

A global database of civil society self-regulatory initiatives



The Challenge

In response to calls for greater accountability, civil society organisations (CSO) have increasingly been coming together to define common standards of practices and identify to whom and for what they are accountable. The result is a rapid proliferation of self-regulatory initiatives including codes of conduct, codes of ethics, certification schemes, reporting frameworks, working groups, and information services such as directories.

However, NGOs, donors, CSOs, and other potential users are often unaware of their existence or what distinguishes one initiative from another. This makes it difficult for potential users to make choices around which initiative best suits their needs. Donors also suffer from the absence of comparable information as they seek to use such initiatives as indicators of the operational, governance, and financial quality of organisations they seek to fund.

A Solution

To address this information gap, the One World Trust is developing a database of self-regulatory initiatives in use at the national, regional, and international level that users can access and search online. Beyond compiling a list of current initiatives, this database will provide descriptive and analytical information on each of the initiatives. Data will be gathered and structured such that users can filter their search according to their particular needs, using a variety of criteria. These criteria would relate to issues such as the areas addressed by the initiative, the sector of civil society it relates to, the type of CSO it is for, if the initiative has a compliance mechanism and if it is principle or standards based. Qualitative assessments of the relative merits of the initiatives will also be included.

Progress to Date (updated January 2010)

The One World Trust is constantly updating the database on NGO self-regulatory initiatives worldwide and preparing a series of publications outlining our findings on the state of CSO self-regulation at national, regional, and international levels.

Recent publications are available on the 'Resources' section of our project portal page at <http://www.oneworldtrust.org/csoproject/cso/resources>.

Contact us

For more information about the project or to let us know about initiatives we should include in the database, please feel free to contact us at csosr@oneworldtrust.org.