

## CHAPTER 7

### GLOBAL CONNECTEDNESS: THE STRUCTURE OF TRANSNATIONAL NGO NETWORKS

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#### Introduction

Globalisation involves the movement of objects (such as goods, services, finance and other resources), meaning (for example, language, symbols, knowledge and identities) and people across regional and intercontinental space. It is a process that turns what has been local and national into transnational and increasingly global flows – be it in the field of trade, information technologies, or epidemics such as HIV/AIDS and SARS (Kaul 2003). Among the consequences of globalisation are the increasing scope and scale of existing supranational structures and patterns, and the emergence of new ones. International nongovernmental organisations (INGOs), transnational corporations (TNCs), states, international governmental organisations (IGOs), and, of course, individuals participate in a great variety of international forums, conventions, meetings, organisations, and coalitions. In other words, they are creating transnational networks of many kinds.

It is useful to view these transnational networks as some kind of ‘global infrastructure’ generated by, and allowing for, the flow of resources, information, knowledge, influence, legitimacy, and so on. For example, TNCs form networks of finance-product-service-consumption chains around transnational markets, involving organisations (firms, regulatory agencies) and individuals as employees and consumers. Similarly, the international system of law and politics, based on bilateral and multilateral contracts, generates a network of international relations, just as links among diaspora communities or political activists form transnational networks between individuals. Last but not least, INGOs form networks based on information exchange, project collaboration, participation in meetings and forums, or joint membership in advocacy coalitions.

Network metaphors are indeed very common in the globalisation literature. Terms like ‘inter-connectedness’ or ‘woven world’ (Yergin and Stanislav 1998) seek to express how transnational actors connect formerly disparate entities and issues. John Keane (2001: 23–4) describes global civil society as an ‘interconnected

and multilayered social space’ comprised of ‘cross border networks (and) chains of interaction’ linking the local to the global. James Rosenau (1995) describes global governance as a framework of horizontal relations between states and between non-state actors. David Held’s notion of global governance (2004) suggests a complicated web of interrelated global issue networks, some that are issue-specific and others more general, together forming a large web of governments, NGOs, IGOs, TNCs and other interested parties. The inter-organisational structure around the International Criminal Court (ICC) is an example of one such global issue network (for a brief analysis of the ICC see the methods chapter in this volume), where INGOs, IGOs and governments came together and developed a new global governance institution.

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**network structures bound the possibilities of action; they prevent some actions but encourage and facilitate others**

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Ulrich Beck (1999) proposes to examine the scale, density, and stability of such regional–global networks, the social spaces they create and the cultural images they carry. In his view, the continued expansion and contraction along local–global axes creates patterns of varying density and centrality in these global networks. Manuel Castells (1996) takes this imagery further to argue that networks increasingly form meta-networks at the transnational level and create a system of ‘decentralized concentration’, where a multiplicity of interconnected tasks takes place in different sites. Since the 1970s, Castells points out, enabling technologies such as IT and the internet have brought about the ascendancy of a ‘network society’, whose processes occur in a new type of space which he labels the ‘space of flows’. This space, comprising a myriad of exchanges, has come to dominate the ‘space of places’ of territorially defined units of states, regions and neighbourhoods thanks to its greater flexibility

and compatibility with the new logic of network society. Nodes and hubs in this space of flows construct the social organisation of this network society. For Castells, this new space is at the core of the globalisation process; and, for understanding global civil society within the larger process of a shift from 'place' to 'flows,' networks are the central concept.

Yet what precisely are the characteristic network structures of global civil society, as measured through INGO networks? Presumably, such a network would involve activists as well as representatives of civil society organisations of many kinds. It would also include inter-organisational relationships like coalitions among INGOs as well as funding flows between philanthropic institutions and recipient groups. These connections form structures and patterns, which involve numerous types of actors – individuals such as citizens, activists and scientists, organisations, governments, corporations, as well as others. But why is it important to know about such network structures, and how would this improve our understanding of global civil society? These are the major questions that we address in the present chapter.

INGO networks are obviously limited in terms of the kind of relationship they include; most notably, they leave out networks among individuals as well as between individuals and organisations. They also do not cover other more organised relations that are important in global civil society, such as social movements, social forums, and the like. Yet at a minimum they allow us to ask important questions about the potential of INGO networks for global action and mobilisation processes within the broader context of the structural patterns of economic and political globalisation.

At one level, network structures bound the possibilities of action; they prevent some actions but encourage and facilitate others. As Cox (1993: 36) puts it, the structural constraints define 'the limits of the possible'. At the same time, however, action defines and modifies structure; actors can create new links, altering the structure, and as a result also the repertoire of actions available to them (Diani 2003a; 2003c; Cox 1993). In this sense, networks are structures created through agency, and analysing such networks provides us with the opportunity to capture the dualistic nature of action and structure. Specifically, looking at the network structures of global civil society will help us better understand their spatial patterns in terms of centre-periphery and inclusion

and exclusion, and whether they and the spaces they create promote or hinder collective action at the global level, and to what end.

This brings us to the issue of global governance. Global civil society is often presented as the remedy for some of the problems of global governance (Kaldor 2003; Kaldor, Anheier and Glasius 2003; Held 2004). As Riva Krut (1997) maintains, global civil society has two major roles in global governance – as part of the system of checks and balances, promoting the transparency and accountability of global governance institutions, and as representatives of the weak and marginalised, a window for popular participation in global governance. Some of the authors of recent accounts of global civil society's role in global governance argue that NGOs are still marginal in many of the circles of power in the global governance system (Held 2004), and are mostly treated as 'second priority' players (Scholte 2004). Can global civil society, as measured here in terms of INGO relations, compensate for weaknesses of the global governance system?

While a fuller set of answers is developed in the course of this chapter (and specifically in Katz 2005), it is useful to summarise our key insights at the outset. Our analysis finds the structural pattern generated by INGO networks relatively coherent and little fragmented, which is conducive to alleviating the political-jurisdictional gap in global governance. In other words, global civil society as measured by INGO networks can be a holistic and coherent 'actor' in the global governance system, one that can address many of the critical issues synergistically. By contrast, however, it is unlikely that this very same pattern could contribute to increased representativeness or inclusion in the global governance system, let alone heighten substantially the participation of currently marginalised constituencies. As we shall see, the network structure is very sparse and reveals a pronounced centre-periphery structure, and it is simply too concentrated in the North. As a result, its capacity to make authentic voices of Southern communities heard in the corridors of global power remains limited. In the concluding section of this chapter we address the implications of these findings.

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**Figure 7.1: Climate Action Network's global network structure**



Source: CAN [URL]

### Global civil society networks

Global civil society is a very relational, networked phenomenon (Anheier and Katz 2004). Indeed, as we have already illustrated, the globalisation and civil society literature is rich in network metaphors. Yet network metaphors of global civil society more often than not remain abstract, with little empirical research using network concepts, and still fewer studies implementing network analysis methods. As Peter Waterman (2000: 144) humorously puts it, 'network babble therefore needs, today, to be replaced by network analysis'. Many writers decry the lack of evidence-based network studies of global civil society. Townsend (1999) points out that, despite frequent reference to the 'network' character of global civil

society as a structured space, analytical portraits or global maps showing the implied connectedness and resulting patterns are still missing. As a first step, some authors suggest that civil society be studied by focusing on the relationships between different INGOs (Florini and Simmons 2000; Deacon 1997). Yet to date no such studies have explored such networks systematically at a global level.

### What is a network?

A network is a set of links or ties connecting nodes. The nodes are typically people or organisations, and the links involve many different types of relations and flows: contracts, joint projects, including funding, joint board members, information exchange, and even affect



relations. Networks are a way of measuring the patterns and structures of social life, including, as we do here, organisational and inter-organisational links. In global civil society specific organisations and networks can be highly complex structures, as is evident in the organisational design of the global Climate Action Network shown in Figure 7.1. The global Climate Action Network, 'a worldwide network of over 340 Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels' (CAN URL) is one INGO network with a highly complex design that includes multiple headquarters and a decentralised federated structure. Yet, however complex, it is only one fragment of the

full network of global civil society.

Of course, the complete structure of the global civil society network adds to this one complex network thousands of other networks and individual organisations, intra- and inter-organisational networks, some even more complex than the global Climate Action Network, and involves more nodes and links than can be displayed in a graph. Therefore, much of what network analysis does is to examine complex personal or inter-organisational networks to reveal the underlying patterns that might lend themselves more easily to some forms of understanding (Anheier and Katz 2004).

### Box 7.1: Using social network analysis to understand a global interpersonal and inter-organisational network

This chapter focuses exclusively on inter-organisational networks among INGOs. Although such networks are a major part of the global civil society infrastructure, they leave out two important aspects: network ties among individuals such as civil society leaders; and inter-organisational connections generated by person-to-person contacts across institutions. In particular, interlocking network structures are critical for information flows, mobilisation of resources and the overall degree of inclusion or exclusion of given fields.

