



2020 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
12th EDITION – NOVEMBER 2021



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Developed by:

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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed herein are those of the panelists and other project researchers and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or FHI 360.

Cover Photo: Residents of Mombasa, Kenya have long complained about the state of roads, the water supply, health care, and other services, but they did not believe that they could get their county officials to listen to them. On March 13, 2020, for the first time, one community gathered to share ideas about how to track county spending on services and community oversight of budgeted infrastructure projects. Through USAID's Agile and Harmonized Assistance for Devolved Institutions (AHADI) Project, over 1.4 million community members across Kenya participated in civic education trainings and learned how to advocate effectively for their needs. With project support, over 140 policies and laws now reflect citizen input and priorities, a key component to enhancing accountable governance and inclusive service delivery in Kenya.

Photo Credit: Rose Odengo for the State University of New York's AHADI project

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INTRODUCTION

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is pleased to present the twelfth edition of the *Civil Society Organization (CSO) Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa*, covering developments during the unprecedented circumstances of 2020, during which the COVID-19 pandemic affected all aspects of life around the globe.

This year's Index reports on the state of CSO sectors in thirty-two countries in the region. It addresses both advances and setbacks in seven key components or "dimensions" of the sustainability of the civil society sector, all of which were impacted by the pandemic in 2020: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, sectoral infrastructure, and public image. The Index is intended to be a useful source of information for local CSOs, governments, donors, academics, and others who want to better understand and monitor key aspects of sustainability in the CSO sector.

The Index's methodology relies on CSO practitioners and researchers, who in each country form an expert panel to assess and rate these dimensions of CSO sustainability during the year. The panels in each country—most of which met virtually this year—agree on scores for each dimension, which range from 1 (the most enhanced level of sustainability) to 7 (the most impeded). The dimension scores are then averaged to produce an overall sustainability score for the CSO sector of a given country. Additionally, electronic surveys were carried out among CSOs in eight countries to increase the representativeness and quality of these reports. An international editorial committee composed of technical and regional experts reviews each panel's scores and the corresponding narrative reports, with the aim of maintaining consistent approaches and standards to facilitate cross-country comparisons. Further details about the methodology used to calculate scores and produce narrative reports are provided in Annex A.

The *CSO Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa* complements similar publications covering other regions. The various regional editions of the *2020 CSO Sustainability Index* assess the civil society sectors in seventy-three countries, including twenty-four in Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, eight in the Middle East and North Africa, eight in Asia, and Mexico.

A publication of this type would not be possible without the contributions of many individuals and organizations. We are especially grateful to our local implementing partners, who play the critical role of facilitating the expert panel meetings and writing the country reports. We would also like to thank the many CSO representatives and experts, USAID partners, and international donors who participate in the expert panels in each country. Their knowledge, perceptions, insights, and contributions are the foundation upon which this Index is based.

In addition, special thanks goes to Eka Imerlishvili from FHI 360, the project manager; Marilyn Wyatt and Jennifer Stuart from ICNL, the report's editors; and Mariam Afrasiabi, Kellie Burk, and Christina Del Castillo from USAID. A full list of acknowledgements can be found on page ii.

Happy reading,

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Civil society in sub-Saharan Africa suffered severe setbacks in 2020. While the causes included political, economic, security, and climate-related factors, the COVID-19 pandemic introduced new and unusual complications. Although sub-Saharan Africa was initially less affected than other parts of the world, by the end of the year, the virus had had a profound effect on CSO sectors throughout the region. Most troubling was the weakening of CSOs' organizational capacity and financial viability and the increasingly constrained legal environments in many countries. At the same time, CSOs' advocacy efforts, service provision, public image, and the sectoral infrastructure often proved resistant to the debilitating effects of the pandemic and, in some countries, even improved as organizations tackled the challenges of the pandemic with energy and confidence. As the *2020 CSO Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa* shows, the pandemic served as a litmus test for civil society, confirming its ability to withstand extreme stress in some areas while exposing acute vulnerabilities in others.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA CONFRONTS COVID-19

The COVID-19 virus was first reported in sub-Saharan Africa in late February 2020. But throughout the spring and summer, as the virus spread rapidly through Europe and North America, the number of cases reported in sub-Saharan Africa remained relatively low. West Africa reported the highest number of infections, followed closely by southern Africa and, at a distance, central and eastern Africa, according to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) of the African Union (AU). The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that even after several waves of infection, by September 2021, the cumulative number of cases in sub-Saharan Africa was just 5.75 million, or 2.5 percent of total cases worldwide, even though the region represents about 14 percent of the world's population.

Several explanations have been offered for the region's early avoidance of the devastating public health crisis. Some observers believe that youthful populations and outdoor lifestyles were mainly responsible. Others point to widespread underreporting of the number of infections. In any case, most experts agree that proactive responses by regional bodies and national governments helped minimize the spread of the virus. AU member countries tackled the disease early in cooperation with the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, whose foresight in preparing for the arrival of COVID-19 has been praised by international experts. In February 2020, the Africa CDC established the Africa Taskforce for Novel Coronavirus-19 to help member states plan their pandemic responses. The Africa CDC and the AU also developed a joint strategy to coordinate national efforts, promote evidence-based public health practices, and rely on local resources in critical areas such as surveillance, screening, testing, and case management.

Many national governments responded forcefully to the pandemic threat, sometimes by introducing lockdowns and other measures even before any cases of the virus had been reported in their countries. Most governments implemented containment measures aligned with WHO recommendations, such as shutting businesses and schools, limiting travel, banning large assemblies, and mandating mask-wearing and social distancing. Countries such as Benin, Namibia, and Nigeria responded by promptly setting up task forces, acquiring medical and hygienic supplies, or equipping quarantine and treatment centers. Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, and other countries established special funds to support households and help businesses survive the pandemic's destabilizing economic impact. Full-scale lockdowns were widespread in the spring but generally eased off by summer. A few governments, notably those in Tanzania and Burundi, downplayed the gravity of the pandemic and rejected the usefulness of restrictions, but these responses were uncommon.

But although they helped slow the spread of infection, pandemic measures—some of which remained in place throughout the year—burdened populations across the region. The closure of markets ruined livelihoods in the informal sector, which accounts for 80 percent of jobs in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the World Bank. People dwelling in informal settlements and refugee camps had even more limited access than usual to critical services such as water and health care. Children were unable to attend school, and most of them did not have the means to learn from home. Other vulnerable populations, such as people living with disabilities or HIV/AIDS, were unable to obtain medical treatment, counseling, or sometimes even food.

In addition, many people were misled by disinformation about the pandemic, which was rife on the social media platforms throughout the region. This problem was severe enough to prompt the WHO to launch the Africa Infodemic Response Alliance, which unites media organizations, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, and technological resources such as big data to debunk dangerous misinformation about the pandemic before it goes viral.

Taken together, all of these forces—economic collapse, weakened health services, disrupted access to educational services, and inaccurate or unreliable information—conspired to weaken citizens' confidence in their governments and contribute to the widespread unrest that characterized the region's social and political environment during the year.

INSECURITY AND ECONOMIC DECLINE

Against the backdrop of the pandemic, attacks by non-state armed groups and violent confrontations between regional and local factions continued to destabilize sub-Saharan Africa in 2020. Some of the most brutal attacks took place in the Sahel. In Burkina Faso, militant jihadists killed more than 2,000 people and displaced 1 million people from their homes, according to the United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Nigerien communities suffered through raids by insurgents tied to the Islamic State, Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, and other extremist groups, while in Nigeria and Cameroon, civilians and schoolchildren were targeted by Boko Haram. Elsewhere, in the Cabo Delgado region of Mozambique, extremists affiliated with the Islamic State launched vicious offenses that drove more than a half million people from their homes. Kenyan civilians were killed or abducted in horrific attacks by al-Shabaab. In Ethiopia, fighting between the national armed forces and special forces of the Tigray Regional State following a dispute over national elections displaced more than 2 million people. These and other violent disruptions caused the number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in sub-Saharan Africa to swell to more than 35 million in 2020, according to the 2020 Global Report of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Compounding the double challenge of the pandemic and insecurity was the region's economic decline in 2020. Although many countries received emergency support from the International Monetary Fund and other international donors, overall economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa fell by an estimated 3.3 percent in 2020, according to World Bank data, forcing the region into its first recession in twenty-five years. As the pandemic stifled trade and pushed governments to increase spending on social services, nearly all countries included in this edition of the Index reported negative economic growth, often after several years of robust economic expansion. Falling prices for commodities exacerbated slowdowns in the region's many economies that are based on exports of raw materials. At the same time, a severe infestation of locusts, driven by changing patterns of rainfall, destroyed crops and pasturelands in East Africa, leading to widespread food insecurity. Higher temperatures accompanied by extreme flooding or drought further stressed the fragile economies of South Africa, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and other countries.

This combination of adverse circumstances halted sub-Saharan Africa's recent progress in eradicating poverty. Between 26 and 41 million more people in the region were predicted to fall into extreme poverty in 2020, according to the World Bank publication *Reversals of Fortune*. As the World Bank observed, vulnerable groups such as the poor, informal-sector workers, women, and youth suffered disproportionately from reduced opportunities and unequal access to social safety nets in 2020—an observation confirmed by many of this year's reports. Although constrained in some cases by restrictive new laws and diminishing funding, CSOs played an essential role in meeting the material and psychosocial needs of these groups. CSOs also channeled people's fears and frustrations into effective campaigns for help and change through protests, policy discussions, online campaigns, and other forms of civic activism.

THREATS TO CIVIC SPACE

Yet despite civil society's energetic response, the public health crisis of 2020 had a debilitating effect on the exercise of civic freedoms in sub-Saharan Africa. The COVID-19 Civic Freedom Tracker of the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) reports that in 2020, governments in forty-six countries of the region

introduced 149 measures, including states of emergency, laws, regulations, executive orders, and decrees, to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these measures constrained freedoms of assembly, association, and expression or were enforced in a way that violated citizens' rights or targeted organizations seeking to hold their governments accountable.

The tension between governments' legitimate efforts to control the pandemic and their use of the pandemic to stifle the exercise of civic freedoms was at the forefront during elections, which took place or were in preparation in a number of countries in 2020. Presidential or parliamentary elections were held in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Niger, and Tanzania (in Ethiopia, a planned presidential election was postponed). Regional and local elections also took place in a number of countries, and campaigning was underway for the 2021 presidential election in Uganda. In its Africa COVID briefer on elections in Sub-Saharan Africa, ICNL notes that although very few elections scheduled for 2020 were delayed as a result of the pandemic, the crisis nevertheless disrupted electoral processes as some governments adopted measures that affected participation in and the fairness of electoral processes. For example, Ugandan authorities arrested the popular opposition candidate Robert Kyagulanyi on charges of violating pandemic restrictions after his campaign rallies attracted huge crowds. In Guinea, where a controversial change in the constitution allowed the incumbent president to run for a third term, the authorities cited pandemic restrictions in curtailing people's right to assemble during the state of emergency, which was extended repeatedly throughout the year, although gatherings supportive of people in power were allowed to take place. While recognizing the need for governments to uphold legally established public health measures, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) expressed concern in July 2020 that the pandemic would impact the public's right to regular, free, fair, and transparent elections.

Some governments also used pandemic restrictions to restrict other efforts to exercise the right to freedom of assembly that the authorities viewed as against their interests. Burkinabe trade unions, for example, interpreted the government's ban on demonstrations as a maneuver to prevent protests against its decision to impose new taxes on allowances and bonuses for public- and private-sector employees. A group in Niger obtained authorization to organize protests against the alleged misuse of funds by the Ministry of Defense only to be charged with breaking pandemic-related restrictions that went into effect after the authorization was granted. Some Zimbabwean CSOs regarded their inability to demonstrate as evidence of the "weaponization" of lockdown restrictions.

In addition, police and security forces enforced pandemic measures such as lockdowns and restrictions on travel with excessive brutality in some countries. Videos of security personnel physically abusing people for violating pandemic restrictions were uploaded by citizens onto social media in Uganda. Security personnel in Kenya also used excessive force to enforce pandemic restrictions, prompting CSOs to document human rights abuses by state agencies during the pandemic. The intimidation and arrest of individuals violating curfews and other restrictions were also reported in Angola, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

As governments sought to quell dissent during the pandemic, freedom of expression also suffered. ICNL's COVID-19 Civic Freedom Tracker reports that at least a dozen governments in sub-Saharan Africa, including Botswana, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kenya, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, sanctioned the reporting of "fake news" or disinformation not only to suppress misinformation about the pandemic but also to quell public criticism of their pandemic responses. In Madagascar, under a ban on the disruption of public order and public safety during exceptional situations, media were required to report only official information about COVID-19, and interactive radio call-in shows were suspended. The Committee to Protect Journalists reported that at least four journalists covering the pandemic in Liberia were intimidated, detained, or physically assaulted in the course of their work. In South Africa, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, the dissemination of false or uncorroborated information about the virus was criminalized. In response to these trends, including attacks on press and human rights defenders who criticized failures in the implementation of COVID-19 response plans, ACHPR stressed in its Resolution 449 of August 7, 2020, that ensuring protection of human rights was a central part of COVID-19 responses.

The clampdown on civic space in the context of the pandemic is reflected in the deterioration of the legal environments for CSOs in seventeen of the thirty-two countries included in this year's Index.¹ This deterioration

¹ Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, The Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

was moderate (a decline of 0.2) in eleven countries, while it regressed significantly (by 0.3 points) in Tanzania, where the government implemented oppressive laws governing CSOs and increasingly harassed human rights and media organizations. In South Sudan, the legal environment weakened to the poorest score possible (7.0), and the weakest score among all countries and dimensions covered by the Index, as the government severely impeded CSOs' work and arbitrarily arrested and detained CSO activists. Some of the extreme challenges in the legal environment in South Sudan were related to pandemic. For example, CSO workers were required to be tested for COVID-19 before traveling to the field but were often unable to obtain test results, forcing organizations to terminate projects.

Legal environments also deteriorated as new laws and regulations allowed governments to intrude in CSOs' operations or otherwise hinder their work. For example, Niger's new Law on the Interception of Communications gives the government sweeping powers to monitor communications in the interest of national security. Zambia and Uganda introduced laws that threaten to restrict the use of social media. The Tanzanian government issued guidelines stipulating that funding for non-governmental organizations must be included in its bilateral agreements with donors, thereby preventing organizations from obtaining funding from donors that do not have such agreements. In Benin and South Sudan, where red tape has encumbered registration for several years, pandemic-related restrictions on travel and face-to-face meetings resulted in even greater delays in the processing of CSOs' registration applications. Other unfavorable legal reforms were introduced or implemented in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, four countries reported improvements in their legal environments in 2020. In Ethiopia, Malawi, and Sudan, governments that recently came into power assumed more progressive attitudes towards CSOs and worked productively with them. For example, Malawi's new president met with CSOs and created the new office of the special presidential advisor on NGOs and civil society, while the Ethiopian Agency for CSOs, which was established in 2019, invited CSOs to comment on the draft of new directives to guide their operations. The Sudanese government eased the implementation of existing laws governing the sector and took steps towards reforming the legal and institutional environment for CSOs. In Ghana, the government approved a new policy and directives for managing the sector that promise to create a more effective regulatory environment.

INCREASING OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, CSOs experienced financial trauma in 2020 because of losses due to the pandemic. Sixteen or half of all countries in this edition of the Index² recorded slight to moderate declines in financial viability as foreign partners, by far the main source of support to CSOs in the region, suspended or rerouted funding if CSOs' planned activities could not take place. A 2020 survey of 1,014 CSOs in forty-four countries conducted by @AfricanNGOs and EPIC-Africa showed that 56 percent of responding CSOs had already lost funding only a few months into the pandemic. In South Sudan, donors redirected funding from advocacy programs to health and humanitarian services or canceled projects altogether, causing more than two-thirds of local CSOs to lose funding, according to a survey conducted by Impact Cap Initiative. In Mali, organizations working in education, the environment, reproductive health, and the promotion of peace and coexistence were especially hard hit by donors' redirection of funding from existing programs to the pandemic response. Some countries, including Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Zambia, reported that because of donors' focus on the pandemic, they did not provide as much support for election-related activities as in previous election and pre-election periods.

In addition, while international and bilateral donors provided support for pandemic responses to many countries of sub-Saharan Africa, the bulk of such funding went to governments, which sometimes did not include local CSOs in their allocations, as in Benin, The Gambia, Liberia, and Malawi. CSOs in Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire were excluded from their governments' emergency funding programs for businesses and households. In Botswana, where CSOs rely mainly on the government for support, they could not obtain funding from two main sources of government support after funds from these sources were diverted to the pandemic response.

² Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The few new funding programs announced in 2020 focused largely on the pandemic. In Ethiopia, the only country to report improved financial viability in 2020, CSOs had access to several new funding programs related to the pandemic, including the Civil Society Support Program 2, which is supported by the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden, and Norway, and those sponsored by USAID. International CSOs in most countries supported projects to help deal with the pandemic. Donors often allowed CSOs to redirect already allocated funding to pandemic-related activities. In Mozambique, for example, the European Union permitted CSOs to charge pandemic-related activities to their budget lines for unforeseen costs, and the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations in The Gambia was able to divert donor funds from a human rights educational project to the provision of face masks and hand sanitizers.

The volume of activities of many organizations declined steeply in 2020 because of reduced funding as well as restrictions on travel and face-to-face meetings. In Rwanda, for example, decreases in donor funding and CSOs' inability to develop new ways to generate revenue during the pandemic resulted in salary cuts and staff layoffs at many organizations. Throughout the region, organizations were forced to suspend or cut back existing projects because they could not reach beneficiaries. Senegalese CSOs had to abruptly halt their interventions, leaving communities without services in critical areas such as health care, education, water, sanitation, and human rights, while Botswanan CSOs found it increasingly difficult to serve people with disabilities living in hard-to-reach areas because of pandemic-related restrictions. While some organizations were able to adjust their activities—Human Communications Resources in northern Uganda, for example, used its network of podcasters to track reports of the virus in refugee camps and produce podcasts about the threat—CSOs often had to deviate from their missions and plans to respond to urgent, unexpected needs.

Donors and governments sometimes supported this change in focus. For example, in Guinea, where organizations must adhere strictly to their stated missions, the government lifted this obligation so that CSOs working on health could contribute to COVID-19 prevention. But the overall effect of the pandemic was to reduce CSOs' organizational capacity, with twelve countries reporting deteriorations in this dimension.³ As the report for Sierra Leone notes, an especially pernicious effect of the pandemic was to widen the gap between strong and struggling organizations, as the former often found ways to adjust their activities while the latter usually lacked the experience and resources to do so.

CIVIL SOCIETY MEETS THE CHALLENGE

Despite these challenges, CSOs recognized the scale of the pandemic early, and in many instances, they adjusted or retooled their activities as soon as cases of the virus were announced. Organizations helped fight COVID-19 by distributing food and protective supplies or raising public awareness about the disease, often in cooperation with governments. For example, Liberian CSOs partnered with the Ministry of Health to erect billboards providing information about the disease, while Nigerien organizations distributed handwashing kits, masks, and other equipment in cooperation with government programs. Some CSOs developed new approaches to cope with the virus. The Ghanaian organization Youth Bridge Foundation reengineered a STEM curriculum into a radio program so that students could continue to learn from home, while the Senegalese CSO Alphadev helped out-of-school youth make masks and distribute them free of charge in communes, markets, fishing piers, and bus stations. Civil society's prompt mobilization to fight the pandemic is reflected in improved service-provision scores in nine countries.⁴

But not all governments welcomed CSOs' involvement in their pandemic responses. In Benin, Burundi, and South Africa, many CSOs were excluded from government funding for pandemic-related interventions, while Burkinabe CSOs were prevented from entering some insecure areas and camps for internally displaced people and rather than deliver aid directly had to hand their provisions over to the Burkinabe Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation.

In several countries, government policies prevented CSOs from contributing to the pandemic response as much as they might have. Nigerien CSOs were cut off from populations in insecure areas because of pandemic restrictions

³ Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

⁴ Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sudan, and Uganda.

on movement and the government's insistence that they travel only with military escorts. A survey of CSOs in South Sudan showed that their efforts to provide humanitarian services in insecure areas were often nearly halted because of pandemic-related restrictions on travel.

CSOs in many countries also advocated vigorously on pandemic-related topics, especially the need for inclusivity and accountability regarding the use of funds. Despite severe legal and financial challenges, advocacy improved in an impressive seventeen countries in the region in 2020.⁵ In Malawi, Niger, and Nigeria, CSOs were able to help shape the pandemic response by serving on government bodies tasked with this duty. In other countries, such as the DRC, Gabon, The Gambia, and Madagascar, CSOs performed a critical watchdog role in monitoring governments' handling of pandemic funds. Kenyan CSOs exposed a number of "COVID-19 millionaires" siphoning off pandemic funding, while Sierra Leonean CSOs successfully lobbied the parliament to reject a draft law that would suspend all accountability mechanisms governing the use of public resources in the pandemic response. Organizations in Ethiopia, Liberia, Nigeria, South Africa, and South Sudan pushed for more gender-inclusive responses to the pandemic, including the appointment of women to decision-making bodies and the provision of better support services to victims of rape.

CSOs also recorded other notable advocacy achievements in 2020. Common areas of focus included the rights of vulnerable groups, women's issues, and environmental protection. In Rwanda, for example, CSOs formed a steering committee to examine the *ubudehe* categories that the government uses to determine households' eligibility for social programs and made recommendations, based on community consultations, for changes to the system to garner more public support.

In nearly all countries, advocacy organizations were able to move their activities to social media. Muslims for Human Rights in Kenya, for example, conducted many of its advocacy activities virtually, although this slowed down the pace of implementation. The efficacy of online campaigns varied, however, depending on local internet accessibility and usage.

As a result of CSOs' outstanding service provision and advocacy during the pandemic, seventeen countries reported a boost in the sector's public image in 2020.⁶ Media coverage of CSOs' assistance to vulnerable populations was widespread and, in Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Nigeria, and South Africa, especially favorable. Mali's state-run and private television networks, radio stations, and private press outlets covered the launch of CSOs' national campaign on food and nutritional security, while in Rwanda, media requests for CSOs' participation in public discussions and on expert panels increased in recognition of their highly visible pandemic-related services. Publics throughout the region approved of CSOs' involvement in the pandemic as well as country-specific priorities, such as early childhood development in South Africa and the return to ten states in South Sudan.

However, governments in the region did not have uniformly favorable opinions of CSOs. As in past years, governments tended to view service-providing organizations as their partners, while viewing advocacy organizations working on human rights and good governance with skepticism, suspicion, or hostility. Positive government views of the sector as a whole were rare and in this year's reports are cited only in Ethiopia, Malawi, and Sudan, which, as mentioned, have newer governments taking more constructive approaches to CSOs.

CSOS TURN TO NEW TECHNOLOGIES—AND EACH OTHER

A silver lining of the pandemic was that it spurred many organizations to improve their technical capacities. Larger, well-funded CSOs were often able to upgrade their equipment and provide computers and training to staff so they could work remotely and use internet-based conferencing platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. In Zimbabwe, CSOs discovered other new ways to use digital platforms, such as the talk shows and virtual business conferences organized by the Election Resource Center and Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce. Although the effectiveness and impact of the move to online operations has yet to be fully understood, during the pandemic, some organizations found that their internal and external communications improved during the

⁵ Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

⁶ Angola, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

pandemic as a result of their shift online. The next step will be for CSOs to heighten their understanding of the importance of cybersecurity, which is still largely inadequate.

Unfortunately, smaller rural organizations were often excluded from the sector's growing use of digital technologies, mainly because of limited internet networks, inadequate equipment, insufficient staff training, and high service costs. Thus, digital technical capacity was another area in which the pandemic widened the gap between the region's have and have-not CSOs.

Another positive development in 2020 was the improvement in the sectoral infrastructure of eight countries.⁷ The main factor behind this promising trend was a surge of cooperation within the CSO sector. Many donors encourage collaboration by prioritizing funding for consortia over support for individual organizations. But CSOs themselves also are realizing the many advantages of sharing resources and pursuing common goals.

During the pandemic, CSOs formed new coalitions, networks, and ad hoc groupings in a number of countries, including Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Senegal, Sudan, and Zambia. The report for Angola notes that CSOs worked together with greater harmony, while in Mozambique, coordination among CSOs is reported to have improved as virtual meetings proved far easier to organize than traditional in-person events. Efforts by members to overturn the arbitrary suspension of the National Election Watch Uganda coalition became one of the biggest collective actions ever undertaken by CSOs in that country.

REGIONAL TRENDS IN CSO SUSTAINABILITY

Taken together, this year's *CSO Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa* depicts a civil society under significant strain. Only five of the thirty-two countries covered by the index recorded overall improvements,⁸ most often driven by strong performances in advocacy. At the same time, eight countries reported deteriorations in their overall CSO sustainability scores,⁹ usually because of regressions in their financial viability and legal environments. The composite portrait offered by this year's Index is of a civil society coming together to fight the pandemic and strengthen its role as the voice of the people at the same time that its work is made more difficult by limited funding and a general deterioration of trust between governments and their people.

Overall, CSO sustainability in sub-Saharan Africa remains constrained despite resilience in the face of difficult circumstances. Twenty-three countries in the region have overall CSO sustainability scores that fall within Sustainability Evolving, the middle category of sustainability, with scores falling between 3.1 and 5.0.¹⁰ Nine countries fall into the Sustainability Impeded category, with overall CSO sustainability scores of 5.1 or higher.¹¹ Cameroon was the only country with an overall score that changed categories in 2020: with deteriorations in four dimensions (legal environment, financial viability, advocacy, and public image), Cameroon's overall CSO sustainability score fell from Sustainability Evolving to Sustainability Impeded. No country has an overall CSO sustainability score that falls within the highest level of sustainability, Sustainability Enhanced (1.0 to 3.0), and there are just three dimension-level scores (advocacy in South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria) that fall within this range.

As in previous years, South Africa had the best overall score in the region at 3.6, followed closely by Kenya (3.9). At the other end of the spectrum was Burundi with an overall score of 5.8, down from 5.7 in 2019, preceded by South Sudan and Angola at 5.5.

⁷ Angola, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, and Uganda.

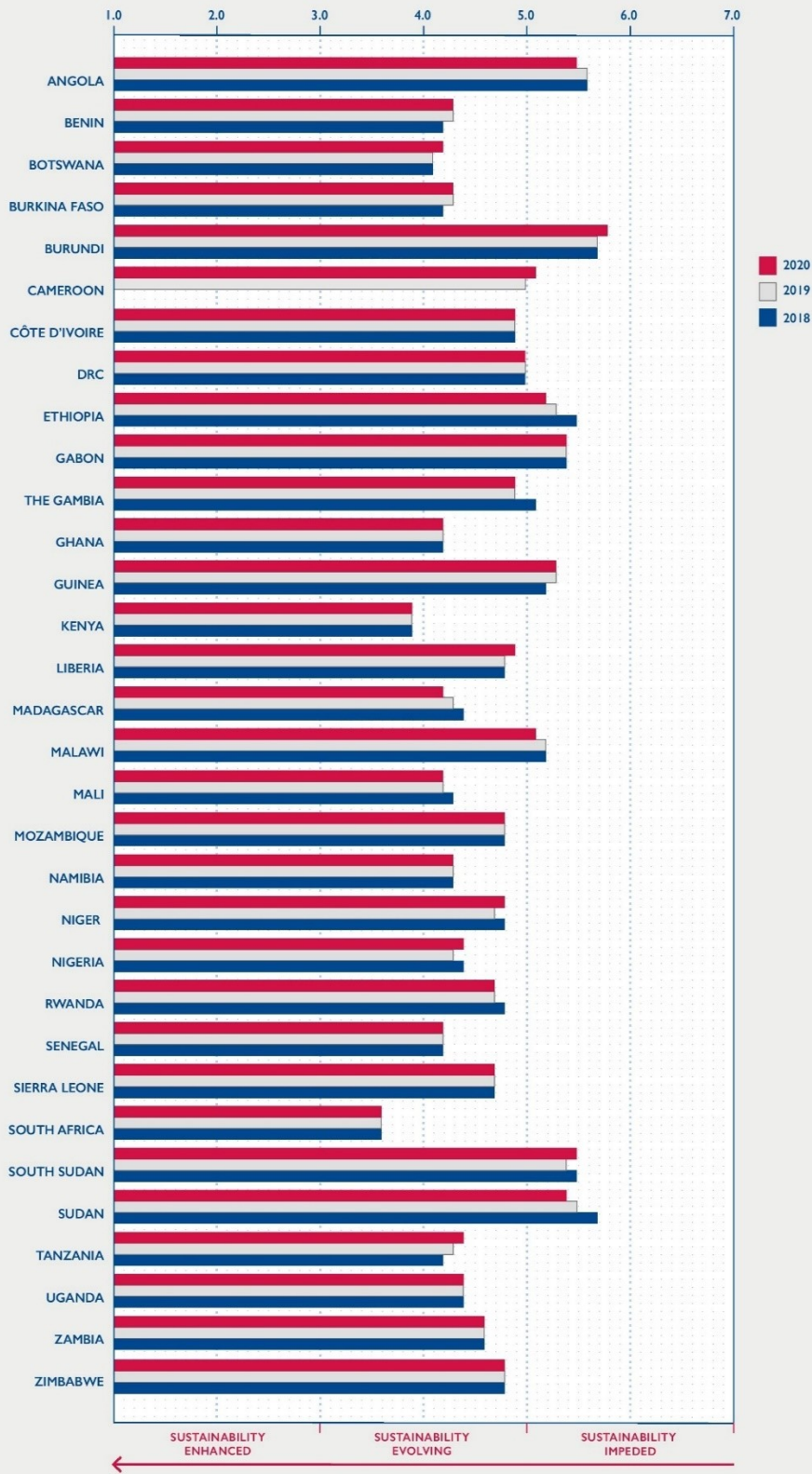
⁸ Angola, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, and Sudan.

