individuals coordinated by Chapter Secretariats and National Governing Councils, chapters are coordinated by Regional Secretariat and Regional Governing Council. The chapter leaderships meet at the Annual General Meeting.	Active	Researches and documents media policies for evidence-based advocacy, organizes the Working Group on Access to Information to bring together advocacy stakeholders, advocates at the Southern African Development Community Council for Non-Governmental Organizations. Regional network organizes various regional campaigns, but national networks undertake their own activities as well.
West African Election Observers Network (WAEON)	Election Observation, Electoral Rights	10 member organizations from 9 countries in the region	General Assembly of member representatives is coordinated by Executive Council. Network is based in Accra at the Ghana Center for Democratic Development	Active	Strengthens and supports Citizens' Election Observation Groups, which monitor electoral processes, train on monitoring and voter education initiatives, and develop manuals of best practices. Seeks to promote the adoption of international electoral standards, researches and spreads awareness of electoral issues in the region, advocates specific reforms, and facilitates coordination and information exchange among electoral stakeholders. Member of Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM).
East and Horn of Africa Election Observers	Election Observation, Electoral Rights	5 citizen election monitoring	E-Horn Council of member representatives elected the Elections	Active, new	Founded in 2013 to coordinate election observation groups and advocate for electoral practices that meet international standards. Hosted a

Network (E-Horn)		groups and networks	Observation Group as the Secretariat for the first 5 years.		regional conference on monitoring voter registration. Plans to sponsor election observation missions, thematic monitoring, advocacy campaigns, and capacity building efforts. Member of GNDEM.

Global

Assessment

While this report has thus far focused on regional networks, it would be remiss to overlook the several large and well-funded global civil society networks that address democracy and governance issues. Global networks are generally larger and have more resources at their disposal than regional networks. The global reach of these networks, particularly the leading networks identified, allows them to pool more expertise and resources than most regional networks are able to leverage. Furthermore, these networks are often headquartered in donor countries, where there are may be more resources available for the organizational development of the network.

Existing Networks

Among the most influential global RDRNs are **Transparency International, CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation**, **World Movement for Democracy (WMD)**, **Partners for Democratic Change International (PDCI)**, **International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)**, **International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX)**, and the **Global Network for Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM)**. Other RDRNs with a global scope include **Opening Parliament**, **Women's Democracy Network (WDN)**, **International Civil Society Forum for Democracy (ICSFD)**, **Association for Progressive Communications (APC)**, **Freedom of Information Advocates Network (FOIA-Net)**, **Network of Democracy Research Institutes (NDRI)**, **UNCAC Coalition**, and **Debates International**.

A more in-depth look at some of the larger networks follows in the chart below:

Select Global Networks					
Network	**Topic Area(s)**	**Members**	**Structure**	**Status**	**Activities**

Transparency International (TI)	Transparency, Anti-Corruption	Chapter in more than 100 countries, each an independent organization	Full-time secretariat staff sits at global HQ in Berlin. Board of Directors has appointed a 37-person Advisory Council, individual members who lend their expertise to the organization.	Active	The network funds and implements projects that combat corruption in the corporate sector and in the public sector, that improve civic engagement and open governance, that safeguard finances to address climate change, and that support innovative anti-corruption solutions. It also publishes various research publications, assesses the state of national integrity systems at the country level, and creates an annual global index of corruption perceptions called the Corruption Perceptions Index. Lastly, TI develops tools for companies, governments, researchers, activists, educators and other civil society groups to enhance their ability to counter corruption in their respective fields.
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation	Civic Engagement, Civil Society Strengthening	150 members (organizations and individuals) and 1,120 supporting members, from over 150 countries	Staff led by Secretary General, Board of Directors provides oversight, members gather at the annual World Assembly	Active	Monitors developments in civil society space around the world, publishes expert analysis and global indices, builds capacity of and shares knowledge among member CSOs, raises awareness and advocates at the UN, hosts annual Global Assembly, and more. Includes the Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA), which publishes research papers and hosts peer learning exchanges.
World Movement for Democracy	Democracy and Governance, Civil Society Strengthening	Participants include individuals and 70 organizations, and networks. Over 400 democracy activists, practitioners, scholars, and donors from more than 100 countries attended the 2015 World Assembly in Lima	Secretariat at NED in Washington, DC. Led by International Steering Committee of expert practitioners. Movement meets at biennial World Assembly.	Active	Organizes Global Assembly for face-to-face networking, coordinates online sharing of information and best practices, alerts members of threats to build solidarity and mobilize joint actions, implements the Defending Civil Society Project and Civic Space Initiative, supports existing regional and functional civil society networks, and provides resource materials.
Partners for Democratic Change	Democracy and Governance,	18 Centers	Centers are coordinated by Secretariat in Brussels, with second	Active	In 2013, PDCI members issued 55 publications and held 2,521 trainings, workshops and events. Activities include training and establishing mentoring

