



Working Together For A Better World

CISUs strategy 2022-25

Om CISU's strategy:

- The strategy is **based on** CISU's statutes, vision and mission.
- The strategy is the **foundation** for CISU's work in 2022-2025.
- The strategy is a tool to help **develop and measure the results** of work by CISU, grant holders and their partners.
- The strategy is for use in CISU's **dialogue** with Danish and international cooperation partners.

About CISU

CISU - Civil Society in Development is an association of approximately 270 civil society organisations in Denmark that are all actively engaged with international development work to some degree.

CISU's member organisations are the basis of the association and determine the direction of CISU's work. CISU's member organisations possess a high level of expertise in the form of knowledge and many years of experience with development work throughout the world and within all UN Sustainable Development Goals.

CISU's member organisations are diverse and range from traditional development organisations, to religious, diaspora and sector organisations, trade unions, political parties, boy and girl scout organisations and much more. CISU's member organisations come in many different sizes and are represented in all regions of Denmark.

CISU's role as a platform for networking, exchanging experience and capacity building for its member organisations is the essence of CISU's mission and vision. CISU works to provide its member organisations with the best possible conditions to collaborate with partners across the globe to improve the lives of people living in adverse circumstances.

CISU's values underpin our day-to-day work. They express CISU's worldview and the way in which we want to collaborate and engage in dialogue with member organisations and cooperation partners.

CISU's values

● Diversity

We will ensure a wide array of approaches to civil society work because different methodologies and types of stakeholders are the hallmark of a thriving civil society.

● Transparency

We will strive for transparency in all our actions and decision-making.

● Accountability

We will take responsibility for our own actions and decisions, and we expect others to do the same.

● Participation

We will offer everyone an equal opportunity to participate, because everyone has something valuable to contribute.

● Respect

We will work with people on their own terms, supporting them in pursuing their own goals. We welcome challenges to our viewpoints and opinions, always learning along the way.

● Cooperation

We cooperate with a wide range of stakeholders, because this is an inspiring, necessary and constructive path to sustainable results.

● Volunteerism

We will create space for voluntary involvement in civil society, because people's free will and volunteerism drives engagement in civil society work.

1 CISU and the World

Opportunities

In recent years, we have seen international support for agreements such as the **UN Sustainable Development Goals** and the **Paris Agreement**. Agreements with ambitious objectives that require immediate action. These global agreements are important for CISU's work.

Great progress has been made. The world has become a better place in a number of important areas. For example, infant mortality rates, extreme poverty and starvation have been reduced, and access to education has been increased. **Taking action works.**

Initiatives across the globe have shown positive results. **Sharing knowledge and experience increases learning** in organisations. Creating alliances and exchanging experience creates an opportunity for innovation and for jointly developing and strengthening new approaches for future work.

Civil society is taking action; locally, nationally and globally. We are experiencing increasing social protest all over the world. Young people in particular are an important resource when it comes to enacting change. People are engaged and mobilising to forge change and improve conditions for vulnerable groups.

Changing lives is best achieved when **people rally to common causes**. This is why it is important to establish a societal foundation in which everyone has the opportunity to organise, assemble and express themselves.

Challenges

In a broad sense, many parts of the world face **unequal access to resources** and are denied access to **basic human rights**. The consequences of the **Covid-19 pandemic** have particularly affected those who live in poverty. **Fundamental freedoms** and civic space are under pressure, while **countless humanitarian crises** take their toll.

The effects of **climate change and the deterioration of nature and the environment** exacerbate inequality and risk undermining efforts to improve access to rights and resources.

Vulnerable groups are more severely affected by all these challenges. People's lives and circumstances are particularly affected by unequal power structures (in relation to gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disabilities, etc.).

Political micromanagement of the development area has increased, and Danish domestic policy interests have become decisive. **Changing political priorities** require readjustment. This is burdensome to both Danish organisations and their partner organisations. It is not good for long-term results. Development takes time.

Involvement is hampered by increased **administrative requirements**. It complicates the goal of increased local ownership and leadership. Requirements for the administration of development efforts should be reasonable, as should the requirements for the allocation of risk and responsibilities. Unnecessary and changing requirements make it more difficult to exploit expertise, develop innovative solutions and motivate involvement.

CISU's Approaches

Rights as a foundation: CISU's work is rights-based and takes outset in the UN international declarations on human rights. We must keep the most vulnerable people and groups in mind, and leave no one behind.