⁹ Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Tanzania.

¹⁰ Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

¹¹ Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Malawi, South Sudan, and Sudan.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA CSO SUSTAINABILITY



* Please note that some of the dimension-level scores were recalibrated in 2018. Please see country reports for more details.

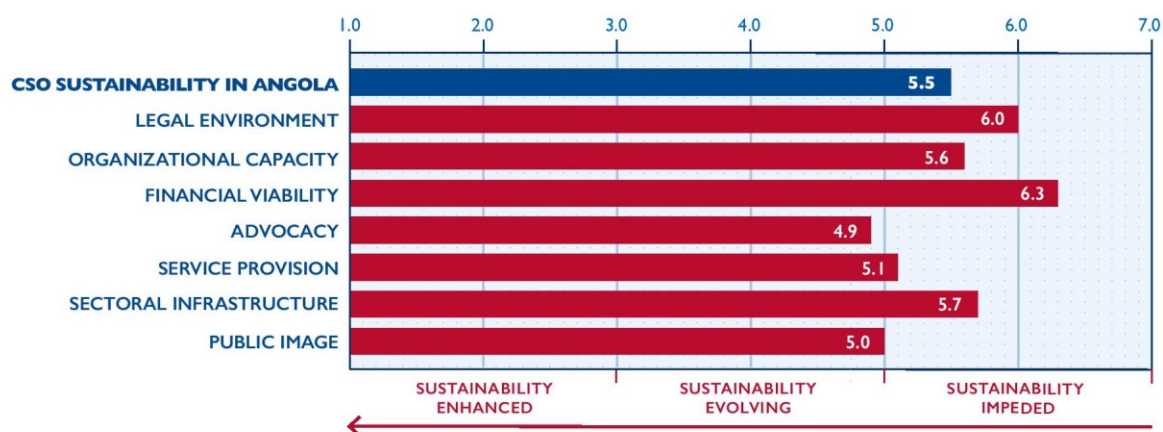
CONCLUSION

The country reports that follow provide an in-depth look at the state of CSO sectors in thirty-two countries across sub-Saharan Africa during the extraordinary circumstances of 2020. This year's reports provide a unique opportunity to assess CSOs in a variety of contexts as they all grappled with similar circumstances. In the midst of a frightening pandemic, many CSOs lacked the organizational capacity to cope simultaneously with deteriorating legal environments caused by government clampdowns on civil society and donors' diversion of funding away from their usual activities. But CSOs showed their mettle by providing new services, engaging in crucial advocacy, embracing technology, improving their public image, and developing new ways to support each other. We hope that this annual survey continues to capture useful trends to support the work of CSOs, governments, donors, and researchers seeking to advance the region's CSO sectors.

ANGOLA

Capital: Luanda
Population: 33,642,646
GDP per capita (PPP): \$6,670
Human Development Index: Medium (0.581)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (31/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.5



Angola was challenged economically and socially by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The country's first two cases of the virus were confirmed on March 21. On March 26, the government declared a state of emergency, followed by a scaled-backed state of calamity that remained in force throughout the year. During the state of emergency, borders, schools, and restaurants were closed; social distancing was required; public gatherings of more than ten people were banned; and public transportation was limited. CSOs assisted in the government's pandemic-relief efforts by distributing food and protective supplies. Many organizations went into crisis during the pandemic because of a lack of funding.

In the autumn, countrywide demonstrations protested the steep rise in the cost of living, corruption, and the high rate of unemployment, especially among young people. Protesters demanded that the government set the date for long-promised local government elections, which had been postponed because of the pandemic and for political reasons, including the lack of implementing legislation. The demonstrations violated the presidential decree banning public gatherings during the pandemic, and some turned violent. At times the police used excessive force to bring the protests under control, and serious injuries and at least one death were reported.

Freedom of the press remained constricted in 2020. Several journalists covering the demonstrations, including three from Rádio Ecclesia and two from TV Zimbo, were arrested. Palanca TV and TV Zimbo were returned to state control after a corruption investigation concluded that they had been illegally funded with public funds. TV Zimbo began to broadcast information that favored the government and ruling party. In September, the government announced that TV Palanca would become a specialized sports channel.

The Angolan economy wilted in 2020 as oil prices declined and the pandemic hampered economic activity. Many companies closed, leading to a significant loss of jobs. The informal sector was especially hard hit by the government's pandemic measures. Angola's poverty rate rose from 32 percent in 2019 to 41 percent in 2020, according to the National Statistics Institute. Some analysts argued that an insufficient share of the state budget was allocated to the social sector, where urgent measures were needed to prevent widespread decline. The

*Capital, population, and GDP for all country reports are drawn from the Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, available online at <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/>. Human Development Index data available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>. Freedom in the World data available at <https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world>.

International Monetary Fund made \$1 billion available to Angola in 2020 under arrangements with its Extended Credit Facility, and Angola was able to pause more than \$3 billion in debt-servicing payments to major creditors.

The overall sustainability of the CSO sector improved slightly in 2020. CSOs' organizational capacity was strengthened by their effective use of digital technologies. The sectoral infrastructure was slightly improved by the opening of a new resource and CSOs' increasing cooperation. Media coverage of CSOs' fight against the pandemic enhanced the sector's public image. All other dimensions of sustainability were unchanged.

According to the Institute of Promotion and Coordination of Aid Communities (IPROCAC), the main oversight body for CSOs, 356 national CSOs, 28 international CSOs, 10 local foundations, 23 national religious institutions, 6 international religious institutions, and 1 international foundation, or a total of 424 organizations, operated in Angola in 2020. This number represents a slight decline from 437 organizations in 2019, which is likely attributable to the pandemic.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 6.0



CSOs' legal environment was largely unchanged in 2020.

Law 14/91 on associations requires CSOs to register before starting operations, and Decree 84/02 describes the registration process. To register, CSOs submit requests for authorization to operate along with required documentation to the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. After receiving the ministry's approval, CSOs then register with IPROCAC and provincial authorities in the geographic areas in which they will operate. The government's electronic public services portal, which was introduced in 2018, has facilitated the registration of new organizations. However, a number of organizations were unable to register in 2020 because they could not obtain the required documents or pay registration fees, which are high. Some organizations, mostly small, rural CSOs

funded by local private donations, operate without legal status.

Registered CSOs must submit regular progress reports about their activities to IPROCAC and local authorities, and larger organizations must provide semi-annual and annual reports to IPROCAC and quarterly reports to provincial governments. All registered CSOs automatically have public utility status if their registration documents are up to date.

Little state harassment of CSOs was reported in 2020. CSOs in Angola operate freely and without government interference as long as they comply with the law and, informally, with the government's political agenda. CSOs have the right to state protection as long as they comply with the purposes for which they were founded. CSOs must inform local authorities in advance about planned activities, which the government claims allows the authorities to support CSOs' activities with necessary arrangements, such as security. Organizations that fail to do so may be questioned by the authorities about their intentions. In 2020, CSOs were required to adhere to all pandemic-related restrictions. For example, large meetings were prohibited, and CSOs had to obtain the government's consent before conducting face-to-face work in communities.

All registered CSOs are entitled to exemptions from income tax and duty on items imported for humanitarian work. Under a new law in 2019, CSOs must pay value-added tax on purchased items. Legally registered businesses that make donations to support social and community development projects are eligible for deductions of up to 40 percent of their total taxable profits or 30 percent if their donations benefit employees and their families.

Legislation does not exist that would allow CSOs to generate profits through their own programs and activities, although they may charge fees to cover administrative costs. To compete for government contracts, CSOs must have public utility status. However, because of an opaque tendering process and a lack of uniform recognition of CSOs' eligibility to compete, CSOs usually find it difficult to obtain government contracts.

Several lawyers in Angola are familiar with legal issues concerning civil society. Organizations usually pay for legal advice, although some lawyers, such as those at the human rights organization Mãos Livres, provide free legal support to CSOs throughout the country. Several CSOs, such as Development Workshop (DW) and the Association of Social Development and Integration of Vulnerable Populations (ADESPOV), have legal teams on their staff.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.6

CSOs' organizational capacity was slightly stronger in 2020 as more organizations used digital technologies in their work.

A few larger CSOs maintained contact with their communities in 2020 by adapting rapidly to the new reality of the pandemic. DW, for example, documented the challenges of communities in accessing water during the pandemic, and the International Humanitarian Organization (OHI) worked to raise awareness about the danger of the virus in Benguela. The Youth Support Center (CAJ), Prazedor, Christian Solidarity and Mutual Help (ASCAM), Mwenho Network of Women Living with HIV, and other organizations took advantage of the forced confinement to learn more about monitoring and evaluation. Using resources such as video lessons, these organizations improved their skills and then applied their new knowledge by obtaining baseline data for projects starting in 2020.



CSOs are supposed to have missions that are clearly defined in the statutes presented at the time of their registration. CSOs increasingly pay attention to their missions and vision and value statements, since they know that they are attractive to potential corporate and international donors. Many funders want to review CSOs' strategic plans, and some donors, such as the United Nations (UN) Population Fund, require strategic plans as a condition for funding. In 2020, several established organizations continued to help other CSOs develop long-term strategic plans. For example, the Association of Social Actors for the Promotion of Early Childhood Rights Angola (AASPDPIA) helped elaborate People in Need's strategic plan, and OHI similarly contributed to Prazedor's strategic plan.

CSOs usually have clearly defined internal bodies, such as general assemblies, boards of directors, and supervisory boards, as well as executive staff including executive directors, managers, and support personnel. CSOs' statutes typically present the organizational structure and responsibilities and relationships of the various bodies. By law, CSOs must have boards of directors, which are supposed to meet regularly to review organizational policies and key achievements. Annual general meetings must be documented in written minutes. CSOs usually have policies governing areas such as project management, reporting, and accounting, which are intended to guarantee their integrity, transparency, and accountability. Only a small number of organizations have conflict-of-interest policies, although they are becoming more common.

Given widespread funding shortfalls in 2020, CSOs continued to find it difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff. OHI, Prazedor, FOJASSIDA, and the Social Development Support League were among the organizations that dismissed staff because they lacked sufficient funding. Many young CSO employees left their organizations, including well-established CSOs, to work for the government, oil corporations, and other companies that could offer better salaries and working conditions. CSOs tend to hire staff with requisite experience and skills but without academic degrees, because they are unable to pay the salaries that employees with professional qualifications demand. Job descriptions are usually provided, and larger CSOs observe government regulations about providing contracts and paying social security. Small and rural CSOs usually offer short-term service contracts only. Core staff receive training from partner agencies, and other employees receive practical training by interacting with more experienced staff on the job. A few large CSOs, such as the Angolan Network of Non-Governmental Organizations to Fight HIV/AIDS (ANASO), ADESPOV, and ADPP, hosted refresher training for their staff on

conflict of interest in 2020. Angolan CSOs obtain specialized services such as accounting and legal advice from the staff of other CSOs.

Angola's internet infrastructure has evolved considerably in recent years and continued to improve during the pandemic. Nearly all CSOs are now in reach of the internet, although service is often expensive. Because of pandemic-related restrictions on movement in 2020, CSOs increasingly relied on the internet and learned to use new communications platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. International organizations, such as People in Need, Population Services International (PSI), and World Vision, and more developed, better-financed domestic CSOs, such as DW, ADRA, and ADPP, use the internet daily and have sufficient funding to purchase basic equipment, such as computers and printers. Smaller, especially rural, CSOs often lack the resources to purchase equipment and access the internet on a regular basis. Cybersecurity has yet to become a concern among Angolan CSOs.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.3



CSOs' financial viability was unchanged in 2020. CSOs continued to face severe financing restrictions as the country's economic decline, coupled with the pandemic, limited access to external and domestic sources of funding and squeezed nearly all organizations. Many CSOs, such as Caritas and the Christian Association Combating Drugs, Alcohol, and Nicotine in Angola, had to suspend activities because of the crisis. But other CSOs, including the Youth Forum for Health Support and AIDS Prevention (FOJASSIDA) and OHI, gained more funding to help implement pandemic-related activities.

In 2020, the African Union, UN, European Union (EU), and governments of Brazil, Canada, France, the Netherlands, and the United States were major donors to CSOs in Angola. For example, the EU's Strengthening

Resilience in Food and Nutrition Security fund continued to distribute funding to CSOs through organizations such as World Vision, People in Need, Codespa Foundation, ADPP, Norwegian Church Aid, and Doctors with Africa. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria was also an important donor and increased its funding from \$53 million in 2019 to \$82 million in 2020. Seventy percent of these funds were earmarked for the Ministry of Health for activities such as vaccinations and the purchase of COVID-19 testing materials, which CSOs such as FOJASSIDA, ANASO, and Prazedor helped distribute. A portion of the Global Fund funding went to World Vision for malaria projects and to ADPP for HIV and tuberculosis projects under the New Funding Model 3 (NFM3), which will open tenders for sub-grants to CSOs in 2021. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief increased its funding from \$5 million in 2019 to \$10 million in 2020, a portion of which went to the organization mothers2mothers to implement activities in Cunene Province both on its own and in partnership with ADPP. The President's Malaria Initiative increased funding for Angola to \$35 million, most of which went to PSI, Rede Mulheres, and Mentor Initiative.

The Angolan government offers few grants or contracts to CSOs, although organizations are occasionally able to enter into agreements to provide services for government ministries. For example, in a multi-year agreement, ADPP receives funding from the Ministry of Education to support fifteen teacher-training and seven vocational schools. Local governments, mainly at the municipal level, offer small amounts of funding to CSOs and in 2020 made funding available to help with pandemic-related activities and the response to a severe drought in Cunene. For example, Prazedor received a contract to sensitize communities in Huila to virus-prevention measures, and FOJASSIDA had a contract for similar work in Cazenga.

Chevron, ExxonMobil, Total, Statoil, BP, and other multinational companies have corporate social responsibility programs that support CSOs' community and social projects. A leading domestic bank, Banco Fomento Angola, issues annual calls for proposals from CSOs and in 2020 provided funds to ADPP for a pre-school education project in Uige Province. However, many private businesses reduced their donations to CSOs in 2020 as the

pandemic affected their financial stability. Kamgamba Sport, for example, stopped funding CSOs because of financial difficulties.

Angolan CSOs make few efforts to generate income. Most CSOs are reluctant to charge for services to beneficiaries who are poor or vulnerable or for services in areas of importance to local communities, such as environmental protection and waste collection. A few CSOs earn small amounts from their services. For example, thematic networks such as ANASO, a network of more than 100 CSOs focused on HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, charge member organizations a symbolic membership fee. ADESPOV organizes artistic and cultural fairs and professional training workshops to raise funds. The Youth Organization for Social Development in Huíla also offers paid professional training courses. CSOs rarely obtain revenue by renting out assets, since most organizations are small and possess few assets that they can use for this purpose.

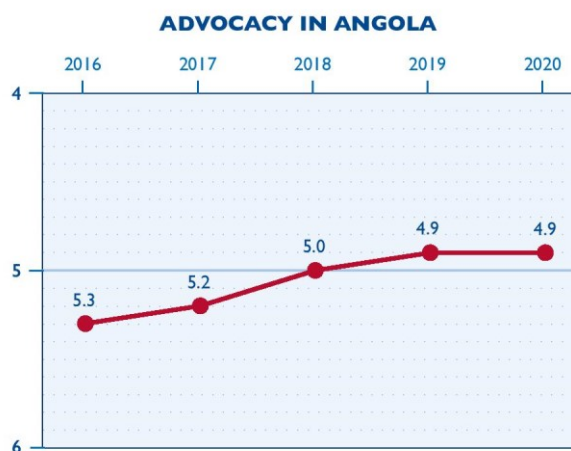
CSOs' capacity to engage in fundraising remained low in 2020. Any fundraising that CSOs pursue usually depends on people-to-people contact, which was difficult in 2020 because of the pandemic. A handful of larger CSOs, such as DW, ADRA, and ADPP, were able to raise funds via the internet.

CSOs based in rural settings usually use simple financial management systems based on Microsoft Excel. CSOs of moderate to large size use standard accounting software, such as Primavera, QuickBooks, or LCGI. Large CSOs, such as ADPP, DW, and Prazedor, conduct regular annual financial audits with reputable external auditors.

ADVOCACY: 4.9

Despite restrictions imposed by the pandemic, CSOs' advocacy was unchanged in 2020.

In recent years, CSOs have gained more space for dialogue with both the executive and legislative branches. CSOs are proactive and able to influence public policy by bringing matters to the attention of ministerial departments and the National Assembly. For example, in 2020, ANASO worked with members of parliament to ensure budgetary allocations for CSOs' projects in these areas. Mosaiko, OHI, DW, and other CSOs urged the government to meet with young people to hear about the reasons behind the widespread demonstrations in 2020. In response, the president met with about 100 young activists in October to discuss their concerns, as a preliminary step to defining sustainable policies for youth. The meeting was attended by key politicians and was covered by many national and international media. No follow-up to the meeting has been noted.



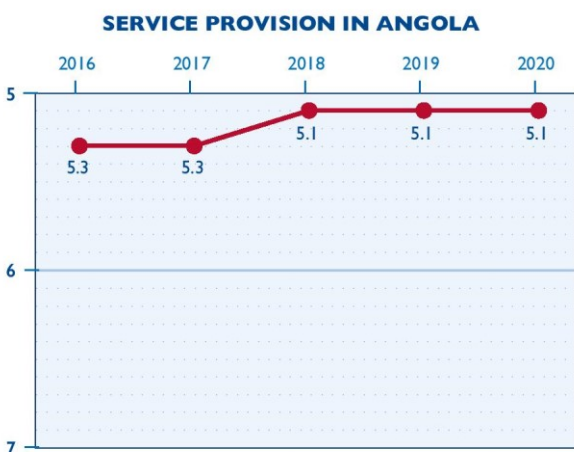
Several organizations were able to engage in advocacy directly related to the pandemic. For example, advocacy by ANASO resulted in funding from the Cazenga government for FOJASSIDA's activities to combat the virus. OHI similarly urged the government of Benguela to work with CSOs to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In addition, national organizations such as Omunga, OHI, and Rede Terra appealed to the central and local governments to provide financial support to CSOs, many of which were facing great financial difficulties. There was no reported response to the appeal.

Several new websites were created by nonprofit media during the year, including Mira do Crime, O Estado News, O Decreto, and Épito Repórter. CSOs used these sites to advocate for various changes in public policies. Other nonprofit digital media, such as Makaangola, Club-K-Net, Angola24horas Correio da Kianda, and Folha8, continued to promote press freedom and publish investigative news during the year.

In lobbying activity, Omunga and OHI collaborated with the parliamentary committees on the national budget and proposed topics for discussion related to the municipal legislative package, which was expected to be completed in 2020 but was postponed. Other initiatives included cooperation with the National Assembly by Omunga, Mosaiko, Forum of Women Journalists for Gender Equality, and Association for Peace, Justice, and Democracy (AJPD) to prevent domestic violence during the pandemic.

CSOs did not engage in efforts to reform the sector’s legal framework in 2020.

SERVICE PROVISION: 5.1



CSOs’ service provision did not change in 2020. CSOs continued to provide services in areas ranging from water and sanitation, education, and health care to women’s entrepreneurship, human rights, youth mobilization, alcoholism, and the arts. For example, ANASO worked with the National Institute for the Fight Against AIDS and Angolan health-service institutions to deliver medicine to the homes of high-risk patients and monitor individuals possibly needing health-care support. CSOs carried out training programs in social defense and access to human rights in many provinces, although the pandemic posed a considerable obstacle to these activities. OMUNGA, for example, hosted a training and several lectures in Benguela on human rights, and OHI held a workshop in Lobito on the right to demonstrate.

Angolan CSOs provide diverse services that respond to community needs. Before implementing projects, CSOs diagnose local needs, analyze the reasons behind them, and forecast possible solutions, typically in tandem with their beneficiaries and the larger community. In 2020, ADPP Angola, for example, facilitated internal stakeholder consultations at the national, regional, and local levels to obtain feedback about the objectives, indicators, and planned activities under a project to help drought-stricken communities. ADPP also encouraged stakeholder communities, including minority groups, to engage by providing signed letters of consent for the project. Because of the pandemic in 2020, many organizations had to suspend their activities or find new ways to stay involved with their communities. For example, OHI, FOJASSIDA, Association for Communitarian Development, and other organizations sought to help their communities by distributing masks or raising awareness on safety and precautions. Through its community-based projects, ADPP constructed “tippy-tappy” water systems without plumbing to enable hand washing in houses.

In providing services, Angolan CSOs conduct studies of both formal and informal markets and apply their extensive knowledge of their clients’ social and economic capacities. Given the country’s extreme poverty and their own philanthropic orientation, CSOs believe that any fees charged for services should not be a burden for beneficiaries, even though the revenues may be insufficient to cover costs. CSOs sometimes seek to recover costs or generate revenue through the provision of services. Organizations that manage, for example, vocational training centers, children’s centers, drug addiction recovery centers, or nursing homes often charge fees for their services. In Benguela Province, OHI offered paid consultancy services to other organizations in 2020. ANASO sometimes helps organizations develop project and operational plans, with its fee equal to a percentage of any grant received.

CSOs usually have areas of specialization in which they provide expert support to audiences beyond their immediate beneficiaries. For example, ADRA works predominantly in agriculture and advised projects in Huambo and other provinces in 2020. CAJ, ASCAM, Prazedor, OHI, and other organizations offer advisory services related to HIV/AIDS.

The Angolan government recognizes the role of CSOs. The president’s official speeches often mention their importance as partners able to complement governmental activities by reaching places that the government cannot go. Local governments express similar appreciation of CSOs’ role.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.7

The sectoral infrastructure for CSOs was slightly stronger in 2020. Although the needs of Angolan CSOs for training and informational support are still significant, a new resource center opened to serve the sector and organizations worked together with increasingly efficacy.

Few resource centers serve CSOs in Angola, and those that exist are largely informal. For example, Mosaiko and DW have libraries that other organizations can use for research and information sharing. To encourage effective advocacy and strengthen the capacity of civil society to combat social inequalities, the Ufolo Center for the Study of Good Governance opened in Luanda in January 2020 but was unable to offer training, funding, or other services during the year.

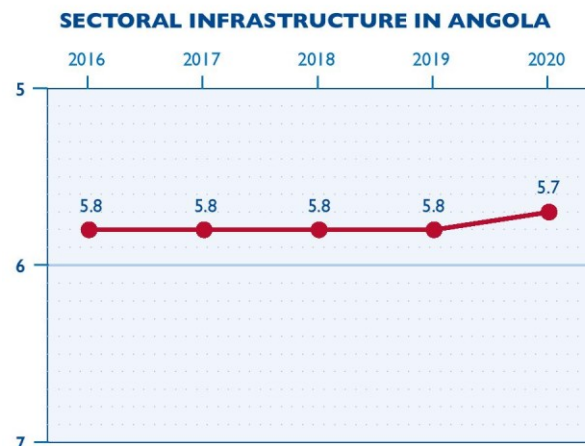
No intermediary support organizations exist in Angola, and few local organizations offer grants or re-grant donor funds.

There is a growing sense of harmony among Angola CSOs. They often work together to solve common problems, and networks representing different sectors work especially well together. For example, ANASO, Maiombe Environmental Network, Technical Group on Human Rights Monitoring, and other CSOs jointly worked on virus-prevention activities in 2020. OHI, AJPD, SOS Habitat, Omungu, and Furdú cooperate to promote human rights and in 2020 organized campaigns and hosted lectures on human rights for local communities. CSOs often incorporate other organizations into their training sessions or field and technical assistance teams. Larger CSOs help organizations with less experience make plans or perform other types of work. CSOs also share their computer equipment, offices, vehicles, and other resources. For example, Prazedor opened its office in Huíla to OHI when the latter organization had to work in the area for two days in 2020.

Training was offered both face to face and online in 2020. The National School of Public Policies invited CSOs to a training on public policy formulation, while the Africa Early Childhood Network conducted a training on financial management, resource mobilization, and organizational development for AASPDPIA members via Zoom. The online format made it possible to reach a broader audience than usual. Although trainers are available to organize workshops for CSOs, it is difficult to find local organizations or individuals that offer training specifically tailored to CSOs. PSI, People in Need, and ADPP have manuals that CSOs can borrow, and DW has posted some of its manuals on its website. Training manuals are available in Portuguese but rarely in local languages.

An increasing number of CSOs are aware of the advantages of intersectoral cooperation and seek to establish or maintain such partnerships. In 2020, many organizations, including FOJASSIDA, ADPP, and OHI, implemented pandemic-related community development projects in formal or informal partnership with private-sector entities, such as ExxonMobil, Chevron, BP, and Grupo Simples. Partnerships with the government also continued to evolve. For example, the Ministry of Education adopted the model of the All Together for Early Childhood program for use across the country and in January 2020 trained fifty CSO staff to teach future e-learning modules on parliamentary operations and open budgets to Angolan CSOs. During a project conducted by ADPP in January 2020, the traffic police helped the project staff and community undertake a procession on road safety.

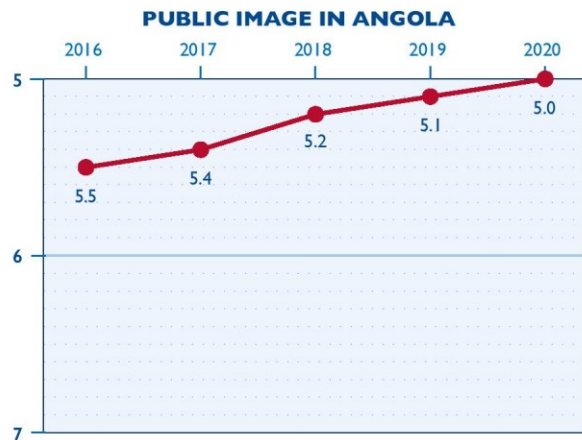
Both public and private media showed greater openness to partnering with CSOs in 2020. For example, Prazedor carried out several activities about HIV and COVID-19 that were covered by media such as Radio Huíla, Radio Mais, and Televisão TPA, and OHI's efforts to prevent HIV/AIDS and malaria were covered by Radio Benguela, Jornal de Benguela, and TV TPA Benguela.



PUBLIC IMAGE: 5.0

CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020, largely because of their heightened media presence and positive views of their contributions to fighting the pandemic.

Since the change in government in 2017, the media has provided positive coverage of CSOs' work, especially if it has significant impact. This was especially the case in 2020, as several radio stations broadcast stories about efforts by OHI, FOJASSIDA, Platform of Angolan Women, ADESPOV, and other organizations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and disseminate food, clothing, and other items to vulnerable populations. Several CSOs, including



FOJASSIDA, OHI, and ADESPOV, received free airtime to broadcast messages about their projects and advertise their events. OHI representatives had more than four interviews on Voice of America and six interviews on Rádio Ecclésia on subjects ranging from democracy and citizenship to the economy and social justice.

Public trust in CSOs seems to be growing, and they are increasingly seen as promoting noble causes. Angolan CSOs have great credibility and are widely viewed as furthering community well-being and sustainable development. The public also perceives CSOs as sources of knowledge for their communities. Some segments of the public, especially in peri-urban and rural communities where CSOs have had a positive impact, understand the concept of CSOs accurately. But CSOs' role can also be

misunderstood, as when some people mistakenly assume that CSOs serve the government's purposes.

