

Project Document - Global Fokus - Claim Your Space 2023-2025

- **Introduction**

The present programme document outlines the background, rationale and justification, objectives and management arrangements for development cooperation concerning **Claim Your Space #2: January 2023 – December 2025** as agreed between the parties: Global Focus and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. The programme document is an annex to the legal bilateral agreement with the implementing partner and constitutes an integral part hereof together with the documentation specified below. “The Documentation” refers to the partner documentation for the supported intervention, which is referenced in the list of supporting annexes at the end of this Programme Document. In case of any discrepancies between the annexes and this document, the Programme Document takes precedence.

- **Context, strategic considerations, rationale and justification**

2.1 Context

Civic space, democracy and human rights continue to be under pressure in many countries, not least in the digital age. Freedoms of expression, association, and assembly are being violated across the world in attempts to silence voices of dissent and opposition. Civil society activists and human rights defenders are under attack, subject to violence, intimidation, persecution, and ultimately at risk of being killed for promoting and defending human rights and democracy. This trend has been exacerbated even further due to the COVID-19 crisis, which has contributed to further restriction of fundamental freedoms and repression of marginalized voices. Meanwhile, digital technologies have proven to offer tremendous opportunities, not least during the pandemic, for civic engagement, participation, and mobilisation. However, new restrictions, harassment, and clampdowns on civil society has also accelerated in the digital age, often with direct and harmful impact on civic space offline. It is against this backdrop, that the *Tech for Democracy* initiative was launched by Denmark in 2021. The initiative seeks to ensure that we harness the great potential of technology for increased online safety, encrypted apps, and access to reliable and trustworthy information online, while addressing the severe challenges that Internet shutdowns, online censorship, and surveillance technologies have for the vital operations of civil society and human rights defenders.

In response to the trend, Global Focus and members in 2021 launched a new rapid response fund, Claim Your Space, with support from the Danish MFA. In January of that year, the encrypted application system went live on Global Focus’ website. The following month, on 1 February 2021, the military in Myanmar overthrew the country’s democratically elected government leading to a massive civilian uprising, which escalated and persisted. The military coup in Myanmar became the first major test of the Claim Your Space mechanism for providing fast and flexible emergency response support to local partners of Danish civil society organisations in distress. Today, the Myanmar military junta is being coined a “digital dictatorship” that has almost wiped out the civic space online entirely. The overall structure of the Fund, as initially designed by Global Focus and our member organisations, has during the pilot-phase proven to be strong, secure, and agile and able to provide a unique service to the Danish CSO community and their local partners in an efficient and professional manner.

Since the inception of the Fund, there has been consistent demand for support from Danish CSO partners from a wide range of different countries, and the feedback on the Fund’s ability to respond to these demands has been positive and encouraging. As was to be expected, we have also encountered multiple challenges along the way, but the excellent collaboration with the Danish CSOs and their local partners has to a great extent enabled us to overcome these challenges. More importantly, it has provided us with valuable lessons on how to make the funding mechanism even stronger and more relevant after the pilot-phase. Valuable

lessons have also been gathered during the initial stages of establishing the Building Responses Together Network (BRT) of international rapid response actors, which has further contributed to the quality of CYS. This a component that Global Focus aims to increasingly prioritize during the post-pilot-phase. This document outlines Global Focus’ strategy for ensuring the sustainable continuation of the Claim Your Space initiative beyond the pilot-phase and to further develop and improve the mechanism. The post-pilot iteration of the Claim Your Space project will be referred to as **CYS#2** throughout the document.

CYS#1: Results and lessons learned

During the pilot-phase, Global Focus has issued a total of 80 emergency grants to local groups and individuals under Track-1 offering direct support to more than 280 HRDs and civil society actors. Global Focus has also

Track-1 geographic coverage		Track-2 geographic coverage	
Bangladesh		Bangladesh	
Palestine		Palestine	
Myanmar		Myanmar	
Burundi		Tanzania	
Ghana		Zimbabwe	
Uganda		Uganda	
DRC		Kenya	
Kenya		Chad	
Zimbabwe			
Tanzania			
Burkina Faso			
Swaziland			

In addition to the geographic coverage, these grants have been distributed across a variety of actors and groups working in a range of **thematic** focus areas, including:

Track-1 thematic coverage		Track-2 thematic coverage	
LGBT+ groups		Support for protest movements	
Women HRDs and women’s rights activism		Youth & student activism	
Digital Security and Safe Conduct		Indigenous people’s rights & land rights	
Indigenous people’s rights & land rights		Environmental activism	
Environmental activism		LGBT+ rights advocacy	
Journalists and Free press		Anti-torture coalitions	
Artists and Freedom of Expression		Legal reform initiatives	
Youth & student activism			
Support for protest movements			
Trade union activism			
The sections below will demonstrate how the lessons learned during the pilot-phase have informed the design of CYS#2. A comprehensive review of the results and lessons learned during the first year of the pilot-phase is also available in the CYS#2 Concept Note and first CYS#1 Learning Product attached as annex 1 and annex 2 to this document.			

The Post-Pilot Phase: CYS#2

Following the two-year pilot-project, Global Focus is proposing a new iteration of the fund. This iteration will be based on the successes and the lessons learned during the pilot-phase and will ensure that CYS can continue to offer rapid and life-saving support to the local partners of Danish CSOs, who implement Denmark's strategic development projects on the ground throughout the Global South. During the pilot-phase, the project has demonstrated a clear added value in being able to protect and support Danish CSO partners, when they find themselves in acute emergency situations as a result of their work. With the second iteration of the project, Global Focus intends to further widen and improve this vital service. It will concurrently sustain the three main components established under the pilot-phase: 1) the two funding tracks, 2) the BRT network, and 3) the annual learning activities:

1. Funding Tracks

Under CYS#2, Global Focus will provide the two funding tracks, which have been developed and refined during the course of the pilot-phase:

- Track-1: Emergency assistance funds that can be provided to applicants experiencing threats, attacks, extra bureaucratic hurdles, legal barriers, defamation, harassment, stigmatisation, discrimination, exclusion, marginalisation, displacement etc. due to their work. Applicants can be any local civil society actor (organisation, movement, group of activists) or individual who is or has been: 1) collaborating with a Danish CSO or; 2) funded by the Danish MFA, including embassies.
- Track-2: Grants to locally-led activities that can be provided if restrictions to freedoms of association, assembly or expression (civic space) have occurred or seem likely to occur and will be addressed collectively through activities by more than one thematic civil society group. Applicants can be any local civil society actor (organisation, movement, group of activists) who is or has been: 1) collaborating with a Danish CSO or; 2) funded by the Danish MFA, including embassies.

2. International Coalition Building – The BRT Network

The post-pilot period will also aim to realise the full potential of the Building Responses Together Network (BRT), established under the pilot-phase as a network of rapid response mechanisms working globally to increase the quality of CYS and similar rapid response mechanisms and to address the gap of collaboration among mechanisms. Specifically, the purpose of the Network is to facilitate coordination among international rapid response mechanisms on referral of applications and verification of applicants, as well as to facilitate coordination on match-funding and avoiding double funding. During the pilot-phase, the BRT-network was established, and it is now fully up and running. A Steering Committee has been appointed and an online platform for coordination has been developed. Now that the initial steps have been completed, there is great potential for further enlarging membership and increasing the collaboration efforts among the members of the network with regard to sharing of experience, joint trainings, and capacity-building. An in-person meeting for members of the network has been planned for December 2022. The purpose of this meeting is to identify emerging trends that require attention and to structure a joint response among the members of the Network.

3. Building Expertise and Increasing Knowledge-Sharing - Annual Learning Activities

A third component is an annual learning product and/or activity aimed at increasing awareness on civic space issues and to continue to build the expertise on this issue among Danish CSOs and academics. In the spring of 2022, Global Focus launched the first such product as part of the pilot-phase, in the form of a report, which was made public on our website and circulated widely in the civil society sector (the 2022 Learning Product is attached here as annex 2). In the 2022 report, the data from the activities supported by CYS provides a picture of the types of groups and thematic areas that are especially vulnerable to threats. The data furthermore gives insights into whether the activities used to address the situation have been successful or

not. Based on this data, the report addresses best practices, lessons learned, and future needs that will allow funding mechanisms to provide better support to protect civic space. A second learning product based on data from the pilot-phase will be developed in the spring of 2023. These learning products and activities will also remain a constant feature under CYS#2 and will continue to be used to examine trends regarding civic space restrictions and responses to these. These activities will especially be relevant for organisations, institutions, and researchers studying and conducting research on civic space, civil society responses, and best practices. The activities will involve Danish and international CSO participants to further increase knowledge sharing on strategies for rapid response engagement and continue to develop the expertise of the Danish CSO-sector on civic space issues.

Components from the pilot-phase remaining under CYS#2

Based on the feedback and lessons learned from local beneficiaries and Danish CSOs, the current format of the CYS-model for a Danish Rapid Response Funding Mechanism, developed during the pilot-phase, as outlined in the CYS#1 Concept Note and Development Engagement Document, has proven to meet the demands identified by Danish CSOs. The Danish CSOs and local partners highlight several strengths in the model, including the efficient application procedure, the rapid application processing times, and the flexibility of the mechanism in responding to applicants' real-life situations. The feedback details how the model has been able to respond to a wide variety of emergency situations, where applicants have faced concrete security threats. In addition to physical security threats, the model has also been able to respond to digital security threats. This has included support to cover essential hardware/software upgrades that have enabled applicants to protect themselves and their information, as well as support to cover training and capacity-building activities that have enabled applicants and their CSOs to operate online with a higher degree of safety (also described in Annex 2). A full description of the qualities of the existing CYS-model as developed during the first year of the pilot-phase are described in the CYS#2 Concept Note (included here as Annex 1).

New components under CYS#2

As described above, the CYS-model works well and meets the demands identified in the concept note for the pilot-phase to a high degree. For that reason, Global Focus will not be proposing any major changes to the structure of the CYS-model itself. However, some new components will be introduced under the grant. Possible changes to the geographical scope of the CYS-model will be subject to a decision before the effective starting date of the project.

Time-frame

Several Danish CSOs have come to rely on CYS to react to emergency requests from their partners. While Claim Your Space is an emergency fund and does not intend to provide funding for long-term projects, a short project time-frame still affects the long-term planning of projects and programs of Danish CSOs, as emergency funding for local partners is strategically important when operating in restricted environments. Furthermore, an extension of the mechanism is also likely to increase the reach of the mechanism, since Danish CSOs will be able to rely on it for support for their local partners, thereby integrating it into their projects and budgets and disseminating information about the mechanism to their local partners. **CYS#2 will therefore operate from January 2023 to December 2025** (as reflected in Annex 4).

Capacity-Building

There is a greater need for capacity-building among local CSOs to enable them to strengthen their organisations and establish and maintain internal security procedures, both online and offline. CYS has to some extent been able to address this need, but not to a sufficient extent as this has not been the primary focus of either of the two application Tracks. Adding this component to the list of eligible activities under Track-2 would enable increased capacity building of local partners of CSOs on security and safe conduct, both online and offline, which would in turn also benefit the Danish CSO relying on these partners to implement

their projects on the ground. **CYS#2 will therefore include a new component of capacity-building for local CSOs as part of eligible activities under Track-2.**

Justification and Relevance

The strategic relevance of the CYS-project, both to Danish CSO partners and in line with the priorities of the MFA, has increased since its launch in January 2021. With reference to the Development Cooperation Strategy of 2021 and the Foreign and Security Policy Strategy of 2022, Denmark remains committed to countering the trend of shrinking civic space, which is increasingly unfolding online. The Danish MFA has therefore strengthened its support to human rights defenders and to organisations defending freedoms of association, assembly, and expression, not least through the Danish flagship project *Tech for Democracy*. The support to Claim Your Space has been a corner stone of this work. Its focus on emergency assistance and the provision of rapid response to human rights defenders and strategic support to locally led activities to proactively counter restrictions to civic space has only become more relevant during the pilot-phase.

The pilot-phase was based on an initial review of existing rapid response mechanisms, where Global Focus and members identified a number of initiatives offering assistance within specific mandates (e.g., women's rights, environmental protection, journalists) to individuals and groups based on applications or referrals. However, only a few of these were seeking to provide concerted and more holistic support on a proactive basis encouraging collaboration across thematic silos. The CYS-model has proven to provide the ability to react rapidly to anticipated or occurred crises in a sustainable and collective manner based in broad alliances. The CYS-model has also complemented existing initiatives by pooling the expertise, professionalism, and best practices into a single mechanism that can deal with the sensitivities, security concerns, and pitfalls of the nature of these types of grants.

Global Focus

During the pilot-phase, Global Focus has successfully offered a platform for more than 80 Danish development and humanitarian civil society organisations, making it uniquely positioned to manage the CYS mechanism. This role has enabled Global Focus to promote and share information about CYS and to liaise with partners and international networks alike. Based on the feedback from a survey of Danish CSOs (included in the CYS#2 Concept Note attached as Annex 1), this has also been to the satisfaction of the Danish CSO users of CYS, several of whom have specifically asked for this entity to remain with Global Focus. The Danish MFA is foreseeing an external evaluation of the pilot-phase (2021-2022) during Q1/Q2 of 2023. Subsequent recommendations in the forthcoming evaluation will be subject to discussion as part of a possible readjustment of the project.

During the pilot-phase, Global Focus has also used its position to continue to push for increased levels of local ownership and alliance-building across themes, which were among the key recommendations for sustainable push-back against closing civic space provided to Danish CSOs and the Danish MFA by Global South partners during the initial design of the mechanism. CYS#2 will continue this approach and will continue to pool the expertise and networks available across Global Focus' members to pursue this agenda of increased localisation. Global Focus expects this local anchoring and focus on network building to result in a more sustainable program and more viable alliances. Lastly, Global Focus is well situated for global collaboration on civic space and rapid response mechanisms as the acting Secretariat of the BRT-network. Global Focus will also continue to collaborate closely with international partner organisations, such as CIVICUS, ICNL, and Front Line Defenders, to ensure quality from exchange of experiences and learning as well as collaboration in the wider civic space work.

- **Programme or Project Objective**

Direct support to HRDs and CSOs in the Global South: The first objective of CYS#2 is to provide emergency assistance to individuals and groups under threat and grants to locally-led activities to collectively counter restrictions to civic space through the two separate funding tracks. The results framework below, which has been developed by Global Focus, provides the overall objective and key outcomes for the two funding tracks for the duration of the post-pilot phase.

International Coordination and Network Building: A second objective will be the further enhancement of international rapid response collaboration through continued development of the BRT-network. Specifically, this will entail: 1) increased activity through bi-monthly coordination meetings, 2) an increase in onboardings of new members, 3) an increase in the use of specific collaboration tools, such as verification and referral support, 4) one in-person meeting per year with 15 participants or more from the BRT-network to discuss strategies for improving the network and identify further steps for future cooperation among network members, as well as foster community building among members to increase engagement in the network.

Knowledge-Sharing and Increased Expertise: The third objective will be to develop learning products and/or activities focusing on awareness raising and learning based on the previous year's CYS activities. This may take the form of a written report, a learning event, or similar products and activities. Learning activities will reflect on lessons learned regarding the efficiency and aid effectiveness of international Rapid Response support, and will be available to the public. Results will also be disseminated through the communication channels of Global Focus and its members. Learning activities will involve relevant Danish and international CSO-partners to discuss the findings and identify potential avenues for joint action based on any recommendations.

- **Theory of change and key assumptions**

Theory of Change

The CYS-mechanism will provide:

- 1) Emergency assistance funds to individuals and groups under threat
- 2) Grants to locally-led activities to proactively counter restrictions to civic space

Through these two tracks of direct funding to local actors, the mechanism combines emergency assistance with a sustainable response to closing civic space. Sustainability is reached through local ownership and by working through broad alliances for civic space. In addition, Global Focus will ensure ongoing review and improvement of the mechanism through the collaboration with international rapid response providers in the BRT-network. This ongoing review process will ensure a funding mechanism that is efficient and able to address the most pressing civic space issues, and any new and emerging threats to civil society, as these arise.

The experiences and lessons learned through the grant-making process under the two funding tracks and the collaboration in the BRT network will be disseminated to Danish CSO-partners through annual learning activities, which will contribute to developing the capacity and expertise of the Danish civil society sector in the field of rapid response action, thereby enabling the sector to better respond to threats to civic space in the future.

- **Summary of the results framework**

Claim Your Space #2 – Results Framework

Project title "Claim Your Space #2" Post-Pilot Phase (2023-2025)		
Project		
Track 1: Emergency assistance funds to individuals and groups under threat		
Output		Individuals and groups under threat enabled to survive and/or continue operating via the emergency assistance funds.
Target	2023	
Target	2024	56 individuals and/or groups feel safer due to the support they received or were able to continue their work due to the support they received
Target	2025	56 individuals and/or groups feel safer due to the support they received or were able to continue their work due to the support they received
Output		Emergency assistance grants to individuals and groups under threat
Target	2023	56 Emergency assistance grants to individuals and groups under threat
Target	2024	56 Emergency assistance grants to individuals and groups under threat
Target	2025	56 Emergency assistance grants to individuals and groups under threat
Track 2: Grants to locally-led activities to collectively counter restrictions to civic space		
Outcome 1 Local stakeholders counter civic space restrictions through collective actions		
Target	2023	2 alliances established or strengthened among local civil society across thematic areas and other relevant stakeholders to conduct advocacy with broader reach and impact, strategise on joint efforts, exchange expertise and build peer-to-peer support networks.
		2 cases of improved infrastructure of local civil society under pressure, in relation to communications, connectivity, support to leaders under threat and modalities of interaction and in relation to concrete security risks.