International (PDCI)	Conflict Resolution		hub in Washington, DC		programs for social entrepreneurs in transition countries, providing program development support, providing CSOs with support for cooperative advocacy initiatives, helping CSOs operating in harsh political environments to plan strategically and secure funding, establishing dialogue between governments and CSOs to enhance participatory policymaking, transparency, accountability, and the administration of justice, facilitating the mediation of environmental disputes, and providing a range of training and consulting services to CSOs, government agencies and private sector actors.
International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)	Human Rights	178 member organizations	Congress of 178 members, International Bureau of 22 members reports to Congress, Executive Board coordinates operations and reports to International Bureau, and International Secretariat in Paris provides administrative and financial support and communicates with partners	Active	Established in 1922 as first human rights network. Conducts fact-finding missions and publishes alerts, provides psychological and legal assistance to activists and organizations suffering harassment, advocates at international institutions on their behalf, and supports networking efforts among members to mobilize for reforms and greater awareness. Provides various types of technical assistance and logistical support to CSOs promoting and defending human rights, women's rights, migrants' rights, and the rights of victims of conflict.
International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX)	Freedom of Expression	104 member organizations from over 60 countries around the world	IFEX Council oversees the network. Staff divided into Information and Awareness team, Campaigning and Advocacy team, Network Development team, and Institutional Strengthening and Sustainability team.	Active	Publishes reports on threats to and violations of freedom of expression, organizes advocacy coalitions, working groups, petitions and statements to mobilize action, holds conferences and workshops to coordinate efforts and develops resource materials.
Global Network for Domestic	Election Observation	190 members from 75 countries,	Originally coordinated and funded by NDI. Now	Active	A large “network of networks” that brings together election observation/monitoring groups, bound by a *Declaration of Global*

Election Monitors (GNDEM)		including 9 regional networks)	led by a two-person coordinating committee and appointed chair.		*Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations*. It also encourages regional and global interaction and exchange between these groups through its Exchanges. GNDEM Exchanges provide forums for independent monitoring groups to share their experiences and discuss the challenges they face, as well as to learn about innovative tools and methodologies that can facilitate their work. GNDEM is currently housed by NDI, its parent organization, though it is currently looking to diversify its funding and to increase its organizational independence.
Freedom of Information Advocates Network (FOIA-Net)	Freedom of Information	Over 240 member organizations (less than 80 are active)	Secretariat is one person, who conducts administrative and logistical work. Steering Committee of 7 most active members.	Active	For its first 9 years, the network was mainly a tool for communication and coordinated the celebration of International Right to Know Day. In the last 3 years, it has become more active, issuing statements of its own and participating in the Open Government Partnership (hosted panel at London summit).
Opening Parliament	Legislative Transparency	170 organizations from 89 countries around the world	Coordinated by NDI, Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency, and Sunlight Foundation. Meets via conferences and through online tools.	Active	A tool for sharing experiences and information, coordinating advocacy, and promoting a shared set of values (*Declaration on Parliamentary Openness*). Activities have included a letter campaign to parliaments and Global Legislative Openness Week, when organizations around the world were encouraged to hold and coordinate activities and conferences on legislative transparency.

SECTION TWO • *Factors that Affect the Success of Networks*

The interviews we conducted with members of regional networks for this report, as well as with expert practitioners and observers of civil society networks, pointed to several factors that affect the success or failure of RDRNs. These factors are not necessarily preconditions for a network's success, but are rather elements that, when present, facilitate the creation and expansion of networks, and when absent, make creating and sustaining them more difficult.

- ***Funding mechanisms conducive to network sustainability.*** RDRNs most often pointed to difficulty raising funds when asked about the challenges they face. Currently, international development funds provided to CSOs flow primarily to individual organizations, not to a regional secretariat. This model is not conducive to sustaining a regional secretariat's overhead costs and current donor funding schemes do not adequately accommodate network structures. RDRNs ask that funds be allocated not only for individual projects, but also for strengthening the network's ability to apply for, distribute, and use the funds it receives. Funding mechanisms should also take into account the general administrative expenses incurred by an active secretariat. Of course, the burden does not fully lie with donors; network secretariats must do more to convey to donors and investors the value they add in furthering their cause and demonstrate the positive impacts of working as an alliance. It is also the case that funding need not take primacy over other factors in a network's success: "Money is not a good glue", as one observer notes. For a complex network to function, funding is necessary but by no means sufficient.