The government views some CSOs as partners in implementing social projects and searching for solutions to varied problems. In 2020, CSOs' involvement in pandemic-related activities improved their reputation with the central and local governments. The business sector, especially oil corporations, has positive impressions of CSOs and fund many of their projects as part of their commitment to corporate social responsibility. Local companies such as BFA Bank, telephone companies such as Unitel, and oil servicing companies such as Grupo Simples finance CSO projects in education, health, the environment, and agriculture.

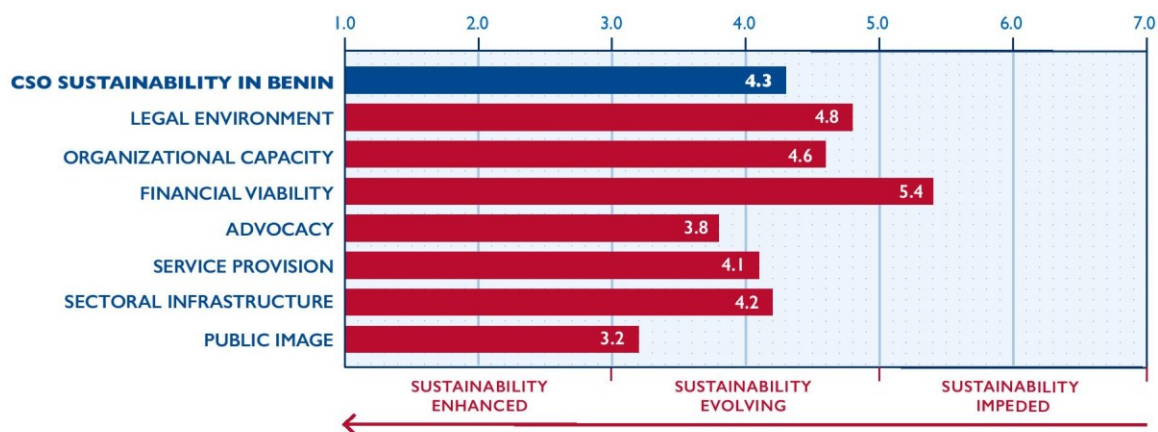
CSOs are aware that their institutional image is a valuable resource for ensuring their credibility and obtaining funding. CSOs promote their image by sharing the results of their projects with government partners, donors, and community members. CSOs also use radio and television to disseminate information about their activities. As media has improved, CSOs' relationships with journalists have improved as well. In 2020, journalists for both public and private media outlets accepted invitations to cover events and even requested interviews with CSOs. Angolan CSOs effectively use online platforms such as websites, Facebook, and WhatsApp to enhance their public visibility.

Most CSOs have codes of ethics and conduct, which they share with donors if requested. Annual reports are usually shared only with institutional partners and funders, although a growing number of organizations, including DW, ADRA, Mosaiko, ADPP, and a few other prominent CSOs, publish their annual reports on their websites and even share them in hard copy.

BENIN

Capital: Porto-Novo
Population: 13,301,694
GDP per capita (PPP): \$3,287
Human Development Index: Low (0.545)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (65/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.3



Benin was marked by a rapidly changing environment in 2020. The COVID-19 virus was first detected in Benin in mid-March. As the virus spread, the authorities closed the country's borders, schools, universities, and places of worship and established cordons sanitaires to isolate the communities most affected by the pandemic. The quarantine zones were lifted immediately before communal elections took place on May 17. At that time, the country reported 339 diagnosed cases and two deaths.

The government proceeded to hold the elections despite the burgeoning pandemic and a request by the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR) to suspend and re-organize the elections to make them more inclusive of the opposition. In the aftermath of disputed legislative elections in April 2019, political tensions were high. But voter turnout for the 2020 elections was meagre, and only three parties gained more than 10 percent of the vote, which is required to obtain seats at the local level and will determine the candidates in the 2021 presidential election. Two of the victorious parties were aligned with President Patrice Talon, and only one belonged to the opposition. After the elections, demonstrations ceased and tensions eased somewhat, although several opposition members in exile continued to challenge the electoral process and results.

Freedom of expression remained restricted during the year. After the ruling on the elections by the AfCHPR, Benin withdrew its recognition of the competence of the court to receive cases directly from CSOs and individuals, a move which Amnesty International called "a further step in the growing repression of dissenting voices in Benin." The Constitutional Court of Benin similarly ruled in April that the protocol of the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) allowing citizens to bring cases before the court had been improperly ratified by Benin and was thus null and void. Several cases from Benin were pending with the ECOWAS court at the time this judgment was made. Journalist Ignace Sossou, who in 2019 had been sentenced to twelve months in prison for tweeting comments by the public prosecutor, was released in June after six months of arbitrary detention. Benin ranked 114 out of 180 countries in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index of Reporters Without Borders.

Benin's economic growth dropped sharply in 2020 with the effects of the pandemic. The African Development Bank estimated the real growth of gross domestic product at 2.3 percent in 2020, compared to 6.9 percent in 2019. Inflation was low at 1.1 percent. The national poverty rate dipped slightly from 40.1 percent in 2019 to 38.2 percent in 2020, according to the World Bank. On December 16, Nigeria reopened its border with Benin, which had been closed for more than sixteen months in a dispute over smuggling.

The overall sustainability of Beninese CSOs was stable in 2020. CSO advocacy improved moderately as organizations working in social and economic fields increased their activity and their attempts to collaborate with

the government met with modest success. At the same time, the legal environment showed moderate deterioration as the government cracked down on protests during and after the elections and the space for freedom of expression and assembly narrowed. All other dimensions of sustainability were unchanged.

Benin's civil society sector includes both formal and informal organizations. There is no database of CSOs. The most recent information about the number of CSOs is from 2015, when the Ministry Charged with Relations with Institutions, Civil Society, and Beninese Abroad reported approximately 6,000 registered CSOs. The sector is believed to have grown since then.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.8



The legal environment for CSOs continued to deteriorate moderately in 2020 as the government cracked down on protests during and after the elections and implemented restrictions curtailing freedom of expression and assembly.

The law governing CSOs dates from 1901 and requires organizations to declare their existence to register. National-level CSOs register with the Ministry of the Interior, while local CSOs register with the prefectures in which their head offices are located. CSOs' organizational objectives must be lawful and may not disturb the peace or offend public decency but otherwise are unrestricted. CSOs are required to purchase template bylaws provided by the government. Organizations usually wait more than three months for

their registrations to be completed. In 2020, the processing of applications was even slower because of administrative malfunctions and pandemic-related restrictions on travel and physical contact. The Cotonou prefecture continued to demand unilaterally that CSOs re-register annually but did not sanction organizations that did not comply. The prefecture continued to stall in issuing a receipt to Beninese Coalition of Human Rights Defenders, which applied for registration in 2018. No association is known to have been denied registration in 2020. The government cannot legally dissolve an association once it is registered. During the year, the government made great strides in digitizing public services to improve processing times but did not include CSO registration in this effort.

Benin's constitution guarantees freedom of expression and assembly. However, the space for exercising such freedoms continued to shrink in 2020 as interference by public authorities grew more pronounced. Benin's withdrawal from the ECOWAS and AfCHPR protocols posed a considerable threat to CSOs' exercise of fundamental freedoms. For example, in the past, the ECOWAS Court of Justice examined reports of human rights violations brought forward by Beninese citizens, but as of 2020, this was no longer possible. In July 2020, the High Authority for Broadcasting and Communication (HAAC) threatened to ban online media, claiming they were operating without authorization under the Code of Information and Communication. The authority also arbitrarily sanctioned journalists and media outlets. For instance, a journalist with France 24 was warned about "extreme solutions" if she continued to work despite the withdrawal of her accreditation after she reported on the security situation in the country's northern area. Many CSOs sensed a climate of fear in the country as people were afraid to discuss political issues on social networks since they are monitored by the government. Unlike in other countries, pandemic-related restrictions did not curtail freedom of assembly significantly, since lockdown rules were not strictly enforced.

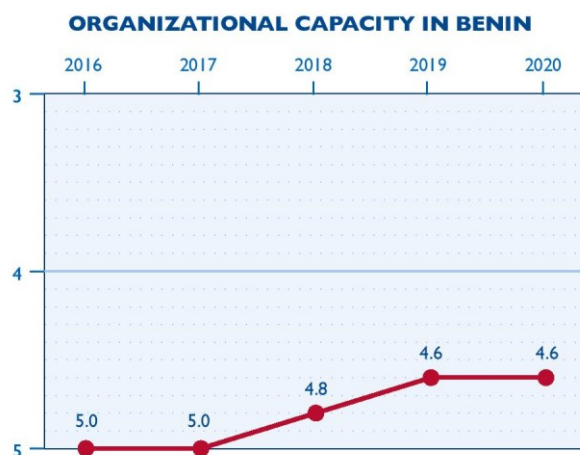
CSOs may benefit from some tax exemptions, including tax-exempt status granted in framework agreements with the government. CSOs must pay taxes on income derived from for-profit activities. CSOs may receive funds from foreign donors, subject to the requirements of the law on money laundering and the financing of terrorism. CSOs are not entitled to bid on government contracts, although the government sometimes awards contracts to CSOs for educational and training services.

CSOs may hire lawyers to defend their interests in court. However, few organizations seek legal advice because of the cost, which is generally affordable only to large networks of organizations. Several attorneys offer pro bono legal advice to CSOs.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.6

CSOs' organizational capacity was unchanged in 2020.

The pandemic disrupted personal interactions in 2020. For example, organizations were unable to reach their beneficiaries because of social distancing and a ban on public gatherings. These and other pandemic-related restrictions posed enormous difficulties for program implementation, which usually depends on human contact. Organizations such as Caritas Benin, Social Watch Benin, Mater-Alma, and Forum of Organizations Defending the Rights of Children in Benin (Forum des organisations de défense des droits des enfants au Bénin, FODDEB) simply canceled or postponed their activities until later dates. Other organizations suspended field activities and replaced them with remote work via online platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Skype, and Zoom. Some CSOs were able to carry out their usual projects after reviewing and reorganizing their field operations to adapt to pandemic conditions. For example, on African Child Day, Itodju was able to distribute food, clothing, and other items to children at the Deaf Center of Parakou. But even with these and other adjustments, CSOs struggled to achieve an impact comparable to that of previous years.



Beninese CSOs do not usually develop strategic plans with action steps and budgets. The few organizations that engage in planning include several with fairly long experience, such as Social Watch Benin, Civil Society House (Maison de la société civile, MdSC), Action Group for Progress and Peace (Groupe d'action pour le progrès et la paix, GAPP)–Africa, Look of Love (Regard d'amour) Foundation, Social Dimension Benin, and Amnesty Benin. But even these organizations rarely have the funds to implement their plans and instead pursue whatever funding is made available by international partners during the year.

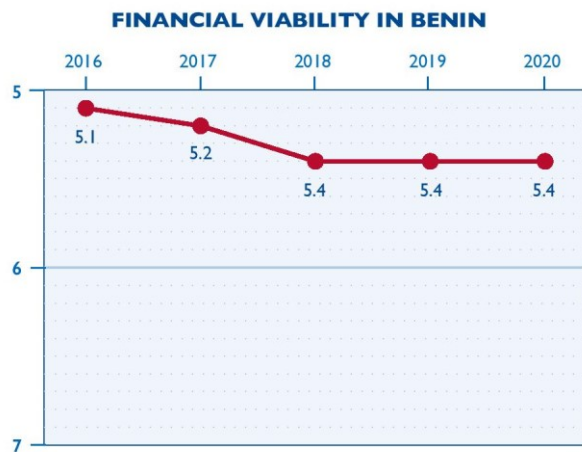
Some CSOs have boards of directors, although the legal framework does not require them. When they exist, boards are generally inactive, since most CSOs do not have permanent staff to assist them. Among the boards that are visibly active are those of large organizations such as the Association for the Fight against Racism, Ethnocentrism, and Regionalism (Association de lutte contre le racism, l'ethnocentrisme et le regionalism, ALCRER), Social Watch Benin, GAPP-Africa, West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (Réseau ouest africain pour l'edification de la paix, WANEP)–Benin, and trade unions. Some CSOs, such as Initiatives for Sustainable Integrated Development (Initiatives pour un développement intégré durable, IDID), Rural Hope (Espoir rural), and South-North Actions (Sud-Nord Actions, SNA), have internal written policies.

Beninese CSOs rarely hire permanent staff. Instead, employees are retained on an ad hoc basis for the duration of specific projects. These temporary employees are usually part-time interns who lack job security, employment contracts, and unemployment insurance. Some CSOs use volunteers extensively. For example, at Prisoners Without Borders, the field teams are made up entirely of volunteers. CSOs do not usually fulfill their legal obligation to declare employees to the National Social Security Office, which would require employees to contribute to retirement funds. Only a few organizations can afford the services of professionals such as accountants or lawyers. The network organization Social Watch Benin has an accountant and a monitoring-evaluation manager on its staff, whom member CSOs can turn to for help on an ad hoc basis when needed.

Most CSOs lack offices and have little equipment because of limited funding. CSOs with equipment usually reserve it for managers' use. The internet is widely available, but the cost of computer equipment and maintenance is high. For many organizations, the need to increase their reliance on the internet during the pandemic posed a significant financial hardship. Staff working for organizations unable to afford high-speed internet connections often use their private cell phones and subscriptions for work. Most organizations have accounts on at least one widely used social

network platform, such as Facebook or Twitter. The pandemic propelled organizations to learn to use apps such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. The majority of CSOs have websites but do not update them regularly since they do not have staff dedicated to this task.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.4



The financial viability of CSOs was unchanged in 2020. CSOs continued to depend for funding on foreign partners such as development agencies, embassies, and international organizations. The main international donors to Beninese CSOs included the European Union (EU), USAID, Swiss Development Cooperation, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), and Netherlands Development Cooperation. During the pandemic, CSOs continued to receive their usual funding. Increased donor funding for health care mostly went through the government, which since 2016 has assumed responsibility for most activities in this sector.

The EU's Program for the Strengthening and Participation of Civil Society in Benin (RePaSoc), launched in 2018 to promote citizen participation in democratic processes,

continued to be a major source of funding for CSOs in 2020. In 2020, the main recipients of RePaSoc funding were WANEP–Benin, Social Watch Benin, ALCRER, and smaller, lesser-known CSOs such as the Association for the Impetus of Grassroots Development Benin (Association pour l'impulsion du développement à la base, AIDeB) and Action Group for Research and Health for Sustainable Development (Groupe de recherche et d'action sanitaire pour un développement durable, GRAS). In 2020, the Innovative Projects of Civil Societies and Coalitions of Actors program of the Embassy of France awarded funding totaling approximately \$220,000 (EUR 193,000) to eleven CSOs for social activity projects.

Government grants, which are always very scarce, were almost non-existent in 2020. The government did not pass on any of the funds it received for the pandemic response to CSOs so that they could provide relevant services. The pandemic severely limited the availability of funding for CSOs from local foundations and businesses, such as the foundations of telecommunications companies MTN and MOOV Africa, since they turned to funding the government's pandemic response.

Although the legal and policy framework offers a favorable context for local resource mobilization, the ability of CSOs to raise funds from individuals, including their members, is still limited. In 2020, newly created CSOs and those with a limited geographical scope, particularly in rural and landlocked areas, found it difficult to survive financially. Many CSOs had trouble covering their operating expenses. A culture of donating to CSOs is uncommon, and only a few organizations, such as the Peace and Security Network of Women in the ECOWAS Area (Réseau paix et sécurité des femmes de l'espace de CEDEAO, REPSFECO)–Benin, have members who contribute financially. CSOs generate little revenue from the sale of products and services.

Most organizations still lack systems for managing their financial resources, although donors increasingly require activity reports and certified accounts before financing new projects. Most organizations with donor funding hire financial officers to prepare financial reports.

ADVOCACY: 3.8

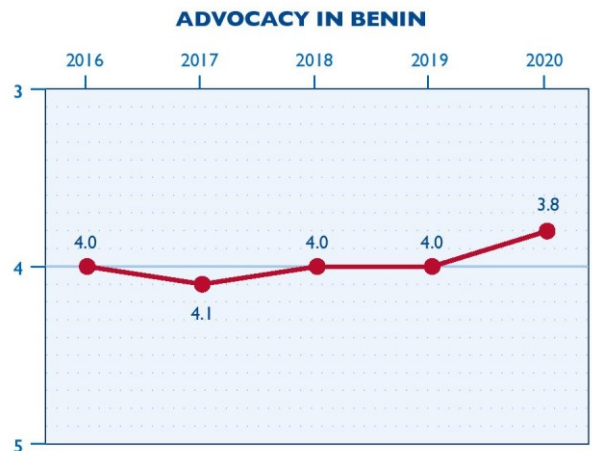
CSO advocacy improved moderately in 2020, as organizations working in social and economic fields increased their activity and their attempts to collaborate with the government met with modest success. Ongoing dialogues between CSOs and the government addressed non-confrontational issues, such as access to water, electricity, and education and the reform of laws related to the protection of children, women, and the environment. Dialogue was almost non-existent on issues of political governance, including elections, freedom of assembly, and the right to strike.

Although a specific directorate is in charge of CSO-related affairs at the Ministry of Justice, there is no formal framework for collaboration between CSOs and government decision makers at the central or local levels. Central and local institutions generally communicate with CSOs only through programs funded by donors. Several international partners have financed capacity-building programs to deepen communications between the two sectors. For example, in 2020, in partnership with the United Nations (UN) Children's Emergency Fund, Social Watch Benin organized three workshops for local elected officials and local CSOs on civil society's involvement in budgeting and communal development plans and the inclusion of children's needs in communal documents.

Collaboration between CSOs and decision makers is slowly developing and met with some success in 2020 despite the pandemic. For example, IDID participated in a discussion of the 2020 annual work plan of the Porto-Novo city council and then was able to address the municipality's challenges in its own work plan. A consortium with Social Watch Benin and the Network for the Integration of Women from African NGOs and Associations (Réseau pour l'intégration des femmes des ONG et associations africaines, RIFONGA)–Benin and the General Directorate for Family and Social Affairs organized a meeting of 150 CSO and government representatives to discuss public expenditures on gender and the environment, with funding from RePaSOC.

In social and economic fields, CSOs belonging to the Platform of Organizations Active in Local Governance (Plateforme des organisations actives dans la gouvernance locale, POGL) advocated for better use of community-development support funds, which allow municipalities to construct markets, schools, health centers, and drinking-water access points with joint financing from the government and development partners. The impact of the platform's effort, which was supported by the European Development Fund, was still unfolding at the end of the year. As part of its project to fight corruption, ALCRER issued a manual called "Getting to Know Corruption to Better Fight It" in cooperation with the Front of National Organizations Against Corruption (Front des organisations nationales contre la corruption, FONAC). This project was funded by RePaSOC and the European Development Fund. Social Watch Benin monitored the implementation of the state budget to ensure achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and implementation of Benin's Poverty Reduction Growth Strategy. At the local level, ALCRER continued to raise awareness of the importance of citizen participation in sessions of communal or municipal councils. REPSFECO–Benin and the West African Network of Young Women Leaders of Benin (Réseau ouest africain des jeunes femmes leaders du Bénin, ROAJELF) increased their advocacy related to women in 2020.

Past capacity-building programs have helped strengthen activism by organizations seeking to defend human rights in the wake of the 2019 elections. Amnesty International–Benin, for example, continued to draw attention to the victims of the violence in 2019 and the government's repression of freedom of expression, particularly on social networks. Social Change Benin (Changement social Benin, CSB), which works on issues of government budget transparency and social accountability, conducted a major campaign to raise awareness of the government's responsibility to publish its accounts. CSB demanded that members of the government reveal their salaries, which the government did not agree to, despite an old law stipulating that government officials must publish their assets when entering and leaving office. Faced with pressure from CSOs, the government simply repealed the law.



During the 2020 local elections, the Electoral Platform of CSOs in Benin, which is composed of major CSOs such as ALCRER, WANEP–Benin, and Social Watch Benin, engaged in civic education and shared information about candidates. The Electoral Platform warned the government that holding the elections in pandemic conditions presented the dual risk of low voter turnout and spread of the COVID-19 virus; the government did not respond to this warning. The platform also campaigned intensively against modifying the electoral code while elections were underway and drew attention to technical weaknesses in the law. The amended law was nevertheless adopted by the National Assembly in June 2020.

During the year, GAPP–Africa pushed for a new law for CSOs to replace the 1901 law that currently governs the sector. The Ministry of Justice proposed a draft bill that, among other things, would reduce CSOs' financial capacity by creating tedious legal processes for CSOs to follow to access donor funds. At a review and validation meeting called by the ministry to discuss the bill, CSOs strongly criticized its contents. The Ministry of Justice promised to consider CSOs' recommendations and call for a new review, but this had not happened by the end of 2020.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.1



CSO service provision remained the same in 2020. As in previous years, CSOs offered a diverse range of services to meet basic needs in areas such as health care, education, and water and sanitation.

The government's effort to push CSOs out of traditional health and environmental services, which began in 2016, continued in 2020. CSOs that used to provide garbage collection and health-care services have been completely sidelined, and in 2020, only state and licensed private providers could offer these services. However, CSOs continued to work in localities not yet served by the government. For example, in July, Enagnon Dandan began a water and sanitation project in Zakpota Commune that will install boreholes to serve 6,600 people. This EUR 165,000 (approximately \$188,000) project is financed by

the French organization Association Action Solidarité.

In 2020, some organizations shifted their focus from their usual activities to provide pandemic-related supplies and services with funding from donors or their own resources. For example, Other Life (Autre vie) donated 100 handwashing kits and materials to people in Ouémé Department, and Cedec Blue offered handwashing kits and masks to the people of Hevie Adovie. Plan International Benin offered 1,452 handwashing kits to schools and colleges in Zou Department. With funding from Amnesty International, Collectif 229 produced a song and video clip to remind young people in high schools and colleges of the importance of protecting themselves and others. The Humanitarian Association for the Development of Third-World Countries (Association humanitaire pour la développement des pays du tiers monde, AHDPM) Benin, in partnership with Social Action and the African Woman Portal (Portail de la femme africaine, PFA), held awareness-raising sessions in Porto-Novo, Missérété, Dangbo, and surrounding areas. A few CSOs offered medical equipment to the Ministry of Health. The government neither supported nor impeded CSOs' pandemic-related interventions.

CSOs try to provide goods and services that reflect the needs and priorities of the groups and communities they support. In practice, CSOs' goods and services are determined by international funders rather than the organizations themselves. CSOs generate little revenue from the marketing of their products and services.

In 2020, the government publicly expressed appreciation for the work of service-providing CSOs that had helped populations in remote areas understand the importance of observing preventative measures to combat COVID-19.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.2

The sectoral infrastructure for CSOs was unchanged in 2020.

Beninese CSOs continued to benefit from several existing resource centers in 2020. The main resource center is MdSC, which is headquartered in Cotonou and has satellite offices in Bohicon in the central region and Parakou in the north. MdSC seeks to strengthen CSOs' capacities to influence decision making and implement development programs. The center hosts a library for use by its members and derives income from membership dues, fees for consulting services, and rental of its conference room. International bodies such as the French Institute, U.S. Embassy, and Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees also provide meeting rooms for CSOs' use. Public libraries, Fondation Zinsou libraries, and the legal library of the Ministry of Justice are open to CSOs, and WANEP–Benin has a library for use by its members. Access to all of these facilities was significantly restricted during the pandemic, especially from the end of March to May 2020, when all libraries were closed.

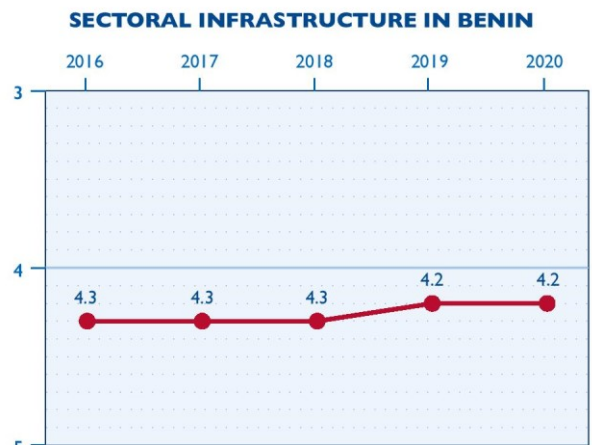
Among the few local re-granting programs, the EU's RePaSoc program allows capable CSOs to subcontract projects to smaller, local organizations.

CSO networks and coalitions are common in Benin. They can be either permanent or ad hoc groupings focused on specific projects, often at the urging of funding partners, which prefer to fund networks rather than individual CSOs. For example, in 2020, Social Watch Benin, ALCRER, and FONAC worked together to develop an appraisal and advocacy paper on the Finance Management Bill 2021.

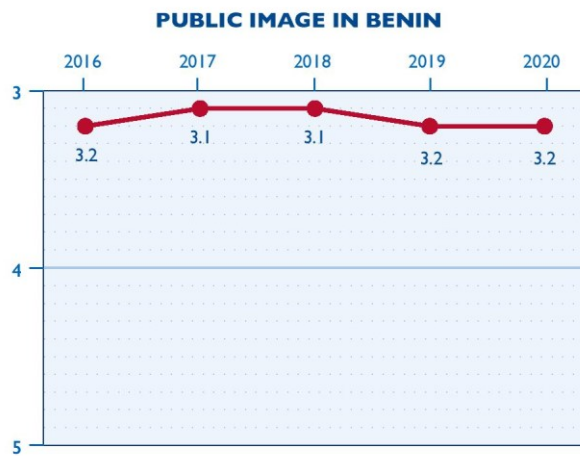
The pandemic did not cause the volume of training to decline or move online in 2020, since the lockdown was of short duration, and internet connectivity is not of sufficient quality to encourage reliance on online platforms. CSOs had access to a number of training opportunities in 2020. The Quality Label program of MdSC continued to provide technical and financial assistance and management training to strengthen individual organizations, which then serve as models for other CSOs. This annual program, launched in 2018, took place over six months in 2020. Of twenty-seven CSOs applying for Quality Label certification according to fixed criteria, only nine were successful. An award ceremony took place in November. Another capacity-building project, the African-German Youth Initiative Benin, was launched in July 2020 by the Beninese Office for Youth Volunteer Services in collaboration with GIZ. The project will certify CSOs that develop volunteer and youth exchange programs. Its implementation was delayed in 2020 because of the pandemic.

In addition, the UN Development Programme organized a workshop on project management for its local partners in Grand-Popo in November. The Embassy of the Netherlands and the OmiDelta program funded a workshop for citizen associations that monitor drinking water and citizen participation units, which was organized by Social Action with support from ALCRER and the Global Water Partnership. The workshop provided actors in the water and sanitation sector with knowledge and tools to effectively monitor and advocate for citizens' water rights.

CSOs worked closely with the government on the pandemic response and other noncontroversial issues such as education and water in 2020. Some organizations were invited to participate in or attend government-funded events, and government representatives attended events organized by CSOs. For example, in November, Social Watch Benin and RIFONGA–Benin organized a debate with CSOs and officials from the Ministry of Nursery and Primary Education, at which CSOs commented on the ministry's budget for the first half of 2020. Collaboration between CSOs and corporations and foundations is not common in Benin.



PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.2



The public image of CSOs did not change in 2020.

CSOs' events are sometimes covered on television and radio and in newspapers. For example, some media outlets covered a discussion of open government organized in August 2020 by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, in collaboration with the Coalition for Open Governance and the National Assembly. The national television station ORTB sometimes covers CSOs working in the social and economic sectors. But in general, Beninese media gives little space to CSOs, in part because they confuse CSOs that denounce violations of fundamental rights with the political opposition. In addition, many Beninese media have communications contracts with the government, which prevent them from giving a voice to any structure that has a different stance from that of the government.

The public has interpreted CSOs' recent inability to speak out and defend fundamental rights as a sign that the sector is no longer independent. Before 2016, CSOs and trade unions were seen as effectively mobilizing the public in the defense of democracy, but the heavy crackdown that began in 2016 has led portions of the public to believe that the government has corrupted some CSO leaders. This impression was reinforced in 2020 when some CSO leaders publicly supported the government on certain political issues and even called for President Talon to run again in 2021.

The government tends to ignore CSOs, since they have little power to mobilize the population. The government does not see CSOs as constituting a political threat and is unresponsive to many of their actions.