Target	2024	<p>Capacity building of local CSOs that have enabled them to improve the security of their operation, offline and/or online, making their organisations, members, and immediate partners less fragile and more resilient to compromising attacks or harassment.</p> <p>2 alliances established or strengthened among local civil society across thematic areas and other relevant stakeholders to conduct advocacy with broader reach and impact, strategise on joint efforts, exchange expertise and build peer-to-peer support networks.</p> <p>2 cases of improved infrastructure of local civil society under pressure, in relation to communications, connectivity, support to leaders under threat and modalities of interaction and in relation to concrete security risks.</p>
Target	2025	<p>Capacity building of local CSOs that have enabled them to improve the security of their operation, offline and/or online, making their organisations, members, and immediate partners less fragile and more resilient to compromising attacks or harassment.</p> <p>2 alliances established or strengthened among local civil society across thematic areas and other relevant stakeholders to conduct advocacy with broader reach and impact, strategise on joint efforts, exchange expertise and build peer-to-peer support networks.</p> <p>2 cases of improved infrastructure of local civil society under pressure, in relation to communications, connectivity, support to leaders under threat and modalities of interaction and in relation to concrete security risks.</p> <p>2 cases of capacity building of local CSOs that have enabled them to improve the security of their operation, offline and/or online, making their organisations, members, and immediate partners less fragile and more resilient to compromising attacks or harassment.</p>
Output		Grants to locally-led activities to collectively counter restrictions to civic space
Target	2023	6 grants to locally-led activities to collectively counter restrictions to civic space
Target	2024	6 grants to locally-led activities to collectively counter restrictions to civic space
Target	2025	6 grants to locally-led activities to collectively counter restrictions to civic space

- **Inputs/budget**

Based on the experience from the pilot-phase, Global Focus proposes to continue with the existing management arrangement to ensure adequate dialogue and timely decisions under CV3#2. Global Focus will continue to be responsible for meeting funder requirements on financial management, narrative reporting, and other forms of compliance. The specific function of each entity of the management structure is outlined below.

- **Institutional and Management arrangement**

Global Focus will implement the two funding tracks in collaboration with member organisations and will be responsible for all management aspects of the project. Global Focus will conduct the initial review of applications according to designated scorecards. Applications for the two funding tracks will be approved by

a group of member organisations known as “The CYS group”. This group will consist of six organisations that are members of Global Focus; three of which will also be members of the Board of Directors (Styregruppen) of Global Focus. For each grant, Global Focus will sign a grant agreement with the local applicant. The Grant agreements will outline the responsibilities of the applicant throughout the project period, including relevant anti-corruption and PSEAH conditions. At the beginning of each year, Global Focus will facilitate a learning activity summarising the results and lessons learned of the previous year and these will be communicated via Global Focus’ online presence, its member organisations, and its partner networks. In addition, Global Focus will be responsible for submitting a brief progress update outlining main results to the MFA at the end of every quarter throughout the project period. Finally, Global Focus will also take responsibility for coordinating joint action initiatives with Danish CSO partners through the Civic Space Working Group.

The CYS Group will be responsible for approving grants already deemed eligible and vetted by Global Focus in collaboration with the Danish CSO partner of the applicant. The CYS Group will receive the request for approval via encrypted app and must answer within 24 hours for track 1 applications and 72 hours for track 2 applications if they disagree with the decision to support the applicant. The CYS Group will consist of six rotating members who can delegate responsibility to each other and/or an alternate from their own or an alternative organisation. Prospect members of the CYS Group will apply to become part of the group and be selected based on experience with rapid response activities and international civic space work. Members will be part of the CYS Group for one year. For both application tracks, Global Focus will contact the Danish member organisation listed as a reference of the applicant to receive verification of the applicant and their situation, as well as their overall standing with the Danish CSO. The Danish member organisation will furthermore be involved in facilitating the onward transfer of funding to the applicant.

Members of Global Focus and of CISU will be responsible for trust verification of own partners that have listed them as references. This means verifying 1) whether the applicant is who they claim to be, 2) whether the applicant’s account of events is genuine, and 3) whether the applicants is in good standing with the Danish partner CSO. Global Focus and CISU will also ensure ongoing coordination to avoid cases of overlapping funding.

The BRT Network will function as the platform for coordinating activities across international rapid response mechanisms. The network includes a larger number of rapid response mechanisms from different regions and mandates that will collaborate to improve support before, during, and after crises. The setup includes rotating chairs of the network made up of three member organisations at a time, and Global Focus serving as the network secretariat that coordinates annual meetings, the online coordination- and meeting platform, and facilitation of collaboration and experience sharing. Collaboration in the network will also entail verification of applicants, referring applicants to relevant mechanisms if necessary, donor coordination, and match/double funding coordination, which will all continue to increase the quality and work of CYS.

The Civic Space Working Group consists of representatives from 30 member organisations of Global Focus collaborating on civic space related issues. Global Focus will maintain regular communication with the Civic Space Working Group to keep member organisations abreast of trends and issues identified through Claim Your Space and the BRT network, as well as to jointly identify areas for further collective action in response to civic space issues. Moreover, Global Focus will ensure to connect the advocacy work of its Civic Space Working Group with the cases and activities supported through CYS. This can relate to the collaboration of Danish CSOs in a particular country and international advocacy in cases where the grantee finds it beneficial to their case.

- **Financial Management, planning and reporting**

The grant is managed according to the applicable guidelines for pooled funds and networks: “Retningslinjer for forvaltning af tilskudsmidler fra Udenrigsministeriet til puljeordninger og netværk”¹. Some special conditions for this grant are highlighted below:

Global Focus is responsible for financial oversight, reporting, and auditing of the program. The Danish CSO partner will receive the subgrant from Global Focus and is responsible for processing the payment onto the grantee. This model has been chosen as the Danish CSO already has an established relationship with the partner and experience with how best to transfer funds to the individual grantee. It is sometimes a problem to get funds into contexts of closed civic space, and therefore Global Focus will gather advice on alternative ways to reach grantees in case their bank account is frozen or receiving the funds put them at too much risk.

Each subgrant will be finalised after submission of financial reporting to Global Focus, including proper receipts documenting expenses. In instances where it is deemed unsafe for grantees to store receipts due to the nature of the applicants’ emergency situation and where this would jeopardize the grantee’s safety, a signed sworn statement can serve in lieu of receipts. Global Focus will make this assessment in cooperation with the Danish partner organisation and will provide the sworn statement template.

Partner procedures

Global Focus aims to make CYS grants available to highly diverse target groups, including grassroots organisations, informal networks and protest coalitions. For that reason, we strive to make the financial management requirements imposed on partners as non-burdening as possible. For Track-1, Grantees are required to submit a finance report supported by proper receipts or similar documentation. For Track-2, additional conditions regarding financial reporting and documentation are required of the partners due to the larger grant amounts involved. Therefore, prior to granting Track-2 support to an applicant, Global Focus makes an assessment of the applicant’s capacity to meet these reporting obligations in collaboration with the applicant’s Danish CSO partner.

Procurement of goods and services

Global Focus’ procurement rules will apply, and all costs will be kept at a minimum. Flight tickets will be on economy class only and per diems will be based on Danida standards or as stipulated by the Ministry of Finance of Denmark. Bonus points from airlines earned on travel shall not be used privately but are used to pay for or receive discounts on other travel for the organization only.

Work Planning

Global Focus will make an annual assessment at the beginning of every calendar year throughout the project period to determine the funding available and the number of grants to be issued during the coming year for targets to be met. The annual assessment will be revised on a quarterly basis, based on the finalised quarter’s output, to allow for adjustments to be made to the annual plan. This will ensure that funding remains available throughout the year.

The last Grants will be issued during the third quarter of the final year of the project (Q3 2025) to ensure that all grantee activities are concluded within the project period and to ensure all Grantee reporting has been finalised in time for Global Focus to meet its reporting deadlines with the MFA. This target has also been achieved during the pilot-phase, where the final grants were issued during Q3 2022 to ensure that all activities were concluded by the end of the pilot-phase as stipulated in the grant agreement between Global Focus and the MFA.

¹ www.amg.um.dk/civil-society-and-humanitarian-aid

Should the MFA decide to provide additional funding during the grant period, given e.g. extraordinary crises or emergencies causing exhaustion of Track-1 funds, Global Focus should submit an updated results framework and revised budget documents.

Financial and narrative reporting

Global Focus will submit a statement of accounts to the MFA once a year after the year has ended, no later than 30 June, starting June 2024. The narrative reporting will consist of an annual learning activity on civic space trends and tendencies (as described above), which will be developed in the beginning of each year starting in 2024. The learning events will reflect lessons learned and identified tendencies during the previous year. In addition, Global Focus will submit a written progress update to the MFA at the end of each quarter throughout the implementation period.

Data Management

Global Focus will work to ensure the safe handling of applicants’ personal information at all times. An encrypted application platform, tested during the pilot-phase, will be used for receiving applications. Approval requests to the CYS Group will be submitted via encrypted messaging app only. Once a grant has been concluded and all reporting has been submitted and approved, Global Focus will delete all personal information pertaining to individual applicants. Reporting to the Danish MFA will not contain the names of applicants, nor any other personal information that can potentially lead to the identification of the applicant. All information shared with the Danish MFA and with Global Focus’ auditors will be redacted prior to submission, concealing individual’s names, to secure the safety of applicants. For tracking purposes, Global Focus will instead rely on unique grant numbers for each applicant.

Referrals in the BRT network will rely on pseudonyms, when a security risk has been identified, and will not contain personal information that can be considered sensitive. When a referral request is met by another organization from the network, the applicant will be instructed to submit an application through the partner organization’s secure application platform directly.

Accounting

Accounts will be kept in accordance with internationally accepted accounting principles and Global Focus will follow the basic four-eye principles for all payments. Accounts will at all times be kept updated according to international standards and will be drawn up to the same level of detail as is done in the budget.

Auditing

Globalt Fokus will arrange for an annual audit of the programme accounts to be performed by a certified audit company. The annual audit will include, but not be limited to, inspection of accounting records including examination of supporting documentation of the transactions, confirmation of cash and bank holdings, checking of bank reconciliations, direct confirmation of accounts receivable, and a verification of fixed assets (if applicable). The audit must include elements of performance and compliance audit. Reference is made to the audit instruction attached to the applicable guidelines.

This table gives an overview of the risk management of the grant.

RISK CATEGORIES RISKS IDENTIFIED RISK MANAGEMENT

- **Risk Management**

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Contextual risks	This concept can be implemented in areas of conflict and will deal with groups of peoples at risk of reprisals, harassment, violence and killings.	Specific risk management measures will be designed for each set of activities pertaining to specific contexts.
Programmatic risks	Internal conflict between organisations involved (e.g., conservation organisations vs. forest dependent rights defenders)	Guidelines and practical procedures in design document
Institutional risks	Individuals, institutions, organisations and groups involved in the activities may be facing additional layers of risks afterwards.	Conflict sensitivity guidelines and procedures exist and are practiced in various Danish CSOs involved.
Digital risks	The CYS could face cyber-attacks targeting sensitive information	Digital security is an integral part of the coordination. All communication with stakeholders at risk, or sensitive information about stakeholders at risk, will be encrypted, including the platform through which they are requesting support
Reputational risk	If individuals or groups are harmed or hurt as a result of their interaction with CYS, it may have a reputational risk for the actors involved	CYS and MFA agrees to be in close contact if such cases occur and CYS is informed if the safety of individuals that receive support is jeopardized
Sensitivity risk		Activities will be conducted under the radar if they endanger those involved or pose reputational risk to the actors involved
Financial risk	Situations that are especially dangerous or politically sensitive may also pose security and reputational risks to all actors involved.	Cash transfer to "secure" middle link will be possible through a contract signed between the grantee and the bank account holder, alternative documentation can be given in sensitive settings by showing other proof of the activities having taken place such as photos, the agenda, minutes etc. or a sworn signed statement from the Grantee.
	Difficult contexts may require alternative cash transfer mechanisms, accountability and ways of documentation that involves higher fiduciary risks.	
For the two funding tracks to continue to be successful, Danish CSOs must actively communicate to their partners globally that the mechanism exists. They must also provide support to identify those particularly in need and in some situations submit applications for or in collaboration with partners. In this communication with partners, Danish CSOs must be particularly mindful of the security needs of the partners through		

engaging in active dialogue from the beginning of the application interest about how to keep the partner

RISK CATEGORIES	RISKS IDENTIFIED	RISK MANAGEMENT
<p>most not application form includes guidance on digital security in the application process.</p> <p>The following risk management table will be filled out by applicants for track 1:</p> <p>Contextual risks</p>	<p><i>What risks exist in the country of the activity?</i></p>	<p><i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i></p>
<p>Community risks</p>	<p><i>What risks exists to the community of the activity?</i></p>	<p><i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i></p>
<p>Individual risks</p>	<p><i>Could these activities increase the risks faced by the individual defender?</i></p>	<p><i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i></p>

The following risk management table will be filled out for applicants of track 2:

RISK CATEGORIES	RISKS IDENTIFIED	RISK MANAGEMENT
<p>Contextual risks</p>	<p><i>What risks exist in the location of the activity?</i></p>	<p><i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i></p>
<p>Programmatic risks</p>	<p><i>What risks exists because of the setup of the organisation or partners involved?</i></p>	<p><i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i></p>
<p>Institutional risks</p>	<p><i>Could these activities increase the risks faced by the organisation, its staff or stakeholders?</i></p>	<p><i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i></p>

Global Focus will publish the final narrative analysis in Q1 2026 and will submit the final financial reporting and audit report to the MFA by the end of Q2 2026. All local Grantees will be required to submit narrative and financial reporting (including supporting documentation) at the end of the project periods. For Track-1, the final Grantee reports will be submitted 30 days after the end date of the programme. For Track-2, the final Grantee reports will be submitted 90 days after the end date of the programme.

Closure

The last Grants will be issued during Q3 2025 to ensure that all grantee activities are concluded by December 2025 and to ensure that all Grantee reporting has been submitted by January 31 for Track-1 and March 31 for Track-2. This will provide Global Focus ample time to process all reporting, including any required follow-up, ahead of the final reporting deadline of the program scheduled for June 2026 (this target was also met

for CYS#1, where the final grants were issued by the end of Q3 2022 in accordance with the CYS#1 Development Engagement Document stipulating that all activities must have been concluded by the end of 2022).

Grantees requiring additional support at the end of the project period will not be left behind (in line with the principle of duty to protect) but will be assisted by Global Focus to find other forms of support and funding opportunities through the member organisations of the BRT network and with the assistance of the Grantees' Danish NGO partners. This practice has already been tested successfully during the pilot-phase.

List of Annexes:

Annex 1: CYS#2 Concept Note (Claim Your Space #2 – Submitted to the MFA in June 2022)

Annex 2: CYS#1 Learning Product (Claiming Civic Spaces Together – Published April 2022)

Annex 3: CYS Administrative Guidelines (September 2022)

Annex 4: CYS#2 Budget 2023-2025 (September 2022)

Claim Your
SPACE
RAPID RESPONSE FUND

CLAIM YOUR SPACE #2

POST-PILOT EDITION
2023-2026

GLOBAL **FOCUS**

CLAIM YOUR SPACE #2

POST-PILOT EDITION 2023-2026

CONTENT	
1: CYS BEYOND THE PILOT-PHASE	3
1.1. Recommendations for how CYS#2 should be different from CYS#1	3
A. Extending the Timeline	4
B. Expanding the Geographic Scope	4
C. Adding Capacity Building for Local Partners	4
2: YEAR ONE OF CYS#1 (DATA AND FEEDBACK)	5
2.1. Year one at a Glance (Quantitative Data)	5
A. Track 1 Spending 2021	5
B. Track 1 Thematic Coverage	6
C. Track 2 Spending 2021	6
D. Track 2 Thematic Coverage	7
2.2. Year one (Qualitative Data) – Global Focus Observations and feedback from Grantees and Danish CSO partners	7
A. Global Focus Observations and Lessons Learned from year one	7
B. What do the Danish CSO partners say?	8
C. What do the local grantees say?	8
3: LESSONS LEARNED AND HOW TO APPLY THESE TO CYS#2	9
3.1. Lessons learned: Which parts of CYS#1 should stay the same?	9
3.2. Other Components from CYS#1 that should continue in CYS#2	10
4: CONCLUSION	11
4.1. Conclusion	11
4.2. Summary of Recommendations	11
ANNEXES	12
Annex A: Summary of Responses from Danish Partner CSOs	12
Annex B: Summary of Responses from Local Grantees	15

INTRODUCTION

In January 2021, the new Danish Rapid Response Mechanism, Claim Your Space, was launched and the encrypted application system went live on Global Focus' website. The following month, on February 1st, the military in Myanmar overthrew the government leading to a massive civilian uprising, which has now persisted for more than a year. The military coup in Myanmar became the first major test of the Claim Your Space mechanism for providing fast and flexible emergency response funding to local partners of Danish civil society organisations in dire need. The overall structure of the Fund, as initially designed by Global Focus and our member organisations, has proven to be strong, secure, and agile and able to provide a unique service to the Danish CSO community and their local partners in an efficient and professional manner.

Since the inception of the Fund, there has been consistent demand for support from Danish CSO partners from a range of different countries, and the feedback on the Fund's ability to respond to these demands has in general been positive and encouraging. As was to be expected, we have encountered multiple challenges along the way, but the excellent collaboration with the Danish CSOs and their local partners has to a great extent enabled us to overcome these challenges. More importantly, it has provided us with valuable lessons on how to make the funding mechanism even stronger and more relevant in the future.

