Change often happens slowly, over time. We acknowledge this fact with the Civil Society Programme ‘Domains of Change’ – a breakdown of the different areas in which change needs to happen in order for PEN Centres to contribute to the overall aim of the Civil Society Programme: Free expression is understood and asserted - Civil Society expresses itself creatively and critically, enhancing freedom of expression policy and practice.

These domains can act as a guide for you plan and monitor your project to ensure that it is strategic and impactful. They are intended to help you to make your short, medium and long term aims specific and realistic, and to break down the big change you are working towards into small, achievable steps. By identifying and understanding the changes (positive or negative) that you have seen in each of these areas – and describing what they look like from a variety of perspectives - you will be measuring impact. This needs to be an ongoing process throughout your project, and you need to be collecting a variety of evidence (e.g. quotes, feedback forms, attendance sheets) to show how these changes have affected different people or contexts.
DOMAIN 1: SPACES

By creating diverse and fertile spaces for literature, language, ideas, opinions, debate and dialogue to flourish, and creating opportunities for diverse, dissenting and unknown writers to be heard, the PEN International Civil Society Programme will influence public and political spheres.

Changes in this area might happen through creating spaces in schools that celebrate and encourage literature and critical thinking. It could be a focus on increasing the number of opportunities for writers to speak out in public events or at literary workshops. Space could be created for dialogue and debate on a radio programme, or via a website.

DOMAIN 2: LAW, POLICY AND PRACTICE

Through the Civil Society programme, Centres will be able to identify and articulate areas where law, policy and/or practice need to change, and build their capacity to develop targeted advocacy strategies to affect those changes. The Centre will participate and provide opportunities and platforms for writers and other stakeholders, to influence policy makers.

For example, the first step to change might be the Centre creating a strong advocacy strategy; a civil society project might be aiming to change legislation in terms of freedom of expression, education or mother language policy. Change could be the Centre being invited onto an advisory panel, attending advocacy meetings with key stakeholders, contributing to a draft bill or being involved in the drafting of submissions to the UN or other bodies.

DOMAIN 3: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND STANDING

Through the Civil Society programme, Centres will build a diverse and engaged membership representative of their context. They will increase their skills in project planning and management and their ability in running sustainable projects. They will have become part of a strong coalition of civil society actors and be widely seen as a strong voice on freedom of expression issues.

For example, any changes in the membership of the Centre as well as the audiences the Centre is reaching through their public events and workshops. Additionally, any changes in the skills and expertise of a PEN Centre and its members, through partnerships and through the civil society project. Any examples of changes in the way the PEN Centre is using learning to inform project planning (altering the project based on participant feedback etc). Change could also be an improvement in the Centres local knowledge and understanding of the national context and issues, which could result in increased standing of the Centre. This should lead to the sustainability of the project itself.