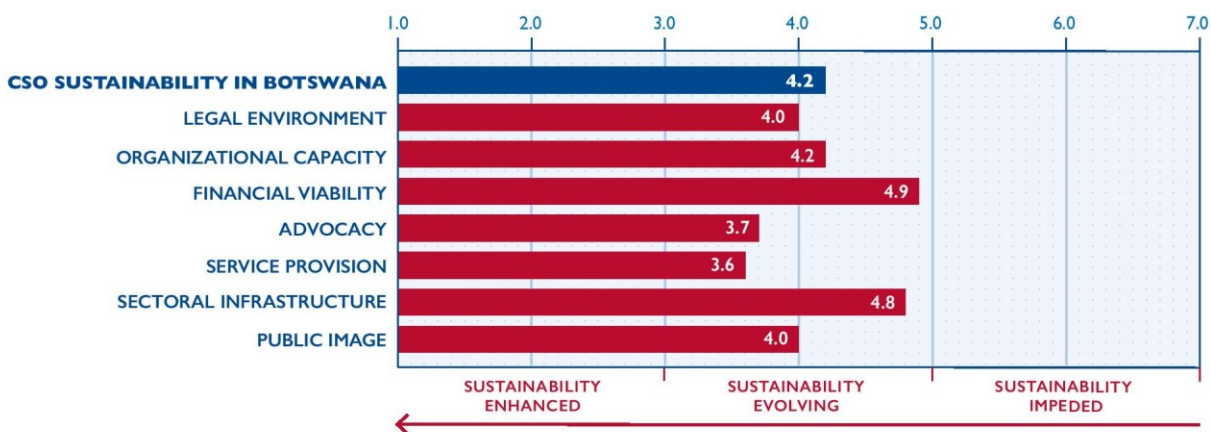
CSOs invite the media to their events. Some CSOs post advertisements or issue publications to reinforce their positive image. Social Watch Benin and ALCRER organized a campaign on a planned Court of Auditors, which boosted the reputation of participating CSOs. CSOs increasingly take advantage of social networks to enhance their visibility. WANEP-Benin, IDID, and other organizations use Facebook and Twitter, and numerous CSO working groups function on WhatsApp. GAPP-Africa was unable to continue its Media Café in 2020, which brings together CSOs and journalist to discuss the sector's activities, but hopes to start it up again in 2021.

Other than the Quality Label certification program, there are no initiatives in Benin to set and internally monitor standards for the CSO sector. Among the very few organizations that issue activity reports, the Benin Coalition of Organizations for Education for All (Coalition béninoise des organisations pour l'éducation pour tous, CBO-EPT) and IDID publish their reports on their websites.

BOTSWANA

Capital: Gaborone
Population: 2,350,667
GDP per capita (PPP): \$17,767
Human Development Index: High (0.735)
Freedom in the World: Free (72/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.2



As the COVID-19 pandemic spread worldwide in early 2020, the government of Botswana took the preventative steps of closing the country's borders and banning gatherings of more than fifty people. The first cases of the virus in Botswana were confirmed on March 30, 2020. The government immediately declared a twenty-eight-day state of public emergency, which, in 2020, was extended twice for a six-month period. Under the state of emergency, which included a lockdown and curfews, schools were closed, social distancing and face masks were compulsory, domestic travel was restricted, and a zoning strategy with screening checkpoints was established. The state of emergency allowed the president to rule by decree, which aroused some concern that these powers could be used to ban the right of unions to strike, limit free speech related to the pandemic, and restrict religious activities. The government established a COVID-19 relief fund to help procure supplies, raise awareness, and support the economy. CSOs helped with contact tracing, testing, and awareness raising but were not part of a government task force on the pandemic. As of December 29, 2020, the number of confirmed cases had risen to 14,700, and forty-two people had died of the virus, according to the task force.

In compiling the Civil Society Mid-Term Review Stakeholder Report, which is part of the third Universal Periodic Review cycle for Botswana, a group of leading CSOs held virtual stakeholder consultations with other CSOs, government officials, and community leaders to discuss the impact of pandemic emergency regulations on human rights. The consultations revealed some inadequacies in government interventions surrounding the pandemic. For example, during the first lockdown in April and May, CSOs dealt with many cases of gender-based violence (GBV), child sexual abuse, and the victimization of key populations. More often than not, such cases were not reported to the police because of victims' mistrust of the authorities' ability to deal with such cases fairly. The consultations also indicated that, although focused on public health, the government's pandemic strategy of restricting mobility, banning public gatherings, and using security forces to enforce compliance had unanticipated consequences, such as shutting down the informal sector, exacerbating threats to vulnerable groups, and impeding CSO operations.

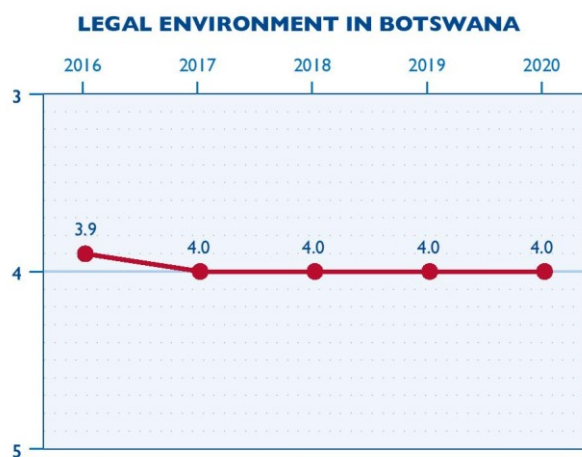
The pandemic had a devastating impact on Botswana's economy. The economy shrank by approximately 7.7 percent in 2020, according to the World Bank. By the third quarter of 2020, the diamond sector, which accounts for one-third of all government revenues, had contracted by more than two-thirds compared to the same period in 2019. The tourism sector also suffered. In mid-October, the government approached the World Bank for budgetary support, which was still under consideration at the end of the year.

The overall sustainability of Botswana's CSO sector deteriorated slightly in 2020. CSOs' organizational capacity was challenged slightly by pandemic-related restrictions, which impeded internal and external communications. Changes in funding streams during the pandemic caused CSOs' financial viability to worsen moderately. On the

other hand, CSOs' public image improved slightly as television and radio stations provided expanded coverage of their activities. All other dimensions of sustainability remained unchanged.

At the end of 2018, the most recent year for which data is available, the Registrar of Societies reported a total of 9,756 registered societies.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.0



The legal environment for CSOs did not change in 2020.

CSOs are governed by the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Policy of 2012, which recognizes civil society's important contribution to national development and nation building. The policy defines the relationship between the government and CSOs, provides for mechanisms to support CSOs through line ministries, and identifies the functions of the NGO Council. The implementation of the NGO Policy is facilitated by the Policy Guidelines for Support to NGOs.

All CSOs are required to register under the Societies Act of 2014, Companies Act as amended in 2008, or Trust Property Control Act of 2018. The Department of Civil and National Registration registers nonprofit organizations, and the Master of the High Court registers

community trusts. Nearly all CSOs register as societies. The registration process is straightforward. Within twenty-eight days of adopting written constitutions, new organizations submit applications and pay required fees to the Registrar of Societies, which then issues certificates of registration. CSOs generally do not experience significant barriers in terms of the cost or clarity of the registration process. However, the turnaround time for applications can be long, and the requirement that new organizations have a minimum of 150 individual members is sometimes impossible to meet. Rural organizations must travel long distances to registration offices, which can also pose a hardship. Online registration is not possible. Organizations working with children must show that they have well-equipped spaces that meet international standards, which can be difficult for CSOs working in remote areas. The registrar regularly deregisters organizations that fail to comply with annual reporting requirements.

The laws and policies governing CSOs do not specify clear rules for internal governance and are confusing about the person or body responsible for coordinating operations. The Model Deeds of Trust and the Community-Based Natural Resource Management Policy are especially vague about issues of leadership, governance, and scope of command. The Trust Properties Act of 2018 introduced stricter requirements concerning the operations, governance, and leadership of trusts.

CSOs operate freely under the law. Some CSOs censor their criticism of the government and limit their human rights advocacy because they rely on the government for funding.

No instance of state harassment of CSOs was reported in 2020. The government occasionally criticized CSOs' activities publicly. Some government officials were alleged to micromanage CSOs and compromise their autonomy by monitoring their operations monthly.

CSOs may obtain funding from foreign donors provided they comply with international agreements adopted by Botswana to counter money laundering and the financing of terrorism. CSOs may participate in government calls for bids, although very few win contracts, largely because their low organizational, financial, and technical capacities weaken their ability to fulfill bidding requirements and complete proposals. Government ministries such as the Ministry of Health and Wellness, sometimes award short- or long-term contracts to CSOs on a non-competitive basis. Under the terms of these contracts, only 20 percent of the funding may go to operational costs, such as human resources and utilities.

CSOs may establish social enterprises to augment their incomes provided any proceeds are reinvested in activities to achieve their public-interest objectives. CSOs may engage in fundraising.

CSOs are not exempted from taxes. CSOs registered with deeds of trust automatically become taxable entities, with taxes levied on trustees.

Local lawyers are trained in CSO-related laws and offer high-quality legal advice. However, their fees can be expensive and difficult for CSOs to afford.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.2

The organizational capacity of Botswana’s CSOs deteriorated slightly in 2020 as the pandemic impeded communications with constituencies, staff turnover was high, and staff members at organizations that preferred to conduct physical meetings were unable to keep in touch with each other.

CSOs are viewed as the “voice of the voiceless” and connect with their communities to build informal social movements. CSOs often involve their beneficiaries in planning their programs, which in turn helps build their constituency base. For example, the Botswana Network on Ethics, Law, and HIV/AIDS (BONELA) has built strong relationships with its affiliates by advocating for access to antiretrovirals by non-citizens and key population groups, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex communities. However, in 2020, pandemic-related restrictions caused CSOs’

engagement with their constituents to deteriorate significantly. Communications became challenging, and most CSOs found it more difficult to provide support to their beneficiaries because of logistical and funding constraints. People with disabilities living in hard-to-reach areas and with limited access to communications networks were especially difficult to involve in CSOs’ activities. However, some CSOs, such as the Trust for Okavango Cultural and Development Initiatives, were able to continue their regular awareness-raising activities. The Botswana Christian AIDS Intervention Program (BOCAIP) relied on councils of church organizations to advance its counselling programs in 2020.

Most CSOs, both rural and urban, have organizational constitutions and strategic plans with vision and mission statements. However, they do not usually follow their plans because of inadequate resources and pressure to implement activities requested by donors. In 2020, CSOs’ ability to realize their missions was hampered by pandemic-related restrictions on travel and in-person gatherings. In addition, some CSOs did not receive funding for their regular activities, since much available funding was re-channeled to fight the pandemic. While the government assisted businesses with COVID-19 wage subsidy funds, CSOs were excluded from this program, even though they were registered, paying taxes, and had employees equally affected by the virus.

While most CSOs in Botswana are generally well managed, some CSOs in rural areas lack clarity about the roles and responsibilities of boards and staff. Other CSOs normally observe legally mandated processes, such as elections at annual general meetings. Boards are often non-functional and may meet formally only when elections are held, thereby failing to perform their primary duty of overseeing operations. In 2020, the pandemic made it difficult for general assemblies to meet and for boards and management to carry out their usual activities. Some management teams used virtual platforms to conduct their work, but at organizations that preferred to meet in person, staff members were unable to keep in touch with each other. Most CSOs in urban areas have written policies, but community-based organizations (CBOs) in rural areas often do not because of a lack of funding to engage specialists to help with their development.

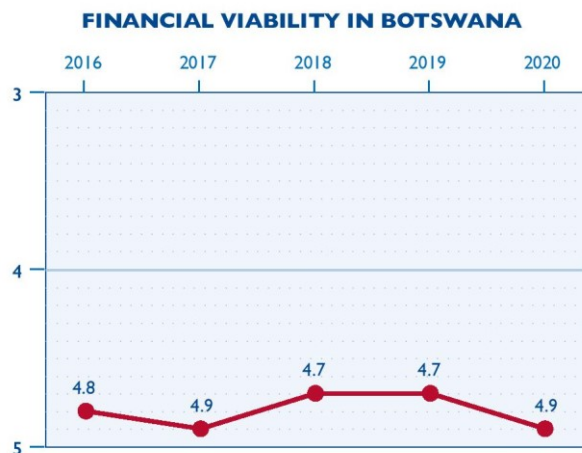
Most CSOs hire staff on a short-term basis only. For example, after a European Union-funded capacity-building program to deepen CSOs’ involvement in governance ended in 2020, participating CSOs were unable to retain associated staff, such as program and account managers, because they no longer had sufficient funds. Many organizations find it difficult to retain highly qualified employees because they are unable to offer competitive remuneration, which causes staff to turn over quickly. These constraints on staffing compromise CSOs’ ability to achieve long-term organizational goals. Institutional memory is also weakened, and processes such as auditing may



be poorly performed. In 2020, the Thuso Rehabilitation Center lost staff because of inadequate funding for operational costs and, as a result, also lost clients.

Internet services tend to be expensive in Botswana. Most CSOs in urban areas have access to the internet and use it often to maintain a presence on websites and social media platforms. In 2020, many well-equipped urban CSOs relied on Zoom to conduct meetings, since physical contact was restricted. In some hard-to-reach areas, such as Okavango and Kgalagadi, access to the internet is inconsistent. CSOs have only recently become aware of the need for cybersecurity to minimize potential breaches, and they are starting to raise awareness about the issue.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 4.9



CSOs' financial viability was challenged moderately in 2020 by changes in funding streams caused by the pandemic. The government competed with CSOs for donor support to battle the virus, while many foreign funders reduced their funding. The private sector contributed funding primarily to the government for pandemic-related activities. However, a few organizations, such as Humana People to People, BOCAIP, Kuru Health, ACHAP, and Tebelopele, received funding from USAID and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) program to participate in COVID-19 contact-tracing activities.

Since Botswana is now an upper middle-income country, most international donors have passed responsibility for financing CSOs to the government. CSOs still receiving

support from international donors such as PEPFAR face an uncertain financial future. Decreases in donor funding forced some CSOs to scale back their activities in 2020. For instance, BONELA lost funding from Save the Children International and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran mission, which had been its partners for more than seven years. Other development partners, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Joint UN Program on HIV and AIDS, also significantly reduced their support to BONELA.

Although donors are transitioning away from Botswana, windows of opportunities are still open. For example, in 2020, ChildLine, Kagisano Society, BONELA, and Skillshare received funding from Save the Children Sweden to address the needs of migrant children and improve child-rights governance. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, through ACHAP, and PEPFAR, through FHI 360, funded HIV-prevention activities and services to victims of GBV, which were provided by organizations such as the Botswana GBV Prevention and Support Center (BGBVC), Tebelopele, and Botswana Retired Nurses Society. CSOs continued to find the process of applying for donor funding both cumbersome and frustrating. Many CSOs, especially in rural areas, had difficulty accessing funding because of logistical constraints and poor internet access.

CSOs continued to rely mainly on the government for funding in 2020. Although comprehensive information about the reprogramming of government funding to fight the pandemic is unavailable, CSOs were unable to access funding from the National Environmental Fund or Alcohol Levy, two main sources of support, because of the diversion of funds from these sources to battle the pandemic. Several government ministries continued to fund CSOs at reduced levels. For example, the National AIDS and Health Promotion Agency (NAHPA) provided funding to Childline, SOS, Marang Childcare Network, Ark and Mark Trust, and Love Botswana for HIV/AIDS-related projects. These organizations also received funding amounting to BWP 6 million (approximately \$500,000) from the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to provide essential services to orphans and vulnerable children. The disbursement of ministry funds was regularly delayed, constricting cash flows at recipient organizations.

Few other domestic sources of funding are available to CSOs. Corporate social responsibility programs are still weak and offer minimal support. A few banks support CSOs, but local philanthropic foundations and individuals rarely donate to CSOs. Organizations continued to lack strategies for mobilizing resources, sufficient marketing and business capacities, and resources to hire dedicated staff.

Most larger CSOs have sound financial management systems and qualified financial management staff. Starting 2020, several CSOs with sound financial management practices, including Hope World Wide, Humana People to People, BOCAIP, Tebelopele, and Stepping Stones International, for the first time received funding directly from USAID rather than through an intermediary organization. However, many CSOs do not observe financial controls and cannot afford to obtain professional financial services. Donors and the government often require audited financial statements but do not cover their costs, which disqualifies CSOs that cannot afford these services on their own. BONELA continued to build the financial capacity of its members by offering training on virtual platforms in 2020.

ADVOCACY: 3.7

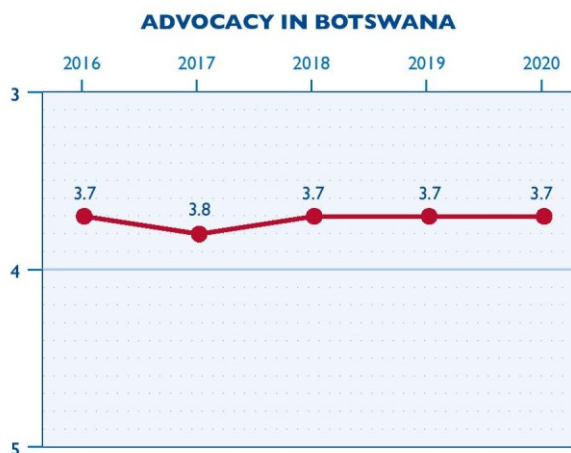
CSO advocacy was stable in 2020.

Platforms such as district development committees, district multisectoral HIV/AIDS committees, and kgotla, or village meetings, allow CSOs to take part in joint planning and review activities at the community level. In 2020, pandemic-related restrictions limited CSOs' ability to engage in these consultative frameworks. The presidential task force did not include CSOs, and CSOs had little influence on policy decisions regarding the pandemic.

Some CSOs, especially human rights organizations, develop policy initiatives to shape the public agenda. For example, in 2020, BONELA, Childline, SOS, Marang Childcare Network, Ark and Mark Trust, and Love Botswana coordinated their advocacy on behalf of child rights. BONELA and Sisonke advocated for access to social services for foreigners during the lockdown, and as a result, some foreigners received government food parcels. BONELA continued to fight against GBV, and its efforts resulted in the establishment of an interministerial committee to address the issue. ACHAP, Sisonke, Rainbow Identity Association, Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals of Botswana (LeGaBiBo), and other organizations worked with NAHPA to establish a human rights office and develop a funded national strategic plan to remove human rights- and gender-related barriers to HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis services. CSOs led by BONASO formed a tripartite committee with the government and donors to encourage community support for measures related to COVID-19.

The government generally ignores CSO lobbying efforts. For instance, CSOs encouraged the parliament to give special attention to child abuse by presenting a petition in parliament. But the petition was ignored, and CSOs were blamed for seeking to drive the political agenda to impress donors. When the Marang Childcare Network and Child Life invited legislators to a roundtable discussion, only a few parliamentarians turned up. Some CSOs have lobbied the government to reform the law governing natural resource management, but their efforts have not borne fruit.

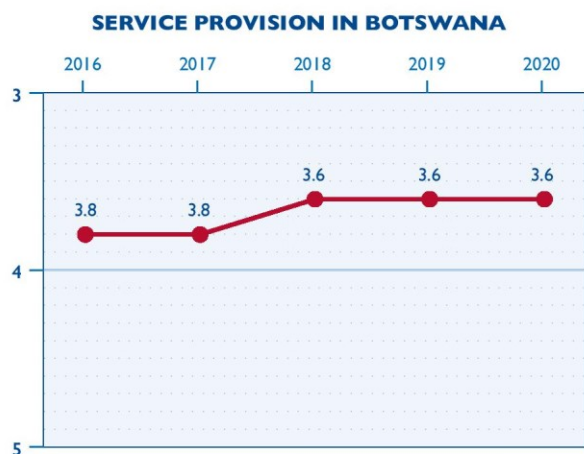
Because of the pandemic, CSOs did not engage in significant efforts to reform the legal framework for the sector in 2020.



SERVICE PROVISION: 3.6

Service delivery by CSOs was unchanged in 2020.

In addition to providing their regular services, CSOs delivered goods and services during the lockdown in March and April. For example, with PEPFAR funding, BOCAIP, Humana People to People, Kuru Health, Botswana GBV Prevention Center, and Tebelopele Wellness Centers helped implement care, treatment, and prevention interventions in greater Gaborone, greater Francistown, Ghanzi, and other districts in line with guidance from the Ministry of Health and Welfare.



CSOs continued to complement government service delivery in 2020 by providing HIV/AIDS testing, treatment, care, and legal services to victims of GBV. For example, with support from the Global Fund, BONELA extended its HIV/AIDS services to five districts by establishing drop-in centers where key populations could have decentralized, non-discriminatory access to services. BONELA also coordinated project funding for eight organizations, including LeGaBiBo, Men for Health and Gender Justice, and Silence Kills, on behalf of the National AIDS and Health Promotion Agency. Many CSOs' services were challenged in 2020 by the pandemic, which posed restrictions on movement and presented the need to migrate in-person meetings and training to online formats. CSOs sometimes sought to make up for gaps in the government's pandemic response. For

example, during the first lockdown in April and May, CSOs sought to address a spike in reports of GBV, which in many cases were not reported to police because of widespread mistrust of the authorities' ability to deal with such cases fairly. BGBVC received additional funding from USAID to open a temporary shelter to help with the increase in cases of domestic violence during the lockdowns.

CSOs seek to be responsive to community needs, and their clients typically regard them as providing excellent services in a timely manner and on flexible terms. While many organizations needed to adapt because of limited resources and pandemic-related restrictions in 2020, CSOs were often able to continue to provide services. For example, BONELA coped with restrictions on movement by establishing a cadre of community monitors to track human rights violations in access to health care and access to services in twenty-seven health districts. The community monitors collected data using tools such as management or referral forms or client satisfaction surveys, and the data was then analyzed to improve service delivery in health facilities and at the community level. Some CSOs used digital platforms such as social media to improve the efficiency of their service delivery.

CSOs lack the capacity to recover the costs of service provision by charging fees, creating social enterprises, or sub-contracting their services. In 2020, some CSOs were unable to cover staff salaries, because the government reimbursed only transportation and supplies. Because of staffing shortages, most CSOs lack the capacity to engage in fundraising, although individual employees may have valuable skills in this area.

In spite of the limited resources that it provides to CSOs, the government appreciated CSOs' role in providing COVID-19 contact tracing and testing services in 2020. Officials assigned to oversee and distribute funding to CSOs are sometimes poorly informed about their specific areas of service delivery.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.8

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector did not change in 2020.

A few resource centers and intermediary support organizations provided services to CSOs in 2020. The Botswana Library provided access to free internet services to CSOs in Gumare, Shakawe, Bobonong, and Nata. The Ngamiland Council of Non-Governmental Organizations provided internet services to at least ten affiliates in Maun.

National grantmaking organizations including Botswana Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (BONEPWA), ACHAP, Botswana Network of AIDS Service Organizations (BONASO), and other umbrella bodies support projects in areas such as community-based HIV testing, palliative care, and the human rights of key and vulnerable populations affected by stigma and discrimination. These organizations usually pass on funding received from the Global Fund, NAHPA, Ministry of Health and Wellness, and PEPFAR. In 2020, PEPFAR, through FHI 360 and the Ministry of Health and Wellness, provided funding for CSOs to conduct COVID-19 screening, contact tracing, and awareness raising. Their level of funding in 2020 could not be verified but overall is estimated to have declined. No grantmaking organizations exist at the district level.

Human rights CSOs used virtual platforms to obtain information and engage in joint activities in 2020. The child rights sector, in conjunction with the Child Rights Network for Southern Africa, was also able to keep its members informed through virtual webinars and meetings. Umbrella groups have recognized their members' activities are often poorly coordinated with the work of CSOs in other sectors and are trying to correct this deficiency.

The pandemic and limited resources forced many coalitions, including BONEPWA and BONASO, to cut back on capacity building for their members in 2020. A few local organizations offered training to CSOs virtually. The Bokamoso Educational Trust, for example, provided CBOs with training in early childhood development, and Legal AID Botswana and the Ombudsman's Office offered training to human rights organizations to improve their civic education programs and case referrals. The Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee continued to provide training on climate change, human rights, and UN mechanisms virtually. The Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organizations and Institute of Development Management signed a memorandum of understanding to provide training to CSOs to increase their levels of competence.

The government and CSOs collaborated closely in 2020. Partnerships between CSOs and other sectors improved slightly. For instance, CSOs in the child rights sector worked with media to publicize children's concerns and brought together CSOs, media, and government representatives to discuss the best interests of the child. CSOs had few partnerships with businesses in 2020.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN BOTSWANA



PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.0

PUBLIC IMAGE IN BOTSWANA



CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020 as television and radio stations provided expanded coverage of their activities. For example, the traditional month of prayer led by BOCAIP was covered by public and private radio and print media, which also published stories about the efforts of human rights organizations to address GBV. The cooperation of the Lake Ngami Trust and Tsodilo Trust with the UNDP was the subject of stories by both private and government media. In 2020, public and private media coverage of services provided by CSOs in response to the pandemic was enormous. For instance, Radio Botswana, a public radio station, introduced an educational program with roundtable discussions of CBOs' activities in response to COVID-19. The program provided an opportunity for local organizations to talk about their work and contributions to the communities

that they serve. Botswana Television, also a public station, provided daily COVID-19 updates in which CSOs were given the opportunity to talk about their efforts. Private radio stations such as Duma FM and Yarona also provided platforms for CSOs to showcase responses to COVID-19.

The public perception of CSOs was positive in 2020. The public generally appreciates CSOs' activities, although its understanding of their operations tends to be limited. Community members sometimes show their solidarity with CSOs by volunteering time or donating cash. Some members of the public believe that CSOs are not responsive to national issues.

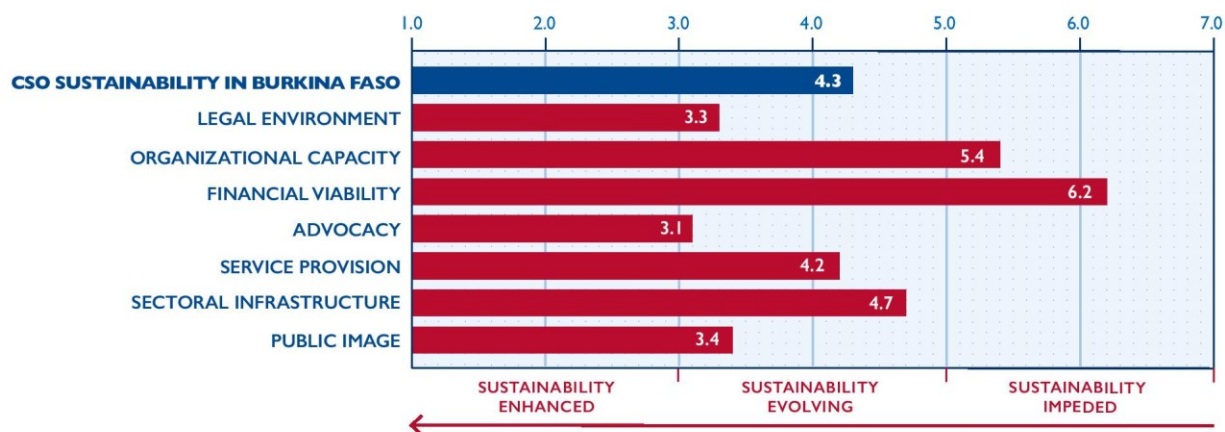
Most CSOs cannot afford public relations officers because of limited funding. In general, CSOs' capacity for effective communication is limited, although umbrella organizations often use print, electronic, and social media to engage on advocacy issues and promote their work.

Only a few experienced CSOs have codes of ethics. Although most organizations have internal regulations, they do not share them with the public. Larger organizations publish annual reports, but other CSOs rarely have the capacity to do so.

BURKINA FASO

Capital: Ouagadougou
Population: 21,382,659
GDP per capita (PPP): \$2,178
Human Development Index: Low (0.452)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (54/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.3



Terrorist activity surged in Burkina Faso in 2020, particularly in the northern and eastern parts of the country, where jihadists and other militant groups stepped up kidnappings, murders, and bombings. The government was unable to control the violence, and, in January 2020, the parliament adopted Law No. 002-2020/AN on Volunteers for the Defense of the Fatherland, which allows the government to train and equip community-based self-defense groups to support the country's defense and security forces. By December, militants had killed more than 2,000 people and forced 1 million people from their homes in the course of the year, according to the United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). More than 2,500 schools were reported to have closed, withholding education to about 300,000 children, according to the UN agency. Humanitarian needs skyrocketed, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in difficult camp conditions were supported by a large number of international and national CSOs. A lull in attacks was reported in the last two months of 2020.