*This concept note will present some of the challenges, as well as the lessons learned in addressing these, during year one of the pilot-phase. Moreover, the concept note will argue that there is a continued need for the Claim Your Space mechanism beyond the pilot-phase, which expires at the end of 2022. **Global Focus and our member organisations are therefore requesting a 4-year renewal***

of the Claim your Space Fund starting in January 2023.

With the renewal of the mechanism, we aim to maintain the existing structure of the funding mechanism but will request some changes to the scope and reach of the mechanism. Chiefly, we are requesting an expansion of the geographic scope to include a wider range of countries eligible for funding. This is based on our assessment that the Claim Your Space model has proven strong and reliable during year one of the pilot-phase and can therefore safely be expanded to cover additional geographic areas which has been a key request from Danish CSOs in order to support their local partners. We believe that the main purpose of the Claim Your Space mechanism must be to protect the local partners of Danish CSO, who are implementing Denmark's strategic development projects throughout the Global South in cases of emergency. Especially if such an emergency should arise as a result of the role the local partner has played in implementing our projects. We believe this is a fundamental responsibility of States and CSOs working in the Global South, and a responsibility that cannot be limited to a narrow geographic scope.

Following our recommendations for a renewal of the Fund, we will demonstrate the reach of the Fund by presenting a breakdown of the grants issued across all countries under Track 1 and Track 2 during year one of the pilot-phase. The concept note also includes a qualitative assessment of year one based on 1) feedback from Danish CSO collected through a survey, 2) data collected from local grantees through their narrative reporting, and 3) Global Focus' own observations based on our first year of managing the Fund. These three layers of feedback also form the basis for our request for a 4-year renewal of the Claim Your Space Fund as per our recommendations.

1: CYS BEYOND THE PILOT-PHASE

1.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOW CYS#2 SHOULD BE DIFFERENT FROM CYS#1

As will be demonstrated in detail below, the CYS-model in its current form works incredibly well and meets the demands identified in the initial concept note to a very high degree. The initial design has proved to be strong, secure, and flexible. For that reason, this concept note will not be proposing any major changes to the structure of the CYS-model itself.

However, three key areas for improvement in the scope of the CYS-model have been identified in cooperation with Danish CSOs and their local partners, which must be addressed moving forward beyond the pilot-phase. In summary, these are **a) the timeline, b) the geographic restrictions, and c) the need for local capacity-building**. Each of these will be explained in detail below.

A. TIMELINE

Based on the feedback from the Danish CSOs, several of them have come to rely on CYS to react to emergency requests from their partners. But the relatively short timeframe of the pilot-phase makes it difficult for them to plan their budgets in this regard. Although the Claim Your Space mechanism is an emergency fund and the purpose is not to provide funding for long-term projects, it still affects the long-term planning of projects and programs for Danish CSOs as emergency funding for local partners is key when operating in restricted environments. Furthermore, we expect that an extension of the mechanism is also likely to increase the reach the mechanism, since Danish CSOs will be able to rely on this for support for their local partners, thereby integrating it in their projects and budgets and disseminating information about the mechanism to their local partners. Therefore, **Global Focus is proposing a four-year timeframe from January 2023 through December 2026 for the second phase of CYS.**

B. GEOGRAPHIC RESTRICTIONS

Based on the feedback from the Danish CSOs, the geographic restrictions placed on CYS#1 are problematic for the following reasons:

- The restrictions are excluding to partners of Danish CSO in countries outside the current narrowly defined geographical scope. As a result, a Danish CSO can support one partner in obtaining CYS-funding to aid them during an emergency in Palestine but be forced to deny the same support to a partner in a similar emergency situation in neighboring Egypt. This is difficult for the Danish partner CSOs to communicate to their local partners as there is no obvious or logical explanation to be provided. At the same time, the restrictions are excluding to Danish CSOs that are primarily active in countries/regions that are not included in the current geographical scope. As a result, even though these organisations may have partners in dire need of emergency assistance, the Danish partner CSOs cannot use the Danish Claim Your Space mechanism to support them, despite the fact that the mechanism was developed for this exact purpose.
- The restrictions do not reflect the countries in which Global Focus member organisations are operating and have active programs, thereby excluding many of their partners from support while being available in countries where Danish CSOs do not have many active programs or partners working within the field of human rights and civic space (e.g., Afghanistan). Nor does the current scope include all partner countries of the Strategic Partner organisations (the SPA partners), which means that the SPA partners are unable to support the local

partners implementing their projects in case of an emergency unless the country falls within the scope. A key purpose of CYS must be to protect the local partners that are implementing Denmark's strategic development projects in case of an emergency. Especially if the emergency is a result of the role the local partner has played in implementing this very project.

- The restrictions prevent CYS from responding to situations of crisis and/or sudden political change in a country context when crises happen in countries outside the geographical scope (recent examples include Ukraine, Lebanon, Colombia, and Kazakhstan).

Global Focus' members have specifically highlighted a number of regions and countries, which are currently not covered by the CYS Fund, where they have active projects and partners that would greatly benefit from a safety net like CYS in response to emergency situations that arise as a result of hostility to their activities. These include:

- **Middle East and Northern Africa** (Countries specifically highlighted: **Egypt, Lebanon**)
- **Latin America** (Countries specifically highlighted: **Colombia, Nicaragua**)
- **Southeast Asia** (Countries specifically highlighted: **Cambodia, the Philippines**)
- **Eastern Europe & South Caucasus**

To fully address these concerns and requests, **Global Focus is proposing a widening of the geographic restrictions to include all countries listed on the OECD/DAC list of ODA countries for the second phase of CYS starting in 2023.**

C. NEED FOR LOCAL CAPACITY-BUILDING

Based on the feedback from local grantees and Danish CSOs alike, there is a greater need for capacity-building among local CSOs to enable them to strengthen their organisations and establish and maintain internal security procedures, both online and offline. CYS has to some extent been able to address this need, but not to a sufficient extent as this has not been the primary focus of either of the two application Tracks. Therefore, **Global Focus is proposing to add Capacity-building for local CSOs to the list of eligible activities.**

2: YEAR ONE OF CYS#1 (DATA AND FEEDBACK)

2.1. YEAR ONE AT A GLANCE (QUANTITATIVE DATA)

The following is a breakdown of the grants issued to local partners of Danish CSOs under Track 1 and Track 2 of the Claim Your Space Fund during the first year of the pilot-phase of the mechanism.

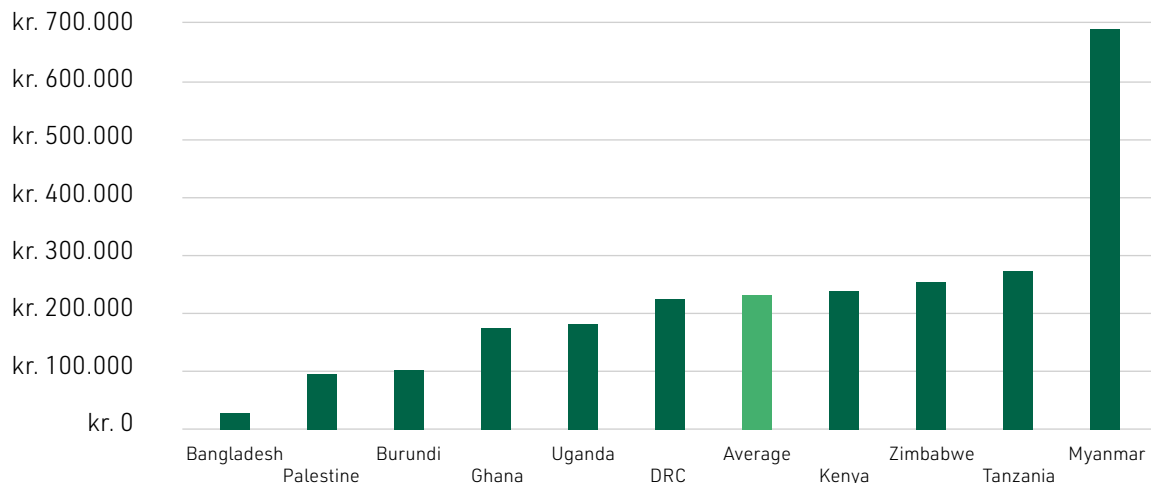
A. TRACK 1 SPENDING 2021

Emergency assistance to individuals and groups under threat.

SPENDING PER COUNTRY (LOW > HIGH)			YEAR ONE TOTAL	
Country	kr.	%	Total Number of Countries	10
Bangladesh	24.538 kr.	1%	Total Number of Grants	44
Palestine	93.252 kr.	4%	Total Number of Beneficiaries	127
Burundi	101.136 kr.	5%		
Ghana	171.799 kr.	8%		
Uganda	179.228 kr.	8%		
DRC	223.423 kr.	10%		
Kenya	236.364 kr.	11%		
Zimbabwe	252.789 kr.	11%		
Tanzania	271.156 kr.	12%		
Myanmar	690.678 kr.	31%		
TOTAL	2.244.363 kr.	100%		

AGGREGATES (AVERAGE SPENDING)	
Spending pr. Country	224.436 kr.
Spending pr. Grant	51.008 kr.
Spending pr. beneficiary	17.672 kr.

Track 1: 2021 Spending pr. country (DKK)



B. TRACK 1 THEMATIC COVERAGE

This illustration shows a simplified overview of the thematic and geographic coverage under CYS' Track 1 during the first year of implementation.

THEMATIC ISSUE	COUNTRY/REGION
LGBT+ groups	East Africa
Women human rights defenders	Southern and Central Africa
Indigenous peoples' rights & land rights	East Africa and Bangladesh
Journalists and Free press	Myanmar
Youth & student activism	Myanmar and Zimbabwe
Support for protest movements	Myanmar and Palestine
Trade union activism	Myanmar

Under Track 1, we have seen a high demand for support for specific activities such as relocation and evacuation of human rights defenders, safehousing of human rights defenders, legal support for human rights defenders, protection measures for human rights defenders, and digital security.

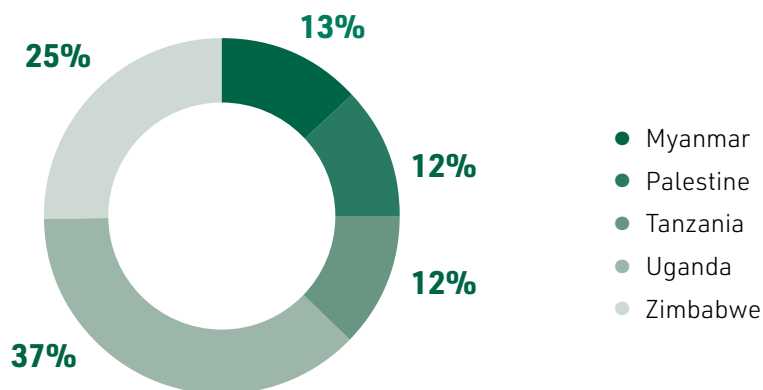
C. TRACK 2 SPENDING 2021

Grants to local CSO alliances to collectively counter civic space restrictions.

SPENDING PER COUNTRY (LOW ► HIGH)			YEAR ONE TOTAL	
Country	kr.	%	Total Number of Countries	5
Palestine	222.338 kr.	12%	Total Number of Grants	8
Tanzania	223.070 kr.	12%	Total Number of involved CSOs	25
Myanmar	243.806 kr.	13%		
Zimbabwe	461.158 kr.	25%		
Uganda	673.090 kr.	37%		
TOTAL	1.823.462 kr.	100%		

AGGREGATES (AVERAGE SPENDING)	
Spending pr. country	364.692 kr.
Spending pr. grant	227.933 kr.

**Track 2:
Spending pr.
country (%)**



D. TRACK 2 THEMATIC COVERAGE

This illustration shows a simplified overview of the thematic and geographic coverage under CYS' Track 2 during the first year of implementation.

THEMATIC ISSUE	COUNTRY/REGION
Support for protest movements	Myanmar, Zimbabwe, and Palestine
Youth & student activism	Myanmar, Zimbabwe, and Uganda
Indigenous people's rights & land rights	Tanzania and Uganda
Environmental activism	Uganda
LGBT+ groups	Uganda

Under Track 2, we have been seeing a high demand for support for specific activities such as projects aiming at legal reform, alliance building, advocacy to protect civic space, public awareness campaigns, protection measures for HRDs, capacity building for CSOs/HRDs.

2.2. YEAR ONE (QUALITATIVE DATA) – GLOBAL FOCUS OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM GRANTEES AND DANISH CSO PARTNERS

A. GLOBAL FOCUS OBSERVATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM YEAR ONE

- **Grant Ceilings:** Early during Year one, it became clear that the grant ceilings proposed for the two Tracks in the original concept note were too restrictive. Based on the initial request and applications, it was evident that more flexibility was required in order for the Fund to be of real relevance to local partners' needs and for the fund to have the agility required for it to be able to respond to the context and situation on the ground. In response, the following adjustments were made:
 - **Track 1:** The original concept note outlined an average of DKK 25.000 per grant for emergency funding. However, this quickly turned out to be too restrictive and would not make the Fund responsive to emergency applications from large groups of individuals in acute need of relocation and safe housing. To address this, Global Focus began assessing the impact of group-applications based on the number of beneficiaries. This has allowed us to respond to situations, where groups of people are in acute need of small-scale funding to escape an emergency situation (e.g., a group of 30 journalists that had their office raided or a group of 15 union activists facing arrest warrants).
 - **Track 2:** The design of Track 2 emphasizes alliance building based on the notion that coalition-based advocacy projects have greater impact than campaigns and initiatives run by individual CSOs. Based on this rationale, a key requirement under Track 2 is that projects must be planned and implemented by a coalition of two or more CSOs in order for applications to be considered for funding. Early feedback from local partners, highlighted that in order for multiple local CSOs to be involved and in order for projects to have any real impact, the grant ceiling would have to be increased. Based on this feedback, the CYS-Team decided to increase the grant ceiling for Track 2 applications to address the feedback from partners.
- **Flexible grants managed by local grantees:** During Year one, it became evident that local HRDs are often in need of very small amounts (e.g., for a bus ticket or a night in a hotel) in order to maintain their safety, but do not need an actual grant. In these cases, the request for support is small in scope but it is imperative that the response is immediate. To meet this demand, Global Focus decided to permit trusted local partners to function as "outpost partners" allowing them to distribute small amounts to HRDs in urgent need. Thus, we have provided a number of flexible Track 1 grants, where the local partner has been allowed to distribute funding to HRDs according to a set of pre-approved guidelines and with the pre-requisite that all recipient names must be cleared in advance. The benefits of providing these types of small flexible grants will be explored further below.
- **Multiple grants to local partners to increase access to funding for grassroots:** To increase access to the Fund,

Global Focus decided to allow trusted local partners to work as “bank accounts” for smaller grassroots organisations that did not have the formal setup required to receive foreign funding. Thereby, the Fund was able to increase its reach to smaller local organisations and informal networks that other rapid response mechanisms are often not able to support.

- **Financial Reporting:** In cases where a balance of 20% or less remained under Track 1 grants, Global Focus decided to allow Grantees to use this funding towards maintaining their safety and/or continuing their activities in line with their approved applications. Global Focus developed a set of internal guidelines to ensure consistency in how this is applied. This approach is based on the following considerations:
 - The acute nature of the situation that faces most Track 1 Grantees at the time of application makes it difficult for them to accurately calculate their budget and predict their expenses. Thus, CYS-budget estimates are often characterized by some degree of uncertainty.
 - The short-term grants provided by CYS most often only mitigates an immediate emergency situation. Grantees will most often still be in a fragile situation after the emergency grant has expired and being able to use remaining funding to maintain their safety will likely improve their situation moving forward.
 - Grantees are often still living in uncertainty and going to a bank to transfer remaining funds to Global Focus might expose them to further surveillance and risk.
 - Allowing Grantees to spend remaining funds on relevant costs, as opposed to international bank transfer fees, increases the percentage of the overall funds made directly available to Grantees.

In cases where the remaining balance is 10% (the equivalent of the budget margin) or less, Global Focus does not require a sworn statement or additional reporting from Grantees.

B. WHAT DO THE DANISH CSO PARTNERS SAY?

At the end of Year one, we circulated a survey to the Danish CSOs that had used the Fund during the first year of the pilot-period (2021). The survey consisted of three key questions:

- *Q1: Based on your experience with using the Claim Your Space fund, what has worked well?*
- *Q2: Based on your experience with using the Claim Your Space fund, what has not worked well?*
- *Q3: In your opinion, how should the design for CYS#2 be different in order to better serve the needs of your organisation and partners?*

We received responses from 11 CSOs (out of a total of 14 CSOs that had actively used the CYS Fund during Year one – not including partners of applicants that were rejected). A full overview of the responses is available in **Annex A**. The responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent with specific examples of the most common responses.

C. WHAT DO THE LOCAL GRANTEES SAY?

Upon completion of Year one of CYS, we have also received a number of narrative reports from local grantees that have completed their grants. The reports are structured around the two central questions posed in the narrative reporting template:

- *What are the main outcomes of the activities conducted?*
- *What are the main challenges encountered during the activities conducted?*

A full overview of the responses from local Grantees is available in **Annex B**. The responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent with specific examples of responses. At the time of writing, we have mainly received reports from Track 1 grantees, as most projects funded through Track 2 have not yet been completed. Therefore, the responses in Annex B are solely based on narrative reports submitted by Track 1 grantees.

