

Berlin Civil Society Center

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Entrance to Berlin Civil Society Center

Message from the Founders

2008 was the Berlin Civil Society Center's first year of operation. While our last Annual Report contained a broad range of third-party events which took place at the Center, the 2008 Report focuses on the activities we conducted ourselves. We held three highly successful workshops for Chairs, CEOs and Senior Managers here at the Center. Leaders from 15 of the top 20 international civil society organisations participated in these workshops. We hosted an informal meeting of global CEOs, a meeting of the INGO Accountability Charter signatories and the 2008 conference of International Advocacy NGOs (IANGO). Together with the Humboldt-Viadrina School of Governance, we launched a series of high-level discussions, the "Berlin Governance Talks", the first of which featured the German Finance Minister, Peer Steinbrück. In addition, we supported Amnesty International in reviewing their global governance, the INGO Accountability Charter in creating an Interim Reporting Framework and the Forum for Active Philanthropy in developing their "Working with Civil Society Organisations" publications.

The highlight of the year for the Center was being host to the first ever meeting of global Chairs and CEOs of the leading international civil society organisations. Participants rated the meeting as highly successful and decided to come together once again in March 2009. Another success we are very happy with is the involvement of some of the top consultancy firms in our work: Accenture, Accenture Development Partnerships, Boston Consulting Group and McKinsey provided pro bono inputs for the workshops and advice to the Center. David Christie and The ValueWeb facilitated one of our workshops on a pro bono basis. Amnesty International, Greenpeace, terre des hommes and World Vision supported the Center financially and the ZEIT Foundation covered the costs for one of our workshops.




The Berlin Civil Society Center team (LTR): Julian Zurek, Jessica Sommer, Peter Eigen, Burkhard Gnärig und Jodi Bertog

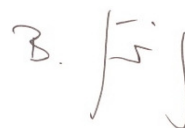
Looking forward to 2009 the Berlin Civil Society Center aims to continue its growth and development. The first indications are excellent: two of our workshops are already fully booked and the number of international civil society organisations supporting the Center has grown from 4 to 7. For 6-8 November 2009, we are planning our most ambitious project yet: the Global Perspectives, a gathering of the top 250 representatives of global civil society organisations and their key stakeholders.

We would like to thank all those who participated in our workshops and other events at the Center, those who provided us with valuable support and those who took an interest in our work. We very much look forward to working with and for you in 2009.

Berlin, 17 February 2009



Peter Eigen



Burkhard Gnärig

The Berlin Civil Society Center supports civil society organisations to:

- devise successful strategies
- pursue good governance
- achieve transparency and accountability and
- strengthen management in all areas of their work.

through **C**onvening, **C**apacity building and **R**esearch

The Center runs workshops for practitioners. As a meeting point of civil society, the Center disseminates information and essential know-how.

The Center offers advice and support on strategy, management and governance. The Center's library is one of the largest civil society libraries in the world.

Research projects aim at delivering results which can be applied to the work of international organisations.

Convening

Vision Works offers Chairs, Board Members and CEOs the opportunity to step out of their daily pressurised positions and enter into a well-prepared process for defining their own visions for the organisations they lead.

Good Governance in Voluntary Organisations

Berlin, 28-29 February 2008

Participants: Amnesty International, Care International, ChildFund Alliance, Civicus, Greenpeace International, terre des hommes International Federation, International Save the Children Alliance, Oxfam International, Plan International, Transparency International, and World Vision International

Support: ZEIT Foundation and Accenture

Globalisation and the rapid growth of global civil society organisations (CSOs) have dramatically increased the challenges of leading these large and complex entities. At the same time, governance structures and processes of most civil society organisations have hardly changed. Global structures do not reflect the new challenges and opportunities and the processes of selection, induction and ongoing support of key post holders in volunteer governance systems rarely meet the requirements of good global governance.

Against this background, 25 global Chairs and CEOs of the leading civil society organisations jointly explored how to strengthen volunteer-based governance in global CSOs. The discussion centred on issues like 'the balance between global and national interests', 'strengthening the performance of global Boards', 'devising a successful global strategy' and 'drawing the line between governance and management'.

Having never met before the group discovered the enormous potential of learning from each other. Participants found the meeting very useful and want to meet again in a year's time.



For the first time ever the global Chairs and CEOs of leading civil society organisations came together

CSO-Academy offers workshops for senior managers on issues such as good governance, effective leadership, strategy development, transparency and accountability, human resources development, finance management and logistics.

Global Talent Development

Berlin, 7-8 April 2008

Participants: Amnesty International, Greenpeace International, Oxfam GB, Plan International, Save the Children US, Transparency International, World Vision International and WWF International.

Support: Boston Consulting Group

Senior positions in civil society organisations are difficult to fill. With the dynamic growth of the sector, many civil society organisations have more than doubled in size over the last few years and, as a consequence, management challenges have become more demanding. Global expectations concerning the professional quality of civil society organisations have increased significantly and efficiency, cost effectiveness, transparency and accountability are crucial requirements for all major civil society organisations. The sector's complex stakeholdership and a fast-changing environment add to the leadership challenges. Meanwhile, salaries, whilst increasing, are not comparable to those paid at corporate level.