The country's growing insecurity dominated presidential and legislative elections, which took place on November 22, 2020. Fifteen political parties vied for seats in the National Assembly, the broadest participation since the country gained independence in 1960. In regions affected by insecurity, campaigning was limited, and nearly 3,000 polling stations were closed on voting day under a new force majeure law. Elsewhere, voting went smoothly, and international observers labeled the elections satisfactory. Several CSO actors ran for office as members of political parties or independent candidates. The incumbent president, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, was re-elected with 58 percent of the vote.

The human rights situation in Burkina Faso continued to be of concern in 2020. The national armed forces, jihadi militants, and community self-help groups all faced allegations of massive human rights abuses, and few steps were taken to investigate the allegations. Revisions of the penal code in 2019, which criminalized the dissemination of some information about terrorist attacks and security force operations, induced established media to refrain from covering the country's security situation for fear of lawsuits or sanctions. In the absence of reporting by established media, disinformation proliferated on the internet.

The number of COVID-19 infections in Burkina Faso in 2020 was low compared to other countries of sub-Saharan Africa. After the first case was reported in early March, the government introduced measures to prevent the spread of the virus. These measures included a ban on movement between cities, lockdowns, and the closing of external borders. Demonstrations were banned from March 11 to April 30, 2020, and then were allowed to continue, although a provision of the new penal code criminalized "undeclared or prohibited" demonstrations.

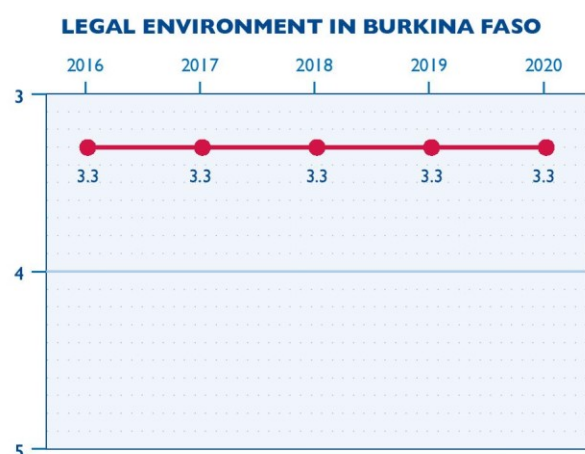
The pandemic and insecurity had a devastating effect on Burkina Faso's economy in 2020. The real gross domestic product contracted by .2 percent after 5.7 percent growth in 2019, according to the African Development Bank.

Increases in the international price for gold, which accounts for 85 percent of the country’s exports, produced a surplus in the current account deficit. Most of the population works in agriculture, and 40 percent live below the poverty line, according to the World Bank. The country ranks 144th among 157 countries on the World Bank’s 2020 Human Capital Index. Because of insecurity, an estimated 3.3 million people faced acute food insecurity in 2020, according to the World Food Program.

Burkinabe CSOs’ overall sustainability did not change in 2020. CSOs’ organizational capacity was slightly weaker as nearly all organizations had to suspend activities because of pandemic restrictions. CSOs’ financial viability deteriorated as donors reduced funding levels. All other dimensions of sustainability were unchanged.

The overall number of CSOs in Burkina Faso is almost impossible to establish since there is no central database of registered organizations. The latest official data showed approximately 15,700 registered organizations in 2016. The Ministry of Territorial Administration, Decentralization, and Social Cohesion (MATD), the main regulatory body for CSOs, has registered between 1,500 and 2,000 organizations a year since 2010. Most CSOs are unregistered and operate informally with minimal activity, which the legal system allows.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 3.3



CSOs’ legal environment was unchanged in 2020.

The laws governing CSOs did not change in 2020. Under Law 064-2015/CNT of 2015 on the freedom of association, CSOs may form freely and do not need government approval in advance. To obtain legal status, an association provides MATD with a declaration of its existence along with draft bylaws, internal regulations, and other information. New procedures introduced in 2019, including the “one-stop-shop” where all registration formalities may be settled, have simplified the registration process. MATD officials often request corrections to founding documents to ensure that they comply with the law. The government has three months to issue a receipt of recognition, after which an association is considered registered. To obtain status as a

non-governmental organization (NGO), which brings tax benefits, a CSO must also register with the Ministry of Finance. NGOs are typically national-level domestic organizations or branches of large international organizations headquartered outside of Burkina Faso. CSOs that have operated for at least five years may apply to MATD for public benefit status, which establishes eligibility for certain types of government funding.

Associations are not required to report to the government. NGOs are supposed to submit annual reports to the Ministry of Economy and Finance, but many fail to do so without being penalized. CSOs with public benefit status must submit annual reports with financial statements to MATD, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and their line ministries. Failure to do so can be punished by the suspension of funding, although this is not known to have happened.

Article 4 of Law 064 protects CSOs from government involvement in their operations, and in practice, despite Burkina Faso’s poor implementation of many of its laws, government interference in CSOs is rare. Organizations are rarely suspended or dissolved, and this is not known to have happened in 2020. CSOs are free to engage on any topic and take part in public discussions. Organizations may take legal action if they believe the government has infringed illegally on their existence or operations.

No organization is known to have suffered state harassment in 2020. However, freedom of association was significantly reduced after demonstrations were suspended as part of the pandemic response. Unions called the ban on demonstrations a maneuver by the government to prevent planned demonstrations against its decision to tax allowances and bonuses paid to public- and private-sector employees. In insecure regions, pandemic measures extended or reinforced restrictions that were already in place, such as the criminalization of undeclared or prohibited demonstrations. CSOs regularly deplore the deaths and other negative impacts of terrorism, and no

organization is known to have been sanctioned under the revised penal code in 2020. Criticism of the government's management of the pandemic and health services and videos showing uniformed officers molesting civilians during nighttime curfews circulated widely on social media in 2020.

The tax status of CSOs has changed little in recent years. Few CSOs know about beneficial provisions of the tax code and the process for taking advantage of them. NGOs are eligible for certain exemptions from taxes on purchases and imported goods or equipment, but only a few organizations attempt to obtain them because of the complicated and time-consuming application procedures. Corporations and individuals may receive deductions for their donations to CSOs.

There is no legal provision for public funding of CSOs, but it is not prohibited. CSOs may compete for government contracts. In years past, some CSOs have tried to push legislation to ensure public financing of CSOs from the central state budget, but these attempts have been unsuccessful. Local municipalities sometimes provide grants to local CSOs, usually for short-term activities. CSOs may accept foreign funding.

The law does not explicitly ban all income-generating activities. However, most CSOs feel that such activities do not belong in their scope of activity and do not engage in them.

Many attorneys and organizations specializing in laws related to civic freedoms offer legal services in the capital, Ouagadougou. They include the Burkinabe Movement for Human and People's Rights (Mouvement burkinabé des droits de l'homme et des peuples, MBDHP), Center for Democratic Governance (Centre pour la gouvernance démocratique, CGD), and Conscious Citizens' Movement (Mouvement citoyens conscients, MCC). These organizations usually offer legal assistance at no charge to CSOs and instead seek external or public funding for their services. At the local level, few attorneys specialize in CSO-related law.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.4

CSOs' organizational capacity was slightly weaker in 2020, as nearly all CSOs had to suspend activities because of pandemic restrictions.

Burkinabe CSOs usually seek to involve their constituencies in their activities. However, in 2020, members of the NGO Permanent Secretariat (Secrétariat permanent des ONG, SPONG), Burkina Faso's largest NGO network, reported that competition from foreign CSOs was disrupting their relationships with beneficiaries. For example, in Sanmatenga Province, the site of particularly intense terrorist attacks, international CSOs work directly with local populations and have no relationship with domestic organizations working in the same localities. The international organizations sometimes duplicate activities that Burkinabe CSOs are already carrying out. This situation creates a lack of clarity about humanitarian activities in specific areas, as it is difficult to know who is doing what and with whom. In addition, since the end of 2019, the government has prohibited or severely restricted CSOs' access to areas of insecurity, particularly IDP camps. Humanitarian agencies, CSOs, and NGOs focused on humanitarian assistance to the IDPs have been required to hand over their supplies to local sections of the Burkinabe Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation, which then redistribute them to the IDPs. This requirement has prevented most CSOs from interacting directly with IDPs.

CSOs' missions are defined in their founding documents. Their need for financial resources forces some CSOs to seek the support of party organizations, which violates the distinction between political parties and CSOs in Law 064 and can lead CSOs to take partisan positions that are outside of their missions and the scope of civil society generally. While not illegal, the candidacy of several CSO actors in the general elections also erased the line between CSOs and partisan activities. The difficult situation with insecurity and the pandemic in 2020 disrupted the strategic planning efforts of most organizations. For example, organizations that intended to conduct activities such



as demonstrations or the provision of humanitarian aid could not achieve these objectives in the planned timeframe.

CSOs' bylaws define their internal decision-making bodies and management rules. A small number of CSOs, including SPONG, Varena-Asso, African Center for Strategic Studies Burkina Faso (Centre d'études stratégiques pour l'Afrique Burkina Faso, CESA-BF), Center for Citizen Monitoring and Analysis of Public Policy (Centre de suivi et d'analyses citoyens des politiques publiques, CDCAP), and Democracy and Economic and Social Development Research Group (Groupe de réflexion sur la démocratie et le développement économique et social, GERDDDES), hold regular statutory meetings, including annual general meetings. But most CSOs are unable to hold such meetings because they have decentralized structures on the regional, provincial, or communal level, which are difficult to coordinate. In 2020, pandemic restrictions added to the difficulty of holding statutory meetings.

CSOs' staffing varies according to their financial resources. While well-established organizations usually have accountants, monitoring and evaluation coordinators, and other key personnel, the vast majority of CSOs do not have the resources to hire and retain enough staff, especially specialists such as computer technicians and communications coordinators. Volunteers remain most organizations' primary human resource. A number of CSOs were forced to let go of staff in 2020, either because program activities could not be carried out because of insecurity in certain areas or funding that was suspended because of the health crisis.

It is fairly common for urban CSOs to have at least one computer and use the internet to communicate about their work. In 2020, CSOs' communications were somewhat reduced if face-to-face interactions could not take place. In urban areas, CSOs moved many activities online, but rural CSOs were unable to do so because of the poor quality of internet services.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.2



CSOs' financial viability deteriorated slightly in 2020 as donor funding decreased. This reduction in funding for CSOs in Burkina Faso added to a downward trend that has been underway for several years.

Foreign organizations and development agencies remained the main source of financial support for CSOs in 2020. The main donors are typically the European Union, World Bank, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), USAID, and the international cooperation agencies of Denmark, Sweden, and France. While exact funding levels in 2020 are unknown, many CSOs were observed to reduce their operations in 2020. Some organizations were required to return funding to donors if planned activities could not be held. Rather than provide funding directly to Burkinabe CSOs, donors

often prefer to go through implementing agencies such as Oxfam, Diakonia, and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). Such organizations are able to compete for funding more successfully than domestic CSOs since the application process is complicated and beyond the capacity of most local organizations. Some Burkinabe CSO leaders have tried to prevent fluctuations in funding for Burkinabe CSOs for nearly a decade, with little success.

The Domestic Resource Mobilization project of the Civil Society Network for Development (Réseau des organisations de la société civile pour le développement, RESOCIDE) has tried to develop indigenous funding mechanisms to ensure a regular, minimal level of support for Burkinabe CSOs while engaging them in crucial issues of development and political governance. The mechanism will be supported by individual donors but did not progress far in 2020 because of disruptions caused by the pandemic.

No legislation requires funding from the state budget or from municipalities to be made available to CSOs. Some ministries regularly sign activity implementation agreements with CSOs. For example, Tin Tua has benefited for many years from such contracts to build literacy in the east areas of the country. Local municipalities, such as Bama, Zorgho, and Matiacoali, sometimes provide grants to local CSOs from their budgets. In general, however,

CSOs find it difficult to obtain information about funding opportunities from government agencies, especially since the Ministry of Economy and Finance does not share up-to-date statistics.

CSOs in Burkina Faso tend to view themselves as nonprofit entities that are not entitled to earn income from their services. However, a few CSOs engage in income-generating activities. Organizations such as the Association to Promote Local Initiatives (Association pour la promotion des initiatives locales, APIL), Varena-Asso, Evangelical Development Support Association (Association évangélique d'appui au développement, AEAD), and Christian Relief and Development Organization (CREDO) derive income from agricultural products, processed wild products such as honey, and training for disadvantaged community groups. Processed products are sold to the public but sometimes also shipped out of the country. Training is usually subsidized by the government or foreign donors and provided free of charge to targeted audiences. In 2020, the National Assembly, Center for Democratic Governance (CGD), National Council of Women of Burkina Faso, and other CSOs raised more than XOF 450 million (approximately \$770,000) in an online “coronathon.” The funds were donated to the Public Health Emergency Operations Center in the Ministry of Health, which served as a central clearinghouse for pandemic-related services.

The quality of CSOs’ financial management ranges from the rudimentary to the complex, depending on available funding and donors’ requirements. CSOs that have the means to develop them usually have manuals and procedures to guide their financial management.

ADVOCACY: 3.1

Despite the pandemic’s silencing of normal life, CSO advocacy changed little in 2020.

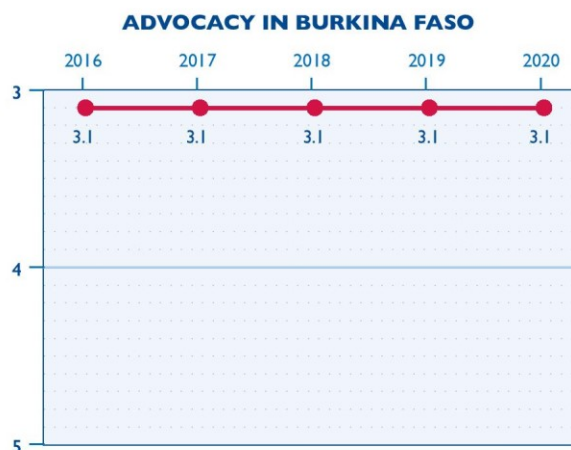
Burkina Faso has a fairly long tradition of dialogue on public policies, and CSOs have taken part in dialogue frameworks at the national and local levels for several years. In 2020, CSOs’ work with the government focused on the second phase of the National Economic and Social Development Plan, which expired in 2020, as well as the preparation of the next phase.

CSOs’ advocacy campaigns were relatively invisible during the year, mainly because of pandemic restrictions on demonstrations. The state of emergency in effect in several provinces since 2018 has also significantly reduced the space for public demonstrations and advocacy in those areas.

The ban on demonstrations was particularly difficult for labor organizations in 2020, since early in the year they were preparing protests against the government’s plan to begin taxing the bonuses and allowances of public and private sector workers. The unions respected the suspension but declared that they will resume demonstrations as soon as possible. The activities of school and student organizations were also frozen, and youth organizations were unable to hold the government accountable about, for example, the quality of education. However, despite the pandemic’s disruption of programming and the electoral calendar, organizations such as the Youth Network for Development and Governance based in Fada Ngourma were able to organize training to encourage young people to register to vote.

Some organizations and, in particular, individual activists relied on social networks, especially Facebook, as their main space for debate and protest in 2020. Health-care organizations used the media to raise public awareness about the dangers of COVID-19. In general, short messages were posted at the end of all CSO communications about the importance of remaining vigilant about the disease.

CSOs’ involvement in legislative processes was undercut in 2020 as many parliamentary sessions were canceled and replaced by online meetings. The only legislative process to which CSOs made a significant contribution was the development of a bill amending the electoral code. RESOCIDE, which works on political governance issues,



participated in the public consultation on the bill organized by NDI. RESOCIDE members also took part in the annual V-Dem initiative, which collects data on trends in democracy around the world.

No initiatives to amend Law 064 were noted in 2020. Organizations that usually work on this subject, such as SPONG and CDCAP, did not take action. A meeting that the new minister of justice, human rights, and civic promotion planned for late November did not happen before the year ended because of competing priorities.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.2



CSOs' service provision did not change in 2020.

The bulk of Burkinabe CSOs work in service provision. For example, with the support of international agencies such as the UN and World Health Organization and international CSOs such as the International Red Cross, domestic CSOs helped the country's hundreds of thousands of IDPs in 2020. The Collective against Impunity and the Stigmatization of Communities (Collectif contre l'impunité et la stigmatisation des communautés, CISC) provided IDPs with basic necessities such as shelter, food, and health care and established a human rights legal assistance program. In Ouahigouya, the Citizen Movement (Mouvement citoyen) continued to help several hundred destitute and displaced persons with administrative procedures, such

as registering for primary services with the Ministry of Social Action or obtaining birth certificates and identity cards. In Dori, the Association for Environmental Management and Development (Association pour la gestion de l'environnement et le développement, AGED) distributed food to vulnerable populations. Action for the Culture of Development Naangué (Action pour la culture du développement, ACD Naangué) raised awareness of malaria and other diseases through service contracts with the Health System Development Support Program of the Ministry of Health. In March 2020, CSO leaders in Gaoua in southwestern Burkina Faso received training about COVID-19 from the provincial coordinator of CSOs so that they would raise awareness about the preventive measures in villages and gold extraction sites.

In 2020, the pandemic prevented some CSO service operations. For example, ACD Naangué was forced to limit its activities to the city of Dori to comply with government directives regarding COVID-19. Some awareness-raising sessions were suspended for at least the rest of the year. Humanitarian aid was subjected to many constraints because of terrorist kidnappings and other forms of insecurity, and several localities, such as Djibo, Arbinda, and Mansila, remained without supplies for many months.

Burkinabe CSOs are highly responsive to the needs of their communities. CSOs usually tailor their actions to specific audiences and specific needs that they know well. Farmers' organizations generally aim to serve their members' interests, especially their financial interests.

Most CSOs provide their products and services free of charge. Among the few CSOs that engage in income-generating activities are the Burkinabe Association for Familial Wellbeing (Association burkinabe pour le bien-être familial, ABBEF), which provides health care; REV+, which is well known for its services for HIV/AIDS patients; and Siphra, which operates a health clinic. In Dori, the Dotinogo Association has built a local reputation for its manufacturing and marketing of soaps and soumbala, a popular ingredient in sauces.

Political actors often refer positively to CSOs' activities in their speeches. The minister of social action, for example, regularly acknowledges her gratitude to humanitarian actors who provide services in place of the government in several areas of the country.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.7

The sectoral infrastructure was stable in 2020.

The number of intermediate support organizations (ISOs) in Burkina Faso changes little from year to year. In 2020, the main ISO remained Oxfam, NDI, and Diakonia, which pass on donor funding to smaller local CSOs through calls for proposals or direct selection. These ISOs typically offer training to grantees as a component of larger projects.

Burkinabe CSOs usually work individually rather than in networks or collectives. Cooperation is more common among service-providing organizations or CSOs focused on economic, social, and cultural rights, which often form partnerships to obtain grants. CSOs working on political governance, civil and political rights, and other advocacy areas are less likely to form groupings, since they have fewer funding opportunities and they tend to act sporadically, depending on public events. Collectives and networks are sometimes formed at the request of donors seeking to multiply the impact of their investments. The best known and most established CSO grouping is SPONG, the largest and oldest CSO network in Burkina Faso, which today has nearly 150 members. The Coalition Against the Cost of Living (Coalition contre la vie chère, CCVC) is another large network, which was formed during the hunger riots in 2009 and today plays a prominent role in protecting consumer rights, particularly as prices rise for basic necessities such as grain and oil. Agricultural organizations form the country's largest networks. The Faso Peasants' Confederation (Confédération paysanne du Faso, CPF), for example, brings together producer cooperatives from all regions of the country. The strength of farmers' organizations and their networks stems from the financial focus of their activities, which provides them with substantial means to organize.

Training is usually included as a component of donor-funded projects and focuses on technical skills such as project management or organizational development. In 2020, SPONG organized training for more than 500 CSO representatives in areas such as citizen monitoring of public policies, social inequalities, social protection, the environment, health care, and water, sanitation, and hygiene. Many of these trainings were online.

CSOs in Burkina Faso are not very actively involved in inter-sectoral cooperation, mainly because funding to convene meetings on issues related to public policies has declined in recent years.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN BURKINA FASO



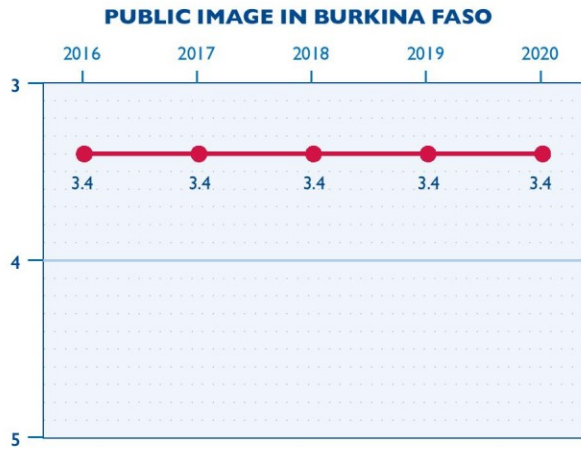
PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.4

CSOs' public image was stable in 2020.

The media often cover CSOs' statements and press conferences about current political events. CSOs can also attract media coverage of their other activities provided they have sufficient funding to pay for such services, which ensures that published information is accurate.

Public opinion of CSOs is varied but overall has declined in recent years. CSOs with a presence on social networks and in traditional media have contributed to the sector's negative image by participating in partisan activities, which creates confusion about their legal status. This confusion has weakened the sector's credibility, as CSO actors are increasingly perceived as little different than politicians. At the same time, some service-providing CSOs enjoy enhanced trust as public faith in the government wanes.

The government has a benevolent posture towards CSOs that support its activities and is critical of CSOs that denounce the inadequacies of its policies. For example, when organizations such as the Framework for Democratic Expression (Cadre d'expression démocratique, CED) criticize the rise of insecurity or weakness of public services, the government almost always denounces their statements as not contributing to the fight against terrorism.



CSOs' relationships with the private sector are limited. Few CSOs have partnerships with private companies. When they exist, they often involve advertising companies' products. Some businesses fund CSOs' sports activities on occasions such as election campaigns.

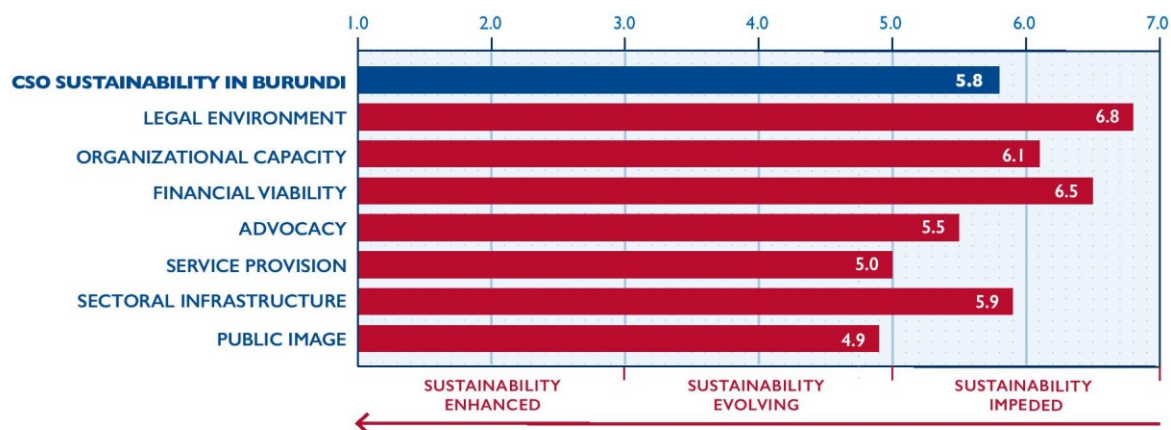
CSOs that conduct many activities and have sufficient funding are able to develop relationships with the media to publicize their activities. CSOs without the funding to pay for media services usually achieve only random coverage of their activities, depending on their relevance to current political issues. Some CSOs prefer to maintain the independence of their communications and so rely on social networks for communicating with their audiences.

CSOs in Burkina Faso are bound by mandatory codes of ethics written into their founding documents. The codes require them to be non-partisan and promote democracy, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights. In general, CSOs comply with these codes since they are part of their legal framework, and their compliance can be checked by MATD. Compliance with other self-regulatory codes by CSOs varies by field. CSOs submit reports about their activities to funders but rarely share them with others. CSOs without funding do not always compile reports on their activities.

BURUNDI

Capital: Gitega
Population: 12,241,065
GDP per capita (PPP): \$752
Human Development Index: Low (0.433)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (14/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.8



A peaceful transfer of power took place in Burundi in 2020. Evariste Ndayishimiye was elected president in general elections in May. Very few international observers monitored the elections because of pandemic-related travel restrictions. The opposition claimed that the elections were rigged and noted irregularities such as the arrest of an unknown number of opposition leaders and reports that people voted multiple times. The Conference of Bishops of Burundi criticized the transparency of the electoral process. Before the president-elect could assume office, the incumbent president, Pierre Nkurunziza, suddenly died. At his inauguration in June, the new president promised to promote human rights, freedom of opinion, and justice for all citizens and encouraged Burundians who had left during the previous regime to return home.

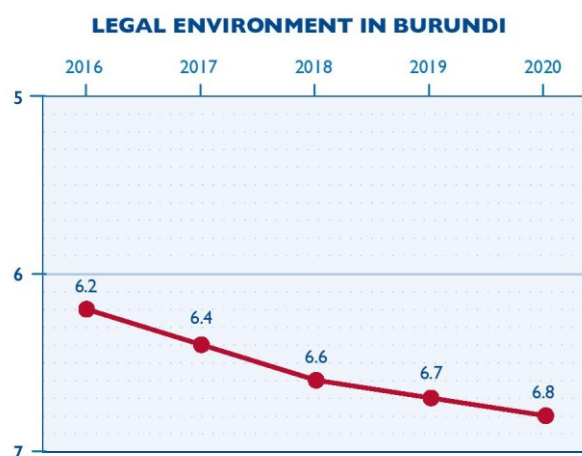
The first case of COVID-19 was detected in Burundi on March 31, 2020. The government introduced quarantines for people entering the country, circulated health guidelines, and instructed security forces to enforce hygienic and sanitation measures in public places. In the following months, some observers claimed that the country's response was inadequate and covered up the real scope of the pandemic. In May, the government expelled without explanation the country director and two experts from the World Health Organization. After President Ndayishimiye was inaugurated, he created a national pandemic response committee chaired by the minister of the interior, community development, and public safety. The committee did not include CSOs. CSOs were generally unprepared for the pandemic and did not receive reliable information or financial support.

The pandemic interrupted the country's fragile economic recovery. The real gross domestic product contracted by 3.3 percent after growing 4.1 percent in 2019, according to the African Development Bank. After two years of deflation, the World Bank reported that inflation reached 7.5 percent in 2020, driven by rising food prices and the limited availability of imported consumer products. Apart from the World Bank, which continues to finance projects in agriculture, community development, education, and health care, many donors have reduced or suspended their direct financial support since 2015, mainly because of mandatory ethnic quotas for the local staff of international organizations in place at the time. Nearly two-thirds of the population lives below the poverty line, according to the United Nations (UN) Development Programme.

The overall sustainability of Burundian CSOs deteriorated slightly in 2020. The legal environment was slightly less enabling as the government implemented existing laws more stringently and state harassment increased. Advocacy deteriorated moderately as opportunities for contact with government officials diminished during and after the elections. CSOs' public image was moderately weakened by the government's expressions of mistrust of the sector, which negatively influenced public views. All other dimensions of sustainability were unchanged.

In 2020, 201 new associations and eight new religious organizations registered in Burundi. As of December 2020, a total of 7,430 non-profit associations and 635 religious organizations had registered in Burundi since 1992. This number includes organizations that are no longer operating as well those that have failed to update their status, as required by Law No. 1/02 on nonprofit associations. It does not include organizations that are registered at the commune, or municipal, level.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 6.8



The legal environment for CSO deteriorated slightly in 2020 as the government implemented existing laws more stringently and state harassment increased.

CSOs in Burundi are governed mainly by two laws passed in 2017, Law No. 1/01, which governs foreign CSOs, and Law No. 1/02 on nonprofit associations, which governs domestic CSOs. While these laws did not change, their implementation posed greater difficulties to CSOs in 2020. The challenges included CSOs' financial difficulties in securing physical addresses for their headquarters, as required by law, as well as the lack of a cooperative framework between the government and CSOs, which is required by Law No. 1/02 but had yet to be put in place. In addition, local governments manage their relations with CSOs poorly, specifically by meddling

in organizations' work and internal operations. These problems were compounded by the fact that Law No. 1/02 has not been translated into the national language, Kirundi, and is available only in French, which most Burundians do not understand.