3: LESSONS LEARNED AND HOW TO APPLY THESE TO CYS#2

3.1 LESSONS LEARNED: WHICH PARTS OF CYS#1 SHOULD STAY THE SAME IN CYS#2?

Based on the feedback from local Grantees and Danish CSOs, as well as Global Focus' own observations and lessons learned, it is clear that the current format of the CYS model works very well and to a great extent meets the demands initially identified by Danish CSOs for a Danish Rapid Response Funding Mechanism. The model is clearly outlined in the initial Concept Note and Development Engagement Document for the pilot-phase as initially approved by the MFA. There is very little need to make changes to the model itself as it has proven solid and functional. In particular, the following strengths of the CYS-model are worth emphasizing:

- The Danish Partnership Component:** The current model of CYS is only available to local partners of Danish CSOs or Danish embassies. Applicants must demonstrate a link (existing or past) to a Danish CSO or embassy and that CSO or embassy must be able to verify this relationship, as well as the applicant's track-record. This is, of course, a some-what excluding model that leaves out many potential applicants in need, who do not have this type of connection to a Danish entity. However, this requirement is also the guarantee for faster processing of applications, compared to other rapid response mechanisms, and for the trust-based approach that makes the CYS-model unique. Both of these elements will be described in detail below.
- The Verification Mechanism:** The CYS-model is based on two levels of verification. 1) When an application is received, Global Focus staff contacts the Danish CSO referenced in the application to verify the applicant's identity, track record, and the nature of the relationship between the applicant and the Danish CSO partner. During this process, the applicant's ability to receive and manage grant funds is also established. 2) Once the first step has been completed, Global Focus staff sends an approval request, via an encrypted messaging app, to the CYS approval committee. The approval committee is comprised of six representatives from Global Focus membership organisations. The approval request details the nature of the emergency situation, the applicant's identity, the proposed activities, and the requested amount. Upon receipt, the members of the approval committee have 24 hours to object to requests for Track 1 applications and 72 hours for Track 2 applications. At both levels, the Danish partner CSO or the members of the approval committee can request that an application is rejected or request Global Focus to conduct an additional verification step through an independent
- third party or through the Building Responses Together Network (BRT). On three occasions, these approaches have been applied: 1) on one occasion, the Danish CSO partner requested that an application for Track 2 support be rejected due to the poor track record of one of the co-applicants; 2) On two occasions, third party verification has been requested via a Danish Embassy, a Danish CSO country office, and/or through other Rapid Response mechanisms that are members of the BRT Network. The verification model has worked very well and has proved very efficient.
- Faster Processing:** One of the major positive points of feedback from Danish CSOs, who have used the CYS mechanisms, is the speed of the processing compared to other Rapid Response Mechanisms. Where other Rapid Response Mechanisms often spend months processing applications, the CYS model is able to process an application (from receipt of application to transfer of funds) in less than a week. This is due to the two factors described above (the requirement that applicants must have an established partnership with a Danish CSO or Embassy and the efficiency of the two-level verification mechanism), which combined makes CYS one of the most agile and efficient response mechanisms available. The trade-off is, of course, that the mechanism is only available to applicants with a Danish partnership link.
- No Size Fits All Approach:** Even though the application forms for the two tracks were designed specifically to ensure an appropriate balance between user-friendliness and security, it quickly became apparent that the types of applicants that were reaching out for support often had specific needs based on context and situation that would not fit into a standardized process and format. Challenges included lack of internet access, limited tech-savviness, lack of access to computers, etc. The CYS-team has therefore adopted an approach that recognizes that some applicants are in unique situations, where alternative channels and methods for submitting applications must be made available. This approach also recognizes that while some applicants have significant digital security concerns and a great need for secure communication, others have limited concerns regarding online security, but a great need for a simplified application process due to lack of resources. Insisting on a fixed digital security protocol would exclude these applicants. The advantage of having a flexible mechanism like CYS is thus evident as it allows for the application process to meet the specific needs of the applicants.

- **Flexible Outpost Grants:** As described above, the option of providing flexible Track 1 grants to trusted local partners and allowing these to distribute small amounts to HRDs in acute need is worth exploring further. Allowing locally based partners to provide small-scale rapid response funding, according to a fixed and flexible set of pre-determined guidelines, guarantees that funding would be available immediately for needs that are low-cost, but extremely urgent.
- **Transfer through Danish CSO partners:** Once an application has been approved, the funding is transferred to the grantee via the Danish partner CSO. This system has worked very well as it allows the Danish CSOs to use transfer methods that have previously been tried and tested with the partner in question. It also allows them to use alternative modes of transfer, when regular bank transfers are not an option. Per agreement with Global Focus, the Danish CSO is required to confirm the mode of transfer and banking details with the local Grantee prior to making the onward transfer. By keeping this exchange of information between the Danish CSO and their local partner, this also ensures that the handling of sensitive banking information (which is often the target of hackers and other malicious agents) involves fewer parties.
- **Triangulation – guarantee for a secure model:** Each CYS grant-making process is a collaborative venture between Global Focus, the local grantee, and the Danish CSO. This three-way relationship guarantees a secure process and full accountability from start to finish. It also helps keep track of funding as the CSO is responsible for confirming with the applicant that the funding has been received and Global Focus confirms separately with the applicant that the funding has been received. This reduces the risk of funding being lost due to transfer errors, etc.
- **The trust-based approach ensures flexibility:** The factors described above, ensure that CYS can operate on a high level of trust, and this is the secret to the faster processing time. The faster processing time is a key factor in crucial moments, where a few days can mean life or death for some of the applicants that make use of this type of funding mechanism. Thus, the trust-based approach provides Global Focus with the flexibility needed to quickly respond to emergency situations, where all the information might not be available and that often do not fit a fixed pattern. And once an engagement has been completed (and the applicant is safe), financial reporting is submitted to Global Focus to document spending of the funds. Thus, Global Focus ensures that the flexible approach does not generate a high level of risk or compromises the accountability of the mechanism.
- **Global Focus' Unique Position:** During the pilot-phase, it has become clear that Global Focus' position as a membership organisation for Danish CSOs makes it uniquely positioned to manage the CYS mechanism. This has made it easy for Global Focus to promote and share information about CYS and to liaise with partners and international networks alike. Based on the feedback from the survey (see annex A below), this has also been to the satisfaction of the Danish CSO users of CYS, several of whom have specifically asked for this entity to remain with Global Focus.

3.2 OTHER COMPONENTS FROM CYS#1 THAT SHOULD CONTINUE IN CYS#2

In addition to the two funding Tracks, a number of additional components from CYS#1 should be highlighted in this section. These include the **Building Responses Together Network** and the **Joint Missions**, which will be described in detail below. Both of these components will also remain integrated parts of CYS#2 as proposed in this Concept Note.

- **The Building Responses Together Network:** During the first year of the pilot-phase, the Building Responses Together Network (BRT) was established, and it is now fully up and running. A steering Committee has been appointed and an online platform for coordination has been developed. The purpose of the network is to facilitate coordination among international Rapid Response mechanisms on referral of applications and verification of applicants, as well as to facilitate coordination on match-funding and avoiding double funding. Now that the BRT network has been established, there is great potential for further enlarging membership and increasing the collaboration efforts among the members of the network, e.g., with regards to experience sharing, joint trainings, and capacity building. These options would be further explored and developed during a second iteration of CYS beyond the pilot-phase.
- **Joint Missions/Study Trips:** As part of CYS#1, a number of Joint Missions with participants from Danish CSOs were planned. During year one of the pilot-phase, the first of these trips was cancelled due to Covid-restrictions, but the second trip is scheduled to take place in Q3 of 2022. These Joint Missions are expected to provide significant added value to the CYS-model by allowing Global Focus and representatives from Danish CSOs to explore strategies for further support to grassroots, networks, and protest movements in the Global South and to identify methods for funding and supporting local change agents. The annual Joint Missions would continue to provide added value to the CYS-model during a second iteration and ensure that the mechanism remains dynamic and responsive to urgent needs.

4: CONCLUSION

4.1 CONCLUSION

As demonstrated during year one of the pilot-phase, the CYS-model works very well and to a great extent meets the needs of Danish CSOs and their local partners in eligible countries. The model is strong, secure, and flexible, and there is currently no need to make any major

changes to the fundamental structure of the CYS-model itself. However, a second iteration would have to address a number of areas for further improvement of the scope and reach of the mechanism. These areas are summarized in the section below.

4.2 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the feedback from local grantees and Danish CSOs, we have identified three key areas for improvement in the scope of the CYS-model that must be addressed moving forward beyond the pilot-phase. Therefore, we recommend the following changes to the CYS-model during a second iteration of the mechanism:

- A. A four-year timeframe from January 2023 through December 2026.**
- B. A widening of the geographic scope to include all countries listed on the OECD/DAC list of ODA countries.**
- C. Adding capacity-building for local CSOs to the list of eligible activities.**

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RAPID RESPONSE FUND

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: SUMMARY OF REPOSSES FROM DANISH PARTNER CSOS

At the end of year one, we circulated a survey to the Danish CSOs that had used the Claim Your Space Fund during the first year of the pilot-period (2021). We received responses from 11 CSOs (out of a total of 14 CSOs that have actively used the CYS Fund). The following is a summary of their responses. The responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent theme (left column) and supported by examples of common comments under each theme (right column). The survey consisted of three key questions:

- Q1: Based on your experience with using the Claim Your Space fund, what has worked well?
- Q2: Based on your experience with using the Claim Your Space fund, what has not worked well?
- Q3: In your opinion, how should the design for CYS#2 be different in order to better serve the needs of your organisation and partners?

Q1: BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH USING THE CLAIM YOUR SPACE FUND, WHAT HAS WORKED WELL?

THEME (BY FREQUENCY)	EXAMPLES OF COMMON COMMENTS FOR EACH THEME
<i>Responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent (left column). The column on the right consists of common examples of comments under each theme.</i>	
Application Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Applications were very swiftly assessed. This was definitely faster than other emergency mechanisms we know of." • "CYS has worked very well and in a fast, flexible, and non-bureaucratic way. The funds were made easily available." • "The speed of the grant mechanism from application to grant payment was very high. The application process is simple and effective."
Added value to Danish CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Having CYS focusing on rapid response has lifted a great deal of work and stress from our organisation and made rapid response engagements easier to manage. CYS has worked so well for us that it would be hard to go back to having to manage without it." • "We are very happy with the current version of CYS. It would require a lot of extra work for Danish CSOs if we were to handle these cases internally again." • "CYS lifts a burden and provides a great relief for us that we have grown quite dependent on." • "Our experience with CYS has been very positive - we think this entity should remain with Global Focus." • "CYS is easier to access for Danish CSOs and their partners compared to international RR mechanisms. International RR mechanisms are often difficult for Danish organisations' partners to access and often does not result in support - CYS is more flexible and better at meeting the needs of our partners."
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Great flexibility, e.g., extension of a grant, reallocation of funds when something was unable to be done as planned." • "The flexibility of the grant provider with regards to alternative transfer methods in crisis situations was key to making this work for us." • "Having two different applications Tracks as options was great for us."
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "CYS staff interactions with partners worked extremely well and was efficient."
Relevance to partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Prompt to reply to all requests. Communication with Global Focus was splendid." • "There is a quick response time and great communication both with the Danish CSO and the local HRDs in need."

Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The verification process is running smoothly and with respect for the HRDs. Global Focus staff display a good understanding for security and use of secure communication channels."
Understanding of context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "CYS has a good understanding of the local context and culture, and staff are willing to listen and learn where the context is new and adjust accordingly."
Issue awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "LGBTQ issues and gender related issues receive very little support from other Rapid Response mechanisms. CYS meets this demand, which is unique." • "It is a great added value that CYS supports "grey area" cases regarding gender and sexuality that are not supported elsewhere and that CYS recognizes that gender identity and social activism are interlinked and cannot be regarded as separate issues."

Q2: BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH USING THE CLAIM YOUR SPACE FUND, WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL?

THEME (BY FREQUENCY)	EXAMPLES OF COMMON COMMENTS FOR EACH THEME
<i>Responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent (left column). The column on the right consists of common examples of comments under each theme.</i>	
Geographic Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The geographic restrictions should be removed." (This was by far the most frequent response to Q2 and Q3. Specific suggestions for changes to geographic scope are listed in the response section to Q3 below).
Applicant/partner limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The narrow definition of a human rights defender does not always work at the grassroots level (people are human rights defenders without being attached to organisations or being activists) and this has led to partners not applying as they didn't know how to explain that the emergency was due to their work." • "The requirement for a Danish CSO partnership restricts many from applying. There is a need for better guidance for those who do not have a link to a Danish CSO on how to find alternative funding options." • "Some of our partners have long lists of individuals in great risk that urgently need support, and it is almost impossible to prioritize whom to apply for and whom to ignore. And since Indigenous communities are often communally involved in human rights struggles, it would be good, if it was possible to support an entire community rather than 'just' an individual or a CSO."
Danish CSO Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Track 2 applications are a lot more challenging for our partners to apply for, and since Danish CSOs cannot serve as the applicant, it makes it difficult for us to assist with the application process. It would also be easier and ensure a higher standard if the Danish CSO could be the lead/anchor on Track 2 applications." • "The intention of making it easy for the Danish organisation to have a minimal workload was greatly appreciated. However, it ended up being extra work with no compensation, as the assumption that the local partners would be able to fill the application and plan the intervention on their own was not correct in our case. We work with rather small partners, and they are not used to complying to Danish standards of applications and project planning. That is where we need to support them a great deal."

Q3: IN YOUR OPINION, HOW SHOULD THE DESIGN FOR CYS#2 BE DIFFERENT IN ORDER TO BETTER SERVE THE NEEDS OF YOUR ORGANISATION AND PARTNERS?

THEME (BY FREQUENCY)	EXAMPLES OF COMMON COMMENTS FOR EACH THEME
<p><i>Responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent (left column). The column on the right consists of common examples of comments under each theme.</i></p>	
<p>“Geographic Restrictions must be removed”</p>	<p>The geographic restrictions must be removed. CYS should be made available to partners in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “All OECD/DAC countries” • “Globally” • “All SPA partner countries” <p>By Region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Middle East and Northern Africa” (specifically mentioned: “Egypt, Lebanon”) • “Latin America” (specifically mentioned: “Colombia, Nicaragua”) • “Southeast Asia” (specifically mentioned: “Cambodia, the Philippines”) • “Eastern and Central Europe & South Caucasus”
<p>“The application and grant-making process should be simplified”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The application form should be simplified. The current application form is too complicated and hard to explain to local partners”. Other suggestions for easing the application process include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “A short tutorial or online video for those new to supporting partners and HRDs on completing the form.” – “Make it clear to applicants that their Danish partners are allowed to help them fill out the application form.” – “The risk assessment section should be revised as it is difficult for local partners to distinguish between the different kinds of risks.” • “Danish CSOs should be able to apply themselves as leads, especially for Track 2.” • “Allow a bigger portion of the budget/administrative contribution to the Danish CSO to cover support to applicants on project preparation and monitoring.” • “CYS should to a greater extent provide larger grants to local partners and let them manage and distribute emergency funds locally.”
<p>“The eligibility and types of projects should be reconsidered”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It should be possible for one single partner to apply for Track 2. The requirement for joint applications (min. 2 CSOs) should be removed.” • “CYS should support humanitarian service delivery, such as shelter support and food distribution to larger groups of civilians.” • “The grant ceiling should be higher.”
<p>“The timeline should be longer”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The two-year period is too short for Danish CSO to rely on. The timeline should be longer, so that Danish CSOs know that they can rely on CYS to meet this demand and so they can plan accordingly.”

ANNEX B: SUMMARY OF REPOSES FROM LOCAL GRANTEES

Upon completion of year one of CYS, we have received the first narrative reports from grantees. The following is a summary of their responses. The responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent theme (left column) and supported by examples of common comments under each theme (right

column). The reports are structured around the two central questions posed in the narrative reporting template:

- *What are the main outcomes of the activities conducted?*
- *What are the main challenges encountered during the activities conducted?*

Q1: WHAT ARE THE MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED?

THEME (BY FREQUENCY)	EXAMPLES OF COMMON COMMENTS FOR EACH THEME
<p><i>Responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent (left column). The column on the right consists of common examples of comments under each theme.</i></p>	
<p>Improved security situation allows applicants to continue their work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Without having to worry about my safety, I could focus more on my professional duties. With the support of this grant, I could manage to work on my duties and support other HRDs while they are fighting for their own rights." • "The support of the CYS Relocation and Safehousing Project allowed [organisation] to further organize protests in Myanmar without compromising their safety." • "Previously, I had situations when the state agents would just show up at my home uninvited and without a warrant. However, the safe house provided by this grant was a place where I could re-establish myself and re-think what must be done as I claimed my space. The support enabled me to continue with my work without constantly looking over my shoulder."
<p>Alliance building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "CYS enabled [organisation] to build trust with other actors and stakeholders more systematically as their individual situation became safer. As a result of this, [organisation] was able to initiate contacts with teachers' unions and education staff unions and other trade union activists in several locations." • "After my kidnapping, the idea was to be relocated to a safer place and to continue our work. Many persons were keeping an eye on me and were interested in what we are doing in our organisation to promote women's rights. Because of the protection provided by this grant, I was able to continue working and expand our work to other places in the country. Many potential funders are now also interested in our organisation." • "This activity [legal support for court case] enhanced my communication and network skills with lawyers, policy makers, civil society and media."
<p>Secure working environments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The community activities are now done in a more secure place which is being monitored using the camera installed with funding from this grant, and the locks are new and more secure. This made the community feel safe and able to concentrate on their work and develop their organisation and continue their activities." • "The lesson learnt from this project is the fact that, when we improve the security of the places we live and our offices, we minimize the impacts of threats, and we are able to avoid risks that we face as human rights defenders." • "In these types of emergency circumstances, it is important to have someone you can walk with for security reasons. An unarmed security personnel will help you survive state sponsored violence, abductions, or torture plans. This has been my case since I managed to get Claim Your Space support. I managed to work without complications as I had someone I can trust to walk with me." • "A total of 10 organisation staff, 3 of them belonging to our partner organisations, benefited from the physical and digital security training initiative funded by this grant. The project has had immediate outcomes which include the office premises now having a layer of security and we are able to both monitor but also prevent intrusion making our staff feel secure and safe while working in the office."