Fair distribution of resources: Broadly speaking, CISU believes that a fair distribution of resources is crucial for society and human development: locally, nationally and globally. This requires a focus on dismantling the structural causes of poverty.

People should have control over their own lives: Better and long-term results are forged when people are free to determine and affect their own lives.

Cooperation for better results: The challenges faced by the world are complex. New knowledge and ideas for solutions are generated through human interactions. The challenges faced by the world are therefore best solved by organisations working with partners, networks and alliances, including collaborations with social movements, authorities, the private sector or research and educational institutions.

Room for diverse initiatives: CISU supports a diverse civil society, including informal organisations. Civil society creates change through humanitarian efforts, efforts in fragile contexts and initiatives with focus on long-term development. We use the term development cooperation as an umbrella term for various types of initiatives. CISU supports collaboration between development, humanitarian and peacebuilding activities in fragile contexts.

2 CISU's goals

CISU's vision and mission

Vision

Strong civil society organisations and associations working to secure human rights, promote global justice and sustainability, and counteract the roots of poverty.

Mission

CISU supports the national and global efforts of Danish organisations for a fair and sustainable world. CISU is a platform for exchange of experience and knowledge-sharing. We build capacity, promote mutual learning and innovation, and strengthen popular participation in development work. We administer public funding and work to ensure the availability of resources for a multitude of organisations and initiatives. CISU promotes the common interests of its member organisations and the space for civil society work.



CISU's strategic goals 2022-25

Sustainable quality of life

Good social and economic conditions, so people have access to their basic human rights and do not live in poverty

Robust local communities that can withstand and prevent the effects of changes to **climate, nature and the environment**

Working together

Diverse involvement contributes to global solidarity and action

Mutual and locally led partnerships and alliances contribute to strong local communities

What will CISU do?

Strengthen

Strengthen civil society

Connect

Build bridges, disseminate and develop new knowledge

Support

Accommodate a wide range of sustainable initiatives

Communicate

Raising awareness about and supporting better conditions for civil society

+ an annual focus selected at CISU's general meeting

The annual focus: CISU's strategy aims to lay the groundwork for the next four years. However, we realise that the world is constantly changing, and we must be ready to act on whatever comes our way. At the annual general assembly, CISU member organisations will therefore identify one specific focus area for the forthcoming year.

Goal 1:

Sustainable quality of life

CISU will work towards a world where everyone has a sustainable quality of life. We will create robust local communities with the social and economic conditions to ensure access to basic human rights and a life free of poverty. Communities that can withstand and prevent the effects of changes to climate, nature and the environment.

Goal 1.1: Good social and economic conditions, so people have access to their basic human rights and do not live in poverty.

Social and economic conditions are good when people have basic human rights, have equal access to resources in a broad sense, and are able to influence the political or economic conditions they live under. To achieve this, partnerships, in collaboration with other stakeholders, must help people and groups demand their rights and achieve economic development. Partnerships should also enable people to participate as active citizens in their society. In fragile contexts, partnerships should lay the foundations for achieving social and economic justice in the long term. To achieve this, support should be provided to the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups. This support should be provided via local stakeholders with access to the most vulnerable groups.

CISU will ensure that civil society stakeholders have the capacity and resources to mobilise and organise civil society, to influence decision-makers and hold them responsible, and to collaborate with other stakeholders to improve social and economic conditions. CISU will also work to ensure that local and Danish organisations have the necessary experience and capacity to perform humanitarian work, and that there is flexible and rapid access to support in the event of a crisis.

Goal 1.2: Robust local communities that can withstand and prevent the effects of changes to climate, nature and the environment.

If local communities are to withstand and prevent the effects of climate change and deterioration in nature and environmental conditions, they need local knowledge about how to do so. When relevant, local climate, environment and nature considerations ought to be a priority for local decision-makers. This requires that this area is an integral part of development cooperation in all relevant contexts, and such cooperation is based on local needs. This in turn requires that civil society partners have the knowledge, capacity and resources to integrate climate change adaptation and local climate, nature and environmental considerations into their work and activities in relevant contexts.

CISU will therefore work towards grant structures that support the integration of climate-change adaptation and climate, nature and environmental considerations into all relevant initiatives. Furthermore, CISU will provide access to information and guidance in connection with adaptation, conservation and prevention efforts centered on climate, nature and the environment in development cooperation. CISU will also focus on reducing its climate footprint and motivate its member organisations to do the same.