CSOs continued to register by applying to the Ministry of the Interior, Public Safety, and Community Development to operate at the national level or by declaring their existence to local authorities if they intended to operate in a single commune. The registration process must be completed within two months, and every organization must re-register every two years. After five years of operation, CSOs working in priority areas specified in Law No. 1/02 may apply for public benefit status, which brings benefits such as tax and customs exemptions and eligibility for government funding. The priority areas include good governance, the environment, the protection of vulnerable groups, peace promotion, and emergency intervention. In 2020, the government arbitrarily stopped registering CSOs and granting official status by issuing certificates to registered organizations that had, as required by Law No. 1/02, harmonized their bylaws, management, and structures with the law. No explanation was offered for the suspension of these activities, which continued throughout the year. Many applications were stuck waiting for processing by the responsible departments, and some CSOs' field activities were slowed down or halted by the government's delay in granting official status.

Domestic CSOs must submit annual reports to their line ministries by March 31 of each year. The Administrative Court may suspend an organization for up to one month if it fails to submit an annual report, does not hold annual general meetings for two consecutive years, fails to renew its registration for two consecutive two-year periods, or does not have a physical address in Burundi during a two-year period. After the month-long suspension, the court must either overturn or uphold the suspension. In the latter case, the court may impose additional penalties, such as withdrawing an organization's authorization to operate. CSOs do not have the right to appeal such decisions. One of Burundi's few human rights organizations, Speech and Action for the Awakening of Consciousness and Evolution of Mindsets (Parole et action pour le réveil des consciences et l'évolution des mentalités, PARCEM), remained suspended in 2020 after it was banned in 2018 on charges of "tarnishing the country's image." International CSOs are no longer required to formally declare the ethnicity of local staff, as had been required since 2018.

After the Ministry of the Interior, Public Safety, and Community Development, which has oversight responsibility for CSOs, was reorganized in 2020 as part of a general government restructuring, certain governmental and local authorities asserted more control over CSOs and sometimes suspended their activities without the legal authority

to do so. For example, the Burundi Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies instructed an organization that intended to conduct research to obtain a statistics permit, which is required when research and studies cover the entire country. The requirement effectively put an end to the project, since acquiring a permit can take up to six months. The Ministry of Interior, Public Safety, and Community Development demanded that several CSOs that were not working in the development sector shift their focus to development so that they could operate more like Sangwe cooperatives, which operate in rural communities throughout Burundi. The government initiated the Sangwe cooperatives, and they often have government officials serving on their management committees.

CSOs in Burundi operated in a highly restrictive and repressive environment, in which security forces are reported to have committed serious human rights violations, including torture, and people no longer dared to express themselves out of fear. As it was too soon to tell whether the new government would change this environment, many people and organizations continued to self-censor after the election in 2020. State harassment of CSOs increased, and CSOs' freedoms of expression, association, and assembly were frequently violated, as the authorities became more vigilant and sought to strengthen their control of the sector, especially during the election period, when the government's mistrust of CSOs soared. CSOs were told to scale back or stop their activities under the pretext that they were distracting local populations from the elections. The internet was shut down at various times during the election period. Among media still suspended in 2020 were the domestic outlets Radio Publique Africaine, Bonesha FM, and Télévision Renaissance, which were suspended in 2015; Voice of America, which has been unable to operate in Burundi since 2018; and the BBC, whose license was withdrawn in 2019. Four journalists for Burundi's only independent newspaper, *Iwacu*, who were arrested in October 2019 while covering unrest in Bubanza Province, were sentenced to two and a half years in prison in January 2020 but released in December 2020.

The taxation of CSOs and the laws governing CSOs' mobilization of financial resources did not change in 2020. Like all entities, CSOs pay value-added tax and taxes on their employees' salaries. CSOs have the right to generate income to achieve their objectives, and they may bid on contracts for government projects if they have the required capacities. CSOs may fundraise and accept funding from foreign donors, provided the funds pass through accounts opened in their names at the Central Bank.

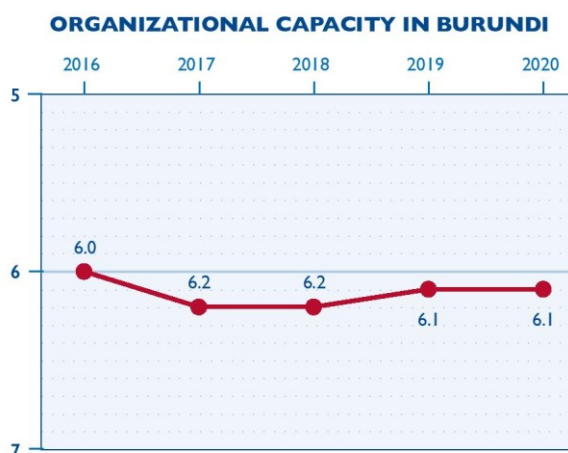
Paid legal services are available, but their cost is unaffordable for many organizations.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 6.1

CSOs' organizational capacity did not change in 2020. Some CSOs continued to show the benefit of training received under a two-year, European Union (EU)-funded capacity-building program, which helped hundreds of CSOs develop their internal structures, update their bylaws and regulations, improve the performance of their statutory bodies, and implement best practices. This program concluded in 2019 and was succeeded by a similar EU program in 2020.

Most Burundian CSOs work at the community level. In the past few years, many organizations have sought to develop a culture of accountability by establishing close relationships with the groups that they work with and identifying their needs in a participatory manner. For example, the Observatory for Government Action (Observatoire de l'action gouvernementale, OAG) works closely with the municipality of Mutimbuzi in Bujumbura Province on fiscal accountability, and the Organization to Support Self-Promotion (Organisation d'appui à l'autopromotion, OAP) works with communities in Bujumbura Province on agriculture and school infrastructure. After the pandemic broke out, CSOs disseminated recommendations for protecting oneself and others from COVID-19 and provided their members with hygiene and disinfection supplies.

In accordance with Law No. 1/02, all CSOs must have functioning statutory bodies. CSOs that work in areas such as health care, HIV/AIDS, education, development, entrepreneurship, women's and girls' empowerment, and youth,



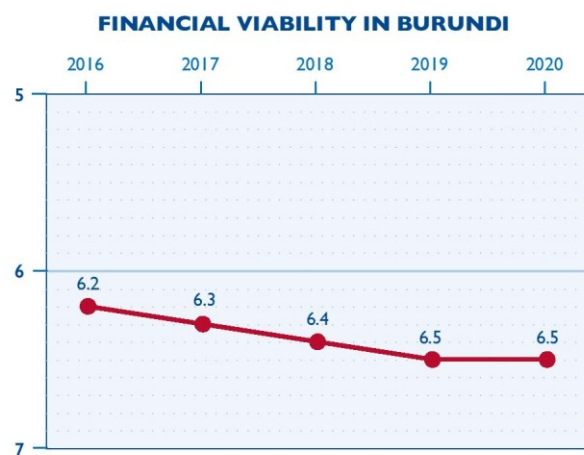
which attract donor support, tend to be better organized. They often have functioning general assemblies, executive committees, and supervisory boards as well as basic management tools, such as procedural manuals, codes of ethics, and anti-fraud policies. Many of these organizations, including OAG, Support for Integral Development and Solidarity in the Communes (Appui au développement intégral et à la solidarité sur les collines, ADISCO), Education and Development Council (Conseil pour l'éducation et le développement, COPED), Burundian Association for Family Wellbeing (Association burundaise pour le bien être familial, ABUBEF), and Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAA)–Burundi, have adopted good practices to promote transparency in their management, including meetings with members to share decisions and solicit their recommendations and feedback.

CSOs' missions and areas of intervention are clearly defined in their founding texts and are integrated into their strategic plans. Organizations preparing strategic plans include ABUBEF, SWAA–Burundi, OAG, Humanitarian Work for the Protection and Development of Children in Difficulty (Oeuvre humanitaire pour la protection et le développement de l'enfant en difficulté, OPDE), and other leading organizations. CSOs usually develop monitoring and evaluation plans to accompany their strategic plans and track the implementation of their projects through first-hand observation in the field.

Most CSOs have no choice but to rely on volunteer members, since they lack the financial resources to pay permanent staff. Employees are hired either on fixed-term contracts aligned with the length of a project or on indefinite-term contracts. Financially stable CSOs usually offer indefinite-term contracts for key staff. Under the Burundi Labor Code, fixed-terms contracts that are renewed more than twice automatically change to indefinite-term contracts. The government's campaign to encourage the Sangwe cooperative movement has motivated some CSO staff to migrate to cooperatives, which offer better salaries.

CSOs usually have basic office equipment, including computers, printers, photocopiers, and scanners. CSOs increasingly use the internet and social networks such as Facebook and WhatsApp to share information and communicate with each other and their audiences. But since Burundi has limited electricity coverage and only a small fraction of the population is online, the internet has yet to become CSOs' main tool for communications. CSOs have not yet mastered issues related to cybersecurity.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.5



The financial viability of Burundian CSOs did not change in 2020.

CSOs' financial situation remained precarious as they continued to have difficulty accessing resources to secure their short, medium-, and long-term operations. With no local sources of funding, CSOs are largely dependent on foreign funding, which has decreased dramatically since 2018. In 2020, a few consortia received direct support from the EU. For example, a consortium consisting of Cordaid, ADISCO, and OAG received EUR 3.1 million (approximately \$3.5 million) for the three-year Strengthening Civil Society for Inclusive Participation in Development and Governance project, which was launched in December. Oxfam, ActionAid, and the Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation (MIPAREC) also

received funding under this project. The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy partnered with CSOs to build the capacity of youth and women, and USAID supported civic participation and CSOs' capacity development. Foreign technical and financial partners did not provide funding for CSOs to perform election-related activities in 2020. Some partners provided protective equipment (masks) and disinfectants but little funding for pandemic-related activities.

The government provides little support to CSOs and did not award any contracts to CSOs in 2020. Businesses do not fund CSOs.

The capacity of CSOs to mobilize other local sources of funding did not change in 2020. Communities are too poor to provide financial support and, on the contrary, look to CSOs for assistance. Few CSOs have resource-mobilization strategies. Self-generated resources such as membership fees are minimal, and financial donations are rare. Very few organizations have initiated income-generating activities.

Some CSOs that partner with donors have strong financial management systems and tools, such as financial and accounting procedural manuals and accounting software such as Sage, since they are conditions for donor funding. Other CSOs have less-developed financial management systems and sometimes lack written financial procedures and traceable transactions.

ADVOCACY: 5.5

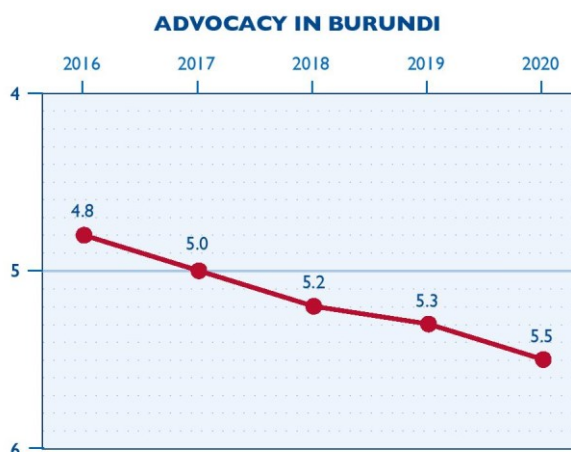
CSO advocacy deteriorated moderately in 2020 as contact between the government and CSOs diminished during the elections, the installation of new officials, and the restructuring of all levels of government.

During the election period, as candidates and their supporters focused intensely on campaigning and political mobilization, decision makers were largely unavailable to CSOs. After the elections, the government underwent extensive change, including new officials at all levels and the redefining of tasks of all ministries. The restructuring of the government and turnover of personnel limited CSOs' ability to engage on advocacy issues for the remainder of 2020, especially as the climate for advocacy under the new government remained unclear.

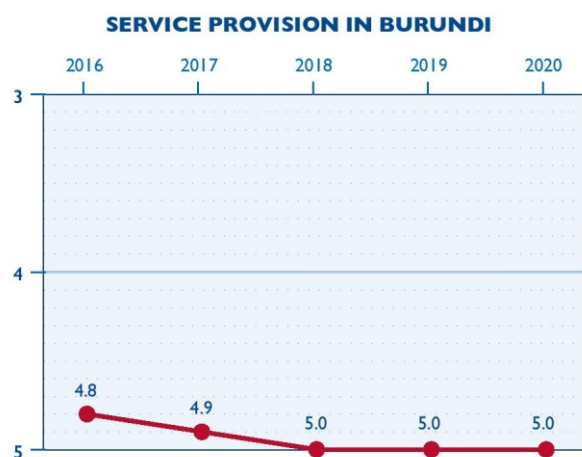
As a result of their limited contact with government officials, CSOs carried out little visible advocacy in 2020, including on the elections.

Despite the unfavorable context, CSOs remained comfortable with the concept of advocacy and planned on resuming their activities in the future. For example, in 2020, women's associations under the leadership of the Women and Peace Network (Réseau femmes et paix, RFP) developed a plan to promote the participation of women in decision-making bodies from 2021 to 2025.

CSOs made no visible effort to improve Law No. 1/02 in 2020.



SERVICE PROVISION: 5.0



CSO service provision did not change in 2020. CSOs continued to provide services in areas such as economic development (including income generation, entrepreneurship, and the economic empowerment of youth, girls, and women), environmental protection (including reforestation, dredging, and erosion prevention), and conflict prevention and peace building (including social dialogue and community mediation). However, because of the pandemic, many target groups were unwilling to travel or take part in large-scale meetings with CSOs. During the election period, the authorities temporarily suspended all of CSOs' on-site activities, under the pretext of preventing CSOs from diverting public attention from the elections. The activities of international CSO did not change.

Some CSOs, such as the Burundi Red Cross, implemented pandemic-related educational programs and distributed items such as sanitizer and soap. CSOs helped raise awareness by requiring beneficiaries to wash their hands regularly and follow the government’s requirements for masks and social distancing in their meetings and workshops. They also broadcast educational announcements in the media. Some partners such as the International Red Cross provided CSOs with protective equipment, including masks and disinfectants for distribution. In their offices, CSOs made available handwashing stations, masks, and posters as recommended by the national pandemic response committee.

CSOs are unable to generate much income through service provision, although some products and services are marketed for token amounts. CSOs’ publications are usually distributed at no cost. Burundian CSOs do not discriminate, as this would be against the law as well as their own values and ethical principles.

In its public statements in 2020, the government recognized the contributions of CSOs, particularly those working in its priority areas of health care and vulnerable populations such as the handicapped, orphans, elderly people, and drug users. However, some provincial governors and communal administrators made disparaging remarks about CSOs and even went so far as to refuse to authorize their activities without offering an explanation. Many CSOs believed that these officials imposed restrictions on their activities so that they could demand bribes to remove them.

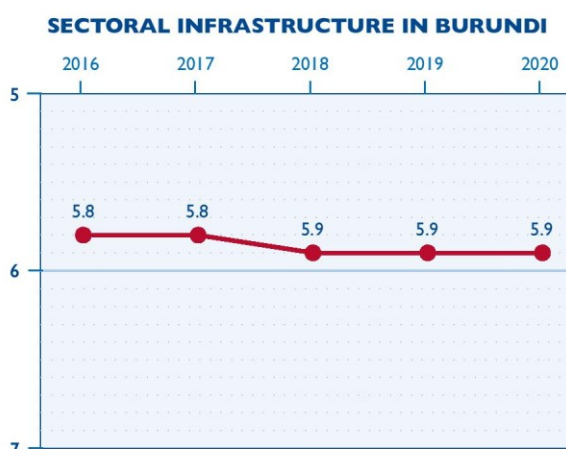
SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.9

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector did not change in 2020.

CSOs have access to resource centers, libraries, and cyber cafes, where they can access information, computers, and the internet. No intermediary support organizations or community foundations support the CSO sector in Burundi.

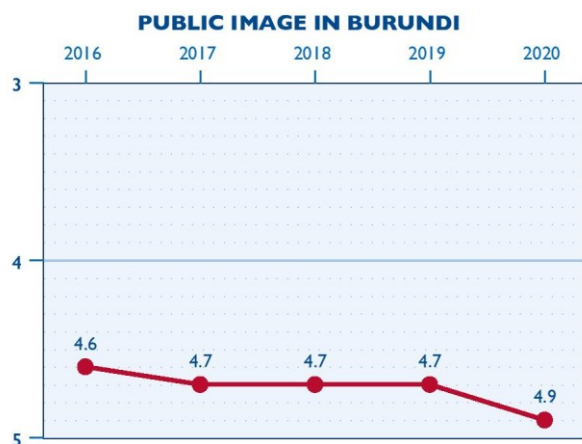
CSOs continued to work together and share information among themselves in 2020. Several groups of CSOs formed consortia to obtain funding in 2020. The Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP), Initiative and Change Burundi (Initiative et changement Burundi, ICB), and the Conflict Alert and Prevention Center (Centre d’alerte et prévention des conflits, CENAP) formed a consortium to implement the Building Synergies for Peace in Burundi project funded by the EU. The Network of Youth Organizations in Action (Réseau des organisations des jeunes en action, REJA), CARE International Burundi, and ActionAid Burundi formed a consortium to carry out lobbying and advocacy activities to meet community needs. Several collectives and national and sectoral networks serve as frameworks for CSOs to promote their common interests. For example, RFP advocates on behalf of women’s participation in decision-making bodies; the Organization of Women’s Associations in the Great Lakes Countries (COCAFEM/GL) seeks to prevent sexual and gender-based violence; and REJA promotes youth development and entrepreneurship.

CSOs continued to have collaboration agreements with the government in 2020 despite reductions in in-person interactions and the extensive changes in government personnel. For example, BLTP had a collaboration agreement with the Ministry of Interior; SWAA-Burundi, ABUBEF, and National Association for the Support of People Living with HIV/AIDS (Association nationale de soutien aux séropositifs et malades du sida, ANSS) had a collaboration agreement with the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight Against AIDS; OAG and the Association of Catholic Jurists in Burundi (Association des juristes catholiques du Burundi, AJCB) collaborated with the Ministry of Justice; Inades-Formation worked with the Ministry of Agriculture; and COCAFEM cooperated with the Ministry of National Solidarity, Social Affairs, Human Rights and Gender.



Some CSOs have formed partnerships with the media to provide coverage of specific topics. For example, Search for Common Ground and Radio Isanganiro work together on radio broadcasts about peace building, conflict resolution, and intra-community reconciliation. CSOs engage in few partnerships with the business sector.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.9



CSOs' public image deteriorated moderately as some government officials expressed mistrust of the sector, thereby influencing public views.

The media does not routinely provide coverage of CSOs' activities. Government-controlled media focus on government activities, while private and local media cover activities at the community level but do not include CSOs. Radio Isanganiro offers CSOs and the public a voice on topics related to peace building and conflict resolution.

The public generally appreciates CSOs' activities since they respond to the needs of target groups. Communities recognize that CSOs contribute significantly to their well-being by providing essential services and products. However, the negative rhetoric of

certain government officials causes large portions of the public to be dismissive of organizations that it sees as having close ties to the opposition or as collaborating with "settlers" or western countries that purportedly fomented the crisis in 2015 over President Pierre Nkurunziza's third term. The public tends to view CSOs positively if it sees them as pro-government.

The government appreciates CSOs' service provision, especially in its priority areas. In 2020, the government recognized Sangwe cooperatives in its public statements and offered them certain privileges, such as the opportunity to access state grants. The government encouraged other organizations to be more like the Sangwe cooperatives and even join them as members. At the same time, some government officials expressed hostile attitudes towards CSOs and made tendentious statements, such as claims that organizations working in the human rights sector are paid by "colonists" to destabilize national institutions. The private sector pays little attention to CSOs but reacts unfavorably if unions make demands.

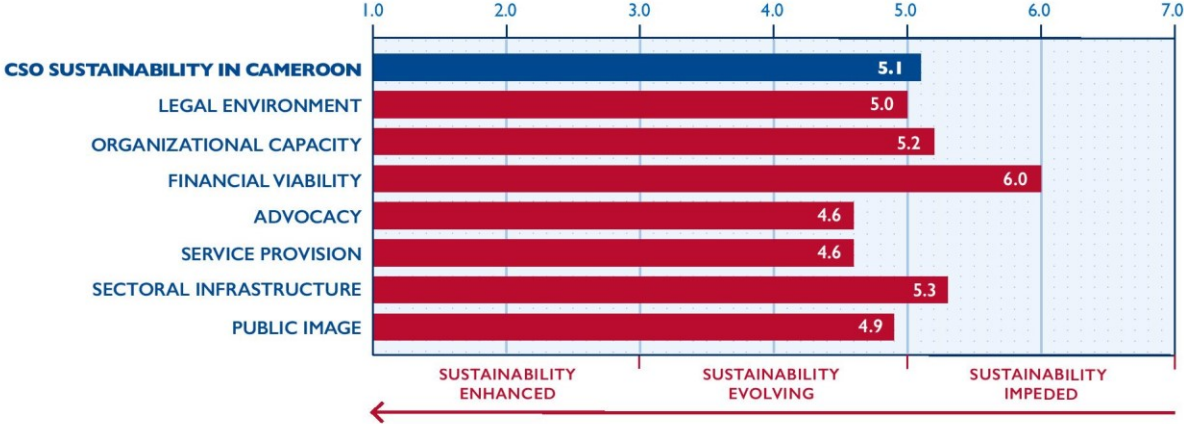
CSOs took few visible actions to promote their image and activities in 2020. Most organizations maintained low profiles as their activities were curtailed during and after the elections. Some CSOs continued to post news about their activities on social media, particularly Facebook.

In the last few years, CSOs have taken part in various workshops that have helped them become aware of the importance of transparency and accountability in their operations. This increased sense of accountability has motivated them to develop written management procedures and tools. Most CSOs have codes of ethics since they are required by law. CSOs produce annual activity reports that are approved by their statutory bodies before submission to the authorities.

CAMEROON

Capital: Yaoundé
Population: 28,524,175
GDP per capita (PPP): \$3,642
Human Development Index: Medium (0.563)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (16/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.1



Cameroon announced its first case of the COVID-19 virus on March 6, 2020. To fight the spread of the virus, the government immediately began screening passengers at airports, training health officials, preparing more patient beds, and restocking medical supplies. A response team was appointed composed of members experienced in battling Ebola. Nevertheless, by the end of the year, Cameroon had recorded more than 26,000 infections and about 500 deaths. Recognizing the important role of religious leaders in public messaging about the pandemic, Cameroonian CSOs worked with them to foster community participation, prevent stigma and discrimination, and encourage respect for human rights. The public questioned the transparency of the government’s management of funds that it received for its pandemic response, including \$226 million from the International Monetary Fund, \$100 million from the African Development Bank, and several million dollars from individuals and companies.

Persistent security crises continued to ravage the Far North, East, and English-speaking Northwest and Southwest regions in 2020. On February 14, twenty-two people were massacred in an attack in Ngarbuh in Ntumbaw village, Northwest Region. After the attack, the United Nations (UN) secretary general called on the Cameroonian government to open an investigation into the incident, which revealed that the massacre had been perpetrated by elements of the Cameroonian defense forces. Boko Haram suicide bombers killed seven civilians and wounded fourteen others in the town of Amchide, Kolofata District, in April. In August, Boko Haram used children to carry out a suicide attack on a camp for internally displaced persons in Nguetchéwé, in the Far North region, which killed at least seventeen civilians and injured sixteen more. In October, armed men stormed the International Bilingual Mother Francisca Academy in Kumba, Southwest Region, and slaughtered seven children with knives. Throughout the year, rebel groups in the Far North, East regions, and English-speaking Northwest and Southwest attacked local villages and seized hostages for ransom.

In December 2019, the government adopted a new decentralization law that gives special status and more local autonomy to the regions and replaces the “super mayors” appointed by the government with elected mayors. This ambitious undertaking marked a departure, at least in theory, from a powerful central administration to one that is closer to local communities and accountable and responsive to citizens’ basic needs. Article 10 of the law states that the decentralized communities may implement projects in partnership with other entities, including CSOs. It is too early to assess the impact of the new law.

In 2020, the government banned public protests of the opposition Cameroon Renaissance Movement (MRC), which had continued since the 2018 re-election of President Paul Biya. The MRC’s leader called on voters to boycott legislative elections in February and regional elections in December, arguing that without reform, the electoral code could not guarantee free and fair elections. The government labeled demonstrations demanding

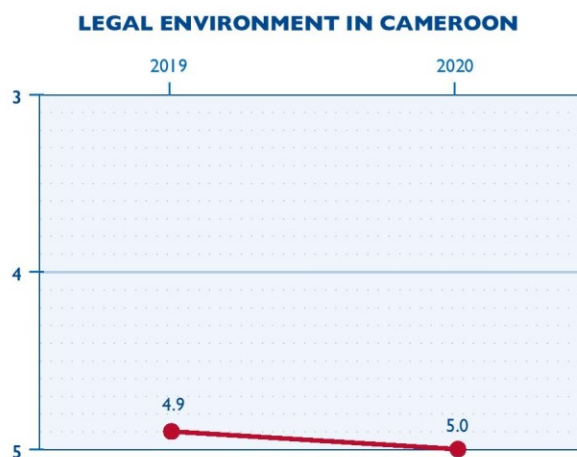
Biya's departure an "insurrectionary movement," and security forces fired tear gas and water cannons at demonstrators. According to the MRC, twenty-five party activists who helped organize the protests were arrested and awaited trial in prison at the end of the year. The ruling party won a landslide victory in December.

The Cameroonian economy shrank by 2.4 percent in 2020 because of the pandemic and the decline in global prices for oil, the country's main export, the African Development Bank reported. According to the National Institute of Statistics, the pandemic lowered the standard of living for 60 percent of the population, with the poorest groups most affected. The country ranked 149 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index and 167 out of 190 countries in the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 report. In 2020, the government adopted the National Development Strategy 2020–30, which aims to achieve "structural transformation and inclusive development" in Cameroon by developing human capital, decentralizing governance, and restructuring the economy in line with its 2009 policy document, Vision 2035.

The overall sustainability of Cameroon's CSO sector deteriorated slightly in 2020. The legal environment was slightly less enabling as the government increased its scrutiny of annual reports and showed increasing hostility to organizations working on human rights and governance. CSOs' financial viability weakened moderately as external partners decreased their support and the pandemic reduced members' ability to contribute to their organizations. CSO advocacy declined slightly, with few initiatives ending successfully. CSOs' public image was moderately poorer as the government's negative attacks on the sector influenced public perceptions. CSOs' organizational capacity, service provision, and the infrastructure supporting the sector were unchanged.

According to the National Governance Program, approximately 56,000 associations were registered in Cameroon at the end of 2020. The Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT), the government body responsible for supervising CSOs, reports that Cameroon had some forty international CSOs and approximately fifty non-governmental organizations (NGOs), a separate legal form. Nearly 500,000 grassroots community organizations, private associations, common initiative groups (that is, economic and social organizations formed by individuals with common interests), development committees, and economic interest groups were thought to exist in 2020. Many of these groups are unregistered.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.0



The legal environment for Cameroonian CSOs deteriorated slightly in 2020 with the government's increased scrutiny of annual reports and increasingly hostile attitude to organizations working on human rights and governance.

Law No. 90/053 of 1990 on freedom of association continued to govern all CSOs in 2020. In addition, NGOs are governed by Law No. 99/014 of 1999; sports associations by Law No. 2018/014 of 2018; and cooperatives and common initiative groups by Law No. 92/006 of 1992. International CSOs have the status of NGOs.

CSOs register by submitting declarations along with the minutes of their founding, statutes, internal regulations, and the names of their leaders to a MINAT divisional

office in their place of residence. The registration process is usually simple, although organizations working on governance, anti-corruption, and human rights may encounter delays or difficulties in obtaining registration receipts or be denied registration arbitrarily. These obstacles give rise to the perception that registering authorities do not apply the laws in a fair and consistent manner. The government practices "administrative tolerance" in that it allows many organizations to operate semi-legally, unable to gain full registration but conducting activities without reprisal. Registered associations that have operated for at least three years may apply to MINAT for NGO status with the consent of the Ministry of External Relations. NGOs, which are entitled to pursue aims that are in the public interest, receive certain tax benefits. Community-based and cultural organizations may operate without registration, although unregistered organizations may not interact with the government or donors. The law allows

MINAT to dissolve any organization that breaches public order or state security. In the event of dissolution, organizations may appeal to administrative courts in their place of residence. No organization is known to have been dissolved in 2020.