In this box, I briefly illustrate these aspects, using the example of international scientific communities as a case in point. Scientists and academics generally form interpersonal ties based on collegiality, information exchange or joint projects and publications. They also establish affiliations with institutions, for example, as members of advisory committees or funding bodies, or acting as external examiners. By doing so, they generate two networks: an interpersonal one linking scientists, and an institutional one linking scientists to organisations. Although networks among civil society activists differ from those among academics in many respects, they have in common that they are communities of meaning and knowledge, so that examining one could help us to understand the other.

Who joins international scientific communities? And how are the scientists who work on international scientific assessments connected? Since the late 1980s, scholars have studied such international communities, exploring 'networks of knowledge-based experts' or what have come to be called 'epistemic communities' (Haas 1992: 2; see also Haas 1989; 1990; Lidskog and Sundqvist 2002). Scholars have used this notion to describe the relationship between scientific communities and international policies such as the Mediterranean Plan of Action (Haas 1989; 1990), the International Food Aid Regime (Hopkins 1992), and the international management of whaling (Peterson 1992), focusing mainly on how epistemic communities address the uncertainties surrounding specific social problems.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) is a case in point. Launched in 2001 by the Secretary General of the United Nations as 'an international work program designed to meet the needs of decision makers and the public for scientific information concerning the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being and options for responding to those changes' (MA URL), the MA aims to involve the top scientists from around the world in the evaluation of the state of the science of biodiversity and ecosystem loss. Through its four working groups (sub-global, conditions, scenarios, and responses), members of the MA, its Board, and other participants have nominated over 3,000 scientists to participate in the assessment<sup>a</sup>, more than 500 of whom have contributed to drafting the group's First Assessment Review, which is scheduled to be published in late 2005.

Although the organisers of this scientific assessment set out to bring together a group of scientists who were diverse in terms of geography and disciplines, and working on issues related to its focus, it is probable that the MA's formation, which involved a multi-stage nominations process, involved a relatively homophilous group of scholars. 'Homophily' is the tendency of individuals to associate with those similar to them, and 'implies that distance in terms of social characteristics translates into network distance...' (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001: 416; see also McPherson and Smith-Lovin 1987; Ruef, Aldrich and Carter 2003). Consequently, the scientists conscripted into this network of biodiversity specialists had central social characteristics in common.

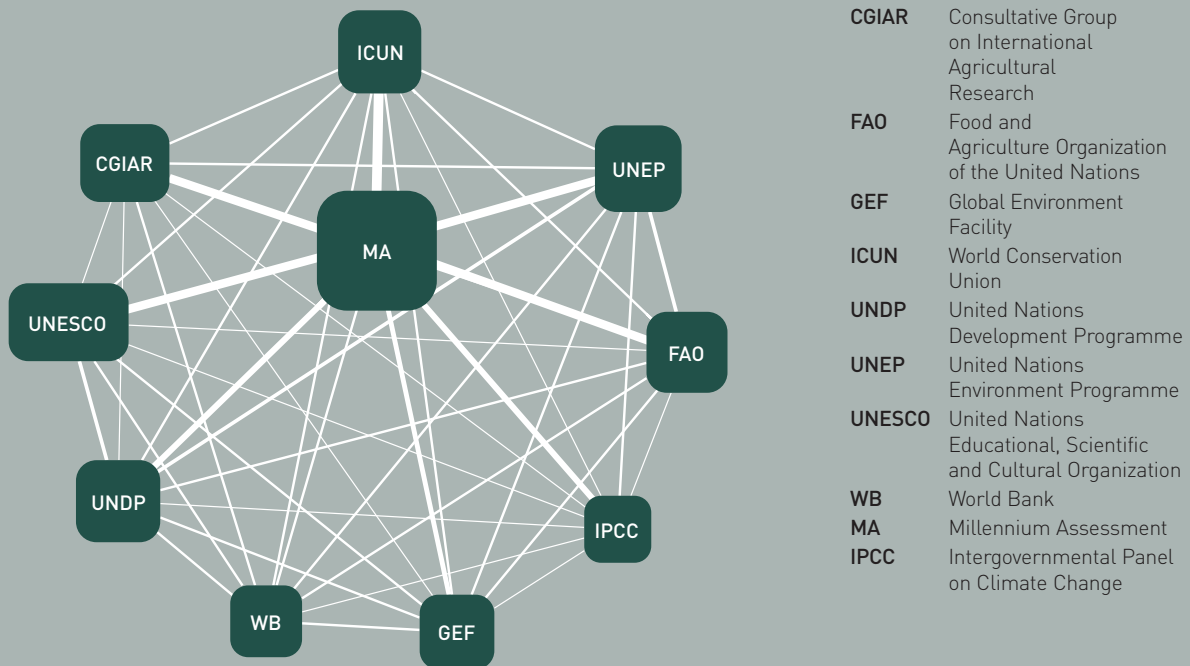
Using data collected through participant observation and a survey of the MA's members, I examined whether the nominations process limited the representation of scholars who were not already involved in other international communities. Such constraints could imply limitations on, for example, particular disciplines and scientific perspectives and on representatives from less developed regions of the world. Preliminary data analyses suggest that that recruitment into the MA frequently occurred through homophilous network ties. In other words, most participants in this scientific assessment had already worked together through other international organisations at least once – which also suggests a certain path dependency and reproduction of network ties<sup>b</sup>. Table 7.1 presents descriptive statistics of the connections among members of the MA. These findings are particularly interesting when one examines the most common ties among the MA's participants, all of which provided backing for the MA itself<sup>c</sup>.

**Table 7.1: Organisational ties among participants in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment**

Observations (N)	368		
Minimum	1	Mean	2.68
Maximum	17	Standard deviation	2.45

In many cases, participants in the MA had multiple common ties through international organisations. Figure 7.2 presents a map of the inter-organisational network created by the connections among these scholars. The density of this network supports the supposition that there was considerable homophily within the MA. In many cases, participants had collaborated on other United Nations-sponsored projects prior to their association through the MA.

**Figure 7.2: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment: inter-organisational ties through individual participants**



This finding has significant implications for global civil society networks and for the tensions between network diversity and efficiency. Because individuals involved tend to nominate others who are similar to them and with whom they have interacted in the past, interpersonal transnational networks are likely to generate homophilous structures and appear exclusive rather than inclusive. By implication, more diverse networks would require more exhaustive reviews of potential members, and the recruitment process would have to extend beyond the common connections among those already participating in the international community. This extension, however, adds to the costs of organising and maintaining the network.

- a This process began with multiple nominations from the director and board of the MA. Although some people involved in the MA were self-nominated, their self-nominations had to be approved by a chair of one of the working groups.
- b The international organisations listed in the survey include those that provided funding and support for the MA as well as the other major international environmental assessments.
- c The most common organisations, besides the MA itself, are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the World Conservation Union (IUCN).

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## Networks matter

Why study the networks of global civil society? The answer is simple: because network structure has an impact on outcomes for the individuals and organisations involved as well as for the network as a whole. The social movement literature is very instructive in illustrating this point: activist networks are affected by the overall configuration of the network structures they are part of, and how these structures influence the potential for collective action (Diani 2003a; McAdam 2003). Most social movement scholars agree that network structure is crucial to the development of movement formation; since actors are usually drawn to a movement by people they know (Gould 2003; see also Chapter 8, this volume). Established associational networks play a central role in facilitating contention. If a mobilising structure is absent, incipient movements lack the capacity to act, even if the opportunity to do so arises (McAdam 2003: 290–1).

Both Mario Diani (2003a; 2003b) and Beth Caniglia (2002) highlight the importance of centrality and brokerage in the network on the network's influence on policy-making. Diani suggests that centrality (a node is considered central when it is connected to more nodes) correlates with leadership and public visibility and has an influence on agenda-setting. In the network he studied (a network of environmental organisations in Milan), more central organisations were generally perceived (by outsiders as well as insiders) as representative of the entire network and the issues it promoted. Brokerage (when a node helps to connect otherwise disconnected nodes), on the other hand, contributed mostly to the integration of the network, and was mostly done behind the scenes. Brokerage was not associated with visibility, as centrality was found to be, but it was found to facilitate communication lines between different subgroups of the movement and to connect divergent organisations. Moreover, Caniglia concludes that brokerage and centrality roles in NGO networks correlate with greater connectedness to international governmental organisations (IGOs). In other words, NGOs central in the NGO network assume brokerage roles in relation to international organisations more generally.

Compositional diversity of the network has also been identified as a factor in successful movements or coalitions. Sanjeev Khagram (2002) points out that a diverse composition, mixing local and global actors grassroots and elite organisations, differing ideolo-

gies, and different strategies (for example, passive resistance, lobbying, confrontation), is what made the coalitions around the Narmada Valley dams in India so successful in their attempt to change the World Bank's politics of development. The Narmada campaigns were successful in part due to the broadbased, interlaced set of issues and organisations that featured in the campaign, including environmental concerns, anti-capitalism, human rights, and development, among others.