Goal 2: Working Together

CISU will strive for a world where people work together to enact positive change. We will strive towards diverse involvement in civil society that contributes to global solidarity and action. We will strive towards mutual and locally led partnerships and alliances that contribute to strong local communities.

Goal 2.1: Diverse involvement contributes to global solidarity and action.

When a multitude of people and civil society stakeholders are involved in creating better conditions at global level, they contribute to global solidarity and more action. In order for this to happen, Danish civil society organisations must be able to

engage themselves and others in global issues. Furthermore, civil society stakeholders in the rest of the world must be able to organise and get involved. To achieve this, civil society stakeholders must share knowledge and help each other in their efforts to improve conditions across the globe, and partnerships must work actively to secure basic rights and conditions for civil society organisations and groups throughout the world.

CISU will therefore work towards ensuring that Danish civil society organisations have the capacity and resources to be engaged in and engage more Danish citizens in their work. CISU will also focus on gaining political support for involving Danish civil society in development cooperation. This will include support for reducing bureaucracy and more reasonable administration requirements. CISU will also strive to create networks and opportunities for exchange of experience both in Denmark and across national borders in collaboration with other stakeholders e.g. the private sector and research institutions.

Goal 2.2: Mutual and locally led partnerships and alliances contribute to strong local communities.

Strong local communities are created when local partners take leadership and change processes are locally anchored. This requires partnerships based on trust, reciprocity, respect and co-creation, where Danish organisations and their partners are cognisant of their own resources and the power structures both within and surrounding the partnership. In order to achieve this, Danish organisations must have the resources and expertise to support local partners on the basis of their needs and wishes. Furthermore, partnerships and initiatives should focus on mobilising, organising and involving local communities to generate ownership of changes. It is also crucial that civil society stakeholders work together and share their knowledge through networks and alliances.

CISU will therefore strive to improve access and increase resources for capacity building of partnerships. The aim of this capacity building is to encourage involvement and introduce approaches that create durable and strong local communities. CISU will also strive to ensure that grant structures encourage full involvement in initiatives and allow for capacity building of the organisations and people involved. CISU will also support the collaboration in networks and alliances at the national, regional and international levels.

3 How CISU Creates Change

CISU's member organisations, grant holders and partners possess a high level of expertise in the form of knowledge and many years of experience with development work throughout the world and within all UN Sustainable Development Goals. This is why CISU creates change by bringing together civil society stakeholders and supporting better conditions for their work.

CISU's core services for reaching its strategic goals are presented in the four boxes below. CISU's Change Narrative (see Annex) shows the correlation between CISU's core services and the achievement of its strategic goals.

STRENGTHEN:

Strengthen civil society

We strengthen the capacity of Danish organisations to cooperate in locally-led, equal partnerships. We do so through organisational development and by supporting networks and the exchange of experience.

We support rights-based civil society work.

We support increased accountability in civil society organisations with regard to the people they work with and their own climate footprint.

SUPPORT:

Accommodate a wide range of sustainable initiatives

Via capacity-building services and pooled schemes, we support development and humanitarian efforts that create durable and sustainable change with regard to social and economic aspects, as well as climate, nature and the environment.

We strive towards a wide range of funding options from relevant donors.

We focus on cohesion between short-term and long-term humanitarian efforts.

CONNECT:

Build bridges, disseminate and develop new knowledge

We support knowledge sharing and learning from experience and global trends, all of which can lead to new, creative approaches to development cooperation.

We build bridges between our member organisations and make it possible for them to exchange experience and establish networks.

We build bridges to other stakeholders in civil society, the private sector and research institutions in Denmark and abroad.

COMMUNICATE:

Raise awareness about and support better conditions for civil society

We motivate the global commitment of Danes by disseminating information about global conditions.

We strive to make the role of civil society more visible, and we raise awareness of the results of member organisations' collaborations with partners and their use of CISU's services.

We strive to create the best possible conditions for work by Danish organisations and greater latitude for their partners by safeguarding their interests in relevant fora.

ANNEX:

CISU's Change Narrative

CISU's Change Narrative presents the correlations between CISU's specific initiatives and work methods (section 3) and its overall strategic goals (section 2). Section 2 is a detailed description of the visualisations in the Annex below. The visualisation differentiates between what CISU has direct control of, what we can influence, and what we want to change.

The Change Narrative clearly shows that the desired changes take place beyond CISU's direct control. It is work done by CISU's member organisations, grant holders and their partners that lead to the changes we want to achieve. CISU's job is to create change by bringing together civil society stakeholders and supporting better conditions for their work as can be seen in the visualisations below.