Two new organic texts were passed and implemented in 2020: Law No. 2020/009 of July 20, 2020, which amends and supplements Law No. 90/053 of December 19, 1990, on freedom of association and gives special status to artistic and cultural associations (Article 4); and Law No 2020/011 of July 20, 2020, which adds artistic and cultural associations to political parties, unions, sports associations, and NGOs as groups governed by special laws. The laws allow individual artistic and cultural associations to join efforts as collective associations, which is expected to help revitalize Cameroon's artistic and cultural industries.

All CSOs must file annual activity reports with MINAT. This requirement is strictly enforced in the case of NGOs, particularly if they work on human rights and governance. Very few other CSOs comply with this obligation. In 2020, in an effort to force compliance, MINAT instructed all organizations to transmit annual reports from the last three years, as prescribed by law, or else face dissolution. Although few CSOs did so, MINAT did not carry out its threat.

CSOs may conduct advocacy within the legal limits designated by the government and Cameroonian law. Under Law No. 90/055, which governs meetings and public events, organizers must obtain permits for public protests and submit prior notification.

The government expressed hostility towards human rights organizations in 2020. For example, the minister of MINAT claimed that the Ten Million Northerners (10 millions de nordistes) movement, which advocates for the interests of people in the country's northern regions, aimed to divide Cameroonians. The minister called on CSOs to comply with their statutes, claiming that during the three years of unrest in the English-speaking regions, several CSOs had deviated completely from their approved goals and missions and some civil society actors were fomenting instability in the regions. In November 2020, MINAT banned all activities, publications, meetings, and demonstrations initiated or supported by the Ten Million Northerners movement.

CSOs are exempt from customs duties, value-added tax, and social charges for non-contributory social protection programs. CSOs also benefit from tax deductions on revenues from grants, donations, fees, and economic activities in conflict-affected areas of the Northwest, Southwest, and Far North regions.

Under Law No. 2019/004 of 2019 on the social economy in Cameroon, CSO may receive grants from the central and local governments, donations, bequests, and income from public fundraising campaigns. CSOs may bid on government contracts, although Decree No. 2018/366 of 2018 allows them to bid on public contracts only if their proposed prices are competitive. Law No. 90/053 specifies that associations may not earn profits, which government officials sometimes use to keep CSOs from winning public contracts in areas other than social mobilization. Only NGOs may accept foreign funding. Public utility status is granted exclusively by presidential decree and allows CSOs to benefit from state subsidies. The number of organizations with public utility status is low.

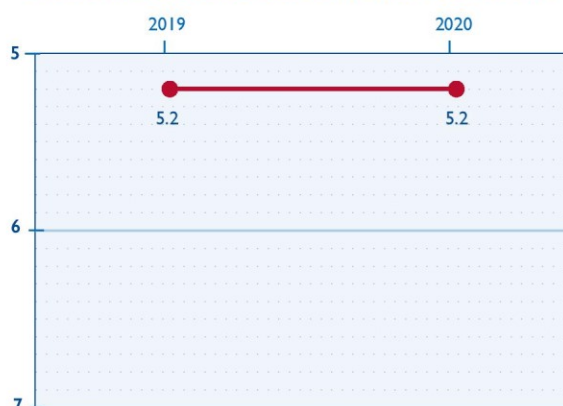
High-quality paid legal expertise is available in Cameroon, especially in large metropolitan areas, but CSOs do not usually have the financial means to pay for it. Pro bono legal counsel is unavailable.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.2

The organizational capacity of Cameroonian CSOs did not change in 2020. Many initiatives to strengthen strategic institutional issues were suspended, modified, or canceled because of the pandemic. For example, the Italian CSO Incontro fra i popoli canceled its capacity-building program for 100 CSO leaders working on international cooperation in the Far North, North, Adamawa, and Center regions. Far North CSOs that are members of the Cameroonian Humanitarian Organizations Initiative (CHOI), including the Association for the Protection of Children Removed from Their Families in Cameroon (Association pour la protection des enfants retirés de leurs familles au Cameroun), Women and Development Association (Association femmes et développement), and Green Safe Association, were unable to realize internal capacity-building plans. Most CSO training that could take place was held via video conference, which many CSOs have yet to master because of a lack of equipment, limited staff capacity, or spotty internet access.

Most CSOs identify their target groups through local contacts and surveys of people in the areas in which they intend to work. CSOs are sometimes assisted in their activities by locally elected officials. Donor-funded CSOs often carry out monitoring and evaluation exercises, but other CSOs generally lack the mechanisms, trained personnel, and funding to assess the effectiveness of their work. CSOs performed a crucial function during the pandemic by providing necessary services and products to their constituencies. Some CSOs added new activities such as the distribution of masks, soaps, and hand-washing utensils in schools and other public places. A number of CSOs relied on videoconferencing to implement activities or communicate with partners.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN CAMEROON



CSOs normally have statutes and internal regulations that specify their missions, target groups, and means of intervention. CSOs with good organizational capacities adhere to their stated missions, but other organizations often stray from their missions to obtain funding. This was particularly the case in 2020, as funding declined in many sectors. Some CSOs use strategic planning processes to define their priorities, but the majority of CSOs follow donors' interests and develop strategic plans simply to comply with donors' requirements. Pandemic-related travel restrictions prevented many CSOs from implementing activities in their coverage areas in 2020.

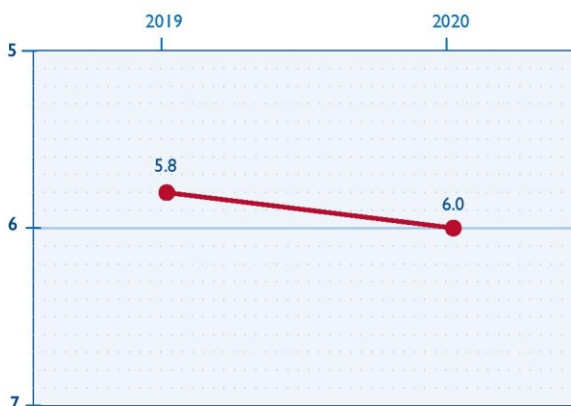
Cameroonian CSOs are usually governed internally by general assemblies, supervisory bodies, administrative councils, management bodies, and various committees and working groups. The effectiveness of these groups is varied and usually determined by a handful of active members. Only large, amalgamated networks and federations develop and follow written policies.

Larger Cameroonian CSOs usually have a paid head manager, other paid staff if funding is available, and interested volunteers. At smaller organizations, there is usually only one main employee. Staff members typically perform an assortment of tasks and tend to be fairly unskilled. CSOs often use outside providers for tasks such as data entry and printing. Since the unemployment rate is high in Cameroon, CSOs find it difficult to recruit volunteers.

Although the internet is not consistently available throughout the country, many CSOs rely heavily on the internet to access information and conduct their work. Videoconferencing via platforms such as Zoom became more common during the pandemic. Most CSOs have rented offices, which are often not well equipped.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.0

FINANCIAL VIABILITY IN CAMEROON



CSOs' financial viability weakened moderately in 2020 as external partners decreased their support and the pandemic reduced members' ability to contribute to their organizations.

Relatively few Cameroonian CSOs benefit from external funding. The main foreign donors supporting CSOs are the United States, France, Switzerland, Canada, France, United Kingdom, European Union (EU), UN, and World Bank. Funding from external donors was uncertain in 2020. For example, the Cameroon Association for Environmental Education (CAEE) received a grant from the German Agency for International Cooperation to carry out a study of the vulnerability to climate change of poor households in the Logone Valley. CAEE also obtained a grant from the Loudéac Community Bretagne

Center in France to support households engaged in market gardening in the Far North. But Action Against Hunger was unable to support development projects in the Far North planned by CAEE and other CSOs. A particularly

important development was the closure of the Netherlands Development Organization, which had a significant impact on the CSOs for which it was a main partner. No CSOs are known to have received emergency pandemic funding from the government.

Funding support from the government is low. The government regularly supports the small number of CSOs with public utility status, which includes religious organizations and large networks such as the National Platform of Associations of Cameroon (Plateforme nationale des associations du Cameroun), Young Professionals Network (Réseau professionnel des jeunes)–Support for Digital Accessibility (Appui au désenclavement numérique, ADEN), and Confederation of Far North Region Producers (Confédération des producteurs de la région de l'Extrême-Nord). Otherwise, the government offers minimal support, citing the law on public procurement and competing national priorities as the main reasons. Municipalities also grant very little funding to CSOs, since they have been slow to assume full control of development planning and funding. Experienced CSOs often lose out on government contracts to companies that may lack qualifications but are tied into corrupt networks. CSOs that complete contracted services for the government are often not paid because of corruption, funding shortages, or management difficulties in government agencies. In 2020, the Green Safe Association had to self-finance the completion of a project to plant trees on pastoral lands degraded by deforestation in the Sudano-Sahelian zone after a contract with the Lake Chad Basin Sustainable Development Program expired before the project was finished. As a consequence of such difficulties, some CSOs have cut back on or stopped seeking government-funded activities.

Businesses do not feel motivated to fund CSOs. Several organizations with direct links to celebrities or the telecommunications companies Orange and MTN have obtained their support for projects such as orphanages, hospitals, and scholarships. CSOs sometimes ask unions, cooperatives, and self-help organizations for funding for projects to help local communities.

Most Cameroonian CSOs are membership-based and depend on donations from their members to survive. Because of the country's economic decline in 2020, many members had trouble paying their membership fees. Organizations such as Children's and Parents' Relays in Cameroon, Bright Smile Cameroon, Sunshine (Rayons de soleil), and Club for the Hearing Impaired (Cercle des handicapés auditifs) raise funds through charitable events or telephone campaigns. The contributions that they receive are often far less than needed. The use of social media to mobilize resources is not very common in Cameroon, although organizations such as CODAS Caritas, National Episcopal Conference, and Human Rights Defense Network for Central Africa (REDHAC) try to raise funds from their supporters through their websites. Many CSOs prefer to solicit in-kind support rather than cash donations because of the complex procedures for obtaining and reporting on donations.

CSOs rarely have specialized financial departments and instead rely on external service providers, especially if engaged in large projects involving government or foreign donors. Large CSOs have accounting manuals and perform external audits. Smaller organizations carry out self-evaluations since they cannot afford the cost of external audits. However, the practice of conducting audits is gradually spreading, although their cost remains prohibitively high.

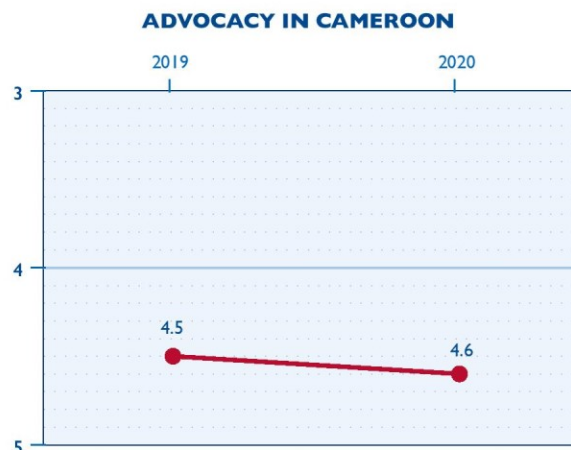
ADVOCACY: 4.6

Advocacy by Cameroonian CSOs weakened slightly in 2020 as few initiatives resulted in notable progress.

Several consultative frameworks offer opportunities for CSOs to interact formally with the government. In accordance with Decree No. 2013/7987/PM of 2013, CSOs take part in a participatory monitoring system meant to promote transparency in the management of public resources. CSOs are particularly active on oversight committees for the extractive industry, public finances, and elections. For example, the Young Professional Network–ADEN, One World One Future (Un monde un avenir), National Self-Managed Center for Local Economic Development (Centre autogéré national de développement économique local, CANADEL), Zenu Network, and Citizenship Dynamics (Dynamique citoyenne) sit on the committee that monitors public investments, where they oversee the proper execution of state-funded projects and can critique poor workmanship or government actions that they deem harmful to local communities.

Most CSO advocacy focuses on areas such as health care, women's rights, environmental protection, the provision of basic services, and the promotion of agro-pastoral diversity. CSOs often carry out campaigns to encourage the

public to hold the government more accountable. Local Youth Corner, National Youth Council of Cameroon, CODAS Caritas, Citizenship Dynamics, and the National Episcopal Conference continued to shape public policies by producing periodic studies on corruption, health care, and human rights in 2020. The Center for the Environment and Development (CED) denounced the government’s attempt to expropriate and monopolize lands in the Littoral Region, and REDHAC and the Cameroonian League of Human Rights criticized the government’s slow processing of persons arrested during conflicts between French and English speakers and election-related demonstrations. Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom–Cameroon and the Cameroonian Women for Peaceful Elections and Peace Education platform produced a report analyzing gender conflict in Cameroon in 2020.



Other CSOs actively advocating for responsible governance in 2020 included the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Central African Forest Commission, which jointly organized the official launch of a new program to manage protected areas and biodiversity in Central Africa in September. Women-Oriented Actions for Change and Green Development Advocates (GDA) took advantage of the regional elections to raise the issue of the use of plastics in Cameroon. CSOs denounced the Ngarbuh attack in Northwest Region, the Amchide attack in Kolofata District, and the massacre of children at the International Bilingual Mother Francisca Academy in Kumba, Southwest Region. Some planned advocacy initiatives could not take place because of the pandemic. For example, the second annual Land Tenure Week, led by a consortium consisting of CED, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), and Anti-Hunger Network (Réseau de lutte contre la faim, RELUFA), was canceled in 2020.

CSOs usually achieve their goals by meeting with government, legislative, private-sector, and civil society representatives and developing effective communication tools, mainly for use on social media. As in-person meetings could not be held in 2020 because of the pandemic, CSOs’ use of social media for advocacy purposes increased. For example, Care For Environment used the site Media Terre to raise awareness about a national training camp to prepare young people for volunteer work with environmental projects.

In 2020, CSOs worked to revise provisions of Law No. 90/053 related to CSOs’ ability to accept grants, MINAT’s authority to suspend and dissolve organizations, and guidelines for reporting on public events. No specific outcomes were reported.

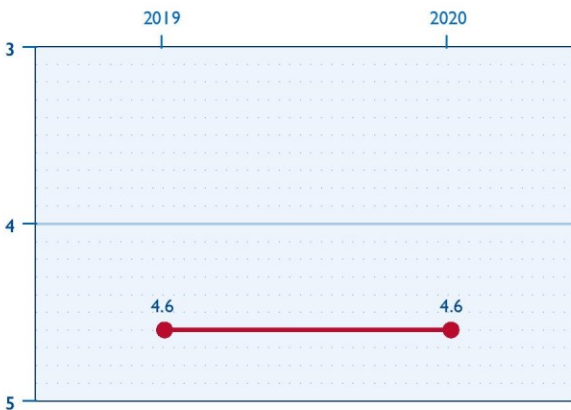
SERVICE PROVISION: 4.6

CSO service provision was stable in 2020. CSOs provide a wide range of services in many sectors, including health care, education, governance, water, energy, environmental protection, sustainable natural resource management, culture, and local development. Leading service providers include the Association of Skills for a Better Life, which provides free medical care and school supplies; We Care Cameroon, which works in health care; and Green Safe Association, which works on the effects of desertification and climate change on women, local populations, and disadvantaged indigenous people.

In April 2020, a number of associations, religious communities, and political parties under the leadership of the archbishop of Douala created the Civil Society COVID-19 Unit, which sought to strengthen and raise awareness of preventative measures and provide support in the acquisition of protective equipment. The unit also highlighted the benefits of traditional medicine as a treatment for COVID-19. In all regions of the country, CSOs distributed materials such as masks and sanitizer and raised the public’s awareness of preventative measures recommended by the World Health Organization.

Several CSOs were involved in the response to the humanitarian crisis in the Northwest, Southwest, East, and Far North regions, sometimes supporting target groups in collaboration with international CSOs. In the Far North

SERVICE PROVISION IN CAMEROON



Region, for example, Public Concern, Action for Community Development, and Saheli worked with displaced persons in refugee camps or affected local communities to distribute humanitarian aid and cash, support the development of income-generating activities, and encourage reforestation through the use of firewood-saving stoves.

CSOs rigorously identify the needs and priorities of grassroots groups so they can respond to them effectively. When designing their projects, organizations typically rely on national policy documents, study reports, field experiences, household surveys, and consultations with traditional authorities and community members. Among the CSOs that respond most effectively to the needs of local communities are those

that are well organized and financially strong, such as the Cameroonian Red Cross, CED, RELUFA, and Caritas Codas. Few CSOs seek to recover the costs of the services that they provide. Most CSOs are ill equipped to analyze market demand, and their target groups are generally unable to pay for services.

The government recognizes the role of CSOs in its Vision 2035 and National Development Strategy 2020–30. These documents refer to CSOs as strategic partners and underscore their role in providing social services, safeguarding national culture, achieving democratization and decentralization, and defending human rights.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.3

The infrastructure supporting CSOs was unchanged in 2020.

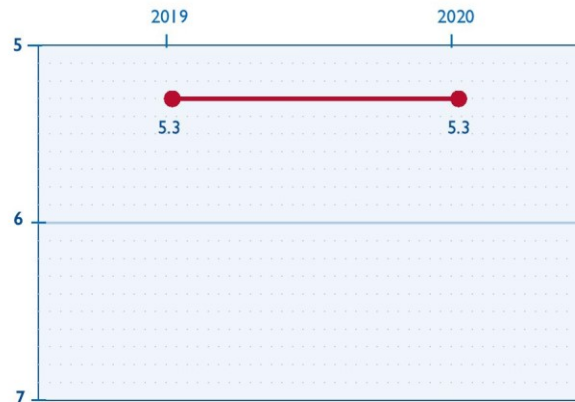
No resource centers specifically serve CSOs in Cameroon. Several intermediary support organizations (ISOs), such as Inades-Formation and the Pan African Institute for Development, host libraries and offer training, information, and computer and communications services. Faith-based CSOs, multipurpose community telecenters, and other groups also offer training and information. These facilities continued to be accessible in 2020 despite the pandemic. International CSOs are generally helpful in sharing information, and UN agencies such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the UN Children's Emergency Fund provide CSOs with information and links to other organizations.

ISOs such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature, UN Women, and Cuso International gave fewer grants in 2020 because of funding shortfalls. The Netherlands Development Organization closed after more than forty years of supporting CSOs in Cameroon.

Local grant-making organizations are practically non-existent in Cameroon, although in 2020, a consortium composed of CED, RELUFA, and IIED provided grants to CSOs through its Landcam Project, funded by the EU. CSOs receiving grants included CAEE and Action for Community Development, which will implement community activities to secure land tenure.

Although a spirit of cooperation is sometimes lacking, Cameroonian CSOs are gradually realizing that they need to form networks and coalitions to operate effectively, mobilize resources, and satisfy their constituents' needs. Prominent coalitions in 2020 included the Cameroonian Humanitarian Organizations Initiative, National Engagement Strategy on Land Governance, CSO Platform of the Lake Chad Basin, CSO Platform for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Fight Against Climate Change, and Network of Active

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN CAMEROON

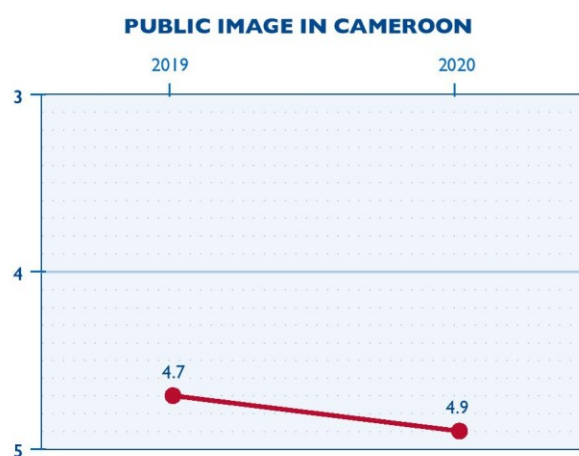


Women for Community Forest Management. These coalitions stand out from other platforms for the commitment of their membership and effective operations. In general, however, civil society in Cameroon is fragmented, and CSOs lack experience and capacity in networking and coalition-building. These deficiencies deprive CSOs of the opportunity to collaborate and build trust. The pandemic has worsened this situation by reducing resources and limiting opportunities to cooperate, network, and develop skills.

Cameroon has many schools that train CSO staff in specialized areas. For example, in 2020, the National School of Social Assistance offered training to organizations working in social areas, and the Institute of International Relations of Cameroon trained executives to serve in several fields of intervention. CSOs, donors, and institutions such as the Master Pro Higher Institute of Public Management and some state universities offered online training in 2020. However, given the instability of internet connections throughout the country, this approach is viewed as a temporary measure.

Collaboration between CSOs and other sectors needs improvement. Among instances of cooperation in 2020, the Inter-Patronal Group of Cameroon facilitated ongoing cooperation between companies, trade unions, and professional groups to produce economic analysis and improve the business climate in Cameroon.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.9



The public image of CSOs was moderately worse in 2020. The public, CSOs' main beneficiary, has grown dissatisfied with CSOs' failure to offer concrete benefits in the manner of government-led public projects, which tend to be accompanied by political propaganda. In addition, as the government ratcheted up its criticism of human rights CSOs in 2020, public perceptions were adversely affected. Since they tended to lack adequate budgets for communications, CSOs found it difficult to react to this challenge with strong public outreach. CSOs fear that without the means to counteract the government's negative campaign by communicating a positive image, they will gradually become indistinguishable from political parties or opposition forces.

Media coverage of CSOs' activities did not change in 2020. Radio and television preferred to feature politicians rather than CSO experts on their debate platforms. As a result, civil society actors were generally absent from broadcasts of public discussions. In addition, publicly owned media are reluctant to cover the activities of CSOs that they consider hostile to the government, especially if they work on human rights. As a result, CSOs often turn to private media companies for coverage since they are more open to working with CSOs and have greater freedom in their editorial stances. CSOs that lack financial resources find it difficult to obtain coverage, since the media usually demand payment for coverage.

The government's view of CSOs that work in the field of human rights was hostile in 2020. In particular, the government claimed that civil society actors were complicit in fomenting instability in the English-speaking regions. In March, the minister of MINAT released a statement lambasting CSOs' criticism of government institutions. The *Journal Cameroun Tribune* quoted the minister as saying that CSOs had spread false reports aimed at tarnishing the image of the country's defense and security forces. The minister alleged, accurately, that security forces had discovered weapons, ammunition, telephones, and binoculars intended for terrorists in the humanitarian convoys of several CSOs. While the government recognizes service-providing organizations as strategic partners, its view of them was mixed if they failed to comply with their legally defined fields of activity.

Public perceptions of CSOs grew worse as media and government conspiracy theorists cast civil society actors on the side of evil in 2020. For example, civil society came under heavy criticism for working with Human Rights Watch to document the February massacre in Ngaruh. The public tends to regard CSOs that provide services more positively. The efforts of CSOs to build awareness of the pandemic were particularly well received.

CSOs experience little conflict with companies or other private-sector actors, mainly because very few of them attempt to exercise oversight in sectors such as mining, logging, or labor. Businessmen who perceive civil society as a threat or have negative perceptions of CSOs are usually also politicians.

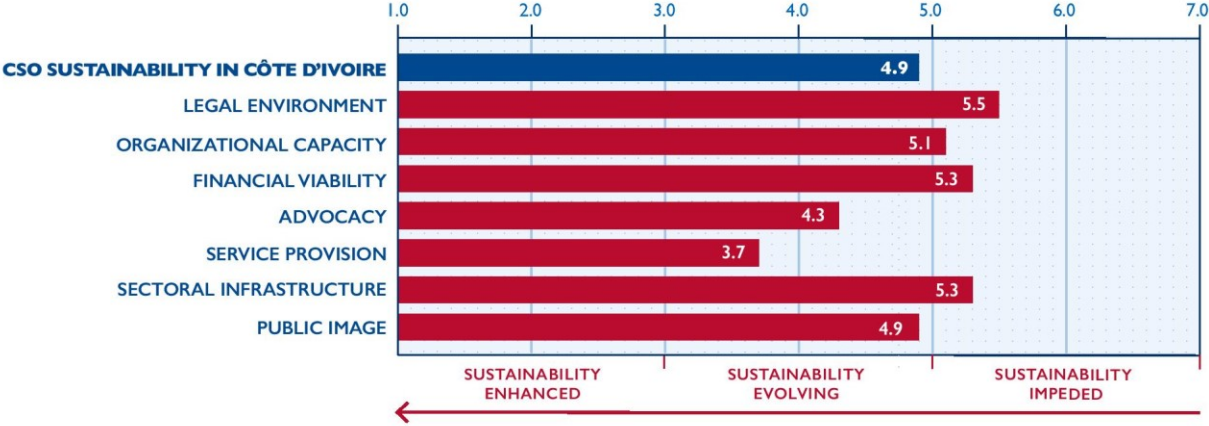
CSO leaders increasingly prefer to use digital technologies to communicate because of their lower cost, easier access, and fewer constraints. A few CSOs are able to harness the press effectively by appearing on televised debates. It is not uncommon for civil society stakeholders to take advantage of their television appearances to describe their activities and highlight their achievements.

Self-regulation did not progress in 2020. Small CSOs often find it difficult to project transparency in their operations, since they are commonly unable to organize general assemblies and may be run by only two or three people, which makes it difficult to ensure appropriate checks and balances. Larger CSOs with websites usually post descriptions of their activities. Annual reports are not usually made public.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Capital: Yamoussoukro
Population: 28,088,455
GDP per capita (PPP): \$5,213
Human Development Index: Low (0.538)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (44/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.9



The major event in Côte d'Ivoire in 2020 was the presidential election on October 31. Reversing an earlier promise not to run, President Alassane Ouattara announced that he would stand for a third term, arguing that the two-term limit imposed by the 2016 constitution did not apply to him, since he was first elected under the previous constitution. Forty of the forty-four candidates seeking to run in the election, including former prime minister Guillaume Soro, were disqualified by the Independent Electoral Commission and Constitutional Council. In September, the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights ordered the government to allow Soro to take part in the election, whereupon the government withdrew its recognition of the court's competence to receive cases directly from the public, including CSOs.

Demonstrations against Ouattara's candidacy broke out in August and continued through the autumn. In October, two of the four candidates approved to run for president said that they would boycott the election and called for public protests and revisions of the electoral list. During the election in October, violent demonstrations and interethnic clashes in Abidjan, Bonoua, and other towns resulted in fifty-five people dead and 282 people injured, according to the National Human Rights Council. After the election, the opposition refused to accept Ouattara's proclaimed victory and set up a National Transitional Council to prepare for "a fair, transparent, and inclusive presidential election." Approximately eighty-eight people, including opposition and civil society activists, were arrested and charged with terrorism, murder, disturbing the public order, and inciting revolt. They were still in detention at the end of the year.

After the COVID-19 virus was reported in Côte d'Ivoire in March, the president declared a state of emergency and imposed curfews, mandatory masks in public places, and travel restrictions. Public gatherings were limited to fifty people, with the limit increased to 200 people in May. The government also took steps to accommodate revenue setbacks and implemented an emergency spending plan. To meet the population's urgent needs, the government strengthened its social programs in areas such as health care, women's empowerment, and youth employment. Infections and deaths from the virus were relatively low in Côte d'Ivoire, according to Johns Hopkins University. However, the crisis exacted a heavy economic toll on households, 71 percent of which were unable to pay for basic expenses during the year, according to the World Bank.

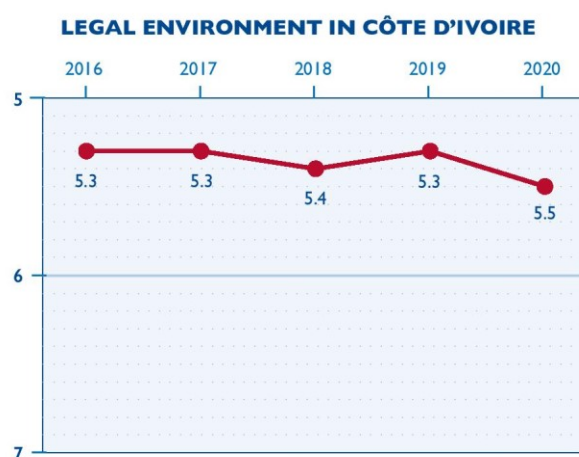
Côte d'Ivoire made some progress on its human rights obligations in 2020. CSOs contributed to the country report to the Committee Against Torture of the United Nations (UN) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which has been due since 1996. However, the report was not submitted owing to a changeover of personnel in the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights and Guardian of the Seals in 2021. CSOs also contributed to a report to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights for the period 2016-20. In

December, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions recognized Côte d'Ivoire's full compliance with international benchmarks for national human rights institutions. After the pandemic reached Côte d'Ivoire, the government released 1,000 prisoners, including political prisoners, and remitted the sentences of many more people in compliance with OHCHR recommendations to protect the health and safety of people in detention.