Improved security situation for surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Moving away from home in the safe house did not only provide security for myself but for my family members as well. This has allowed me to continue my work without having to worry.” • “As for the organization, the grant helped reduce the current threat to [organisation]. With [HRD applicant] no longer a target, [organisation] was to a lesser extent the focus of the authorities and more beneficiaries were attracted to the organisation services again and even requested to volunteer with us.”
Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “After my abduction and torture, I was left with no choice but to go for medical check-ups to deal with the pain I felt inside my body. The support from this grant made it possible for me to have these check-ups and other critical scans. My health is now normal and that is a change which this support helped with.” • “This project [psychological counselling] helped me understand why I do what I do and how it serves a greater purpose, not only for me but for everyone in the country and around the globe. It helped me gain confidence and motivation not to stop my work as an HRD.”

Q2: WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED DURING THE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED?

THEME (BY FREQUENCY)	EXAMPLES OF COMMON COMMENTS FOR EACH THEME
<p><i>Responses have been thematically grouped and ranked from most frequent to least frequent (left column). The column on the right consists of common examples of comments under each theme.</i></p>	
Difficulties in predicting needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As I was no longer subject to arrests or brought to the interrogation center, I didn’t need legal aid for myself any longer but instead for my close colleagues, 2 youths from our network, who urgently needed legal support, which I was able to provide by hiring lawyers and providing other family support.” • “The costs of my relocation were higher than expected due to the need for intermediary links.” • “The challenging thing is that the speed of the revolution in Myanmar is changing all the time. Therefore, I also need to adjust my activities to the flow of revolution. That is my biggest challenge.”
Unforeseen changes to the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Due to COVID and the coup situation in my country, I requested to extend the grant period. As my friend allowed me to stay at her apartment, I saved some money from the accommodation line in the budget. Thus, I requested CYS to allow me to use the unused fund to cover insurance for the next 3 months and visa application fees for next 3 months as well, so I could remain in safety in exile while figuring out what to do.” • “The security situation in Myanmar remains fluid and the risk scenarios are changing all the time.” • “We are learning that there should always be timely relocation of HRDs when emergencies arise, though there are number of hurdles in the process of responding to such emergencies. But we are also learning that the organisation should have a dedicated emergency fund at all times to be able to make immediate interventions as needs arise.”
Channels of money transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Central Bank of Myanmar under the junta’s control had blocked mobile/web banking in the country, including limiting daily withdrawal of money to about \$25 per day per person and maximum \$10,000 per bank branch per day. This created challenges in transferring money to our staff inside the country. Money had to be transferred in small batches to the team inside to ensure the target group was covered. Hard-cash became difficult to acquire. Our Thailand office had to use the in-formal “Hundi payment system” to send money into Myanmar, which also caused delays as this informal system uses hard-cash to be transferred and paid to the receiver.” • “Admin and Finance staff had to reach out individually to each staff member and work out a safe place to physically provide money to the team member staying underground and also to get signed statements subsequently after making payments. This required more time to reach out to all staff.” • “One of the challenges I met had to do with the fluctuating black-market rates of the Zimbabwean dollar versus the formal interbank rate. Most if not all shops in Zimbabwe use the black-market rates for customers.”

Meeting formal requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I faced challenges in submitting my reports, firstly because in October, I moved back to Harare and realized that I was still wanted and the authorities were still looking for me. I therefore spent October and November running around and hiding. I also had exams at university during this period, and I had not planned adequately for that at the time of applying for the grant. Instead, I compiled the report in December and sent it once I was safe again." • "Relocating HRDs, especially LGBTI activists, in rural areas is always a matter of life and death. Sometimes the process and requirements needed to process a grant such as evidence of the threat may further risk the life of the HRD."
Covid-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The COVID-19 lock down came with stringent travel restrictions across borders in Uganda which made it quite difficult for [applicant] to be relocated with ease. This is also something to learn from and as a community come up with exit/evacuation measures to relocate HRDs at immediate risk." • After my relocation, my mother got infected with COVID. She was in critical condition. I needed to go back to my village to take care of her during the COVID crisis. Finally, she has now overcome it. We didn't expect this kind of things would happen."
Reactive measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "We have learnt that we were able to get support to minimize the impact of the risks we were facing, but we should be training our members and staff about safety and security to be able to measure the risks we are facing and record all security incidents and examine our capacity to avoid these in the future. " • "Most security interventions are also reactionary. They respond to actual violence/abuse/hate crimes. Our organization saw an opportunity in this to sensitize community members on how to mitigate risk by reducing their vulnerability to violence. More security trainings for community members and LBGT CSOs would go a long way in reducing these types of incidents." • "There is also the absence of a security plan within our local branch and reduced capacity on monitoring techniques. We need to work on this."



Claim Your
SPACE
RAPID RESPONSE FUND

GLOBAL FOCUS

CLAIMING CIVIC SPACES TOGETHER

ENLARGING THE SCOPE OF SUPPORT AND REACHING NEW ACTORS

ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE CLAIM YOUR SPACE RAPID RESPONSE FUND



The rapid response mechanism **Claim Your Space** was established to counter the negative trend of shrinking civic space and as a response to the fact that partners of Danish civil society organisations around the world were increasingly in need of emergency support when attacks on rights defenders occurred.

Through the first year of implementing Claim Your Space, the mechanism has proven strong in its ability to respond quickly to emergency requests for support as well as in its ability to provide funds for alliances of civil society actors collaborating on activities to counter shrinking civic space. As a rapid response mechanism, Claim Your Space functions both as a reactive and as a proactive initiative to help prevent crack-downs. This analysis presents the results and lessons learned through Global Focus' first year of the pilot-phase of Claim Your Space.

Recommendations

- Ensure locally anchored flexible funds
- Broaden the geographical scope of flexible funding mechanisms to include all ODA recipient countries
- Make core funding available through flexible funding mechanisms



VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINES:

“ In the last 6 months, security risks and threats by the military forces are much higher. Military seriously attacked civilians especially if they suspect [that you are an activist]. Many people got killed in the interrogation centers. While exposed to more risks, we experience increased difficulties to continue our non-violent movement because there were many people arrested everyday. Arranging different safe houses or relocating to different places with the support of CYS helped a lot to mitigate security threats and I was able to continue my work for the movement”.

- Anti-Coup activist in Myanmar

INTRODUCTION

Only 3.1 % of the world's population live in democratically open rated countries,¹ and even countries that currently find themselves struggling between democratic and authoritarian regimes now tend to tilt towards the latter.² From the re-emergence of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan to the violent riots on Capitol Hill in the US, threats to democracy, freedom, and human rights continue to take new radical forms and shapes across the globe. In fact, 2022 marks the 16th consecutive year of declining global freedom. The world is now on a democracy level equal to that of 1989, which means that the last 30 years of democratic advances have been eradicated.³ This is a critical development, and it calls for immediate action.

On top of this, new data shows that the nature of authoritarian regimes is changing. These regimes are becoming more effective in circumventing norms and institutions traditionally in place to support democratic values.⁴ And tools of restricting civic space are multiplying and becoming increasingly advanced. This means an increased use of bolder actions such as full-fledged coups, toxic levels of polarisation mechanisms, and misinformation.⁵ On top of this, restrictive laws and violent crackdowns continue to limit activists and human-rights defenders' work across the globe. In fact, the no. 1 violation on civic space is detaining peaceful protesters.⁶ To make matters worse, the global pandemic has resulted in new waves of restrictions, and COVID-19 legislation enforced for unspecified periods of time has disproportionately limited basic human rights, adding to the democratic backsliding.⁷

A strong, vigorous and inclusive civil society is imperative to protect and enhance democracy and human rights, and to respond to the democratic backsliding anno 2022. This is why, we must innovate and improve the ways in which we facilitate funding in order to be able to respond to the diverse and ever-changing needs for solidarity. And we need to enhance the protection and work of civil society actors fighting for democratic change and human rights across the globe. There is a growing willingness among international donors to heed this call for more flexible

funding opportunities, and with the introduction of funding facilities, such as the rapid response mechanism Claim Your Space, Denmark is contributing to a current push for a new and improved resourcing landscape that is able to meet the needs of rights defenders situated at the challenging forefronts of the global fight for democracy and human rights.

Claim Your Space (hereafter CYS) was established to counter the negative trend of shrinking civic space and as a response to the fact that partners of Danish civil society organisations (CSOs) around the world were increasingly in need of emergency support when attacks on rights defenders occurred. Furthermore, partners in the Global South are increasingly in need of proactive support for rapid actions to counter signs of shrinking civic space. The pilot-phase of CYS was launched by Global Focus in January 2021 and since then, CYS has been able to support a wide range of civil society actors within the geographical scope of the mechanism.⁸

Through this first year of implementing CYS, the mechanism has proven strong in its ability to respond quickly to emergency requests for support as well as in its ability to provide funds for alliances of civil society actors collaborating on activities to counter shrinking civic space. As a rapid response mechanism, CYS thereby functions both as a reactive measure to respond when crackdowns occur and as a proactive initiative to help prevent crackdowns in the future. These activities are facilitated through the two-track model of CYS where Track 1 provides emergency assistance and Track 2 provides support for activities to proactively counter civic space, including enhancing alliance building among civil society actors locally and internationally.

This analysis will present the results and lessons learned through Global Focus' first year of implementing the pilot-phase of the Claim Your Space mechanism. The analysis will conclude with a set of recommendations for further development of flexible funding modalities.

1) <https://findings2021.monitor.civicus.org/in-numbers.html>

2) https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/FIW_2022_PDF_Booklet_Digital_Final_Web.pdf

3) https://v-dem.net/media/publications/dr_2022.pdf

4) https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/FIW_2022_PDF_Booklet_Digital_Final_Web.pdf

5) https://v-dem.net/media/publications/dr_2022.pdf

6) <https://findings2021.monitor.civicus.org/top-violations.html>

7) https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/FIW_2022_PDF_Booklet_Digital_Final_Web.pdf

8) Sub-Saharan African countries, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Palestine.

1. CYS SUPPORT AT A GLANCE

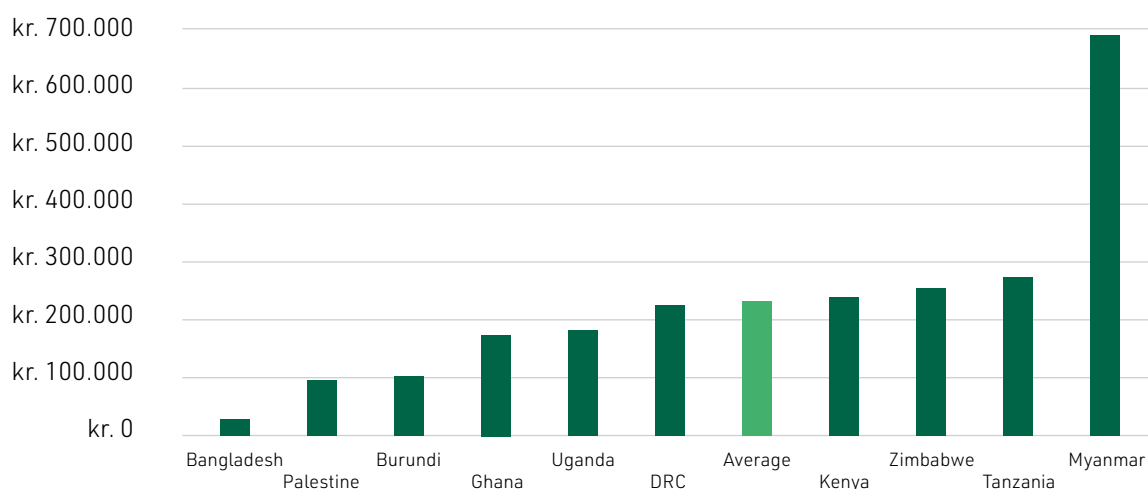
The following is a breakdown of the grants issued to local partners of Danish CSOs under Track 1 and Track 2 of the Claim Your Space Fund during the first year of the pilot-phase of the project.

TRACK 1 SPENDING 2021

Emergency assistance to individuals and groups under threat

SPENDING PER COUNTRY			YEAR ONE TOTAL	
Country	kr.	%	Total Number of Countries	10
Bangladesh	24.538 kr.	1%	Total Number of Grants	44
Palestine	93.252 kr.	4%	Total Number of Beneficiaries	127
Burundi	101.136 kr.	5%		
Ghana	171.799 kr.	8%	AGGREGATES (AVERAGE SPENDING)	
Uganda	179.228 kr.	8%	Spending pr. Country	224.436 kr.
DRC	223.423 kr.	10%	Spending pr. Grant	51.008 kr.
Kenya	236.364 kr.	11%	Spending pr. beneficiary	17.672 kr.
Zimbabwe	252.789 kr.	11%		
Tanzania	271.156 kr.	12%		
Myanmar	690.678 kr.	31%		
TOTAL	2.244.363 kr.	100%		

**Track 1:
2021 Spending pr. country
(DKK)**

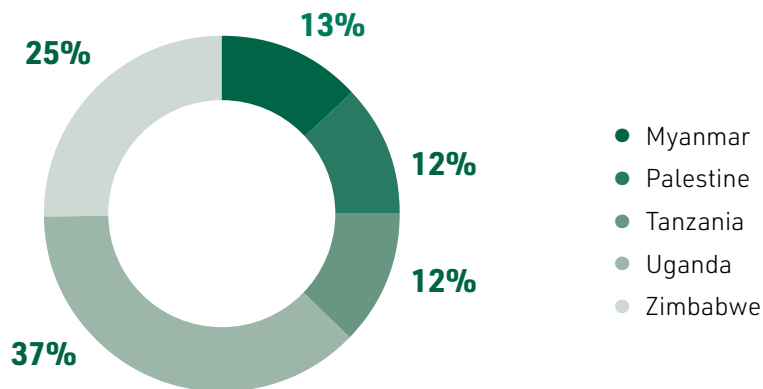


TRACK 2 SPENDING 2021

Grants to local CSO alliances to collectively counter civic space restrictions

SPENDING PER COUNTRY			YEAR ONE TOTAL	
Country	kr.	%	Total Number of Countries	5
Palestine	222.338 kr.	12%	Total Number of Grants	8
Tanzania	223.070 kr.	12%	Total Number of involved CSOs	25
Myanmar	243.806 kr.	13%		
Zimbabwe	461.158 kr.	25%		
Uganda	673.090 kr.	37%		
TOTAL	1.823.462 kr.	100%		
			AGGREGATES (AVERAGE SPENDING)	
			Spending pr. country	364.692 kr.
			Spending pr. grant	227.933 kr.

**Track 2:
Spending pr.
country (%)**



STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES – ZIMBABWE:

The organisation applied for funds to support three women human rights defenders who had been subjected to forced disappearance, torture, inhuman and humiliating treatment and subject to severe harassment and intimidation due to their work for women's rights. CYS supported the three women human rights defenders by covering the cost of: 1) Transport and communication costs involved in the weekly reporting to the police and communication with lawyers, 2) Physical and psychological recovery (all three women had obtained substantial traumas during their time in custody – both physically and psychologically), 3) Safe housing (as all women were subjected to continuing surveillance and threats), 4) Temporary livelihood support (as the women had lost their jobs as a result of their abduction).

STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES – BURKINA FASO:

This application was received from a civil society activist working to secure the rights of vulnerable children and women. The activist also provides support for family planning and contraception in rural communities for those afraid to leave their house. These activities made him a target of jihadist groups, who have been stepping up attacks in the area in recent years. The activist and his family were frequently receiving death threats. To mitigate the situation, CYS supported the relocation of the applicant and his family, including transport, rental of safe house, basic supplies, utilities and communication costs.

2. THEMATIC AND GEOGRAPHIC TRENDS

In the following, we will unfold some of the data presented in the graphs above. Within the geographic area that the CYS pilot-phase has covered, there have been some clear trends. Two geographic areas are worth highlighting: *Myanmar* and *East Africa*. Within these contexts, two thematic trends have been particularly prevalent. In Myanmar, CYS has provided a large amount of grants for activists and protest movements. In East Africa, a significant number of approved applications have been for people belonging to the LGBT+ community. In the following, we will dive into these geographical trends and seek to understand why CYS has been paramount to addressing the situations that civil society actors are faced with within these specific contexts. Lastly, we will present some of the trends in the thematic coverage that spreads across borders and we will unfold what these tendencies convey about the current state of civic space.



STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES – MYANMAR:

Due to his involvement as an organiser of protests in the anti-coup movement in Myanmar in the spring of 2021, the authorities placed this applicant on a warrant list, calling for his arrest. If apprehended, the applicant risked being placed in jail for up to 7 years for his activities, where he would be at high risk of torture. To respond to this situation, CYS support covered relocation of the applicant to a safe house for six months, as well as costs for communication, transportation, and a food allowance.

CIVILIAN-LED ACTIVISM IN MYANMAR

On the 1st of February 2021, one month after the pilot-phase of CYS kicked off, a military coup erupted in Myanmar, leading to a massive civilian uprising. Since the military coup brought the country into a violent whirlwind of potential change, civil society actors have mobilised to counter the military take-over despite violent, frequent and sometimes deadly crack-downs from the Junta. During this instance of sudden and immense upheaval and civilian engagement, we clearly saw the added value in having a quick and flexible funding mechanism in place to support rights defenders and changemakers who mobilise against authoritarian clampdowns on fundamental rights. To support democratic change, it is therefore imperative that we have flexible support mechanisms in place to support change when local momentum arises, as it did in Myanmar in 2021, and when crackdowns are experienced by civil society and rights defenders at the frontlines during these changing times.

