



## INVITATION

# Civil Society @ Crossroads?

**Presentation of a reflection exercise on the future of civil society  
Thursday 22 November, 2pm-6pm, ISS the Hague**

Over the past year, a unique global partnership between CDRA (South Africa), EASUN (Tanzania), ICD (Uruguay), PRIA (India), INTRAC (UK) and PSO (Netherlands) collaborated on exploring the shifting roles, capacities, contributions, limitations and challenges facing different segments of civil society in changing local and global contexts.

The initiative generated stories of 'civil society crossroads' in 15 countries---Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, Malawi, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Uganda, India, Cambodia, Indonesia, UK, Netherlands, Greece, Russia and Ireland, plus a number of citizens' movements in the North and South. Reflections on preliminary findings were presented at various international conferences, such as CIVICUS 2011 & 2012, EADI 2011, ARNOVA 2011, ISTR 2012.

The Crossroads Collective will now share these stories and reflections in the Netherlands during an event hosted by the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS). Interactive sessions will explore the implications facing civil society at crossroads worldwide. We will also identify collective ways of carrying this critical reflection forward amongst civil society actors and other key stakeholders (policy-makers, resource providers, researchers, media, etc.).

### Participants

Civil society actors, policy-makers, resource providers, researchers and media with an interest in the roles, contributions and challenges of civil society nationally and globally.

### Outline

The Crossroads Collective instigated a process of providing insight into how civil society contributions in different regions of the world can be understood, supported and enhanced, thereby enabling a fresh understanding of civil society processes from local contexts and trans-nationally. This understanding will enable all those interested in strengthening civil societies to advance their theories and beliefs in change, and retool themselves in order to support civil society in regaining its (political) space over the coming decades. Besides formal civil society organisations (more popularly known as NGOs), this initiative focused on various other forms of associations (e.g. local associations, indigenous groups and citizens' movements from around the globe) and has attempted to highlight the role they play in bringing about social change.

### Venue & details

**What:** Presentations and reflections workshops about the future of civil society around the world

**Where:** International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Kortenaerkade 12, The Hague  
[http://www.iss.nl/about\\_iss/contact\\_and\\_directions/](http://www.iss.nl/about_iss/contact_and_directions/)

**When:** Thursday 22nd of November 2012 from 14.00 to 17.30 with drinks afterwards

**Registration:** Email to [aanmelding@pso.nl](mailto:aanmelding@pso.nl) before 9 November with reference to: CS at Crossroads

## Programme

Convening: Crossroads team, PSO, ISS

Date: 22 November 14.00 – 17.30

Venue: ISS

14.00 – 14.30 Welcome & Introduction

14.30 – 15.45 Group work with case presentations of Civil Societies at Crossroads, followed by discussions. Country stories of civil society in South-Africa, India, UK, Netherlands, Zimbabwe, Ireland, Cambodia, and Russia, as well as citizens' actions in Uganda, India, Greece, UK (Occupy & grassroots movements), Uruguay, Chilean student movement, Argentine LGBT movement, and youth participation in Latin America, among others.

15.45 – 16.15 Tea/Coffee break

16.15 – 17.30 Panel discussion on implications, wrap up & conclusions

17.30 – 18.30 Drinks

A final detailed programme with background materials will be circulated following registration.