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Looking at a different movement, Elizabeth Donnelly (2002) shows that, as the global scope of the debt reduction network grew, so did its impact. This increase was made possible by greater compatibility between the scope and breadth of anti-debt network and the multilateral nature of world trade and debt. Compositional diversity of networks implies a mix of different issues and interests for achieving greater impact. In this context, Diani (2003c) notes that network diversity is multiplicative, as it opens channels of communication to varied populations of organisations. In turn, issue diversity is also linked to strategic diversity, flexibility, and adjustment to change. By implication, the challenge of movements is to balance too much diversity, which can lead to lack of coherence, and too little diversity around single issues that opponents can more easily isolate or otherwise neutralise.

## Global network patterns and functions

What emerges from this brief review of transnational social movements and networks is the close link between inter-organisational relations and transnational connectedness. Yet what overall patterns of connectedness can we hypothesise? What role or functions would such an emerging 'organisational infrastructure' of global civil society perform? And critically: what is the relation between structure and function? In approaching these questions, it is useful to seek theoretical guidance from the civil society literature first.

Antonio Gramsci and his followers see in a dense

**Table 7.2: Sample network matrix**

		To			
		Organisation A	Organisation B	Organisation C	...
From	Organisation A	–	1	1	...
	Organisation B	0	–	0	...
	Organisation C	1	0	–	...
...		...	...	...	–

network of connectedness and in a solid organisational infrastructure a precondition for the development of civil society into a counter-hegemonic bloc – a bloc that can challenge existing power structures<sup>1</sup>. We suggest that what holds for national systems could also apply to the global level: such a bloc would serve the function of offering a viable alternative in the systems of global governance to global neo-liberalism (Cox 1993; 1996; 2002; Gill 1993; Gramsci 1971) or other dominant ideologies and institutions that are seen as problematic or unjust. Such a bloc would incorporate a wide range of parties that take issue with prevailing policies and patterns of economic and political globalisation – and do so across regions, classes, constituencies, and so forth. This bloc, as an all-inclusive network, would help guarantee more equal and fuller representation of interests in the global governance system, and thereby also reaffirm the legitimacy that is the consequence of such fuller representation.

Specifically, in the case of INGOs several characteristics would indicate the presence of a bloc. First, INGO networks would have to show global reach or, in Held and McGrew's term (2002), 'extensity'. Second, this global reach must show some spread in numbers and centrality; that is, it should allow for multiple centres of influence and a brokerage role to emerge. Third, it must show compositional diversity and incorporate different issues, coalitions and interests. If these characteristics are present, INGO networks can help reaffirm full and significant participation of more peoples and communities in the processes of global governance, setting the priorities of global governance institutions, and keeping an eye on governments and TNCs.

Another aspect of the reach of the global civil society network is the enhancement of the local-global nexus.

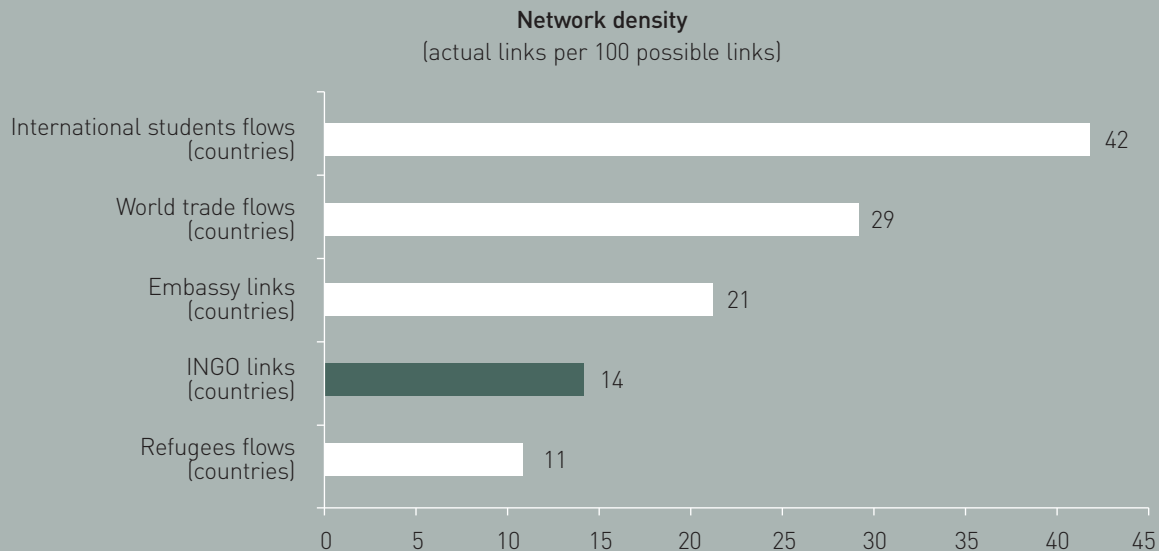
Local presence has the important potential of generating local grassroots activism and empowering such local activism with the support of an international backing. According to Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998), a local-global mix allows for the so-called boomerang effect, whereby the organisations of local protestors against national governments forge links with INGOs in other countries, which, in turn, mobilise their own governments and other constituencies to exert pressure on their behalf from outside. Hence, participation in such global civil society networks potentially allows access to power – it allows local INGOs to reach, if by proxy, the centres of decision making in Brussels, New York and London. It provides them with indirect access to large influential INGOs, governments and IGOs.

Castells (1997) argues that avoiding localism is important to thwart the attempts of global capitalist elites to co-opt and weaken resistance, since to be able to have impact on the circles of power of the network society, which are placeless, resistance identities need to become placeless as well. Expanding local campaigns into global networks (as Zapatistas did) elevates them from operating in the space of places to operating in the space of flows, thus giving them greater visibility where it really counts.

But what if transnational NGO connectedness is very uneven across regions and fields, and what if the organisational infrastructure does not reflect Gramscian

<sup>1</sup> Obviously, Gramsci didn't advocate network density, if only because the concept wasn't in existence in his time. However, Gramsci advocated the development of a counter-hegemonic historic bloc which, he argued, to be of value should include all of the subaltern groups and interests, including workers and other groups. When read with a network mindset, this translates into a dense network in the sense that many of the ties that can possibly exist between those subaltern groups are actually in existence.



**Figure 7.3: Network densities: INGOs and other global networks**

blocs, boomerang patterns or local-global relations? What if emerging network patterns are more reflective of existing power structures than counter-hegemonic tendencies? What do structural patterns say about the potential of global civil society in relation to global governance problems?

### Data and methods

We analyse the relations among INGOs as an initial step toward improving our understanding of the network structure of global civil society. Of course, we are well aware that INGOs are not the only element of global civil society, and that concentrating on organisations leaves out the important aspect of transnational interpersonal connections. Nonetheless, INGOs are a prominent part of the infrastructure of global civil society, and are among its most visible or tangible actors (Anheier and Katz 2003; Boli and Thomas 1997; Castells 1997; Cox 1993; Falk 2003). Since ties among formal organisations by definition tend to be less ephemeral than individual ties, the study of such ties provides a glimpse into aspects of the longer-term structures of global civil society.

Yet inter-organisational relations are only one part

of the total set of links connecting INGOs. Individuals, too, connect INGOs in many ways, including but not limited to overlapping memberships, friendships, participation in meetings and conferences, and even marriage. However permanent or transient they may be, such personal ties between organisations through the individuals that intertwine them can be of substantial importance, revealing informal layers of politics and influence. An example of one such study is presented in Box 7.1, in which Dana Fisher looks at how and why links between individuals create a network of inter-organisational connections. In Chapter 8 in this volume, Castells and his colleagues discuss another facet of the role of informal and interpersonal links and communications in developing and mobilising civil society. They show how interpersonal networks facilitate organisation and mobilisation, between organisations, between organisations and activists, or among previously unorganised masses, especially when such networks are reinforced by advanced technologies such as mobile telephony and text messaging. In some cases, they show, chaotic interpersonal networks are more effective in mobilising for action than more organised ones.

**Table 7.3: Organisations and links by regions and World Bank income groups**

World Bank income groups	Organisations (%)	Links sent (%)	Links received (%)
High income	81	81	80
Middle income	11	11	11
Low income	6	6	6

Regions	Organisations (%)	Links sent (%)	Links received (%)
East Asia & Pacific	8	8	8
Europe & Central Asia	54	56	54
EU-15	47	48	47
Latin America & Caribbean	5	5	5
Middle East & North Africa	2	2	2
North America	23	20	22
South Asia	2	2	2
Sub-Saharan Africa	5	5	5
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>10,001</b>	<b>9,863</b>	<b>29,863</b>

While no picture of global civil society can be complete without these two elements (inter-organisational and interpersonal), individual-level data is rare and the cost of collecting it prohibitive. Of course, even for INGOs themselves the data situation is far from ideal. At the very least, to find initial answers to the above questions we need data on a substantial share of the thousands of INGOs operating in and across different fields and parts of the world. Fortunately, the Brussels-based Union of International Associations (UIA) collects information on approximately 45,000 international organisations and associations on an ongoing basis, including INGOs and other types of international organisations, associations, conferences, treaties and more<sup>2</sup>. The descriptions of organisations in UIA's database are based on information received from a variety of sources but primarily from INGOs

<sup>2</sup> For more details on the UIA, its publications and work, see [UIA URL](#).