Since the coup occurred in Myanmar, CYS has been able to support a wide range of civil society actors who have mobilised against the military take-over in the country. Myanmar became the first major test of the CYS-mechanism, and during year one, groups and individuals in Myanmar were the recipients of roughly 1/3 of the total funding issued under CYS' Track 1 for emergency assistance making it the sole country to receive the most support for emergency

VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINES:

“I am still in safety and security risks are reduced with the support of “Claim Your Space”. Therefore, the last 6 months, there are immediate outcomes and impacts, as I was able to continue to support the non-violence movement in Myanmar through fundraising, coordination, communication and logistical support. I provided this to different youth, civil society organisations and groups, civil disobedience movement of public servants, gun-wounded people and injured people and internally displaced peoples across the country”.

- Anti-Coup activist in Myanmar

assistance. Through Track 1, CYS has specifically provided emergency support for activists, human rights defenders and journalists. This support has to a large extent been granted for relocation and safe housing, as well as legal aid. Through Track 2, which covers activities that counter shrinking civic space, CYS has also been able to support an alliance of local civil society movements who applied for support to coordinate their efforts in optimising safety and exploring innovative approaches to organising protests. Through the support in Myanmar, CYS has thereby been able to enhance safety and alliance building among local changemakers in Myanmar. This has been done on local terms in response to local momentum arising for democratic change, and with limited involvement and interference from the CYS administration. This approach ensures that the initiatives carried forth on the basis of Danish support through CYS are anchored in local visions for a different future, thereby enhancing the likelihood of channeling funds into initiatives for sustainable democratic change.

By far the biggest single recipient country of CYS-support in 2021 was Myanmar. As mentioned above, this reflects the situation in the country, where a violent military coup took place in February 2021. At the same time, it reflects that a handful of Danish CSO partners were highly involved in disseminating the information about CYS to their local partners from day one of the coup and were also very active in helping partners apply.

Finally, the grants that were provided to applicants from Myanmar were often relatively large grants distributed among large groups of individuals (e.g., journalists, trade union activists) in acute need of relocation. The grant amounts were quite small when split per individual, but due to the number of individuals per application these

ended up being quite large. This is also part of the explanation for Myanmar's overrepresentation in the geographic breakdown of Track 1 support during year one.

CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS BELONGING TO THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY IN EAST AFRICA

Throughout the period, since the launch of CYS in January 2021, the highest number of applications for support under both tracks have consistently been from applicants in East Africa, particularly Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya (and to a lesser extent Burundi). During year one, groups and individuals in East African countries were the recipients of more than 1/3 of the funding issued under Track 1 and almost half of the funding issued under Track 2. CYS support in East Africa has covered different types of actors and activities but there has been a clear overrepresentation of civil society actors belonging to the LGBT+ community.

At the time of writing, same-sex relationships continue to be illegal in the six African countries where CYS has provided support: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ghana and Burundi. Defying restrictive laws, stipulating penalties of long prison-sentences, or sometimes even risking death, civil society actors working within these contexts continue to work tirelessly for the human rights of people belonging to the LGBT+ community. This is not a new phenomenon. Recent developments to the rights of LGBT+ people can therefore not be said to lie at the root of the high amount of LGBT+ applicants. Rather, we would argue that the large amount of support for the LGBT+ community that has been requested through CYS is due to a lack of other funding options for this group of civil society actors.



STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES - GHANA:

After opening their new office, this applicant's LGBT+ organisation came under serious attack and top officials called for the arrest of its key members. Some members had to run for their lives and abandon the new office when the building was stormed by police and mobs of homophobic individuals with the intent to arrest them. Following the attack, key members of the organisation were living in hiding for fear of reprisals and had to move between safehouses on a weekly basis. To respond to this situation, CYS provided funding for accommodation and food/living allowance for the human rights defenders in hiding and assisted with securing funding to support their safety beyond the CYS-grant.

VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINES:

// *This grant has helped [anonymous individual] be safe [after harassment and attacks due to his work for LGBT+ rights]. He no longer experiences challenges from neighbours and also attends the mosque without facing challenges. The lawyer has been very helpful to mediate with the mufti and others. [Anonymous individual] again actively joins organisations and the community, and conducts counselling for [Anonymous group]. We can see that weight has been lifted from his shoulders and he is able to breathe again”.*

- Tanzanian partner CSO

Based on feedback from local grantees and their Danish partner CSOs, the overrepresentation of applicants belonging to the LGBT+ community reflects the fact that this type of civil society actor is often excluded from other funding opportunities, as they do not always fit within the traditional definition of what constitutes a human rights defender. For example, they are not always able to prove that they are being harassed or persecuted because of their work and/or activism and not because of their gender- or sexual identity. CYS provides more flexibility in this respect by recognising that for these types of groups, the personal is by definition political, as well as by accepting that in some contexts, a certain gender identity constitutes a political act in itself. This group of civil society actors is thereby subject to multiple layers of restrictions, as both their personal identities and their active engagement in civil society put them at risk of being subjected to crack-downs.

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

// *LGBTQ issues and gender related issues receive very little support from other rapid response mechanisms. CYS meets this demand, which is unique”.*

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

// *It is a great added value that CYS supports “grey area” cases regarding gender and sexuality that are not supported elsewhere and that CYS recognises that gender identity and social activism are interlinked and cannot be regarded as separate issues”.*

According to Danish partner CSOs and local grantees, another reason as to why these groups sometimes struggle to obtain rapid response funding elsewhere is that the threats they are exposed to can be mistaken for regular criminal attacks, rather than state oppression and persecution, which is usually the main focus for human rights-centered rapid response funding. In these cases, the threat often comes from groups of homophobic individuals, often spurred on by religious or community leaders, who are not formally organised or controlled by the state apparatus. Attacks often involve street harassment, verbal abuse, break-ins, vandalism, and burglaries/theft, and it can be difficult to document that these incidents are politically motivated attacks and not simply criminal acts. CYS's approach to these types of cases, which is that they are politically fueled attacks on intersectional groups, has resulted in a high number of applications from LGBT+ groups and individuals, who often experience being rejected for funding elsewhere, which is why this group makes up a considerable part of the support issued under Track 1. Similar challenges to achieving funding are encountered by other intersectional civil society groups; something we have also been able to observe through our facilitation of CYS. As it is the case for LGBT+ actors, indigenous peoples working for human rights or land rights also experience falling between categories in other funding options, as their civil society work and their personal identities intertwine. The same can be said for women human rights defenders. These two intersectional groups have also been significantly represented among CYS grantees.

LGBT+ persons are exposed to threats in many parts of the world. In addition to the above-described reasons behind the overrepresentation of LGBT+ cases supported in East Africa, it should also be noted that the Danish CSO environment has for many years been very active in a number of East African countries and has long standing ties to local partners that have been developed over years. This includes countries like e.g., Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya. This can explain why countries in this region are overrepresented, as CYS-support can only be given to local partners of Danish CSOs. Also, there is a natural snowball effect, which means that once an applicant receives funding, they share the information with colleagues and partners in their area, which in turn generates more applications from certain countries/regions.

THEMATIC TRENDS AT A GLANCE

The following presents an overview of thematic trends that we have observed in connection with the country contexts where they have been prevalent.

TRACK 1: EMERGENCY SUPPORT

This illustration shows a simplified overview of the thematic and geographic coverage under CYS' **Track 1** during the first year of implementation.

THEMATIC ISSUE	COUNTRY/REGION
LGBT+ groups	East Africa
Women human rights defenders	Southern and Central Africa
Indigenous peoples' rights & land rights	East Africa and Bangladesh
Journalists and Free press	Myanmar
Youth & student activism	Myanmar and Zimbabwe
Support for protest movements	Myanmar and Palestine
Trade union activism	Myanmar

Under **Track 1**, we have seen a high demand for support for specific activities such as relocation and evacuation of human rights defenders, safehousing of human rights defenders, legal support for human rights defenders, protection measures for human rights defenders, and digital security.

TRACK 2: ACTIVITIES TO COUNTER THE SHRINKING OF CIVIC SPACE

This illustration shows a simplified overview of the thematic and geographic coverage under CYS' **Track 2** during the first year of implementation.

THEMATIC ISSUE	COUNTRY/REGION
Support for protest movements	Myanmar, Zimbabwe, and Palestine
Youth & student activism	Myanmar, Zimbabwe, and Uganda
Indigenous people's rights & land rights	Tanzania and Uganda
Environmental activism	Uganda
LGBT+ groups	Uganda

Under **Track 2**, we have been seeing a high demand for support for specific activities such as projects aiming at legal reform, alliance building, advocacy to protect civic space, public awareness campaigns, protection measures for HRDs, capacity building for CSOs/HRDs.

DIGITAL SECURITY SUPPORT: A TRANSNATIONAL TREND

All the thematic trends indicated above present opportunities for interesting findings. We will not be able to unfold them all in this analysis. However, one thematic trend has shown to be represented broadly across the supported countries and thus particularly calls for separate mention, namely support for digital security measures.

Throughout 2021 and across the geographical spread of CYS, we have received applications from activists and civil society groups in need of support to optimise their digital security. All over the globe, digital technologies have long posed a severe threat to human rights and democracy through surveillance, criminalisation of online activism, internet shutdowns, misinformation etc. This is not nothing new. However, with the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic in

2020, civil society actors were forced to move much of their work online underlining the need to ensure safe online spaces that protect the rights to freedoms of expression and association. CYS did not exist before the spread of the pandemic. For this reason, we can only presume that the immense demand for funds designated for digital security needs can at least in part be ascribed to spread of Covid-19 and the consequential spread of national lockdowns.

Requests for support to address digital security needs have been submitted by both individual actors, civil society groups, and organisations. Needs include developing secure back-up systems and putting up software and hardware protection and acquiring secure digital devices and secure internet connections. Others have applied for funds to conduct digital security trainings for staff or community members. The following textbox contains a common example of a request for digital security support.



STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES - DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:

The activists working with [anonymous organisation] face continuous threats of reprisals from authorities. Moreover, these activists have to rely on internet cafés for communication, where intelligence agents attempt to gain access to their information, and security forces harass them. To protect [anonymous organisation] actors against surveillance and harassment, the organisation needs to establish secure digital spaces for communication and information sharing. For this, Track 1 support is requested to cover the following activities:

- Creating, launching, and hosting a secure online platform/website for the organisation,
- Obtaining a fast and secure internet connection service for the office (to prevent surveillance and hacking attempts by intelligence agents),
- Purchasing hardware and software to ensure secure data-handling,
- Training of 10 [anonymous organisation] members on digital security.

Applications for support to address digital security needs have often been very basic, compared to what one might think when hearing the technical term "digital security". In many instances the needs that people have sought to address are of a practical nature and arise from their limited access to resources that are necessary for them to conduct their work in a secure manner. This also comes across in the example from DRC in the textbox above.

The significant number of requests for digital security support can be seen as an expression of a global need to ensure that civic space is protected both offline and online. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to ensure that the digital space is inclusive and accessible to all.

3. LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH IMPLEMENTING CYS

In the following, we will present some of the lessons learned through implementing CYS in the first year of the pilot-phase. We will present challenges that we have encountered, as well as some of the ways in which we have sought to address them.

ENSURING INCLUSIVITY

Securing more flexible funding that is inclusive and within reach to a wider range of civil society actors is imperative to ensuring sustainable change. What we have been able to observe throughout this first year of implementing CYS is a great need for support among civil society actors, who do not operate on the basis of a bureaucratised system, and who thus have previously experienced funding options as inaccessible to them. Reaching new civil society actors who are to varying degrees excluded from funding due to bureaucratic barriers, such as stringent application and reporting requirements, has proven to be a key contribution of CYS.

A key learning point for us during the first year of the pilot-phase with CYS has been to understand and adjust to the significance of operating on the basis of local needs and challenges encountered by different types of civil society actors to make sure that our mechanism accommodates experienced needs on the ground. We have also learned that this effort to understand the unique situations of individual activists on the ground is imperative to ensuring the right to support and protection for all civil society actors who mobilise to defend human rights and democracy. It is not unusual that we will receive an application that does not provide all the information that is needed to approve the request. Rather than rejecting such an application, CYS staff has reached out to the applicant and the Danish partner organisation to understand the situation of the applicant better and assemble the information that is necessary for us to process the application.

The applications that we have received throughout this first year of implementing CYS have been vastly different

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

“CYS has a good understanding of the local context and culture, and staff are willing to listen and learn where the context is new and adjust accordingly.”

in character. Although there have been clear indications of trends in the types of crack-downs that people are exposed to, as it comes across in the above break-down of CYS support, the ways in which people convey their situations and work are vastly different. Beyond bureaucratic barriers, this gives us an insight into another significant aspect of why some civil society actors have a harder time attaining support for their work.

In assessing applications submitted to CYS, it has been clear that cases are presented and framed in vastly different ways depending on what type of civil society actor the applicant is and where in the world they are situated. Differences in the use of language and cultural particularities manifested in the framing of cases has presented challenges in our processing of applications. CYS is shaped in a Danish context and it is facilitated by Danish staff. This is not insignificant as it unavoidably shapes our expectations of what an application should entail and how it should be phrased. This is a realisation that is an integral first step towards establishing funding modalities that are accessible to an inclusive civil society. Reaching civil society actors through CYS who have a harder time accessing funds has been a key ambition for us. For this reason, we have made great efforts to ensure thorough communication with applicants in order to understand their situations and needs and provide support in accordance.

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

“ [There has been] rapid response in terms of very quick response to email requests and quick transfer of funds and approval mechanisms, [as well as] flexibility and contextual understanding, great, polite and encouraging communication, and good understanding for security and use of secure communication channels”

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

“CYS is easier to access for Danish CSOs and their partners compared to international rapid response mechanisms. International rapid response mechanisms are often difficult for Danish organisations' partners to access and often do not result in support – CYS is more flexible and better at meeting the needs of our partners.”



It requires a flexibility in the design of a mechanism to be able to adjust and keep adjusting to accommodate different types of applicants. CYS' ability to do so is one of the main strengths of the mechanism.

REACHING BEYOND EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout the first year of implementing CYS we have been able to observe a great need for support among civil society actors, who do not operate on the basis of a bureaucratised system, and who thus have previously experienced challenges in accessing funding. This has been made clear by the number of applications we have received from activists, civil society groups, and intersectional human rights defenders who have been unable to attain funding through other modalities. Reaching new civil society actors who experience being excluded from many other funding options due to bureaucratic hurdles,

stringent applicant requirements, or other barriers has proven to be a key contribution of CYS. However, it has not been without challenges along the way.

Our ambition of reaching new civil society actors has particularly been challenging to achieve due to our model of verification which is dependent on GF's member organisations being able to approve applicants on the basis of existing partnerships with the applicant. This excludes applicants who do not have established partnerships with a Danish CSO or Embassy. The verification model of CYS is what enables us to respond quickly to requests for support. It is also a significant factor in our ability to operate on a trust-based approach, as our member organisations already have established relationships with the applicants. In this way the verification model is strong and has worked very well setting CYS apart from other rapid response mechanisms. The success and effectiveness of the CYS verification model has also been noted by GF's member organisations, as seen in the textboxes below.

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

“ Applications were very swiftly assessed. This was definitely faster than other emergency mechanisms we know of.”

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

“ CYS has worked very well and in a fast, flexible, and non-bureaucratic way. The funds were made easily available.”

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

“ The speed of the grant mechanism from application to grant payment was very high. The application process is simple and effective.”

In spite of the great success of the verification model, the excluding by-product of the verification model has been important to us to address.

During 2021, we received applications from many different organisations within the geographical scope of the mechanism. Some applied for support to address needs within their own organisations and interestingly some submitted applications on behalf of local activists and human rights defenders working independently in their environments. These independent civil society actors were unable to apply for themselves for a variety of reasons. A common reason was, that they were unable to demonstrate a formal direct partnership with a Danish CSO or embassy, because they did not operate as a registered NGO. This made us aware of the potential to reach individual civil society actors, who typically have a hard time accessing funds, by enabling local partner organisations to Danish CSO's to act as basket funds directly anchored within a local context.

Building partnerships with international allies is typically not a prime focus of independent civil society actors, as their focus is locally anchored and day-to-day survival is not a given, thereby tying their attention to emergent issues on-the-ground. To ensure that these actors were not left outside the reach of support options, due to the fact that they did not conform to larger and bureaucratic donor standards, CYS staff decided to ally up with trusted local partner organisations of Danish CSO's. Using local partner organisations as on-the-ground basket funds for channeling grants to independent civil society actors became a model that we employed in several locations throughout the first year of implementing CYS.

There are several advantages to employing this model. Firstly, CYS broadens its reach beyond existing formal Danish partnerships, thereby enhancing international alliance building and ensuring that the barrier of bureaucratic demands it lessened. Secondly, delegating funds to organisations who operate on the ground allows for a response that is quicker than any foreign based funding modality would be able to accommodate. This is crucial as the situations that have been supported in this manner have often been for actors in severely emergent life or death situations. Lastly, anchoring funds in local contexts encourages local leadership and self-determination, thereby heightening the possibility of sustainable change.

Facilitating flexible support for a diverse range of civil society actors in this manner also presents challenges. For one, it is a time-consuming task to build relationships of trust with applicants – something that is essential to the facilitation of flexible support. Significantly, it also requires us to make efforts to understand and adjust to local circumstances. This is a task where CYS staff has been dependent on our member organisations to help us navigate within different local environments. A key attention point for us has been to ensure that our support does not negatively

impact local power dynamics by channeling a disproportionate amount of funds into one interest group within a community. To avoid this, we have chosen to distribute CYS funds broadly amongst partner organisations who will act as local basket Funds. This contributes to ensuring that CYS support reaches a diverse range of civil society actors.

STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES – UGANDA:

Following the 2021 elections in Uganda, sex worker rights activists experienced increasing levels of attacks and harassment from police officers and hostile members of the public. Activists suffered violent arrests and physical and psychological abuse, which has left many with permanent injuries and have forced some to quit their activism altogether. The applicant, a local CSO that fights for the rights of sex workers, reported similar hostility towards their staff, one of whom had been attacked and murdered while at her place of work. To avoid similar fates for other activists, CYS funding was provided to cover emergency medical support, evacuation support, and psychosocial support to sex worker rights activists faced with attacks and threats to enable the applicant CSO to respond quickly in acute situations and thereby save lives.

SUPPORTING LOCAL CHANGEMAKERS IN TURBULENT TIMES

The eruption of the military coup in Myanmar in February 2021 brought with it the first major test of CYS' abilities to contribute with support during turbulent processes of change. The CYS model proved to be strong and as indicated above, we were able to support civil society actors in Myanmar in a variety of ways, strengthening local efforts for democratic change and human rights. However, supporting changemakers who are operating in a context undergoing chaotic change comes with challenges. In Myanmar, it proved a practical challenge to ensure that applicants received the allocated funds from CYS. Following the coup, the Junta took over control of the banks, which naturally made it impossible for us to make direct bank transfers to recipients. This meant that we had to come up with alternative ways of making sure that the needed support reached our colleagues on the ground.

To understand the viable transfer options specific to Myanmar, we had to consult with colleagues from GF's member organisations, as well as civil society organisations in Myanmar and Thailand. In the case of Myanmar, we learned that the safest way to ensure that CYS funds made their way to its recipients was to channel the funds through colleagues in Thailand. This meant that we had to identify

trusted civil society allies in Thailand, who would agree to receive the funds on behalf of their colleagues in Myanmar to then physically carry the funds across the border and deliver them to their final destination.

Identifying alternative methods of money transfer, such as this one, requires time and effort from funding facilitators. Both the task of identifying viable alternative options of transfer, in situations where standard methods are impossible, and the task of understanding and implementing systems of exchange that lie outside of our standard modes of operation also require flexibility in the framework of funding modalities.

There is no doubt that CYS has had life preserving impacts in Myanmar and contributed to alliance building and impactful initiatives carried out by Myanmar's civil society. There is also no doubt that the support that has been channeled into Myanmar through CYS has only been possible because the framework of this mechanism allows CYS staff to be creative and adjust the mechanisms modes of operation according to context specific situations. Due to the longer processing time, extensive application processes as well as set rules and regulations of many other funding options it would not have been possible for many other donors to support civilian led initiatives for democratic change in Myanmar, in the way that CYS has been able to. The significance of ensuring flexible funding modalities that are able to operate outside of the standard methods of transfer comes across in the reports from GF's member organisations and CYS applicants presented in the textboxes below.

VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINES:

“ We appreciate your support and your help with transferring the funding to the HRDs. Thank you for understanding Myanmar's situation and your flexibility for this.”

- Human Rights Defender in Myanmar

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

“ The flexibility of the grant provider with regards to alternative transfer methods in crisis situations was key to making this work for us”.

The significance of flexibility in funding modalities reaches far beyond the need to be able to operate through alternative methods of transfer. For example, there has been a widespread tendency that applicants have needed to diverge from their original plans, presented in their applications, due to unforeseen changes to their situations. It is imperative to ensure flexible funding options that allows applicants to continuously apply changes to their planned activities, as the conditions under which they operate are constantly changing, often requiring constant re-evaluation of activities and implementation. CYS has approached all agreements with applicants on the basis of this understanding. Our decision to permit re-allocations of funds, has meant that we have not had to recall any of our allocated funds, as applicants have been able to re-distribute funds to other relevant activities, if conditions have meant that they have been unable to apply the funds in the intended ways. GF has developed a set of internal guidelines to ensure consistency in how this flexibility is applied. This approach is based on the following considerations:

- The acute nature of the situation that faces most Track 1 Grantees at the time of application makes it difficult for them to accurately calculate their budget and foresee their expenses. Thus, CYS-budget estimates are often characterised by some degree of uncertainty.
- The short-term grants provided by CYS most often only mitigates an immediate emergency situation. Grantees will most often still be in a fragile situation after the emergency grant has expired and being able to use remaining funding to maintain their situation may improve their situation onwards.
- Grantees are often still living in uncertainty and going to a bank to transfer remaining funds might expose them to further surveillance and risk.
- Allowing Grantees to spend remaining funds on relevant costs, as opposed to international bank transfer fees, increases the percentage of the overall funds made directly available to Grantees.

VOICES FROM DANISH PARTNERS:

“ Great flexibility, e.g., extension of a grant and reallocation of funds when something was unable to be done as planned”.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A strong democracy cannot exist without an active, diverse and independent civil society to keep power in check, represent the voices of society, and humanise political issues – particularly, in a world where polarisation, inequality, authoritarianism and conflict is on the rise. Democracy is built from the ground up and, equally importantly, democracy is built in different ways depending on the context. To work towards enhancing sustainable human rights-based democratic change through Danish foreign development aid, it is therefore imperative to ensure flexible funding options that are inclusive and within reach to a wide range of civil society actors working locally for human rights and democratic change. This is something the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs recognises, and it comes across clearly in the Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation “The World We Share”,⁹ when they write:

“We will maintain strong and targeted support for defenders of democracy who are subject to harassment and attack – both online and physically. These include human rights advocates, journalists, trade union representatives, faith-based actors, environmental activists, etc.”

Through the first year of implementing CYS, the mechanism has proven incredibly effective in securing rapid and flexible support for a large and diverse group of civil society actors within the current geographical scope of the mechanism. Based on our experiences facilitating support through CYS, we will conclude this analysis by presenting three recommendations for further development of flexible funding mechanisms.

RECOMMENDATION 1: ENSURE LOCALLY ANCHORED FLEXIBLE FUNDS

Throughout the first year of the pilot-phase of CYS, we have allocated funds to trusted local partner organisations who have then acted as local basket funds, channeling funds to activists and human rights defenders in their communities. Anchoring funds in local contexts enforces local ownership and broadens the reach of Danish funds. In addition, it enables immediate responses, as the funds are already in the country and ensures a safer deliverance of the funds, as the basket organisations have a greater

understanding of the local context. Lastly, by anchoring funds in local baskets, we have limited costs for international bank transfers and administration, as we have sent larger grants in one transfer.

RECOMMENDATION 2: BROADEN GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE OF FLEXIBLE FUNDING MECHANISMS TO INCLUDE ALL ODA RECIPIENT COUNTRIES

To support local initiatives for democratic change it is crucial that we are able to support local civil societies when momentum for change arises. This is unpredictable and our funding mechanisms must therefore be able to accommodate needs whenever and wherever they arise. We therefore recommend that flexible funding is made available for civil society actors in all ODA recipient countries, when transformative situations occur (e.g., civilian mass mobilisation, revolution, coups, periods of political transition, or war). In Myanmar, CYS has been able to support agents of democratic change effectively throughout 2021. Making this type of support more widely available would be beneficial to Danish international efforts for democracy and human rights.

RECOMMENDATION 3: MAKE CORE FUNDING AVAILABLE THROUGH FLEXIBLE FUNDING MECHANISMS

CYS has been able to accommodate almost all requests we have received for support throughout 2021. The ones we have had to reject have almost all been of the same nature: they have been requests for funding for organisational development in terms of capacity building, staff costs, and office equipment and facilities. This underlines the issue that while funding is becoming more accessible to a wider scope of civil society actors globally, many who operate outside the Western norms of bureaucratic standards still have very limited access to core funding. Making this type of funds more widely available is a crucial step in enabling a more diverse and equal civil society to work together towards common goals.

⁹) file:///C:/Users/anr/Downloads/Denmarks-Strategy-for-Development-Cooperation_2021.pdf

Claim Your **SPACE**

RAPID RESPONSE FUND



Published by: Global Fokus in April 2022

Graphics and layout: Maja Wesnæs

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GLOBAL FOCUS

Global Focus is a platform of Danish development, environmental and humanitarian non-governmental organizations. Our aim is to strengthen and promote a diverse civil society and their capacity to promote a more just and sustainable world.

CLAIM YOUR SPACE #2

Post- Pilot Edition 2023-2025

CYS Administrative Guidelines (*Updated September 2022*)

Below is a description of the administrative guidelines for the two tracks under CYS#2. These are based on the model developed for the pilot-phase with few adjustments.

Tracks and application criteria

Track 1: Emergency assistance funds to individuals and groups under threat

Criteria

An individual or group must have experienced threats, attacks, extra bureaucratic hurdles, legal barriers, defamation, harassment, stigmatization, discrimination, exclusion, marginalization, displacement etc. due to their work.

Provision of emergency assistance funds: provided to individuals, communities, or groups under threat or intimidation

Concretely, the following criteria must be met:

- Applicants can be any current or former local civil society actor (organization, movement, group of activists) or individuals who is or has been either:
 - o Collaborating with a Danish CSO or similar or
 - o Funded by the Danish MFA, including by embassies
- The restrictions to civic space must be posed against people or organisations located in countries included on the list of eligible countries referenced in the Development Engagement Document between Global Focus and the MFA stipulating the terms of the CYS programme.
- Applicants must demonstrate the concrete discrimination, marginalisation, exclusion, displacement, restrictions and threats/attacks against the individual, community, group or organisation.
 - This can be shown in whatever form possible such as news articles, testimonies, reports, confirmation from other organisations or other reliable sources of verification for follow-up.
- The safety measures needed to mitigate the threat, intimidation, displacement or past attack must be outlined and it must be explained why these emergency measures are needed and how they will benefit from them concretely.
- In case of any individuals applying for this support, a support letter demonstrating their works from a CSO which receives Danish aid can be submitted along with the application and other relevant documents as supporting documentation.
- The amount needed for the activities must be clearly outlined and presented in a line-item budget showing the individual costs. The grants are expected to be in the range of DKK 30.000-40.000 but amounts above can be granted if necessary, especially for larger groups of applicants, where a larger grant for several individuals would result in greater impact and value for money.

- The timeframe for the assistance should strive to not exceed one year unless certain circumstances demand it such as a court case or other processes exceeding one year. However, all activities must be completed by the end of the grant agreement between Global Focus and the MFA.

The following will not be supported:

- Organisations that have received funding from another donor to cover the same activities to be covered by this grant.
- Armed security guards.
- Purchase of vehicles or other large-scale equipment.
- Non-civil society actors such as national governments, political parties, public authorities or bodies, or private businesses.
- Actors listed on any official UN or EU sanctions list, which is continuously updated.
- Actors in sanctioned jurisdictions subject to general restrictions on financial transactions due to official UN or EU sanctions – however, following an obtainment of the relevant prior licenses/exemptions such actors can be supported.
- Actors with connections to individuals, entities or organizations that are listed on EU and UN sanctions lists
- The grant must not amount to more than 50% of the annual income of the receiving organization.
- The proposed grant does not relate to the funding of commercial services, investment or other commercial activities

Suggested activities

The grant could cover activities such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Ensure physical and mental protection such as through safety alarms or unarmed security personnel
- Rehabilitation support
- Medical treatment following attack or torture
- Psycho-social support for individuals and their families facing trauma
- Rest and recreation in safe space
- Temporary relocation of individuals at eminent risk of attack, torture, displacement, kidnapping, arrest or killing
 - In-country relocation if possible, otherwise to another country as can be arranged by the civil society organization. Neighborhood countries are preferred if possible. Global Focus cannot assist with obtaining visas for applicants, and the Danish government is not obliged to assist nor host country relocation.
- IT/digital security related to hardware and software
 - E.g. handling of phones and laptops, software, passwords, encryption, safe communication, web hosts, servers
- Information security - storage and handling of information, both digitally and physically
 - E.g. how information is classified and handled
- Legal fees

- Legal fees in connection to case against individual, group or organization
 - Legal fees to release an individual from prison
 - Legal fees to address other legal barriers to continuing the work
- Community actions increasing safety for those at risk
- Support for families of imprisoned human rights defenders
- Replacement of materials stolen outlined in police report or other proof for verification such as CCTV etc.
- Location change of office
- Safe meeting spaces
- Bail
- Other relevant activities identified by the applicant

Application form

The application format is available on an encrypted platform and asks the applicant to complete the following sections:

- Contact details of the applicant,
 - must include full name, organisation, address of organisation, phone number and email, and the name of the person accountable from the organisation or customary institution. If applicable, also include links to social media profiles.
- What security risks are you facing?
 - Please include details of the most recent security incidents that have led you to apply for this grant
- What do you want to do and how would the proposed grant make a difference to your security and reduce the risks you face?
- What results do you expect? Is there a way to measure whether it has made a difference?
 - this will be what we expect to be covered in your report on the grant in addition to original receipts for purchases
- Give a precise breakdown of costs for each requested item / measure.
- Give a concise outline of your group/organisation to include its aims, previous activities, membership, organisational structure, financial structure, work with Danish organisations or Danish embassies.
- In order for us to assess this application, please give contact details (name, organisation, phone, email) for at least one reference in the Danish partner organisation or embassy who knows your work.
- Please fill out this risk assessment template:

RISK CATEGORIES	RISKS IDENTIFIED	RISK MANAGEMENT
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Contextual risks	<i>What risks exist in the country of the activity?</i>	<i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i>
Community risks	<i>What risks exists to the community of the activity?</i>	<i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i>
Individual risks	<i>Could these activities increase the risks faced by the individual defender?</i>	<i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i>

Note to applicants:

- You are welcome to answer the above questions in any language.
- You are welcome to make your application by video or audio if sending documents will put you in danger.
- You are welcome to submit application through a credible second person or organisation as an option
- After submitting your application, a Global Focus staff member or your designated organisation will contact you. This will be in collaboration with the Danish organisation in case of language issues or potentially a translator if the Danish partner doesn't have the language skills. Please ensure that the method of contact you are providing is secure and that it is OK to be contacted in that way to discuss the application further.
 - You are welcome to communicate with us over a secure application, such as Signal or Wire.
 - If an encrypted app is not applicable or you feel that contact with Global Focus may put you at great risk, we suggest that at minimum you use a secure computer, safe internet connection and open a separate, new email account and provide this address in the application instead.
 - For further information see: Keep your online communication private <https://securityinabox.org/en/guide/secure-communication/> and Communicating with Others <https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/communicating-others> .

Success criteria and risk management

For track 1 to be successful, Danish CSOs must actively communicate to their partners globally that the mechanism exists. They must also be of support to identify those particularly in need and in some situations submit applications for or in collaboration with partners. In this communication with partners, Danish CSOs must be particularly mindful of the security needs of the partners through engaging in active dialogue about how to keep the partner most safe. The support mechanism must run on principles such as *duty to protect* meaning that grantees will not be left behind after project end without supporting them in finding ways forward.

Track 2: Grants to locally-led activities to collectively counter restrictions to civic space

Criteria

Restrictions to freedoms of association, assembly or expression (civic space) have occurred or seem likely to occur and will be addressed collectively through activities by more than one thematic civil society group. The restrictions to civic space include attacks and other violations against human rights defenders (see definition of human rights defenders below).

Countering civic space restrictions collectively: Local civil society groups address a situation of closing civic space that is occurring or about to occur.

Concretely, the following criteria must be met:

- Applicants can be any current or former local civil society actor (organization, movement, group of activists) who is or has been either:
 - o Collaborating with a Danish CSO or similar or
 - o Funded by the Danish MFA, including by embassies
- The restrictions to civic space must be posed against people or organisations located in countries included on the list of eligible countries referenced in the Development Engagement Document between Global Focus and the MFA stipulating the terms of the CYS programme.
- *If restrictions have occurred:* Restrictions that have occurred are demonstrated through news articles or other reliable sources of verification (such as human rights organisations' reports) for follow up
- *If restrictions seem likely to occur:* It is demonstrated why it seems likely that restrictions will occur such as through politicians speaking about their wish or plans to do so, increase in attacks at local level, legislation proposed in parliament, increase in bureaucratic hurdles for CSOs etc.
- The civic space situation will be addressed collectively through activities by more than one thematic civil society group with the aim to create sustainable responses
- One thematic civil society group can apply by themselves but either request contacts to other thematic groups or have demonstrated plans to collaborate with other groups
 - GF and the Danish CSO partner will aim to provide the applicant with a list of organisations that partner with Danish CSOs in country who the applicant can decide to collaborate with in case they don't already have contacts to one or more groups. GF will coordinate efforts among Danish CSOs to mobilise partners in the country to take part
- The amount needed for the activities must be clearly outlined in a budget showing the individual costs. It is expected that most grants will be around DKK 100.000-200.000. Co-financing is encouraged where possible.
- The timeframe for the assistance should strive to not exceed 12-18 months unless certain circumstances demand it. However, all activities must be completed by the end of the grant agreement between Global Focus and the MFA.

The following will not be supported:

- International organisations (this doesn't include local and regional chapters, groups or affiliates of international alliances and organisations if the activity is locally driven).