- ***An enabling legal and political operating environment.*** Regions in which democracy has been established and where funding is readily available are naturally more likely to have strong RDRNs. Conversely, authoritarian and semi-authoritarian countries whose governments restrict the ability of NGOs to receive funds are far less likely to produce these networks. Hostile political environments affect civil society in multiple ways, from burdensome reporting requirements and funding limitations to outright harassment and prosecution. By reducing their ability to organize and sustain themselves financially,

Challenges in Action:
The Inter-American Democracy Network

The story of the Inter-American Democracy Network (RID) illustrates the effect these factors can have on the expansion or collapse of an RDRN. The RID was, only a few years ago, a vibrant RDRN coordinated by Partners of the Americas and the Esquel Foundation. With member organizations in the fields of transparency, civic engagement, conflict resolution, environmental sustainability, civil society strengthening and more, the RID produced research studies, promoted the exchange of information, and sponsored capacity building trainings, technical assistance projects and civic education initiatives, working closely with the Organization of American States (OAS).

However, the network has become dormant in recent years, for several reasons: (1) a shortage of funding to cover the needed overhead administrative costs of the network; (2) an overdependence on a single funder, without enough cross-cutting projects to fully leverage some members of the network; (3) a mismatch between the activities donors were interested in funding (many were concerned primarily with advocacy at regional institutions) and the priorities of many of the network's members; and (4) political polarization in the region. These challenges illustrate the importance of diversifying funding in order to increase the sustainability and flexibility of the network and the importance of tailoring the network's agenda in a manner that maximizes its usefulness to member organizations and legitimates its continued existence.

national legislation that over-regulates civil society also hampers these groups' ability to coordinate with one another and participate in international networks.

- ***Dynamic leadership and broad member buy-in.*** In addition to at least tacit acceptance by the local government and engagement from the international community, networks must have buy-in from the members themselves. Strong leadership seems to be crucial to achieving this buy-in. When an organization is willing to host a network in its early stages or an individual network leader devotes the time and effort needed to expand and maintain communication and strategic direction, networks are more likely to build momentum. Individual leadership can be particularly important in communicating the value of the network to existing and potential members and setting an ambitious and exciting agenda that attracts members. Alternatively, without this leadership networks often resort to the 'lowest common denominator' and levels of activity suffer. Several interviewees mentioned personal leadership as having an effect on the level of activity of their network, in one case resulting in membership expansion and new activities and the other playing a role in the network's disintegration. Conversely, the leading organization must be complemented by a variety of other strong organizations for the network to hold. If member organizations are not sustainable and active in their own right, then their capacity to add value to a network will be limited.

- ***Incentives to join the struggle.*** Lastly, member organizations must feel that networks are representative of their interests and useful to their cause. Therefore, networks tend to develop when organizations in multiple countries feel like they have common cause with one another that supersedes partisan politics or specific social groups. When this regional consensus is lacking, networks are less likely to thrive. As scholar L. David Brown writes, a "culture of mutual respect and trust" must be present "to organize joint action at scale."[4] In addition, RDRNs are more likely to be active when democracy and human rights are threatened. A regional sense of common threat or common opportunity can galvanize CSOs to expand their networks and to form new ones.

[4] Brown, David L., Alnoor Ebrahim and Srilatha Batliwala. "Governing International Advocacy NGOs." *World Development*, Vol. 40, No. 6, pp. 1098–1108, 2012.

SECTION THREE • *Recommendations on Supporting Networks*

Donors can lend various types of support donors to civil society networks, and new mechanisms for support continue to be developed (see the *Annex*). Taking into account a network's structure is crucial to providing the most productive and impactful support to these groups. Below is an illustration of how network support mechanisms can be matched to fit the management structure of the network.

The structures below are not a comprehensive list. Each network's management structure is slightly different, and have been simplified to attempt to capture common management characteristics. While this report recommends types of support to these broad categories of networks, the option or combination of options that are ultimately chosen should be based primarily on the capabilities and available resources of the donor organization, the needs of the network being supported, and the rules of the host country regarding foreign donations to local entities.

Here are some examples and considerations for support to each of the network structures listed above:

Recommended Support Mechanisms for Common Management Structures				
Management Structure	**Support Type**			
	Grants as core funding and/or for network development, and to fund activities	Co-implementation of activities with secretariat	In-kind grants	Capacity building/training activities
Secretariat is hosted or managed by a single member NGO	X	X	X	X
Secretariat is registered & independent of member organizations	X	X	X	X
Secretariat staff is drawn from member NGOs, but not registered		X		X
No Secretariat				X

***Secretariat hosted or managed by single member*:** In this management structure an existing NGO coordinates the network's activities and often physically hosts its staff members. For example, the Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network (PAHRD-Net) is coordinated by the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHARDP), a member organization.