<sup>3</sup> UIA classifies all organisations in the database into 1,283 subject categories, allowing for multiple classifications. In other words, each organisation can be associated with more than one subject category ([UIA URL](#)).

<sup>4</sup> All names of organisations mentioned in this paragraph are real, and are extracted from UIA's online databases ([UIA URL](#)).

themselves, through an annual survey questionnaire administered by UIA.

### Developing the network dataset

Our access to UIA's database was limited to a subset of organisations that were selected in an iterative process with the use of UIA's subject classification<sup>3</sup>. We selected organisations deemed relevant to global governance according to the stated subjects they address or the fields in which they operate. While arguably every inter-organisational tie is a potential channel of information, thereby adding to the density of global civil society networks, some links are unlikely to be instrumental, or play a role in, global governance processes. In other words, we excluded organisations that are primarily self-interested and narrow in scope, such as the International Association of Stamp Collectors and similar clubs. We also excluded organisations that at least at face value appeared only remotely relevant to global governance issues, such as the Association for Computational Linguistics, and organisations that are of an extremely expressive nature and imply no action orientation whatsoever, such as Crystal Consciousness<sup>4</sup>.

The selection process started by identifying UIA subject groups that correspond to thematic issues in panels at the 2004 World Social Forum that were set up by the organising committee of the forum, which consisted of 67 Indian organisations including trade unions, women's groups, farmers' networks, as well as 27 social movements and NGOs (for the committee's roles and responsibilities, see WSF 2004a). The World Social Forum is considered to be the central and most comprehensive global civil society event in recent years. It is the most global civil society event, both in its attendance and in the approach to the issues discussed in it. As well, it serves as a convergence point for nodes of existing networks and as a launching pad for new ones (Cock 2004). The World Social Forum is therefore here assumed to reflect the central issues concerning global civil society actors today.

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**the matrix of country interconnections through INGO links is considerably denser, but still not as dense and well-connected as other global networks, notably those that pertain to the global economy and to inter-state relations**

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The panels covered the following issues: Globalisation, Global Governance and the Nation State; The World Trade Organization; Militarism, War and Peace; Political Parties and Social Movements; Media, Culture and Knowledge; Wars against Women, Women against Wars; Globalisation Economic and Social Security; Globalisation and its Alternatives; Discrimination and Oppression: Racism and Casteism; Work and the World of Labour; The Struggle against Neoliberalism and War and the Significance of WSF Religious, Ethnic and Linguistic Exclusion and Oppression; Food Sovereignty and Natural Resources (WSF 2004b). These issues were associated with corresponding UIA subject groups: Peace and Justice, Societal Problems, Community, Conditions of Trade, and Freedom and Liberation. Not all of the issues had exactly corresponding subject groups in the UIA classification, but those that did not were covered by the more general subject groups such as Community or Peace and Justice.

We then looked at the list of organisations in the UIA's database included in each of these five UIA subject groups, and listed other subject groups with which they were associated, and the number of times

those subject groups appeared. Subject groups with which at least 10 per cent of the organisations in the core groups were associated were singled out and listed in a second list of subject groups. Thereafter we looked into the organisations associated with the second list of subject groups, and likewise identified additional subject groups with which organisations listed in them were associated. This process was repeated five times, resulting in a list of 356 subject groups. Only subject groups that were counted at least twice were selected (the median number of times subject groups surfaced in the process was two). In the end, this step-wise procedure yielded 181 subject groups (14 per cent of UIA's 1,283 groups). In our final network data-set we included the organisations listed in these groups, as well as those in other groups that were linked to them. The final set of INGOs totaled 10,001 organisations (48.5 per cent of the total number of international NGOs in UIA's database<sup>5</sup>). In network analysis terms, they comprise a square matrix of 10,001 entries, with  $N*(N - 1)$  or just over 100 million possible links.

Based on this selection, UIA staff extracted from their database a directed, binary matrix of links in which the existence of a link between one organisation and another is coded as '1' and the absence of a link is coded '0'. In Table 7.2, for example, organisation A argues it has a link with organisation B, as indicated by the '1' in the cell from organisation A to organisation B; but this link is not reciprocal as organisation B reports no link with organisation A, as indicated by the '0' in the cell from organisation B to organisation A.

The matrix was created through a purposive sample of egocentric networks: nodes were included if they had links from organisations in the sample subject groups. So if organisation A was included in one of the selected subject groups, it would be included in the sample. If organisation A states that it has a link to organisation B, organisation B is also included in the sample even if it is not in the selected subject groups.

In its database UIA collects information on different types of links between INGOs<sup>6</sup>. These include the following:

- links through founding or establishment – organisation A took part in the founding of organisation B;
- structural link: for example, sister organisation or subsidiary organisation;
- link through shared or mutual assignment of key

**Table 7.4: Organisations and links by country, top 20 countries**

Rank	Organisations	%	Rank	Links sent	%	Rank	Links received	%
1	USA	19.6	1	USA	17.4	1	USA	19.0
2	UK	10.0	2	UK	10.5	2	UK	9.7
3	Belgium	9.3	3	Belgium	10.1	3	Belgium	9.5
4	France	7.8	4	France	8.0	4	France	7.8
5	Germany	4.8	5	Switzerland	5.8	5	Germany	4.8
6	Switzerland	4.2	6	Germany	4.6	6	Switzerland	4.3
7	Netherlands	3.9	7	Netherlands	4.0	7	Netherlands	4.0
8	Canada	3.0	8	Italy	3.1	8	Italy	3.1
9	Italy	3.0	9	Canada	2.9	9	Canada	3.0
10	Spain	1.6	10	Austria	1.6	10	Spain	1.8
11	Sweden	1.5	11	Australia	1.5	11	Austria	1.6
12	Australia	1.5	12	Sweden	1.5	12	Denmark	1.6
13	Austria	1.5	13	Denmark	1.4	13	Sweden	1.5
14	Japan	1.4	14	Spain	1.3	14	Japan	1.5
15	Denmark	1.4	15	Japan	1.2	15	Australia	1.5
16	India	1.2	16	India	1.2	16	India	1.3
17	Norway	0.9	17	Norway	1.0	17	Kenya	0.9
18	Kenya	0.9	18	Venezuela	0.9	18	Norway	0.9
19	Finland	0.8	19	Philippines	0.8	19	Finland	0.8
20	Philippines	0.8	20	Kenya	0.7	20	Philippines	0.8

staff, as when two organisations have the same CEO, or when organisation A nominates board members in organisation B;

- financial links, such as when organisation A donates money to organisation B, or when two or more organisations run shared fund-raising campaigns;
- activity links – joint activities or activities aimed at the cited organisation, as when organisation A collects information for organisation B;
- publication links: joint publications or publications about another organisation, as when organisation A publishes regular reports on the conduct of organisation B;
- membership links, such as those between a federation of organisations and its members; and
- other forms of relation with another NGO that were not classified.

However, since UIA did not make available to us such detailed data, we make no distinction between different types of links, and all the types of links mentioned above are treated in our analysis in the same way. Hence, the '1' from organisation A to organisation B in the example above would mean that any of the above types of links exists between these two organisations. Recall that

<sup>5</sup> According to UIA criteria, this covers organisations of types A to G, excluding bodies coded 'governmental'.

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that the UIA database probably does not cover all the NGOs involved in international activities, particularly those working in regions where, and around issues on which, data is hard to obtain. Also, since the database is generated mostly from self-reporting, bias can be expected in the data it contains. Nonetheless, it is still the most comprehensive and expansive database on such organisations, and has been used in many previous works (including previous editions of the *Global Civil Society Yearbook*) as well as by other authors such as Boli and Thomas (1997).

### Box 7.2: Civil Society and communication information policy – mapping the WSIS Global Civil Society Network

Communication and information policy (CIP) is often overlooked by analysts of transnational civil society. The use of the internet as a tool of civil society actors has been widely noted, but usually the causes involve other policy domains, such as trade, human rights or environmentalism. Yet the issues surrounding the governance of the internet itself are of critical importance in their own right.