Against this background, 10 HR Directors of the largest global civil society organisations explored strategies on how to systematically attract, select, develop and retain high-performing staff. Participants identified three major components of talent development which they addressed in break-out groups and in a plenary discussion:

- Securing Acceptance for Talent Development
- Evaluation & Identification of Talent / Talent Pools
- Retention / Training & Development

Meeting for the first time ever, the HR Directors highly valued the opportunity of a professional exchange. They are meeting again in March 2009 to continue the process of learning from each other.

The best thing I got out of this workshop – participants’ comments:

“Steps to take in establishing a talent development process, pitfalls to avoid and a very practical approach”

“Understanding what other NGOs are doing”

“Challenge and ideas from peers who understand my context; some specific practical ideas to learn from others and apply in my own organisation”

“Being able to benchmark where we are in terms of Best Practice in talent development”

“Networking”

The Digital Futures of Civil Society

8-9 September 2008

Participants: Amnesty International, CARE US, Oxfam International, Oxfam GB, Save the Children US, Save the Children UK, Save the Children Germany, terre des hommes International Federation, Islamic Relief Worldwide, SOS Kinderdorf International, World Vision Germany.

Support: The Value Web, Accenture Development Partnerships

Over the last few years Internet-based communication, advocacy and fundraising have become more and more successful. Partly undertaken by well-established civil society organisations, partly by loosely-connected individuals, and partly as a spontaneous “movement” of people who did not know each other and came together virtually only for one single, timely limited purpose, these activities are significantly different from traditional approaches. Another development is the emergence of Internet-based charities which may eventually deliver more individualised services to donors, more immediate support to their beneficiaries, direct contact between donor and beneficiary and all of this with overheads much lower than those of traditional CSOs.



Break-out groups during the Digital Futures Session at the Berlin Civil Society Center

The best thing I got out of this workshop – participants' comments:

“Shared understanding of current challenges for technology professionals and through the work groups and breakout sessions a chance to discuss these in more detail, building relationships through shared experiences.”

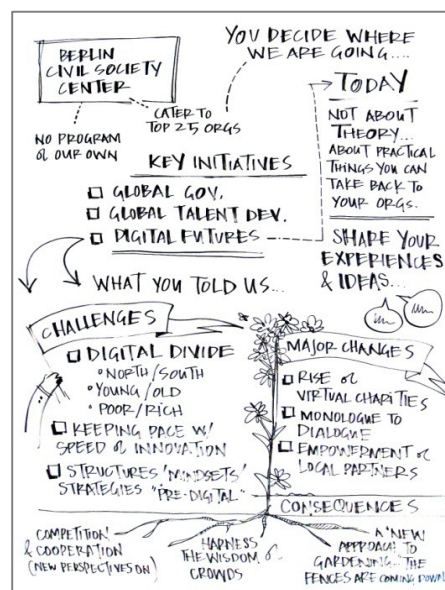
“A sense of NGO ‘community’ our different organisations sitting together to address common issues (not seeing each other as rivals for donor money).”

“Input for our internal decision making process is excellent.”

Against this background, 12 participants from 11 international civil society organisations and 4 corporate partners explored different digital futures for global civil society organisations and identified concrete ways of how they can embrace internet technology to optimise their impact in supporting their beneficiaries.

After scanning the challenges, they broke out into small teams looking at branding and communication, risk management and leadership in uncertain times with the aim of developing a concrete “plan of action” which can inform the development of their organisation’s own internet strategy.

Having met for the first time, the group discovered the enormous potential of learning from each other. Participants found the meeting very useful and would like to meet again.



Introduction facilitated by The ValueWeb

For more information on this WorkSession:

<http://thevalueweb.missinglink.biz/berlin-civil-society-center/civil-society-digital-futures>

Capacity Building

Good Governance offers

- support with reviewing Board and Membership structures and processes
- support with reviewing and agreeing the most appropriate distribution of roles and responsibilities between governance and management
- individual and group coaching to Board members

Amnesty International

was supported in reviewing its international Board Committees in 2007 and 2008. Interviews with Amnesty’s leadership, an analysis of processes and products of the Board Committees and a comparison with the governance structures of other civil society organisations formed the basis for a number of recommendations, all of which were accepted and implemented by the Amnesty International Board.

During 2008 the Berlin Civil Society Center supported Amnesty International with a second project, “Strengthening Democracy”, a review of Amnesty’s global governance with the focus

on strengthening democratic participation and increasing effectiveness. Amnesty's 2009 global members' meeting, the ICM, will discuss the proposed concept.

"I want to thank Burkhard Gnärig for his input to the process. It was extremely helpful to have his interventions."