When the secretariat of a network is registered in its host country, donors have more options. As legal entities, these networks can receive funding and enter contractual relationships. All four types of assistance listed above are applicable to this category of network.

***Secretariat registered independent of members*:** In this model the secretariat is either created as a new institution separate from its members, usually with its own full-time staff, or it is hosted by a parent organization. For example, the World Movement for Democracy's secretariat staff is managed by the National Endowment for Democracy.

Again, because the secretariat is a registered organization in its home country, it can receive various types of assistance. The option chosen should reflect the needs of the beneficiary network. However, often parent organizations will donate in-kind resources to secretariats they host, making in-kind grants less necessary than cases in which the secretariat is entirely independent and does not have this kind of support.

***Secretariat drawn from members and unregistered*:** In this model, the network's daily operations are carried out by a portion of the staff from several or all its member organizations. Though member organizations and networks are most likely registered in their respective countries, this category is marked by the fact that the network's management is not legally housed in a single location. For example, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) operates as a collection of national chapters. Representatives are elected to participate in the Regional Secretariat, but the corporate structure is decentralized so that each national chapter is an autonomous NGO or Trust registered according to the laws of its host country.

In these cases, providing grants to the network itself can be complicated, as there is no designated organization to receive the grant, raising questions of accountability. However, assistance can still be provided through organizational development training, mutual sponsorship of conferences or activities, and other means.

***No Secretariat*:** Some RDRNs have no secretariat and coordination is achieved through online communication and communal decision-making. For example, Opening Parliament is an informal, bottom-up platform where over a hundred participating organizations communicate with one another regularly to share insights and coordinate activities. While the network is sponsored by several existing organizations (mainly NDI), its strategic direction is determined by its members and it self-organizes into ad-hoc working groups based on shared interests and needs.

Networks without secretariats often have more fluid membership and sometimes lack a bank account, making them less suitable to co-implement projects or receive grants. If these networks wish to become more formal or to expand their activities, capacity building and training can be useful tools toward this end.

While RDRNs have grown and proliferated around the world over the last decade, their growth has been uneven and remains fragile. In order to bolster the progress made and support growth in new regions, donors must make a concerted effort to provide support to the networks themselves. Whether this support comes in the form of financial assistance or technical capacity building activities, providing these networks with the support they need will be essential to ensuring the growth of civil society and the advancement of democracy and human rights in these regions in the years to come.

ANNEX 1: Case Study of Civil Society Network Support

The Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund (RCNF)

The Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund (RCNF) supports international civil society networks that address the needs and human rights of inadequately served populations (ISP) facing a higher risk of HIV, mortality and/or morbidity than the general population. Launched in Washington, DC in 2012, RCNF provides both financial resources and technical assistance to regional and global networks that work to improve the quality, effectiveness and gender equity of AIDS responses to these inadequately-served local populations around the world.

The fund is governed by three bodies: (1) the International Steering Committee, composed of four representatives from donors and four representatives from civil society networks who set the strategic direction, define priorities and provide oversight; (2) the Fund Management Agency, the Fund's secretariat and grants management body; and (3) the Program Advisory Panel, which evaluates potential grantees.

The project currently funds 24 networks and consortia of networks, though the International Steering Committee has decided to add 14 more in the next two years.

RCNF's goals are to improve global and regional network capacity, to improve the inclusiveness of the global response to HIV, to improve the ability of underserved populations advocate for better policies, and to improve accountability surrounding the use of resources to combat HIV.

RCNF, similar to the Making All Voices Count Grand Challenge, implemented by Hivos, the Institute for Development Studies and Ushahidi Inc., operates as a "pooled funding mechanism." Funding for the RCNF is provided by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the Department for International Development (DfID), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the MAC AIDS Fund. RCNF has distributed its grants through two RFPs which have together distributed over $18.2 million in funds.

According to a mid-term review of RCNF, 24% of the funds given by the fund in the first two rounds of grants were for onward activities, i.e. the network recipients then re-granted those funds to their members. To ensure accountability, RCNF first does a careful assessment of the primary grantee to make sure they have systems in place to do the onward granting. RCNF then monitors the activities of secondary grantees and does site visits to verify that activities are taking place, and to collect data for M&E and for external communications.

Could this be a model for funding RDRNs?

While RCNF does not deal with democracy and human rights issues, it demonstrates the feasibility of using a fund to strengthen cross-border civil society networks. As a Mid-Term Review of RCNF points out, the Fund provides an opportunity for donors to coordinate their response to an issue, in this case weak civil society capacity to advocate for more inclusive HIV/AIDS treatment policies and to care for those living with the disease.