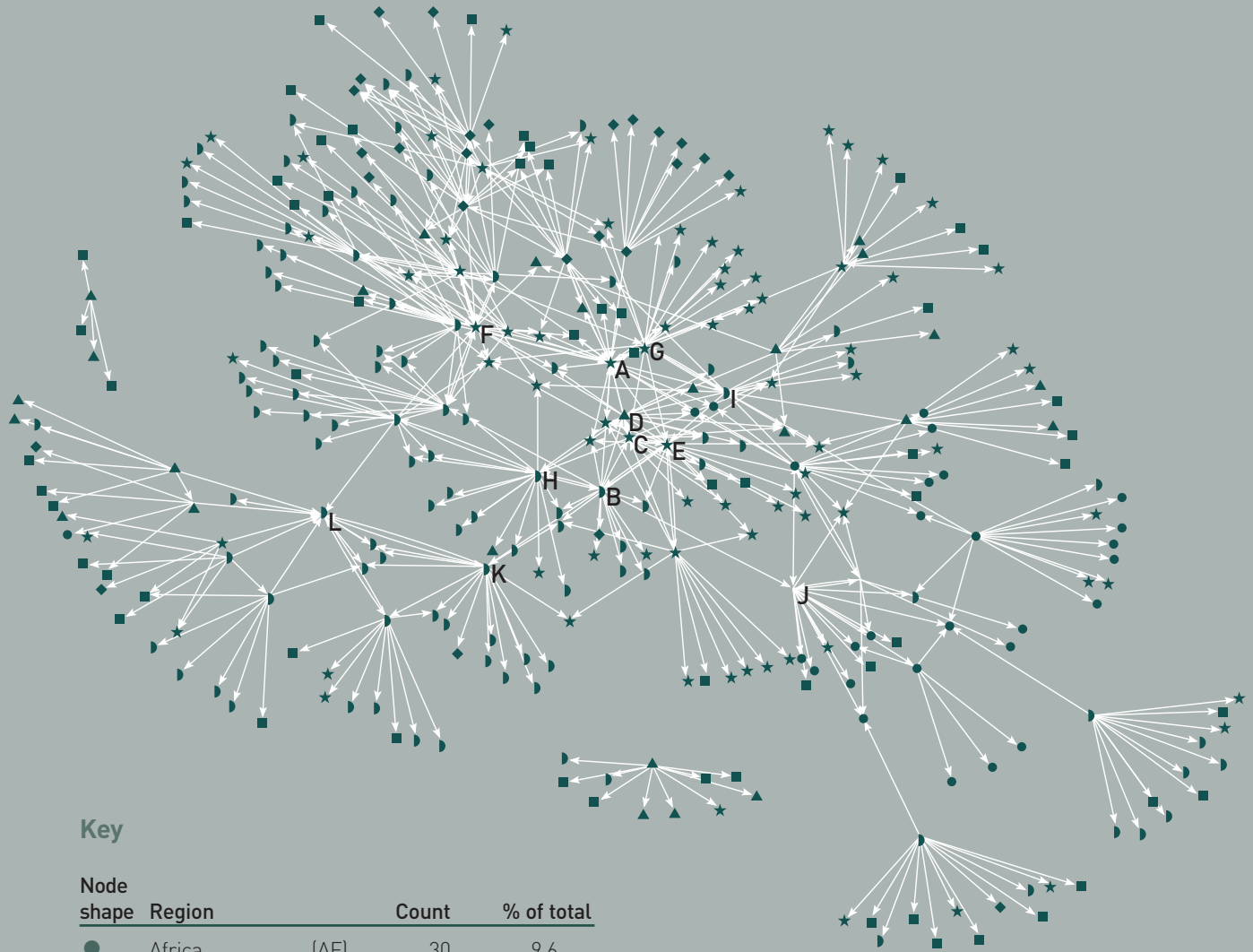
As a policy domain CIP involves such issues as telecommunications infrastructure regulation and development, privacy and freedom of expression, free software, intellectual property protection and the public domain, mass media regulation, technical standards and internet governance.

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) has generated significant activity in global civil society. WSIS provided an opportunity for civil society actors in all CIP-related issue networks to converge on a common forum. Can this activity be characterised as a global social movement, comparable to environmentalism, or is it just a collection of issue networks? Who is involved and how wide and deep is the network?

To answer those questions, researchers at Syracuse University's Convergence Center performed a social network analysis of 50 individuals involved in transnational civil society action around CIP issues. Each respondent generated an average of ten names of people to whom they were connected in interactions regarding CIP. This produced a network structure of 345 unique individuals. The results showed that WSIS has indeed brought together a broad range of CIP-issue networks, but there are still some barriers to integration of different regions and issue areas.

Figure 7.4 shows the entire interpersonal network. Note the lingering significance of geography and the importance of intermediaries in connecting NGOs to the WSIS process. In the overall network map, considered clockwise, North Americans (represented by the semi-circles) cluster around 8–10 am, Latin Americans (diamonds) cluster around noon–1 pm. Africans (circles) tend to be found at 4–5 pm, Europeans (squares) tend to be distributed around the centre.

Figure 7.4: Transnational CIP interpersonal network



Key

Node shape	Region	Count	% of total
●	Africa (AF)	30	9.6
▲	Asia Pacific (AP)	19	6.1
■	European Union (EU)	82	26.1
◆	Latin America (LA)	26	8.3
◐	North America (NA)	103	32.8
★	Unidentified	54	17.2

Although geographically diverse, the WSIS civil society network is Europe-centred. If one uses 'degree' or 'closeness' as the measure of centrality (see Table 7.5), five of the top seven most central actors are in Europe. Although there are more North Americans, the Europeans are less regionally clustered. North Americans and Europeans combined

account for about 60 per cent of the identifiable actors. A striking feature of the diagram is the minimal involvement of Asians (triangles) in the global civil society network: only 6 per cent of the identifiable actors are from Asia. There are only two Asians with significant centrality, and both are in Japan. India and China are notable by their relative absence. Most Latin Americans are connected to the WSIS civil society process via the Communication Rights in the Information Society (CRIS) campaign. Africans are connected through individuals associated with the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), the WSIS Civil Society Bureau, and development agencies.

GLOBAL CONNECTEDNESS

**Table 7.5: Ten most central actors by closeness**

Ind.	Region	Issue	Degree	Measure of centrality	
				Closeness	Betweenness
A	EU	Multiple	8.307	35.129	31.354
B	NA	Privacy; internet governance	5.431	34.701	30.692
C	EU	Internet governance	4.792	32.741	8.997
D	AP	Internet governance	4.792	32.706	9.311
E	EU	Privacy	5.751	31.841	8.208
F	EU	Communication rights	5.751	31.841	16.080
G	EU	UN process	6.070	30.716	10.289
H	NA	Internet governance	5.431	30.477	8.257
I	NA	UN process	4.153	29.753	7.554
J	AF	ICT dev; internet governance	5.431	29.473	22.947

Note: Disconnected nodes removed for analysis.

Table 7.5 reveals a concentration of centrality on individual A. By any mathematical measure (degree, closeness, and betweenness) this individual is the hub of the WSIS-CS network. This individual's organisation is involved in a variety of CIP issues, from gender to ICT development to the internet. Following in rank are six individuals who focus on internet governance, privacy, and communication rights, and two who are concerned with civil society participation in UN processes. Among other things, this data shows the degree to which the growing prominence of internet governance has brought into the centre of the WSIS network individuals who are strongly associated with that issue and active in the civil society institutions of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

Betweenness measures the degree to which a given individual connects other members of the network who are otherwise disconnected. Nodes with high levels of betweenness (individuals A, B, J, K and L) can act as gatekeepers of information flow or as liaisons between different parts of the network. In this case the same individual, A, has the highest rank, but there is a significantly different ordering below. North American activists in WSIS (including individuals K and L in Figure 7.4 whose betweenness scores exceed 17) tend to have higher betweenness scores because North American civil society advocacy groups are less integrated in the WSIS process than European groups. Likewise, African civil society tends to be connected to WSIS through a small number of intermediaries (such as individual J).

Source: Convergence Center (URL)

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our data contains only formal inter-organisational links; and links between organisations by way of individuals active in them are not covered. Also, in order to preserve their anonymity, UIA did not include the actual names of INGOs. However, a separate file listed information on activities and headquarter country.

We used a variety of network analytic techniques, including centrality, density and clustering measures as well as blockmodel, correspondence and cluster analysis<sup>7</sup>. In addition, we used other readily available data-sets as part of our overall analysis to provide some basis for comparing our results with other global patterns. These included refugee flows across borders, international student exchanges, ambassadorial and consular links, and trade flows<sup>8</sup>.

### The structure of the global INGO network

What is the scale and pattern of the global INGO network? How dense are the links in this network and how does the INGO network density compare to that of other global networks? We will present our key empirical results, and then explore their implications.

#### A sparse network

Analysis reveals that network density (calculated as the ratio of the number of existing links to that of all possible links in the network) is very thin: only 0.03 per cent. In other words, for every 10,000 possible links between INGOs in our sample, only three links exist in the data reported. Densities improve when we look at how INGO links connect countries. As Figure 7.3 shows, the matrix of country interconnections through INGO links is considerably denser, but still not as dense and well-connected as other global networks, notably those that pertain to the global economy and to inter-state relations.

