



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Central America Regional Forum on Arts, Culture and Human Rights takes place June 18-20 - Tegucigalpa, Honduras

freeDimensional (www.freedimensional.org), **Colectivo Hormiga** (<http://colectivohormiga.com>) **HIVOS** (www.hivos.nl) are pleased to announce the launch of the Central American Regional Forum on Arts, Culture and Human Rights, June 18-20 in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

The Forum is the first-ever three-day participatory forum aiming to support, unite and inspire the arts & culture and human rights sectors in Central America to collaborate, uphold freedom of expression as a basic human right and acknowledge artists and culture workers as primary defenders of it. Approximately 50 Central American cultural and human rights organizations will participate.

Increasing numbers of artists and culture workers are using their artistic expression to support human rights and social justice objectives for their communities. In return they can face physical violence, imprisonment or even death. It is crucial that human rights, free speech and culture organizations work together to ensure their safety and the continuation of the important work they do for society.

The Regional Forum will trace the history of socially and politically engaged artistic practice in Central America, identify common issues and experiences, develop a collective vision of the future and lead to the establishment of a regional platform for exchange and collaboration between artists and culture workers working towards transformative societal change.

The Regional Forum is guided by **freeDimensional**, an internationally networked organization, that assists artists, culture workers and communicators at risk by brokering resources and services, linking them to art spaces that can provide temporary safe haven and by facilitating the development of safety and support networks in regions around the world.

Based in Tegucigalpa, **Colectivo Hormiga** is a group of five organizations committed to art, linked to the community and dedicated to the enhancement of the old Casa Central Penitentiary of Honduras as an open and culturally diverse space.

HIVOS is an international development organization based in the Netherlands guided by humanist values. Working in collaboration with local civil society organizations in developing countries, Hivos aims to contribute to a free, fair and sustainable world.

The Forum is supported by **Actors for Change** (<http://central-america.hivos.org/actors-change>), a program funded by **SIDA** (<http://www.sida.se>) and implemented by Hivos throughout Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Actors for Change include independent media, journalists, artists, cultural activists, and human rights defenders and aims to build a collective strategy that includes enhancing free expression, capacity building, and safety and protection.

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