An advantage of this initiative is that because its Requests for Proposals (RFPs) are designed to fund networks, it allows for grantees to apply for core funding. According to the Mid-Term Review, in Round 1

of the grants program (2012), grantees used 74% of their awarded grants as core funding. In Round 2, which provided funding for two years, core funding requests were slightly lower, reflecting that core funds are often initial investments and that once provided for, networks are able to spend relatively more of their grant funds on their projects. Nevertheless, the high percentage of grant funds RCNF grantees decide to spend on strengthening core organizational capacity reveals how important this type of funding can be to civil society networks. When grantees were asked by RCNF to reduce their proposed budgets, they usually prioritized retaining core funds and cut their proposed programmatic work instead.

Another feature of this model is the aforementioned "onward granting," whereby grantee networks re-grant a portion of their funds based on their own priorities and goals. Because many civil society networks are not necessarily programmatic institutions, but are instead a gathering of organizations with common purpose, providing them with funds to support their common goals can make sense. However, making a network secretariat a funding institution in its own right can have adverse effects, such as competition among partners for its funds that can undermine a network's cooperative spirit.

RCNF provides funds not only to networks of organizations but also to networks of networks, or in its parlance, "consortia." The Mid-Term Review mentions some advantages and some challenges of supporting consortia. On one hand, funding consortia allows donors to save on administration costs by issuing fewer large grants rather than many small individual ones. Funding these consortia can also bolster their place in the global civil society landscape, enhancing coordination between national, regional and global networks and increasing the "scope and solidarity" of civil society movements. However, applying for grants can often be difficult for consortia, as they have many more voices and priorities to contend with during the application process and the administration of the funds. With more members, funds are often split many ways, undermining their effectiveness. Large global consortia can also be further removed from beneficiaries and can contribute to top-down institutional structures. These considerations are important to keep in mind when funding RDRNs as well, as many of them, including several discussed in this paper, fall into this "consortia" category.

Overall, this pooled funding mechanism is a promising model for supporting regional democracy and rights networks. Combining grants funds with institutional support can serve well the goal of strengthening civil society networks and the pooled mechanism can provide a steady stream of resources for this purpose. Even if the funds are not pooled, the Robert Carr Fund proves that supporting civil society networks is a feasible and realistic endeavor and can be implemented successfully.

ANNEX 2: Social Media Activity of Selected RDRNs

This section presents snapshots of social media activity for selected RDRNs, to give an overview of the extent to which these tools are used by the networks to engage audiences. The data was gathered using Crimson Hexagon software. The RDRNs chosen for inclusion were among the most active identified by the researchers.

The annex looks mostly at Facebook and Twitter use by RDRNs. The period covered for Facebook is February 11, 2015 – March 13, 2015. The period covered for Twitter is December 19, 2013 (or the date on which a specific account was created, if later) – March 13, 2015. The table below also notes where other social media accounts for the RDRNs were found by the researchers, such as LinkedIn, Google+, YouTube, and Flickr.