If global civil society is to become a counterweight to economic globalisation in the Gramscian sense of a historic bloc and, possibly, to have a reforming and humanising impact on global injustices, our results indicate that it still has a long way to go before its network density approaches that of international trade and transnational corporations. Across the 222 countries and regions included, the trade network is omnipresent. By contrast, the INGO network analysed here covers only 168 countries and far fewer links between them. This means that economic globalisation extends farther and deeper than INGOs do.

As Figure 7.3 shows, most other networks analysed here are denser than the INGO network. The only network less dense is that of refugee flows (UNHCR 2004: Table 8). This comes as no surprise, especially since only few countries serve as hosts for this type of flow, and refugee flows are rarely reciprocal. Other networks are considerably denser: countries are 50 per cent more connected by placing embassies in each other (Maher et al. 2001), 100 per cent more connected by trade flows (UN URL), and 300 per cent more connected by international students' flows (UNESCO 2004) than they are by INGOs.

#### A pronounced core-periphery structure

A well-known trait of global civil society is its uneven global distribution (Anheier and Stares 2002; Anheier and Katz 2003; Kaldor, Anheier, and Glasius 2003), with concentrations in some parts of the world and a virtual absence in others. The picture that emerges with INGOs is no different. INGOs in our network – that is, organisations that deal with issues related to core global governance issues – come predominantly from the developed world: 81 per cent of the organisations in the network are from high-income economies, 54 per cent from Europe and Central Asia (but almost all of those are from European Union member states) and 23 per cent from North America (Table 7.3). The distribution of network links, both sent and received, is basically the same.

A glimpse at the distribution of organisations in the network by countries in Table 7.4 shows that the US alone accounts for 20 per cent of all organisations in the network. The 15 countries that were EU members in 2003 account for 47 per cent. In other words, while the US is the central country of INGO networks, the EU is its central region. Together, the EU and the US represent 66 per cent of all organisations, 65 per cent of all links sent, and 66 per cent of all links received.

Similar Western European bias was found in the work done by Milton Mueller et al. on global civil society networks dealing with communication information policy (see Box 7.2). Since they analyse individual networks, the similar findings suggest that comparable

<sup>7</sup> For a comprehensive review see Wasserman and Faust (1994); for an application to global civil society networks see Anheier and Katz (2004).

<sup>8</sup> Sources for this network data include, respectively: UNHCR (2004); UNESCO (2004); Maher et al. (2001); UN (2005).



patterns can be found in the organisational level and the individual level of global civil society networks. It is worth noting, however, that the structure Mueller et al. find may reflect the issue their network deals with, namely, IT and communications, which is strongly affected by the global digital divide. It is not surprising, then, to find there such a Eurocentric bias. Networks dealing with other issues might not be as centred in the developed North, as was shown in numerous cases (see for example the Latin American bias in the networks of international farmers' associations, Edelman 2003).

By contrast, among the top 20 countries represented in the network, only three are developing nations: India, Kenya, and the Philippines. All three rank 16th or lower, in terms of their share both in the total number of organisations and in the total number of links. In the count of outgoing links, Venezuela makes an appearance in the 18th place. Hence, it appears that developed countries are home to the majority of the network's nodes as well as the bulk of the links. Yet it also turns out that the description offered by some (for example, Lindenbergh and Bryant 2001), whereby the shape of the global INGO network resembles a star, with Northern INGOs being the hub of the star and Southern INGOs the spokes, fails to receive much empirical support in our analysis. If such an unequal relationship actually held, we would expect the share of Southern INGOs in the number of links to be smaller than their share in the number of organisations. Our findings show, however, that the share of Southern INGOs in the number of network nodes closely reflects their share in the number of network links. One can deduce that organisations in the global South, once they emerge, create just as many links on average as their Northern counterparts. But they create more links with Northern INGOs, particularly in a few selected nations, than with other Southern INGOs.

Preliminary analyses of INGO networks in a smaller sample taken from the UIA database, and of INGOs participating in events during the 2004 World Social Forum (Anheier and Katz 2004), show in each case a clear core-periphery structure whereby Northern INGOs form the core and INGOs from the global South are located at the periphery. Our current data, too, reveal such a sharp distinction between a core and a periphery at the country level. A core-periphery analysis on the country matrix (generated from the INGO matrix as input) places three countries at the core of INGO network structure – the US, the UK, and

Belgium. All other countries are placed at the periphery. This finding clearly reflects the impact of political centres of power (US and EU) and the legacy of colonial and post-colonial history (London).

As Table 7.6 shows, the core countries play a major role in the network. Links between INGOs in the three core countries account for 15 per cent of the links in the entire network, and links from periphery organisations to the core and vice versa account for 47 per cent of the total. In all, almost two in every three links between INGOs in our network involve an organisation in Belgium, the UK or the US. Finally, links among INGOs in peripheral countries account for 38 per cent of the total connectivity in the network, divided between 165 countries. Moreover, under a tenth of those, or 3 per cent of all links, are between two developing or in-transition countries. The rest (35 per cent of total links) involve at least one developed country. In other words, the structure of the network reveals a coherent and well-connected centre located entirely in the developed North, and a dispersed and less well-connected periphery which includes the entire global South.

When we examine the spatial distribution of network centrality (using degree centrality scores, which measure centrality by number of connected nodes), this core-periphery structure becomes very clear. As Figure 7.5 shows, the network density is far higher in Western Europe and the north-eastern seaboard of North America than anywhere else. Yet, several secondary network hubs seem to be emerging in the developing world: Nairobi, Johannesburg and Lagos in Africa; New Delhi in Asia; Buenos Aires, São Paulo and Caracas in Latin America; Cairo, Amman and Jerusalem in the Middle East. Yet from this map we also see that vast areas of the world, among them highly vulnerable and fragile regions, are not included in the INGO network structure.

### A mostly cohesive structure

The core-periphery analysis tells us how egalitarian the INGO network is in terms of the distribution of links. In our case it actually tells us that the network is unevenly divided between North and South, and between the capitals of global governance and finance and the rest of the world. But, while the core-periphery analysis tells us that the network has a clear hierarchical structure, it does not tell us whether the network is fragmented or cohesive. A network can be hierarchical but still be cohesive in that it is not

**Table 7.6: Core-periphery links**

	Share of total links (%)
Links involving core countries	62
Within-core links	15
Core-periphery links	47
Within-periphery links	38
All links	100 (= 29,863)

broken into loosely connected sub-networks. Such cohesiveness is important if we want INGOs to serve as an infrastructure for a global, rather than a loosely associated collection of regional, interest-bound, or sectarian, civil societies. As mentioned above, networks' diversity can have a considerable impact on their effectiveness.

The key question here is this: what is the degree of fragmentation of the global INGO network? To answer it, we need to analyse the network for clustering. Is the network completely unified in one more or less inclusive structure, or is it broken up into mutually exclusive groups? Or is the structure somewhere in between these two extremes, as suggested by Richard Falk's observations (2003) that global civil society is still divided into partly complementary and partly overlapping, movements? Curiously, all three possibilities seem to be valid at the same time, at least to some extent. To find this out, we performed correspondence analysis<sup>9</sup> on the INGO matrix. Correspondence analysis looks at the patterns of connections in the networks, and draws the nodes in a multidimensional space based on how similar their connections are. Two organisations that have an identical set of links will be charted next to each other. As Figure 7.6 shows, the analysis produced six clusters (few organisations were not included in any of those clusters). The first of the clusters is extremely large, and it accounts for over nine-tenths of the entire network in term of nodes as well as of links (Table 7.7). It includes all but 11 of the major hubs of the network (164 organisations in our network which have at least 25 links with other organisations). This group of well-connected organisations is also extremely interconnected, creating a very dense web of links between them. By contrast, the major cluster and the minor clusters are to a great

extent disconnected from each other. Given the fact that over 90 per cent of the network is contained in one cluster, this finding is not so alarming. It means that, overall, the network is considerably unified and that fragmentation in the network is limited, but at the same time it shows that global civil society has a marginal tendency to form disparate, cohesive and exclusive blocs, a fact whose scope and impact should be followed closely in the future.