- Organisations that have received funding from another donor to cover the same activities to be covered by this grant. Co-funding is allowed provided it is clearly outlined which activities are covered by which donor.
- Projects that focus on other issues than the protection of civic space
- Purchase of vehicles or other large-scale equipment
- Non-civil society actors such as national governments, political parties, public authorities or bodies, or private businesses
- Actors on any official UN or EU sanctions, which is continuously updated
- Actors in sanctioned jurisdictions subject to general restrictions on financial transactions due to official UN or EU sanctions – however, following an obtainment of the relevant prior licenses/exemptions such actors can be supported.
- Actors with connections to individuals, entities or organizations that are listed on EU and UN sanctions lists
- The grant mustn't amount to more than 50% of the annual income of the receiving organization
- The proposed grant does not relate to the funding of commercial services, investment or other commercial activities

Suggested Activities

The grant could cover activities such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Alliance building and strengthening among civil society in country to address the situation with an aim of cross-thematic involvement for impact. Outreach to other stakeholders for **alliance building** should take place (unless an alliance already exists) and could happen in the following ways:
 - The grantee reaches out to other CSOs and groups working across different thematic areas to ensure stronger alliance building, e.g. through regular meetings, advocacy efforts, and joint action
 - Local civil society reaches out to other stakeholders if relevant such as to the private sector, academia, or religious groups.
 - Coordination with other international efforts, including UN mechanisms on the ground is encouraged and supported by Danish CSOs.
 - Danish CSOs can provide contacts to their partners to ensure involvement across thematic areas.
 - Danish actors can be invited to take part in the activities by the applicant to provide their expertise if seen as beneficial. This could be with a purpose of mobilising broad international support, joint international advocacy etc.
 - Danish actors may also play a proactive role in these efforts, e.g. by facilitating initial meetings with partners, linking local actors, and offering best practices and lessons from elsewhere.
- A variety of activities can be supported depending on what local actors deem most relevant in the specific context. They can include but are not limited to:
 - Advocacy and campaigns against restrictive laws
 - Documentation
 - Digital security
 - Roundtable dialogues
 - Early warning systems
 - Self-protection trainings

- Expert advice
 - Eg. empower CSOs to analyse risks and design responsive strategies. Global Focus and the Danish CSO partner will assist to identify relevant experts and trainers globally
- Engagement with other actors than civil society such as NHRIs, religious groups, local authorities, private sector etc. if relevant
- General support and capacity building of local human rights defenders
 - Individuals could be trained to provide this support in their local community
- Conflict resolution
- Legal reform efforts
- Legal litigation including public interest litigation
- Legal researches or studies
- Other relevant activities identified by the applicant

Application form

- Contact details of the applicant,
 - must include full name of the organisation, address of organisation, phone number and email, and the name of the person accountable from the organisation.
- What restrictions to freedoms of assembly, association and/or expression are you facing?
 - Please include details of the most recent incidents that have led you to apply for this grant
- What activities you want to do?
- Do you need expert advice to better carry out some of the activities?
- How would the proposed grant make a difference to the civic space situation and reduce the risks faced by civil society?
- Who will be part of the alliance across thematic civil society groups and stakeholders you will create (or have created) and who will take the lead?
- Please provide a timeframe of the activities
- What results do you expect? Is there a way to measure whether it has made a difference?
 - this will be what we expect to be covered in your report on the grant in addition to original receipts for purchases
- Give a precise breakdown of costs for each requested item / measure.
- Give a concise outline of your group/organisation to include its aims, previous activities, membership, organisational structure, financial structure, work with Danish organisation.
- In order for us to assess this application, please give contact details (name, organisation, phone, email) for at least one reference in the Danish partner organisation who knows your work.
- Please fill out this risk assessment template:

RISK CATEGORIES	RISKS IDENTIFIED	RISK MANAGEMENT
Contextual risks	<i>What risks exist in the location of the activity?</i>	<i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i>
Programmatic risks	<i>What risks exists because of the setup of the organisation or partners involved?</i>	<i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i>
Institutional risks	<i>Could these activities increase the risks faced by the organisation, its staff or stakeholders?</i>	<i>How will you mitigate these risks?</i>

Note to applicants:

- You are welcome to answer the above questions in any language.
- You are welcome to make your application by video or audio if sending documents will put you in danger.
- After submitting your application, a Global Focus staff member will contact you. Please ensure that the method of contact you are providing is secure and that it is OK to be contacted in that way to discuss the application further.
 - You are welcome to communicate with us over a secure application, such as Signal or Wire.
 - If an encrypted app is not applicable or you feel that contact with Global Focus may put you at great risk, we suggest that at minimum you use a secure computer, safe internet connection and open a separate, new email account and provide this address in the application instead.
 - For further information see: Keep your online communication private <https://securityinabox.org/en/guide/secure-communication/> and Communicating with Others <https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/communicating-others>.

Procedure for Processing Applications and for Vetting and Assessing applicants

Pre-application: Information sharing and proactive work

Danish CSOs share information about the CYS with their partners globally. They might even reach out to a few to suggest that they apply if they know that they are in need of rapid response funds. For Track-2, it is essential that proactive work has been made with partners to ensure their interest in the specific setup of alliance building

Applying

An application form must be completed by the applicant and in some cases in collaboration with Danish CSO partner when the applicant would be in danger or otherwise does not have access to completing the document. Call for applications is open until the initial pool of

funds is exhausted in the first year and the selection process will not only look at first come first served but in case of overload also consider who is most in need. Subsequent allocations are to be adjusted in accordance with need.

- Applications can be submitted in any language and they can be done by video and audio.
- Concrete resources for digital security in connection with application forms are suggested in the application form format.
- Application forms must be sent to a dedicated email address or telephone number which is administered by Global Focus

Application Scoring

Upon receipt, two Global Focus staff members score each application based on the categories listed in the Track-1 and Track-2 scorecards. If a staff member knows an applicant personally or has previous relations with an applicant or their organization, the staff member must recuse him/herself to avoid a conflict of interest, and another GF staff member will be asked to perform the second scoring of the application instead.

Vetting

Global Focus will be vetting the applicant in collaboration with its member organization (or a member organization of CISU). There will be a Google search of the organization's (incl. members of the board and management) and individual staff names. They will be run through the OFAC and EU sanctions lists and a screenshot will be taken for internal keeping. Actors in sanctioned jurisdictions subject to general restrictions on financial transactions due to official sanctions, can be supported following an obtainment of the relevant prior licenses/exemptions.

A conversation between the applicant and a Global Focus staff member will happen (if possible security wise), potentially together with the Danish CSO, to ensure that all the needs and requests of the applicant have been understood correctly. Additional activities or needs might be added if necessary.

Approval Process

All grants under both tracks must be approved by the CYS Group. The CYS Group is responsible for approving grants already deemed eligible and vetted by GF staff in collaboration with the Danish CSO partner of the applicant. The CYS Group will receive the request for approval via encrypted messaging app and must respond only if they disagree with the decision to support the applicant. The CYS Group consists of six rotating members who can delegate responsibility to each other and/or an alternate from their own or an alternative organisation. Members will be part of the CYS Group for one year.

Global Focus staff members prepare an approval request to The CYS Group giving them the opportunity to answer within 24 hours (track 1) and 72 hours (track 2) indicating that they

disagree with the decision to support the applicant. If no response has been made from the CYS members, their silence will be taken as approval.

- CYS Group members must always have a person ready to respond to approval requests. The organisation can appoint an alternative representative in cases of vacation and sick leave.
- After an affirmative decision on track 2, information will be sent to a wider group of Danish CSOs giving them the chance to respond to say that their partners in the specific country would be relevant to include.

Agreement

After approval, the applicant is notified and dialogue will be initiated on details that need to be sorted out jointly, such as expert advice needed, alliance building, reach out to international networks etc. if needed. For each grant, Global Focus and the Grantee enter into an agreement, which stipulates the rights and responsibilities of each party. In the same instance, the applicant will receive information about reporting requirements. The reporting requirements are:

- Narrative reporting detailing the activities conducted, how they met the intended goals, impact they had, problems along the way, learnings and reflections on future work needed on the issue.
- Financial reporting detailing the actual expenses held up against the budget. The expenses need to be accompanied with receipts. If in some situations, receipts cannot be not collected and/or provided safely, the receiving organization will sign a sworn statement. If these are not provided, the applicant will be unable to apply for another grant through CYS.

Support Team

The grantee will receive information on who to contact for emergencies or advise during the course of the project. This can be the Danish partner CSO and/or Global Focus. Especially for track 2, the team could consist of several organisations and have the aim to reach out to other stakeholders on the ground that the team has contact with.

Transfer of Funds

The Danish CSO partner will receive the subgrant from Global Focus and is responsible for processing the payment onto the grantee. This is because the Danish CSO already has a relationship established with the partner and the experience of the Danish CSO of how to best transfer funds to the individual grantee. Part of the project amount will be dedicated as a 5% admin fee for the organisation for handling the transfer. This will be in addition to the local partner grant and will not impact the funding for local activities.

For Track-2 grants, the grant will be transferred in two installments; 70% of the amount is transferred upon signature of both parties of the agreement, the remaining 30% will be transferred following a completed progress meeting between Global Focus, The Grantee, and the Danish partner organization, where the Grantee must provide an update on the

progress of the implementation, any encountered challenges and proposed solutions, and any required changes to the workplan and/or budget.

In cases where the member organisation cannot transfer funds or where the grantee is a partner of a Danish embassy, Global Focus will handle the transfer. It is sometimes a problem to get funds into contexts of closed civic space and therefore, Global Focus will gather advice on alternative ways to reach grantees in case their bank account is frozen or receiving the funds put them at too much risk.

Monitoring and evaluation

A quarterly report will be prepared by Global Focus staff for the Board of Directors. It will look at numbers, learnings, and future priorities based on experiences from last quarter. Reports will not include names of recipients due to the sensitivity issues and in very sensitive situations, meta data might be omitted if it can lead to identification. This is also how names and data on recipients are handled by other reputable Rapid Response Mechanisms, such as those managed by Front Line Defenders and Lifeline. Information needed for the accountant to prepare the audit will be provided but must be kept confidential. This can include information from the reporting requirements grantees need to provide. If MFA will ever need to view a particular document to see if the expenses were conducted, this will only be available for them to view at a physical meeting. In especially sensitive cases, the personal and organizational information will be removed from the document at such physical meeting.

Sharing Learning

Global Focus will coordinate development of learning products and/or activities focusing on awareness raising and learning based on the previous year's CYS activities. This may take the form of a written report, a learning event, or similar products and activities. Learning activities will reflect on lessons learned regarding the efficiency and aid effectiveness of international Rapid Response support, and will be available to the public, and results will be disseminated through the communication channels of Global Focus and its members. Learning activities will involve relevant Danish and international CSO-partners to discuss the findings and identify potential avenues for joint action based on any recommendations.

Definitions

Civil society is broadly defined to include CSOs, human rights defenders, social movements, media, faith-based actors, academia, trade unions, as well as community-based groups and organisations. Where Danish partner CSOs have collaborations with informal organisations, these are included as well.

Individuals/human rights defenders are anyone who individually or in association with others promotes and protects human rights. This includes all actors working on issues within a broad human rights issue spectrum, such as environmental rights, gender equality, LGBTI+ rights, indigenous rights, children and youth rights, labour rights, right to thought, conscious and religion, refugee rights etc. We especially acknowledge the multiple layers of restrictions faced by excluded groups and human rights defenders such as children and

youth, refugees, women human rights defenders, LGBTI activists, environmental human rights defenders, indigenous human rights defenders, and human rights defenders from religious minorities.

Annex 1

Budgetmodel for puljeordninger og faglige netværk

Resumé		Budget					
Midler til rådighed fra Udenrigsministeriet		2023		2024		2025	
Ikke disponerede midler overført fra tidligere år							
Bevillinger (tilsagn) fra DANIDA		15.000.000				0	
Renter		0		0		0	
Midler retur fra bevillingshavere		0		0		0	
Total		15.000.000		0		0	
Udgifter (Disponeringer)		2023		2024		2025	
Program- og projekaktiviteter (PPA) - Pulje(r) og netværksaktiviteter		4.662.897	93%	4.662.897	93%	4.662.897	93%
PPA total		4.662.897	93%	4.662.897	93%	4.662.897	93%
Revision		10.000	0%	10.000	0%	10.000	0%
Administration		327.103	7%	327.103	7%	327.103	7%
Total		5.000.000	100%	5.000.000	100%	5.000.000	100%
Specificering af PPA - Omkostningskategorier		Budget					
PPA		2023		2024		2025	
PPA		4.662.897	100%	4.662.897	100%	4.662.897	100%
A1 - Aktivitetsomkostninger		1.544.897	33%	1.544.897	33%	1.544.897	33%
A2 - Overførsler til uafhængige partnere		2.920.000	63%	2.920.000	63%	2.920.000	63%
A3 - Programunderstøttende funktioner		198.000	4%	198.000	4%	198.000	4%
Specificering af PPA - Outcomes		Budget					
PPA		2023		2024		2025	
PPA		4.662.897	100%	4.662.897	100%	4.662.897	100%
Outcome 1 - Emergency assistance funds		2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%
Outcome 2 - Grants to locally led activities		1.014.000	22%	0	0%	0	0%
Outcome 3 - BRT Network		615.397	13%	0	0%	0	0%
Outcome 4 - Annual learning activities		98.500	2%	1.629.397	35%	1.629.397	35%
Compliance data		Budget					
Emne		2023		2024		2025	
Uallokerede midler (inkl. budgetreserve), (maks 5% af bevilling)		0,0%		0,0%		0,0%	
Administration (maks. 7 % af udgifter exkl. administration)		7,0%		7,0%		7,0%	

* I regnskabet kontrolleres at Oplysnisaktiviteter maksimalt udgør 2% af anvendt PPA (dvs. eksklusiv uallokerede midler).

Annex 1.2 Budget - PPA - Outcomes

		BUDGET					
<i>Program- og projektaktiviteter (PPA)</i>		2023		2024		2025	
Puljer og -forvaltning samt fagligt netværksarbejde							
<i>Track 1: Emergency assistance funds incl. Transfer costs</i>		2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%
Outcome 1 - Emergency assistance funds		2.935.000		2.935.000		2.935.000	
<i>Track 2: Grants to locally led activities to collectively counter CS restrictions</i>		1.014.000	22%	1.014.000	22%	1.014.000	22%
Outcome 2 - Grants to locally led activities		1.014.000		1.014.000		1.014.000	
<i>International Coalition Building - The BRT Network</i>		615.397	13%	615.397	13%	615.397	13%
Outcome 3 - BRT Network		615.397		615.397		615.397	
<i>Annual Learning Activities</i>		98.500	2%	98.500	2%	98.500	2%
Outcome 4 - Annual learning activities		98.500		98.500		98.500	
Puljer og -forvaltning samt netværksaktiviteter - total		4.662.897		4.662.897		4.662.897	
-heraf							
Outcome 1 - Emergency assistance funds		2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%
Outcome 2 - Grants to locally led activities		1.014.000	22%				
Outcome 3 - BRT Network		615.397	13%				
Outcome 4 - Annual learning activities		98.500	2%	1.629.397	35%	1.629.397	35%
Total outcome-allokerede program- og projektaktiviteter		4.662.897		4.662.897		4.662.897	
-heraf							
Outcome 1 - Emergency assistance funds		2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%
Outcome 2 - Grants to locally led activities		1.014.000	22%				
Outcome 3 - BRT Network		615.397	13%				
Outcome 4 - Annual learning activities		98.500	2%	1.629.397	35%	1.629.397	35%

Annex 1.3

Budget - PPA - Omkostningskategorier

BUDGET						
Program- og projektaktiviteter (PPA)		2023	2024	2025		
Puljer og -forvaltning samt fagligt netværksarbejde						
<i>Track 1: Emergency assistance funds incl. Transfer costs</i>		2.935.000	63%	2.935.000	63%	2.935.000 63%
A1 - Aktivitetsomkostninger		636.000		636.000		636.000
A2 - Overførsler til uafhængige partnere (bevillingshavere)		2.200.000		2.200.000		2.200.000
A3 - Programunderstøttende funktioner		99.000		99.000		99.000
<i>Track 2: Grants to locally led activities to collectively counter CS restrictions</i>		1.014.000	22%	1.014.000	22%	1.014.000 22%
A1 - Aktivitetsomkostninger		254.400		254.400		254.400
A2 - Overførsler til uafhængige partnere (bevillingshavere)		720.000		720.000		720.000
A3 - Programunderstøttende funktioner		39.600		39.600		39.600
<i>International Coalition Building - The BRT Network</i>		615.397	13%	615.397	13%	615.397 13%
A1 - Aktivitetsomkostninger		565.897		565.897		565.897
A2 - Overførsler til uafhængige partnere (bevillingshavere)						
A3 - Programunderstøttende funktioner		49.500		49.500		49.500
<i>Annual Learning Activities</i>		98.500	2%	98.500	2%	98.500 2%
A1 - Aktivitetsomkostninger		88.600		88.600		88.600
A2 - Overførsler til uafhængige partnere (bevillingshavere)						
A3 - Programunderstøttende funktioner		9.900		9.900		9.900
Puljer og -forvaltning samt netværksaktiviteter - total		4.662.897		4.662.897		4.662.897
<i>-heraf</i>						
A1 - Aktivitetsomkostninger		1.544.897	33%	1.544.897	33%	1.544.897 33%
A2 - Overførsler til uafhængige partnere (bevillingshavere)		2.920.000	63%	2.920.000	63%	2.920.000 63%
A3 - Programunderstøttende funktioner		198.000	4%	198.000	4%	198.000 4%
Total outcome-allokerede program- og projektaktiviteter						
<i>-heraf</i>						
A1 - Aktivitetsomkostninger		1.544.897	33%	1.544.897	33%	1.544.897 33%
A2 - Overførsler til uafhængige partnere		2.920.000	63%	2.920.000	63%	2.920.000 63%
A3 - Programunderstøttende funktioner		198.000	4%	198.000	4%	198.000 4%