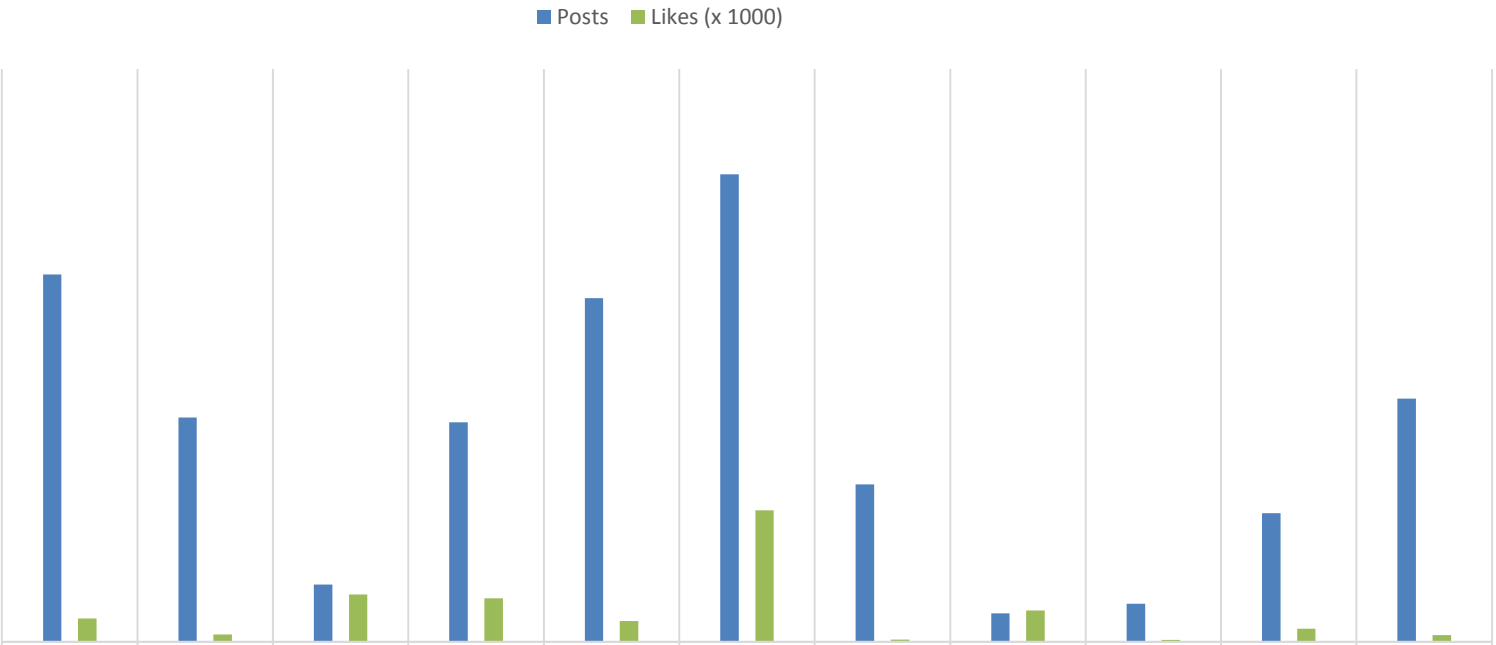
Four views of the data are presented: the table below, which shows all the information found on social media use by the selected RDRNs; a bar graph of Facebook posts and likes by each RDRN examined; a bar graph of Twitter tweets and followers by each RDRN; and finally, a line graph showing Twitter "engagement" (frequency of replies, mentions and retweets) by the followers of each RDRN since December 2013.

Network	Facebook Account	Facebook Snapshot	Twitter Account	Twitter Snapshot	Other Accounts
Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM)	https://www.facebook.com/REDCLADEM	#of posts in period covered: 77 # of likes: 4894	https://twitter.com/CLADEM	# of followers: 1,646 # of tweets: 974	https://www.youtube.com/user/CLADEMenvideo
Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy (RedLad)	https://www.facebook.com/pages/Red-Latinoamericana-y-del-Caribe-para-la-Democracia/164792916942457?sk=app_2231777543	#of posts in period covered: 47 # of likes: 1,574	https://twitter.com/redlatcaribe	# of followers: 1,781 # of tweets: 247	Also Google+ and linkedin
Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)	https://www.facebook.com/emhrnremdh.emhrn	#of posts in period covered: 0	https://twitter.com/emhrn	# of followers: 8,851 # of tweets: 202	