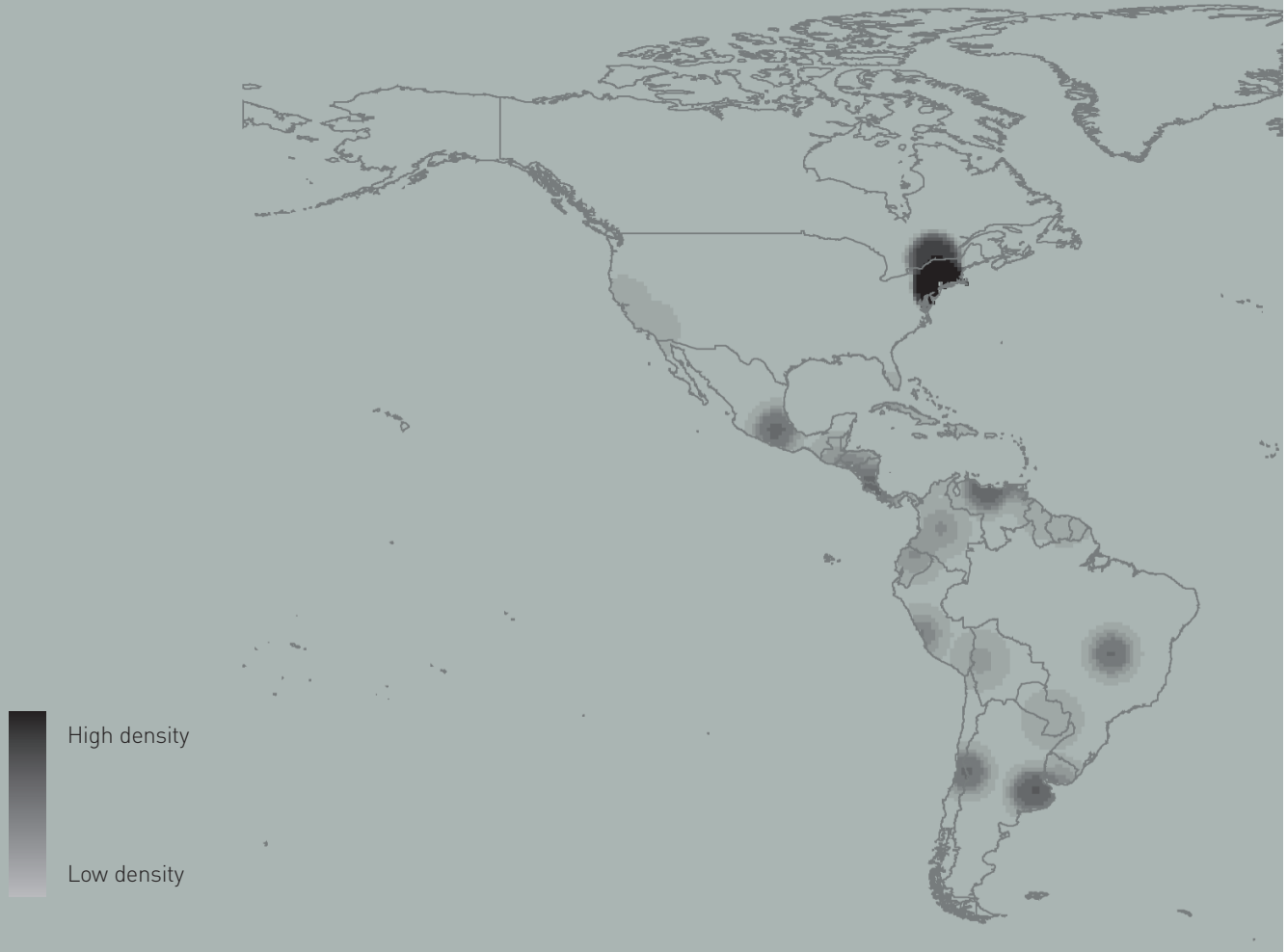
A look at the composition of the clusters by subjects as well as by countries reveals no particular patterns; that is, none of the clusters is issue-specific or region-specific. All clusters have a similar mix of organisations from all regions and income groups dealing with all manner of issues. This reflects a network that is substantially cohesive in terms of who is connected with whom, while at the same time being extremely diverse.

We now explore the implications of our findings. We test them against conventional expectations about INGOs within the broader context of global governance.

### Implications

Analysing the network among 10,001 INGOs and 29,863 links revealed three major results. First, the network, as measured by the UIA annual survey, is very sparse, which indicates that the inter-organisational infrastructure of global civil society is less developed than other globalisation processes. Second, a pronounced centre-periphery structure reproduces rather than compensates for North-South splits in

<sup>9</sup> Developed by Michael Greenacre and Jörg Blasius (1994), correspondence analysis is used in network analysis to extract cohesive groups (groups that have more links between their members, and fewer links with members from other groups) from a larger matrix, by locating groups of nodes with similar tie patterns (for a succinct summary, see Clausen 1998).

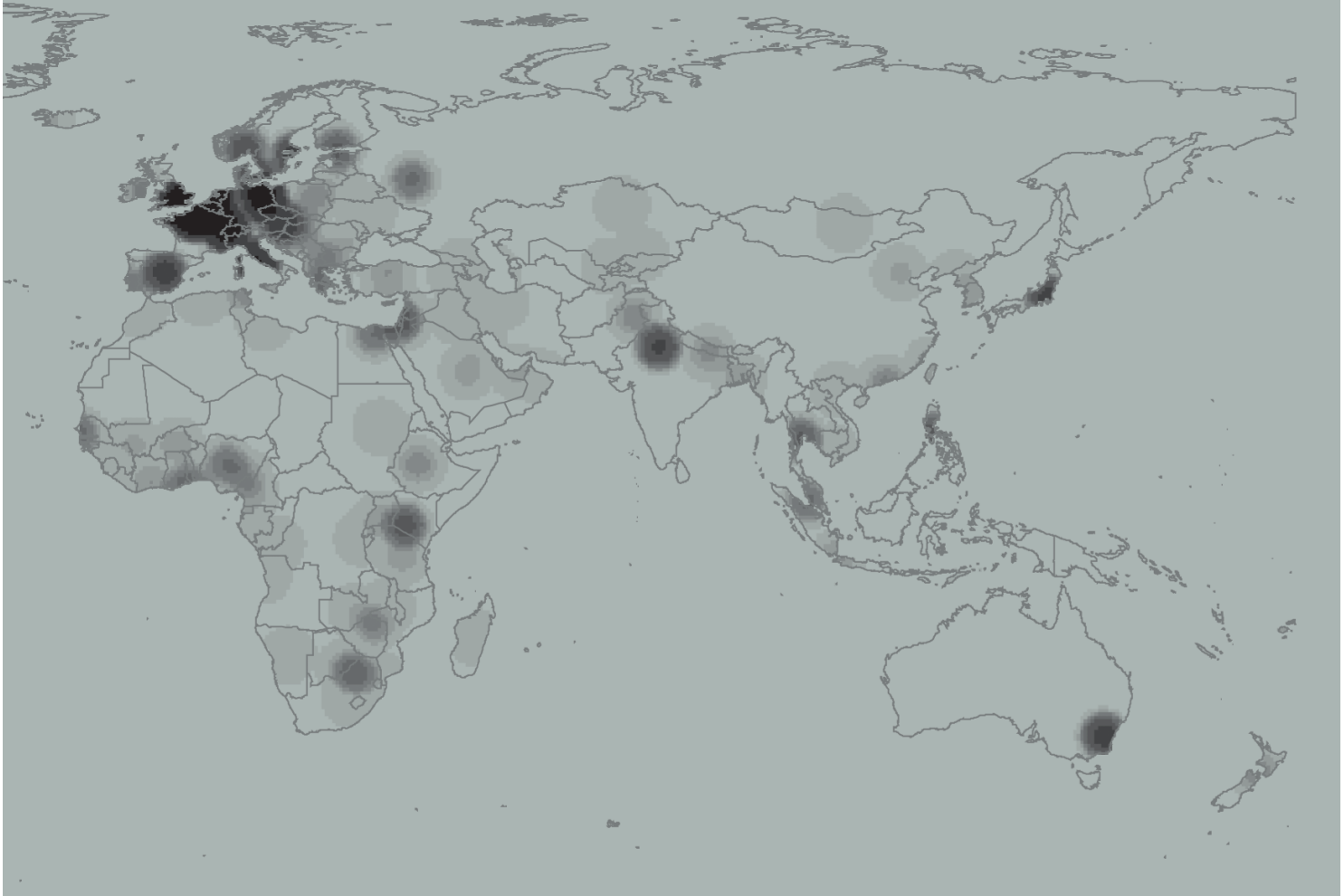
**Figure 7.5: Spatial distribution of network centrality**

other dimensions of globalisation, notably trade flows. Third, correspondence analysis points to a cohesive network with some marginal, almost negligible, tendencies towards fragmentation.

INGOs are frequently portrayed as a potential counterweight to the ills of globalisation (Clark 2003; Lindenberg and Bryant 2001; Kaldor, Anheier, and Glasius 2003). Keeping markets and governments at bay, they are seen as organisations dedicated to international understanding, introducing greater participation, giving voice to under-represented groups and encouraging greater global equity. As quintessential institutions of global civil society, it is argued, INGOs are the human face of globalisation, and at the forefront of a struggle for better global governance.

Clearly, these statements are based on a mix of implicit assumptions and reflect normative expectations. In particular they assume some form of combined or collective action among INGOs, however loosely coordinated or structured, toward humanising globalisation or some related goal; they also assume a generally positive INGO contribution to the creation of an effective counterweight vis-à-vis global market players and hegemonic states.