Goal 1: Sustainable quality of life

What we want to change

What we can influence

What we can control

Good social and economic conditions,
so people have access to their basic human rights and do not live in poverty

Robust local communities that can withstand and prevent the effects of changes to
climate, nature and the environment



People are able to enjoy their rights and have access to resources in a broad sense

People are able to change the conditions they are living under

In fragile contexts, a basis for improving economic and social conditions in the long term

Local knowledge on how to withstand and prevent the effects of changes to climate, nature and the environment

Local policy-makers prioritising climate, nature and the environment when relevant

Partnerships that help people and groups demand their rights and achieve economic development

Partnerships that work towards creating opportunities for people to actively participate in society

Providing support for the most vulnerable groups

Aid is distributed through local stakeholders with access to the most vulnerable groups

Partnerships that have the knowledge, capacity and resources to integrate climate change adaptation and local climate, nature and environmental considerations into their work and activities when relevant

Climate, nature and the environment as an integral part of development cooperation and civil society in Denmark, where relevant and based on local needs

Civil society stakeholders have the capacity and resources to mobilise and organise civil society, and to influence decision-makers and hold them responsible

Civil society stakeholders collaborate with other stakeholders

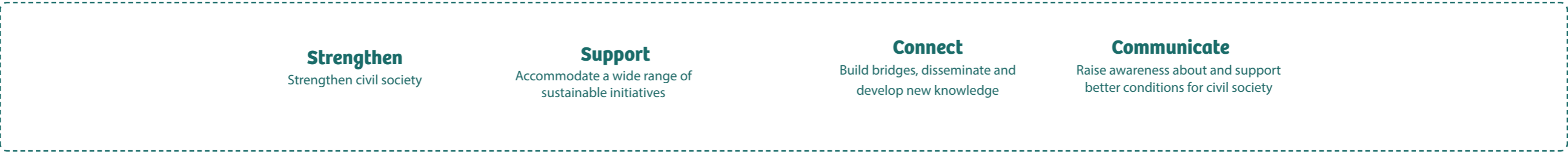
Flexible and rapid access to aid in the event of crises

Local and Danish organisations have the necessary experience and capacity to perform humanitarian work

Grant structures that support the integration of climate-change adaptation and climate, nature and environmental considerations

Access to information and guidance in connection with adaptation, conservation and prevention efforts related to climate, nature and the environment in development cooperation

Focus on reducing the CISU climate footprint and motivating member organisations to do the same



Goal 2: Working together

What we want to change

What we can influence

What we can control

Diverse involvement

contributes to global solidarity and action

Civil society stakeholders and citizens involved in creating better conditions at global level

Danish civil society stakeholders are able to engage themselves and others in global issues

Civil society stakeholders have the opportunity to organise and engage in the world

Civil society shares knowledge and collaborates to improve conditions around the globe

Partnerships that actively work towards ensuring rights and good conditions for civil society organisations and groups

Political support for the involvement of Danish civil society in development cooperation; less bureaucracy and more reasonable administrative requirements

Ensure that Danish civil society organisations have the capacity and resources to engage both themselves and others in their work

Networks and opportunities for exchanging experience both in Denmark and across national borders - including with other stakeholders

Strengthen

Strengthen civil society

Support

Accommodate a wide range of sustainable initiatives

Mutual and locally led partnerships

and alliances contribute to strong local communities

Local partners taking and demonstrating leadership

Partnerships built on trust, respect and co-creation, where all parties are cognisant of their own resources and the power structures both within and surrounding the partnership

Local ownership and leadership of change processes in local communities

Civil society stakeholders working together and sharing knowledge through networks and alliances

Danish organisations that have the resources and expertise to support their partners on the basis of local needs, wishes and capabilities

Partnerships and initiatives that focus on mobilising, organising and involving local communities to generate ownership of changes

Networks and alliances collaborate at national, regional and international levels

Improve access and increase resources to capacity building for partnerships

Capacity building that motivates engagement and introduces approaches that create durable and strong local communities

Grant structures that encourage inclusion of all involved and opportunities for capacity building of people and organisations

Connect

Build bridges, disseminate and develop new knowledge

Communicate

Raise awareness about and support better conditions for civil society



CISU - Civil Society in Development
Klosterport 4x, 3. sal
8000 Århus C

Tel: +45 8612 0342 • Mail: cisu@cisu.dk