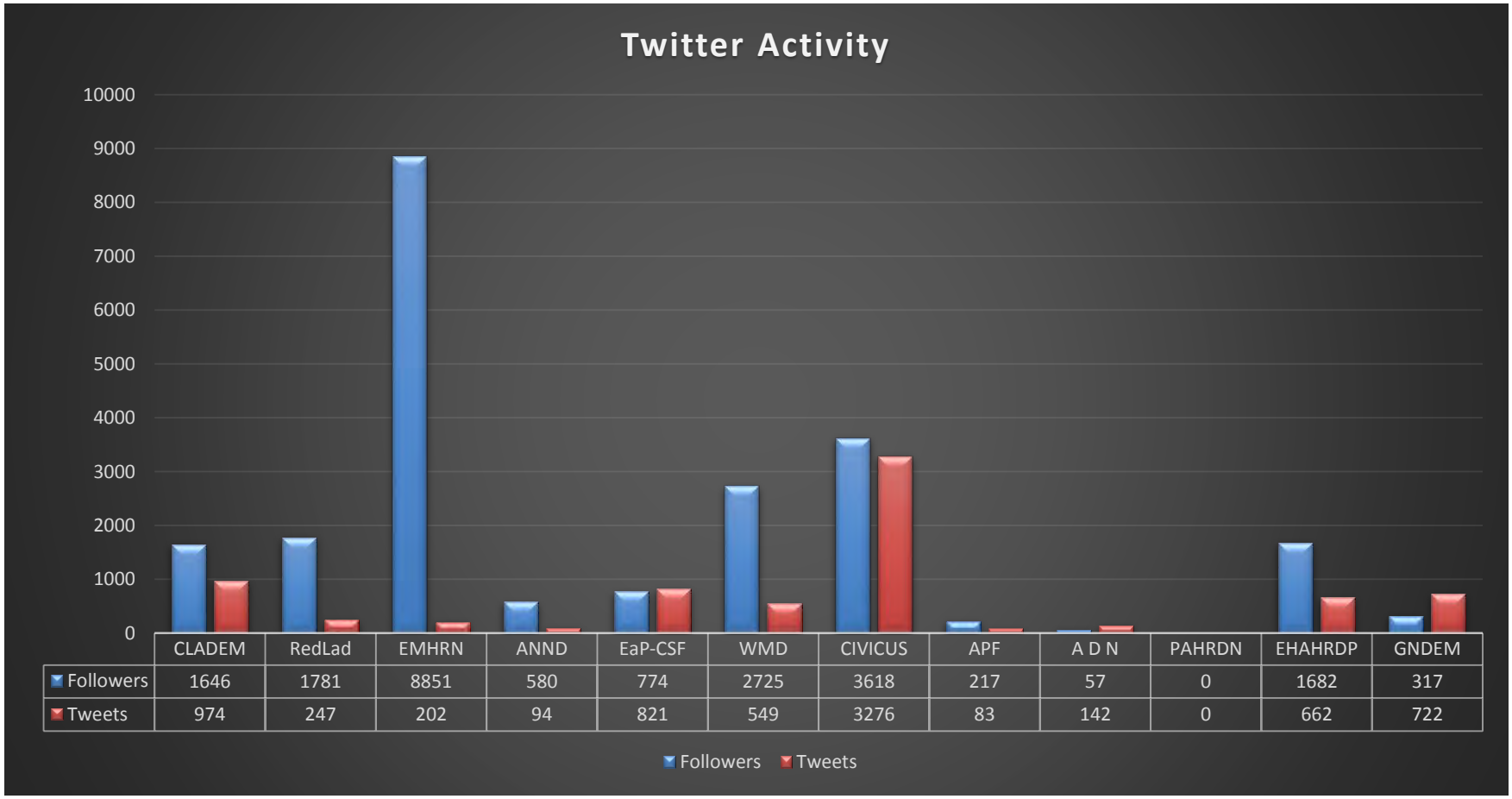
	(Not a public page, so data on posts and likes were unavailable.)	# of likes: n/a			
Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)	https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arab-NGO-Network-for-Development/238451432898055	#of posts in period covered: 12 # of likes: 9,944	https://twitter.com/ArabNGONetwork	# of followers: 580 # of tweets: 94 (total retweets, replies, mentions and posts is 467 though they rarely tweet	
Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP-CSF)	https://www.facebook.com/EaP.Civil.Society.Forum	#of posts in period covered: 46 # of likes: 9,179	https://twitter.com/eapcsf	# of followers: 774 # of tweets: 821	LinkedIn
World Movement for Democracy	https://www.facebook.com/worldmovementfordemocracy	#of posts in period covered: 72 # of likes: 4,378	https://twitter.com/MoveDemocracy	# of followers: 2,725 # of tweets: 549	https://www.youtube.com/user/wmdontheweb
CIVICUS	https://www.facebook.com/CIVICUS	#of posts in period covered: 98 # of likes: 27,582	https://twitter.com/civicusalliance	# of followers: 3,618 # of tweets: 3,267	https://www.youtube.com/user/civicusworldalliance
ASEAN People's Forum (APF)	https://www.facebook.com/ASEANPeoplesForum	#of posts in period covered: 33 # of likes: 524	https://twitter.com/aseanpf	# of followers: 217 # of tweets: 83	