But how real are these expectations? While the analysis presented here is only preliminary, and based on partial and incomplete information, our results nonetheless lead us to be cautious about the structural impact of INGOs. Our findings reveal a very sparse network, unevenly dispersed around the globe,



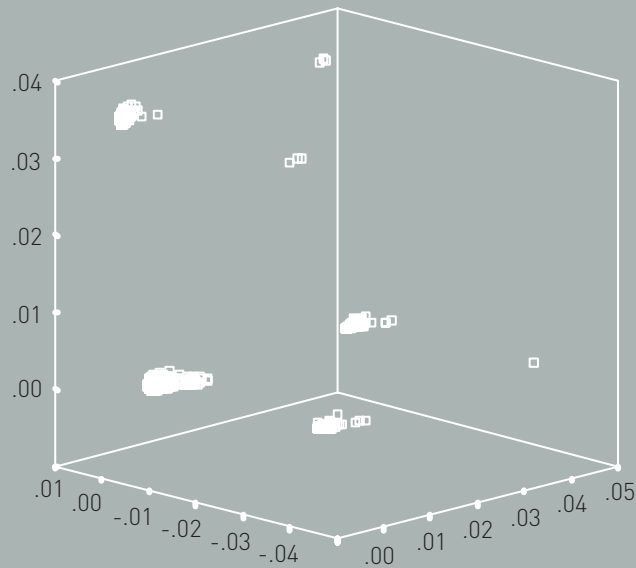
with Europe and North America accounting for largest share of the nodes and links of the network. While some minor Southern foci exist, the global INGO network is still predominantly a Northern and Western phenomenon. Furthermore, it is highly concentrated where the global centres of power – political and economic – are located: in New York, Washington, London and Brussels.

As we have seen, the network of INGOs, comprising the infrastructure of global civil society, is only slightly fragmented, but when fragmentation occurs it creates relatively isolated pockets. These pockets are not distinguishable in terms of issue or regional focus, and so it is more likely from the knowledge we possess at the moment that they are competing rather than

complementary. What does this mean for global civil society and global governance?

The end of the cold war and the processes of globalisation have engendered change and ambiguity in the locus of power in the world system. David Held (2004: 89–93) describes two main gaps that have evolved in the global governance system as a result of these changes: jurisdictional and incentive. The jurisdictional gap has to do with the incongruence between current policy-making units, which are for the most part local, and the global scope and character of present social problems. The incentive gap relates to the unwillingness of institutions, in particular international organisations like the UN, the IMF or the World Bank, to undertake policy innovation

**Figure 7.6: Clusters of connectivity in the global civil society network**



and reform. The result is not only an incoherent system but also an institutional vacuum: we lack institutions that address many of the issues at hand. The current system is crippled by a lack of clear distribution of labour, overlapping jurisdictions, and procedural ambiguity. This melange of political and legal structures, John Keane (2001) argues, is present in many policy areas, involving nation states and regional and local governments, inter-governmental agencies and programmes, inter-governmental structures, INGOs and TNCs. The system of global governance also includes global accords, treaties, and conventions; policy summits and meetings; and more forms of public deliberation and conflict resolution.

Held (2004: 90, 94) adds that the lack of ownership of global problems causes some problems to be claimed by several institutions, often in an uncoordinated and even conflicting fashion, while other problems or issues are tossed between institutions like hot potatoes, eventually falling between the cracks in the global governance system. In addition, in the absence of any significant supranational entity to regulate

global governance processes, particularly in light of the deepening weakness of the UN system (Krut 1997; Ollila 2003), global governance actors lack any motivation to act and often prefer to free ride.

Equity and representation are also prominent problems in the systems of global governance. Global governance is distorted in the sense that it promotes the interests of the most powerful states and global social actors (IGOs, TNCs) and impedes the achievement of global social justice and human security (Rosenau 2002; Held 2004). It is a product of global power inequalities, and reproduces those very inequalities. TNCs, largely unchecked by most governments, enjoy increasing power, while they remain accountable primarily to their shareholders, who are typically in the industrial North. This situation increases other deficits in the global governance system, that is, the lack of equity and representation characteristic of global governance institutions, most specifically around issues of welfare, human security and poverty reduction, issues which have no strong actor to promote them.

The result of this uneven 'playing field' is an increasing

**Table 7.7: Organisations and links by cluster**

Cluster	Organisations (%)	Links sent (%)	Links received (%)	Ratio sent/received
1	93.20%	93.60%	91.14%	1.03
2	1.37%	1.23%	1.74%	0.71
3	0.94%	0.91%	1.28%	0.71
4	1.02%	1.28%	1.37%	0.93
5	1.36%	1.01%	1.81%	0.56
6	2.02%	1.86%	2.60%	0.71

gap between the level of development of rules promoting free markets and those promoting social justice (Held 2004: 92; Held and McGrew 2002: 1–21). Underrepresentation of global constituencies, especially among poor nations and indigenous people, is exacerbated by the unequal decision making structures of some prominent IGOs, particularly those dealing with economic regulation such as the WTO and the IMF, and the complete absence of many countries from bodies such as G8. Held (2004: 15) points out that the key mechanism for popular participation in political processes in democratic systems, namely, electoral and campaigning politics, is not relevant to global governance institutions, since they have no direct link to a politically bounded population.

Moreover, the limited access to and supervision of global governance institutions that most governments enjoy is usually in the hands of state bureaucrats who have no direct ties to voters (Scholte 2004). Many governance institutions lack mechanisms to introduce popular inputs in their deliberations, and in many cases the introduction of INGOs is no more than a token gesture (Held 2004). Consequently, there is growing incongruence between those affected by public goods (and 'bads') and those involved in deciding on and providing them. In addition, systems of global governance lack the checks and balances that are essential for democratic regimes.

Can global civil society, and especially its most prominent actors – INGOs – cure these ills of the global governance system? Our results suggest an answer to this question along the lines of 'potentially and to some extent yes, but currently no'. Our findings can be divided into 'good news' and 'bad news'. Let's start

with the good news. Our analysis finds the global civil society network notably cohesive, as indicated by its low level of fragmentation. Such cohesion means that there is only one INGO network in which almost all INGOs are reachable, and only a few are relatively disconnected in smaller sub-groups. The import of this is that potentially all INGOs in this network can be brought to the discussion table, directly or indirectly, and that all voices, regions, issues and constituencies are represented in this network. This characteristic of the INGO network is conducive to alleviating the jurisdictional gap – global civil society can be a holistic and coherent actor in the global governance system, one that can address many critical issues synergistically. This compositional diversity, as shown in the cases of the Narmada dam and the debt reduction networks discussed above, also enhances the effectiveness of the network.

This characteristic of global civil society is also conducive to the development of a global movement of sorts, perhaps a version of Antonio Gramsci's counter-hegemonic historic bloc. For Gramsci, an opposition movement to hegemonic institutions can develop into a true counter-hegemonic historic bloc only if all the subaltern groups are represented in it. The existing data show that, at least at the level of the organisational networks of global civil society, the INGO network is all-inclusive, and practically all the actors in our analysis are included in the main network cluster. Any exclusions from the main cluster are not systematic, that is, our findings show that no single region or constituency is excluded from the global structure. The very low degree of fragmentation we found in this giant network is one precondition of the

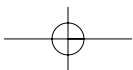
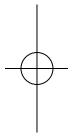
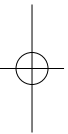
emergence of a global bloc. Other preconditions exist, of course, and, as we discuss below, a few of them are still to be met.

This optimistic finding is by no means enough to secure either a change to the global governance system or the development of a global counter-hegemonic movement. The bad news that emerges from our study is that the global INGO network is greatly underdeveloped, especially in the developing world. The overall sparseness of the global INGO network and its limited global reach relative to other global networks, particularly those of international relations and global trade, restricts its capacity to become a serious and viable force in the global governance system. First, it is less omnipresent, and lacks a local footing in all the places where it is relevant. While international organisations such as Greenpeace or Human Rights Watch address problems related to their organisational mandate anywhere in the world, even if local NGOs are not linked to the global network we have analysed here, the additional benefit of local-global collaboration and the potential advantage of the 'boomerang effect' (Keck and Sikkink 1998) will be missing from such action.

Another concern is the underdevelopment of the INGO presence and structure in the South. Indeed, our findings show that even though INGOs from the global South are symmetrically and proportionally involved in the global INGO network, there are simply not enough of them, and those few are locked into a peripheral position. As it appears now, it is not very likely that global civil society in its current structure can contribute to increasing the representativeness of the global governance system, or increase substantially the participation of currently marginalised constituencies in global governance processes. It is too concentrated in the North, its density in the South is dismal, and as a result its capacity to legitimately make the authentic voices of Southern communities heard in the corridors of global power is very limited.

Presumably, were the number of INGOs in the South to increase, and at a faster rate than the centre, and were present patterns of inclusion to continue and strengthen, particularly an intentional thickening of the links between Northern and Southern NGOs, such a future global INGO network would be more likely to accrue the global reach needed for it to become a significant element of the infrastructure of global civil

society. It could even become an effective element of global governance, and achieve better representation and improved legitimacy based on greater inclusion and participation. Only then, we suggest, could the global INGO network serve as the vehicle for the emergence of a historic bloc and potentially act as a countervailing force in the globalisation process.





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