Peter Pack, Chair, Amnesty International

Transparency and Accountability offers

- support with developing transparent and accountable structures and processes
- support with building internal feed back and evaluation systems
- support with reporting under the INGO Accountability Charter

Accountability Charter

The Berlin Civil Society Center supports the Accountability Charter Board with establishing strategic management of the Charter's development and growth. As a first step, the Center produced an Interim Reporting Framework guiding reporting under the Charter's provisions and setting the strategic framework for activities leading to a formal reporting framework.

Research

Research and Publications offers implementation focussed research and publications with a focus on increasing the know-how not just of individual organisations but of the sector generally.

Forum for Active Philanthropy

was supported in producing the "Working with Civil Society Organisations" series, a number of texts advising major donors how best to cooperate with civil society organisations. A second project for Active Philanthropy will produce the organisation's first sector guide for philanthropists with the topic "Children". This cooperation will continue during 2009.

"The Berlin Civil Society Center is filling a crucial gap in the rapidly growing market of social investment: a place where NGOs and foundations can meet to explore opportunities to work together and a repository of knowledge and best practices from the field, that can help donors to navigate the multitude of projects developed by existing players."

Felicitas von Peter, Managing Partner, Forum for Active Philanthropy

2008 Calendar

On 27-28 February, we hosted a Meeting of **Independent Global NPOs (IGNPO)** at the Berlin Civil Society Center in which the CEOs of Amnesty International, Greenpeace International, Oxfam International, World Vision International and WWF International came together to address common issues for their organisations.

On 28-29 February, we ran a workshop on **Good Governance in Voluntary Organisations**. The global Chairs and CEOs of leading civil society organisations jointly explored how to strengthen volunteer-based governance in global CSOs. Having never met before the group discovered the enormous potential of learning from each other and decided to meet annually at the Center from now on.

On 7-8 April, we held a workshop on **Global Talent Development**. The HR Directors of the largest global civil society organisations explored strategies on how to systematically attract, select, develop and retain high-performing staff. Meeting for the first time ever, the HR Directors valued the opportunity for a first professional exchange and decided to meet again to continue the process of learning from each other.

On 1-2 June, we facilitated the **INGO Accountability Charter Signatories Meeting** that successfully elected a Board.

From 1 to 3 June, we hosted the **International Advocacy NGO Meeting (IANGO)**. Representatives of many of the leading civil society organisations came together in order to address the common challenges for advocacy organisations, focusing especially on NGO effectiveness and governance issues.



Jeremy Hobbs, L. David Brown and Srilatha Batiwlala during the IANGO Meeting at the Berlin Civil Society Center

On 17 July, we organised a meeting with the **Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden** discussing opportunities for the for-profit sector to initiate and conduct a dialogue and collaboration with science and society.

On 8-9 September, we held a workshop on **The Digital Futures of Civil Society**. The Chief Information Officers of leading civil society organisations explored different digital futures for global civil society organisations and identified concrete ways of how they can embrace internet technology to optimise their impact in supporting their beneficiaries.

On 8 October, we held a meeting in Amsterdam preparing the launch of a **Board of Directors** for the Berlin Civil Society Center.

On 8-9 October, we supported a meeting of **Independent Global Non-Profit Organisations (IGNPO)** in Amsterdam. Leading CEOs came together to discuss current issues, including: climate change, benchmarking, a networked world and claiming access to the global stage.

On 29 October, in cooperation with the Humboldt-Viadrina School of Governance, we organised the first of the **Berlin Governance Talks**. This series of events brings together representatives

from government, business and from civil society organisations to discuss possible forms of good global governance.

Prospects

On 6-8 November 2009, we will run the **Global Perspectives**, which brings together 250 leaders from (inter-)national civil society organisations, UN organisations, government and business. In a highly interactive and participatory process, we will jointly address the main challenges and opportunities of the non-profit sector. At the request of the participants from our three major workshops in 2008, we are running follow-up workshops in 2009 on:

Global Crisis and Global Governance: the workshop brings together Chairs and CEOs of major civil society organisations to discuss strategies on how to strengthen global governance in the face of the financial/economic crisis.

Towards a Consistent Global HR Policy: a group of global HR Directors comes together to develop strategies on how to systematically set up a global HR Policy.

The Digital Futures of Civil Society II: the workshop brings together IT experts and civil society organisations, exploring how to optimise the use of the Internet.

In cooperation with the Dräger Foundation, we convene representatives from government, business and civil society organisations to jointly explore **Mutual Accountability**.

Finance and Staff: In order to fully realise its potential and to achieve sustainability, the Center will strengthen its finance basis and employ a small number of professional salaried staff in 2009.

Income and Expenditure in 2008

All figures in Euro – figures rounded (this may lead to minor inconsistencies)

INCOME	98.561
Grants	4.494
Workshop Income	50.607
Core Support	34.197
Income from Services	7.423
Other Income	1.840
EXPENDITURE	104.566
Seminars	20.126
Personnel	58.612
Secretariat Infrastructure	24.301
Other Expenses	1.528
Deficit	- 6.005