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Tip sheet: *How to Collaborations with Civil Society Organizations as a journalist*

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Introduction to the Topic (2-3 sentences)

Civil society and journalism do not need to be allies or friends, but they do need to work together under a symbiotic logic to help produce quality information as a public good, enabling the public to make decisions based on relevant data, and creating favorable conditions for the development of collaborative processes that foster systemic changes in societies.

Things to do

1. **Trust is the foundation -** It's not decreed; it's earned through openness, fairness, and time.
2. **Embrace tensions -** Friction is not failure; it's fuel for depth, creativity, and balance.
3. **Purpose lights the way -** Collaboration without a shared "why" drifts; with it, direction sharpens.
4. **Climb, don't rush -** Change matures step by step; the climb itself teaches endurance.
5. **Join forces for the impossible -** The biggest stories are too heavy for one voice alone.
6. **Share to expand -** What's given doesn't diminish; it multiplies when it circulates.
7. **Count echoes, not clicks -** The measure of impact lies in what lingers, not what trends.
8. **Fuse worlds -** Let data dance with poetry, and facts breathe through emotion.
9. **Care as resistance -** Looking after one another is a form of courage in uncertain terrain.
10. **Build truth together -** Credibility grows from collective integrity - a plural, living trust.

Things to watch out for

How to Measure Impact Through Resonance

For a long time, media outlets measured their success in views, clicks, likes, and shares. But when a media organization partners with a social organization, those numbers become insufficient. A story might not go viral and still change a law, a routine, or a public conversation.

The Invisible Agreement

Every partnership needs its own compass. Media outlets tend to talk about reach, while organizations talk about influence. But the true meeting point lies in defining together what it means to "have achieved something." The Paraguayan outlet *El Surti*, for example, doesn't ask how many people read a story, but whether that story helped move something — an idea, a policy, a conscience.

Measuring Movement, Not Noise

The Intercept's Impact Score follows that logic. It measures both visible effects — debates, reforms, institutional reactions — and invisible ones: people who changed their minds or began talking about a topic they previously ignored. It's a way of measuring movement, not noise.

Usefulness as a Measure of Value

A podcast listened to by a thousand people can have more impact than an investigation with millions of views if it manages to mobilize a community. The value lies in usefulness, not quantity. Impact is not about how many listen — it's about who does something afterward.

Examples/Case Studies of investigative stories (if relevant)
Strengthening Grassroots Recyclers as Actors in Global Negotiations

In Latin America and the Caribbean, people who collect and sell recyclable materials on the streets were long stigmatized and marginalized. Fundación Avina incorporated into its Inclusive Recycling program a media positioning and advocacy strategy to shift perceptions toward recognizing recycling as a dignified profession with high social impact. In partnership with Fundación Gabo, in-person and virtual workshops were held to train more than 3,000 journalists, and over 50 journalism production grants were awarded to bring the issue onto the public agenda.

* A partnership with a key actor such as Fundación Gabo helped spark public conversation around a topic that was previously absent from the agenda.
* Training sessions were organized to build understanding of key concepts, along with field visits to witness cases firsthand, and support mechanisms for journalistic production to enhance visibility.
* Experienced journalists, known for their professionalism and broad perspectives, took on the challenge of exploring a new issue, enriching it with their expertise in cross-cutting topics.

* Civil society organizations facilitated access to sources that are often hard to find due to their low visibility. They also contributed valuable data — addressing one of the major challenges in the recycling chain: the lack of reliable information.

Further Reading/Resources

Guide to Designing Symbiotic Relationships Between Journalism and Civil Society
https://inncontext.net/guia/