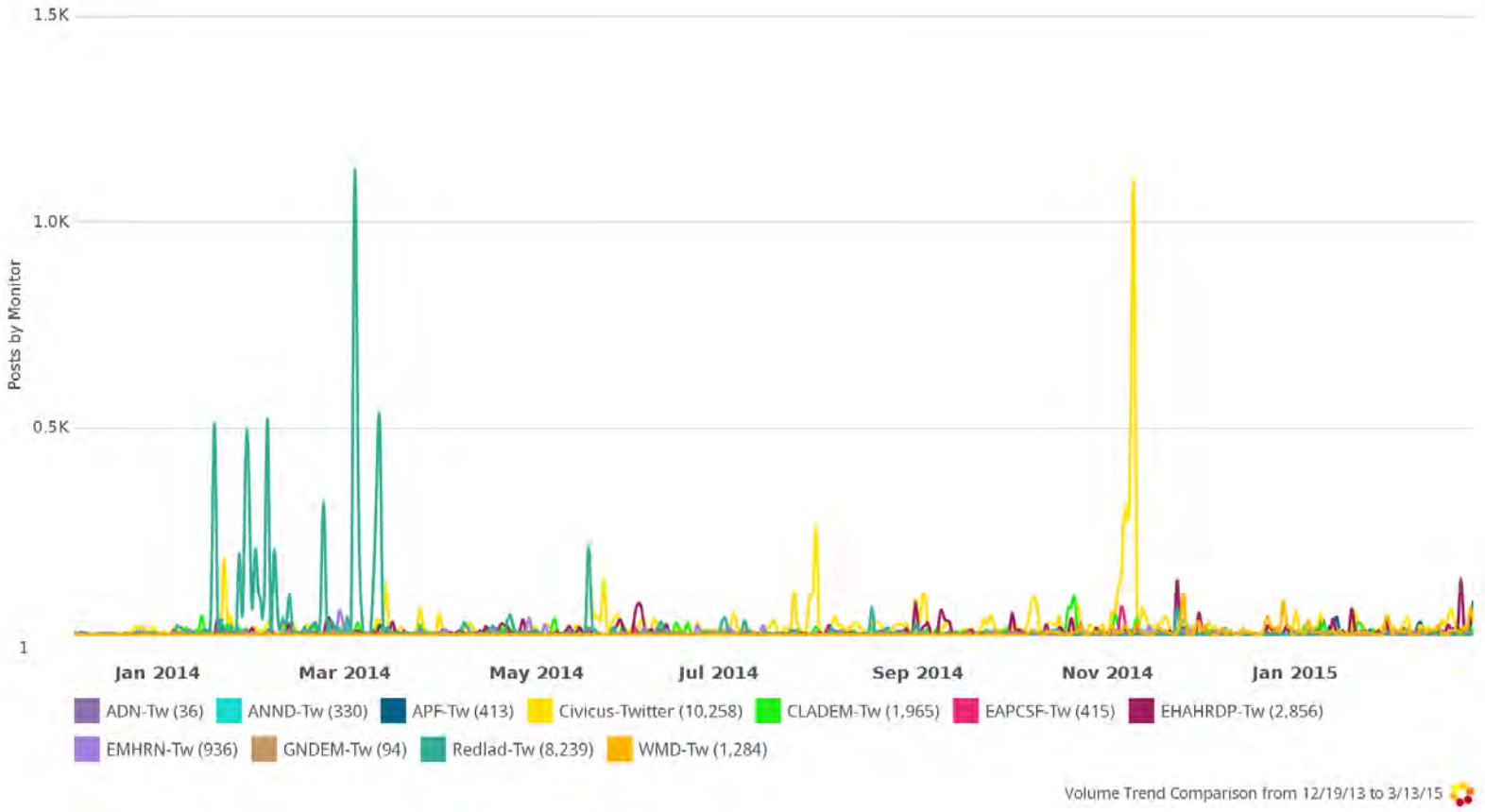
Asia Democracy Network	https://www.facebook.com/asiademocracynetwork	#of posts in period covered: 6 # of likes: 6,614	https://twitter.com/adn2013seoul	# of followers: 57 # of tweets: 142	
Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network	https://www.facebook.com/panafricandefenders	#of posts in period covered: 8 # of likes: 419		# of followers: # of tweets:	
East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project	https://www.facebook.com/humanrightsdefendersproject	#of posts in period covered: 27 # of likes: 2,760	https://twitter.com/EHAHRDP	# of followers: 1,682 # of tweets: 662	https://www.youtube.com/user/ehahrdp
Global Network for Democratic Elections Monitors (GNDEM)	https://www.facebook.com/GNDEM	#of posts in period covered: 51 # of likes: 1,447	https://twitter.com/gndemexchanges	# of followers: 317 # of tweets: 722	https://www.youtube.com/user/GNDEMexchanges LinkedIn Flickr

FACEBOOK ACTIVITY



	CLADEM	RedLad	ANND	EaP-CSF	WMD	CIVICUS	APF	A D N	PAHRDN	EHAHRDP	GNDEM
Posts	77	47	12	46	72	98	33	6	8	27	51
Likes (x 1000)	4.9	1.6	9.9	9.2	4.4	27.6	0.5	6.6	0.4	2.8	1.4



	CLADEM	RedLad	EMHRN	ANND	EaP-CSF	WMD	CIVICUS	APF	A D N	PAHRDN	EHAHRDP	GNDEM
Followers	1646	1781	8851	580	774	2725	3618	217	57	0	1682	317
Tweets	974	247	202	94	821	549	3276	83	142	0	662	722

Twitter Engagement: Retweets, mentions, and replies