The overall sustainability of Ivorian CSOs was stable in 2020. The legal environment deteriorated moderately as CSOs were harassed and the country withdrew from provisions of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights. Advocacy improved moderately thanks to the sector's active cooperation with the government on a number of policy issues. CSOs' public image improved slightly thanks to a more diverse media presence and the adoption of a sectoral code of ethics by organizations working on democracy and governance. CSOs' organizational capacity, financial viability, service provision, and sectoral infrastructure did not change.

The number of CSOs in Côte d'Ivoire is unknown.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.5



The legal environment for CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020 as harassment of CSOs increased during the presidential election. In addition, Côte d'Ivoire's withdrawal of recognition of the authority of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights to receive cases directly from the public deprived CSOs lacking observer status of the means to petition the court directly.

Law No. 60-315 of 1960 on associations continues to govern CSOs. CSOs obtain legal status through a slow and opaque process. They must first file declarations with the district governments of their places of operation and may not undertake activities for two months while their applications are processed. Applicant organizations then receive provisional receipts that allow them to operate

for three months while awaiting final authorization from the Ministry of the Interior. Registration fees are high, and final authorizations are difficult to obtain. For example, in Divo, in the country's interior, nineteen of the twenty-five CSOs that filed declarations in 2020 did not receive provisional receipts or explanations for the delays. The Observatory for Good Governance in the Mining Sector of Côte d'Ivoire (Observatoire pour la bonne gouvernance du secteur extractif en Côte d'Ivoire, OBGSE-CI) has been waiting for its provisional receipt since February 2019. Most CSOs lacking receipts are able to operate without interference by the authorities. Organizations working on issues of sexual orientation are still unable to obtain legal recognition, although some CSOs registered to work on HIV/AIDS conduct activities in this area.

Few regulations govern CSOs' internal operations. CSOs are generally allowed to work freely, and the government may not interfere in their activities unless they are unlawful or immoral. Administrative judges may penalize inappropriate government interventions in CSOs' work as an abuse of power but rarely do so. Article 4 of Law No. 60-315 prohibits CSOs from harming national security through activities that seek to compromise public safety, cause political disturbances, arouse hatred among ethnic groups, discredit or hinder political institutions, or incite citizens to break the law. Law No. 2014-388 on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights Defenders and its Application Decree No. 2017-121 require human rights organizations to file annual activity reports with the government.

As in other election years, government harassment of CSOs intensified in 2020. Although Article 5 of Law No. 2014-388 stipulates that "human rights defenders may not be prosecuted, searched, arrested, detained or judged on the basis of opinions expressed," many civil society activists were arrested while protesting the outgoing president's third term. On September 13, the coordinator of the Coalition of Indignants of Côte d'Ivoire (Coalition des indignés de Côte d'Ivoire, CICI) was stabbed by unknown assailants during an attack on the organization's headquarters. In the precarious political environment, CSOs' fear of government reprisals sometimes undermined their commitment to action or slowed down the pace of their work.

After the government withdrew recognition of the competence of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the court retained jurisdiction over all cases registered before the government's decision took effect, which was one year after its date of issuance. About twenty Ivorian cases were pending at this time, all brought by individuals.

The law does not require CSOs to pay income tax, and individual donors are exempt from taxes on donations to humanitarian organizations. CSOs pay value-added tax (VAT) and taxes on goods that they import into the country. Cooperatives enjoy reductions on VAT and other taxes. Donors such as the European Union (EU) and government agencies such as the Ministry of Health require CSOs to have current tax declarations confirming their payment of employee taxes and declarations of their employees to the National Social Security Fund.

Law No. 60-315 does not restrict CSOs' funding in any way. CSO may accept funds from foreign donors and earn income from the provision of goods and services, provided any revenue earned goes back into the organizations. CSOs may fundraise from the public, corporations, and other benefactors. To receive government funding or bid on public contracts, CSOs must have public benefit status, which is difficult to obtain. The application is arduous, and applications must be approved by a decree from the Council of Ministers before final approval is issued by the minister of the interior.

Human rights CSOs in Abidjan have professional staff who offer quality legal advice to other organizations. For example, the Ivorian Observatory for the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (Observatoire ivoirien pour la gestion durable des ressources naturelles, OI-REN), a platform of about sixty CSOs, receives legal assistance from a human rights legal expert on its work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.1

CSOs' organizational capacity did not change in 2020. Although the pandemic hit the Ivorian CSO sector hard, CSOs showed resilience, and their organizational capacity was relatively unscathed. In fact, CSOs' usual lack of strategic plans made them open to opportunities to fight the disease and engage in activities outside of their usual areas.

CSOs generally cooperate with their communities to identify needs and involve beneficiaries in their activities. For example, organizations such as the Ivorian Association for Familial Well-being (Association ivoirienne pour le bien être familial, AIBEF), Action Against Unwanted High-Risk Pregnancies (Action contre les grossesses non désirées à risque, ACNDR), and Organization for Democracy, Economic and Social Development (Organisation pour la démocratie, le développement économique et social, ODDES) have set up local committees to oversee the provision of free family-planning services. CSOs operating on the local level usually take the precaution of getting to know local authorities, since their cooperation is essential, and they are credible sources of information about local conditions. However, CSOs' efforts to bring all stakeholders on board do not always guarantee success in project implementation. For example, Aid, Assistance, and Community Development in Côte d'Ivoire (Aide, assistance et développement communautaire de Côte d'Ivoire, ADC-CI) encountered public hostility in Daoukro, an opposition stronghold, while seeking to sensitize communities to the importance of a peaceful presidential election in 2020. Community hostility to CSOs' election-related work turned violent in Bongouanou and M'Battos, where deaths and vandalized property were reported after opposition candidates failed to win the elections. During the lockdown in March and April 2020, CSOs' contact with target populations decreased, especially in the interior, where special permission was needed to travel. CSOs are usually unable to stay in contact with target populations beyond the scope of specific projects.

CSOs other than cooperatives generally lack the means to adhere to their missions and strategic plans. If CSOs have mission statements, they often change them according to funding opportunities or the interests of the organization's leadership. For example, in response to requests for help from technical and financial partners, many

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE



CSOs pivoted to fighting the virus by distributing food and hygienic supplies. Since Côte d'Ivoire is a country of origin for many undocumented migrants to Europe, projects focused on immigration have high funding potential, and many CSOs seek to work in this area no matter what their stated missions. Organizations tend to develop strategic plans in an ad hoc manner to meet donors' requirements for good governance but ignore their plans if funds for different areas of activity emerge. Although difficulties in obtaining funding often prevent CSOs from realizing their missions and plans in a sustained, systematic way, in 2020, CSOs' ability to rapidly readjust their focus enabled them to make significant contributions to the pandemic response.

The roles and responsibilities of CSOs' management bodies are usually not clearly defined. Law No. 60-315 does not provide for the creation of boards of directors, and most CSOs do not have them. However, boards are usually required by technical and financial partners. When they do exist, boards serve mainly to endorse the goals of the management team. In umbrella organizations, boards often act in the place of executive teams, which undermines stability. CSOs usually have general assemblies, although in some organizations, they never meet. CSOs' leaders usually serve as their organizations' strategic engines. They typically remain in office until better opportunities come along, although internal crises sometimes force them to leave, as happened with the Action to Protect Human Rights (Action pour la protection des droits de l'homme, APDH), Ivorian Network of Young Leaders for Integrity (Réseau ivoirien des jeunes leaders pour l'intégrité, RIJLI), and West African Civil Society Forum—Côte d'Ivoire (Forum de la société civile d'Afrique de l'ouest Côte d'Ivoire, FOSCAO—CI) in 2020.

Most CSOs have an improvised approach to management and staffing. Internal management structures are rarely transparent, and organizational charts, operational plans, and procedural manuals are generally lacking. For example, of the thirty organizations belonging to OBGSE—CI, twenty-six did not have procedural manuals and organizational charts in 2020.

Ivorian CSOs are making efforts to improve the quality of their human resources. In 2020, the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Chair for the Culture of Peace at the Félix Houphouët-Boigny University in Abidjan stated that it received numerous inquiries about its training sessions for CSOs. However, the professional quality of CSO staff remains generally low, and CSOs' capacity to perform tasks such as writing project proposals and financial and narrative reports is poor. CSOs' weak capacity to mobilize financial resources generally prevents them from hiring permanent salaried employees. In 2020, the worsening financial viability of many organizations meant that they had fewer employees. Some CSO staff receive compensation during specific projects but otherwise work as volunteers. With the exception of a few organizations, such as Ivorian Human Rights League (Ligue ivoirienne des droits de l'homme, LIDHO) and Ivorian Human Rights Movement (Mouvement ivoirien des droits humains, MIDH), succession planning does not take place, and positions can remain vacant for a long time.

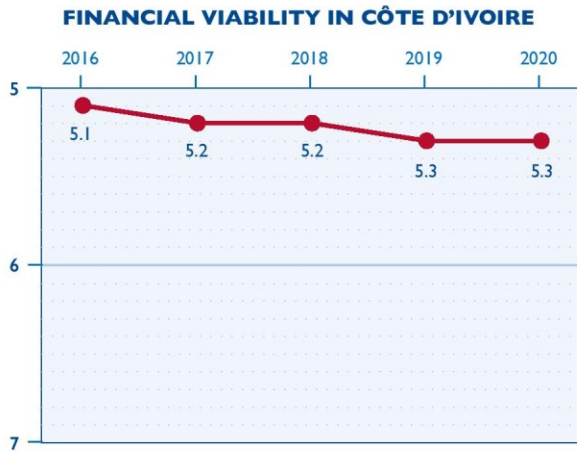
Most CSOs, especially in the interior and rural areas, cannot afford office space. CSOs do not normally have the resources to establish permanent internet lines or modernize equipment such as computers, software, printers, or cell phones. Projects financed by international partners may offer opportunities to acquire new equipment. For example, UPR Info, a coalition of regional human rights councils and CSOs, offered CSOs and the National Human Rights Commission equipment such as internet kits with three-month connections in 2020. Many CSOs use Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp to communicate, and some organizations have benefited from training on using these platforms. CSOs are increasingly concerned about cybersecurity, and trainings on that topic are starting to be offered.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.3

The financial viability of Ivorian CSOs did not change in 2020.

Funding decreased from developed countries that were themselves coping with the pandemic, and CSOs were overlooked in economic-support measures offered by the Ivorian government.

Ivorian CSOs are largely dependent on international partners, whose support continued to decline in 2020. For example, the UN Development Programme is the only funder known to have supported CSOs working on voter education in 2020, in contrast to previous years, when election-related activities were more generously funded. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) announced a funding cut during the year. A new project, Public Finances Concern Us All, was announced by the Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung in partnership with APDH, with funding from



the EU. Only a few organizations, such as APDH, Ivorian Human Rights Stakeholders Group (Regroupement des acteurs ivoiriens des droits humains, RAIDH), and Cavoquiva, had multiple funding partners.

A few CSOs with public utility status benefit from government financing for projects supported by bilateral and multilateral partners. In 2020, organizations such as OI-REN received funding from the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, which was funded by the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) program of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. OI-REN also obtained a government contract to independently observe the Forest Investment Program, with funding from the German Agency for International Cooperation.

The Association of Women Jurists (Association des femmes juristes, AFJCI) and other CSOs were funded by the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance, and Trade Action Plan through the Ministry of Water and Forests. The Leadership and Initiatives of Non-State Actors (LIANE 2) project, which receives financial support from the European Development Fund through the Ministry of Economy and Finance, supported the projects of fifty organizations focused on strengthening CSOs' participation in public policy formulation and the fight against COVID-19.

CSOs sometimes receive donations and in-kind support from the communities in which they work. For example, FOSCAO–CI received in-kind support from local communities while working on community solidarity activities under NDI's Transition and Political Inclusion program, which is funded by USAID.

The corporate social responsibility programs of mining companies and the accountability of local mining development committees are growing in Côte d'Ivoire. The mining code, for example, specifies the social responsibilities of companies and local governments to the communities in which they work. Companies such as Petroci, Orange, Moov, and MTN have set up foundations for community work, but they usually bypass CSOs to fund communities directly.

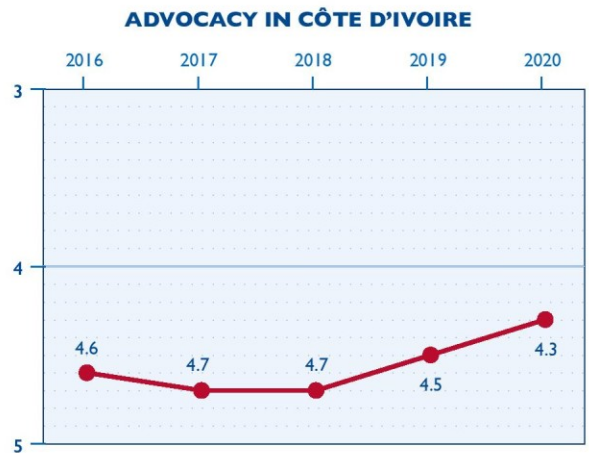
Few CSOs have the expertise to conduct local fundraising activities, undertake income-generating activities, or administer fundraising campaigns online. Most CSOs and unions find it difficult to collect membership dues, and gala dinners and requests for support from the community are not common practices in Côte d'Ivoire. Several organizations, including AIBEF, earn income by selling products and services or renting out space. A handful of CSOs, including ODDES and the Health and Urban Self-Promotion Support Association (Association de soutien à l'autopromotion sanitaire et urbaine, ASAPSU), have social enterprises or collect funds using online crowdfunding platforms, such as Orange Money and Seekewa. Cooperatives earn funds by withholding sums from their members' sale of agricultural products.

Donors increasingly require CSOs to conduct audits of their activities and bank accounts. CSOs often open bank accounts for specific projects and pay employee salaries by check or bank transfer to ensure the traceability of expenditures. CSOs are often less than transparent in sharing financial information with their members, and in many organizations, only the board, treasurer, accountant, and executive director have access to financial information. Specialized project management consultants offer to certify CSOs' financial statements at preferential rates, but few organizations take advantage of this opportunity.

ADVOCACY: 4.3

CSO advocacy improved moderately in 2020 as CSOs worked with the government on a wider range of policy issues. The 2016 constitution highlights civil society's role in Côte d'Ivoire's social and economic development, and the government increasingly integrates CSOs into its policy-making processes. This cooperation allows CSOs to assert a leadership role, ensure that decision-making takes communities' interests into account, and benefit from available funding, especially since donors often require CSOs to be a part of programs that they fund.

As 2020 was an election year, civil society participated actively in discussions with the prime minister and political parties about reforming the Independent Electoral Commission. The topic was of importance to the sector since the commission relies heavily on CSOs to conduct large-scale voter-education efforts. APDH, FOSCAO–CI, the Platform of Civil Society Organizations for Election Observation in Côte d'Ivoire (Plateforme des organisations de la société civile pour l'observation des élections en Côte d'Ivoire, POECI), Dialogue and Research Initiative Action for Peace in Côte d'Ivoire (Initiative de dialogue et recherche action pour la paix en Côte d'Ivoire, INDIGO), and West African Network for Peacebuilding in Côte d'Ivoire (Réseau ouest africain pour l'édification de la paix en Côte d'Ivoire, WANEP-CI) conducted training, local educational campaigns, and election monitoring to ensure that the voting process was transparent and inclusive. With funding from USAID's Political Transition and Inclusion program, NDI supported civic education and awareness raising for political participation by the Coordinating Committee for Women's Political Participation (Le comité de coordination pour la participation politique des femmes, 2C2PF), RIJLI, and the Program for Young Politicians in Africa–Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, a group of CSOs developed a code of conduct banning the spread of hate messages during political campaigns and requiring candidates to accept voters' decisions and use legal means to contest election results.



CSOs have representatives in independent government agencies such as the National Press Council, Commission for Access to Information and Documents of Public Interest, and High Authority for Audiovisual Communication. In 2020, the Group for Research and Advocacy on the Extractive Industries (Groupe de recherche et de plaidoyer sur les industries extractives, GRPIE) cooperated with the High Commission on Good Governance to educate the public about access to information. CSOs also worked with the national REDD+ Commission and the technical negotiation committee involved in the partnership agreement on forest governance between Côte d'Ivoire and the EU. The Network of Human Rights, Democracy, and Gender Educators (Réseau des éducateurs aux droits de l'homme, à la démocratie et au genre, REDHG) and WANEP-CI helped establish a civil-military committee in Dabou and M'batto and raised public awareness about working for peace. Several CSOs, including Social Justice, GRPIE, and REDHG, asked the government to post its budget and contracts with mining companies online, which the government did. CSOs also collaborated with the government on the right to health, budget transparency, and transitional justice in 2020.

CSOs are less involved in working with authorities on the local level. For example, in Hiré, a city that has suffered from the negative environmental effects of mining, organizations such as N'ta Kaio advocate against mining companies' activities without the support of local authorities.

CSOs regularly carry out activities such as press conferences, debates, workshops, and awareness-raising sessions to help shape public opinion. For example, after a community destroyed a COVID-19 screening center in Yopougon in 2020, FOSCAO–CI issued a press release highlighting shortcomings in government communications about the pandemic.

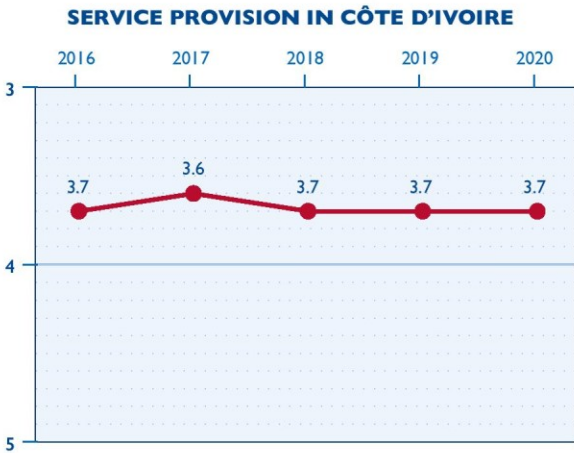
Lobbying by 2C2PF led to the National Assembly's adoption in November of Decree No. 2020-914, which addresses implementation of Law No. 2019-870 of 2019 promoting women's representation in elected assemblies.

In 2020, CSOs continued to call for improvements to the legal environment that governs their operations.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.7

Service provision by Ivorian CSOs did not change in 2020.

Ivorian CSOs provide services in a wide range of fields, including health care, food, energy, water, housing, civic education, economic development, rural land management, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding. For example, in



2020, WANEP-CI, OFACI, and other CSOs educated the public about COVID-19 and assisted people affected by the virus. Several CSOs offered care to victims of inter-ethnic clashes.

CSOs' services respond to the needs of the communities that they serve. To determine those needs, CSOs rely on their knowledge of the places in which they will work. They usually engage in participatory approaches but, because of the pandemic and tense political situation, were unable to be in close contact with their target populations in 2020. CSOs typically conduct evaluations to assess their impact. For example, during Land Alert, a project on land security, participating CSOs shared learnings and evaluated activities related to land ownership laws and specific contracts. The government

often uses CSOs' evaluation reports to support its budgetary decisions.

CSOs provide services free of charge to their members as well as other entities, such as local communities, minorities and vulnerable people, and religious institutions.

The government recognizes that CSOs have the energy and expertise needed to effect social change and involves them as key actors in multiple areas, including education, community development, human rights, and the environment. For example, the government acknowledged FOSCAO-CI's expertise in promoting social solidarity through its work with four communities in Abidjan under its political transition and inclusion program.

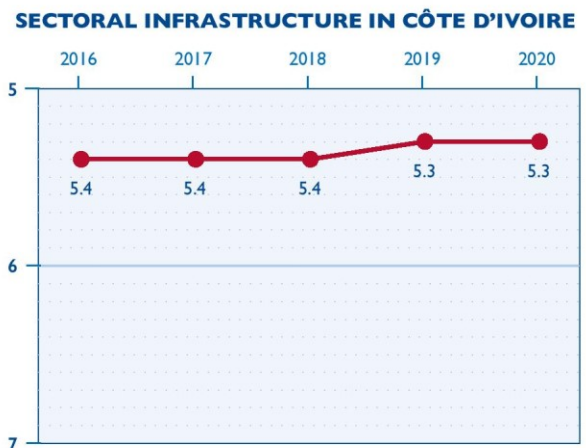
SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.3

The sectoral infrastructure for CSOs did not change in 2020.

Most resource centers and intermediate support organizations (ISOs) are in Abidjan and have a limited presence in other parts of the country. They normally offer CSOs capacity building in areas such as internal governance, strategic management, resource mobilization, communications, human rights, and financial management. In 2020, access to training and other services was restricted because of the pandemic, although some training was offered online. ISOs and resource centers usually receive a portion of their operating revenue from earned income such as service fees.

Local community foundations such as the Fondation Didier Drogba and Children of Africa, ISOs such as NDI, and public entities such as the National Fund for Local Solidarity (Fonds national de solidarité local, FNLS) provide grants to CSOs. The funding is raised locally or reallocated from funding provided by international donors.

Local CSOs often share information and work together on advocacy or service provision. Joint programming by CSOs increased in 2020, as technical and financial partners supported groups such as United Against HIV/AIDS/Tuberculosis (Union contre la co-infection VIH/hépatite/tuberculose, UNICO) in the fight against COVID-19. Prominent coalitions in 2020 included the Society for Gynecology and Obstetrics of Côte d'Ivoire (Société de gynécologie et d'obstétrique de Côte d'Ivoire, SOGOCI), Action against Unwanted and Risky Pregnancies (Action contre les grossesses non désirées et à risques, AGnDR), and Coalition of CSOs for Family Planning in Côte d'Ivoire (Coalition des OSC pour la planification familiale en Côte d'Ivoire, COS4SRPF). Advocacy

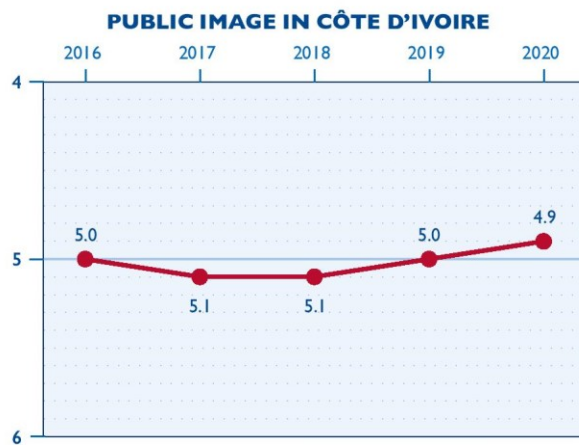


groups began operating more effectively in 2020 with support from donors. However, the management of funds within CSOs' groups sometimes creates internal tensions or a lack of leadership and trust.

Face-to-face training opportunities decreased in 2020 because of social-distancing requirements. Some organizations, including NDI, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, CARE International, International Service for Human Rights, and UPR Info offered online training to their grant recipients. Competent local trainers offer basic management training in Abidjan and some secondary towns. Specialized training and training materials are available in strategic management, program management, accounting and financial management, fundraising, volunteer management, target group building, advocacy, and board membership. The EU announced a major capacity-building project for CSOs scheduled to start in 2021 under the LIANE 2 program.

CSOs' partnerships with the government continued in 2020 despite the pandemic. For example, CSOs worked with the ministries of water and forests and private logging companies on national forestry governance and climate change policy. CSOs also partnered with the secretary of state for human rights and the National Human Rights Council. Some CSOs, such as AGnDR and the Network of Ivoirian Media Actors for the Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health (Réseau des acteurs des medias ivoiriens pour la promotion de la santé sexuelle et reproductive, RAM-2SR), work in informal partnerships with media outlets to promote reproductive health.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.9



CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020 thanks to a more intense media presence, the development of a sectoral code of ethics, and the use of "debate capsules" or social media news discussions.

CSOs benefitted from increased coverage by private and public media in 2020. The growing number of media in Côte d'Ivoire since 2019 has allowed more room for coverage of CSOs, and they are often featured in televised debates about topics such as the elections, education, and security. The range of CSO activities covered and the television stations covering them were more diverse in 2020. The main stories addressed CSOs' election-related activities and their public messaging about the pandemic. Private media tend to give more coverage to CSOs than public media. Stories about CSOs

in online news outlets are highly visible, inexpensive, and topical. In the media, a clear distinction is made between public service announcements and corporate advertising.

Despite this favorable media environment, public perception of CSOs was mixed in 2020. The public remains confused about the concept of CSOs but is generally supportive of their activities. CSOs enjoyed particularly good credibility in the communities that they assist. However, the public would like to see CSOs behave more professionally and assume a greater role in overseeing government activities, such as its fulfillment of commitments made in the National Development Program 2021–25.

The corporate sector and local and central governments generally have positive views of CSOs, especially if they work in areas such as health care. But government and business representatives remain suspicious of human rights CSOs and organizations that deal with issues of governance. For example, in 2020, mining companies refused to collaborate with APDH and REDHG after they issued reports alleging that the companies had violated the rights of local communities. Similarly, human rights CSOs' relations with the government grew tense after they criticized the government's violation of human rights by imprisoning human rights defenders and prohibiting marches.

CSOs make extensive use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to raise public awareness about their activities and debate topics such as democracy, the elections, and rural land ownership. Their presence on social networks helps communities understand their work, and some CSOs work with highly regarded community managers or bloggers to expand their communications. For example, WANEP-CI collaborates with bloggers, and the ESD Education Center for a Sustainable Society (Centre d'éducation pour une société durable, ESD Center)

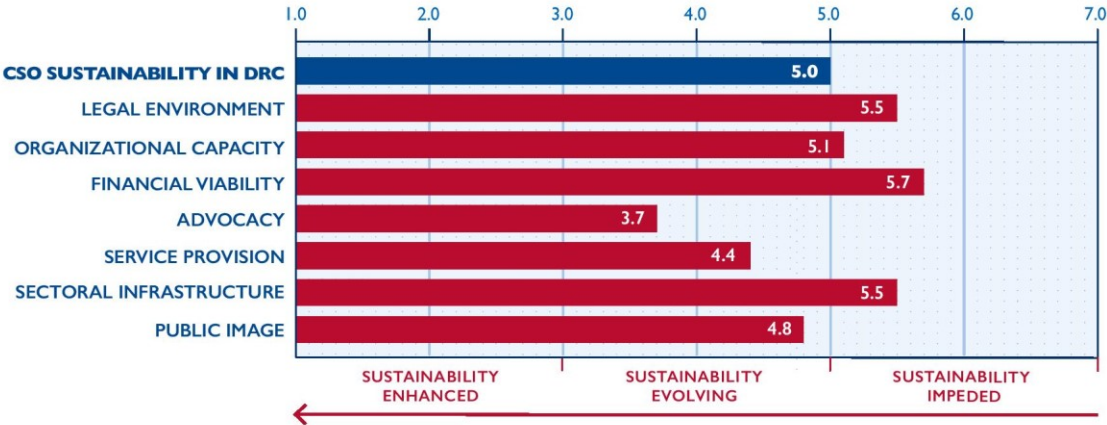
has a platform called the Citizen Observer that helps it reach broader audiences. FOSCAO-CI operates a digital monitoring unit. Some CSOs have websites that they use to promote their activities, but the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of the information that they post is not always first-rate.

In December 2020, CSOs adopted the Code of Good Conduct for Ivorian Civil Society Active in the Field of Governance and Democracy with support from the USAID-funded Political Transition and Inclusion program. Signatories to the code agree to refrain from making statements that could influence voters about a particular candidate or political entity. During each election cycle, the signatories agree to conduct self-evaluations. Larger organizations such as Christian Action to Abolish Torture in Côte d'Ivoire (Action des chrétiens pour l'abolition de la torture en Côte d'Ivoire, ACAT-CI), LIDHO, and MIDH produce annual activity reports and usually distribute the reports to their technical and financial partners, embassies, and the secretary of state for human rights as well as posting them on their websites.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Capital: Kinshasa
Population: 105,044,646
GDP per capita (PPP): \$1,098
Human Development Index: Low (0.480)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (20/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.0



The year 2020 marked the second year of political change in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) after the democratic transfer of power in January 2019. The tense cohabitation between coalition partners Heading for Change (CACH), led by President Felix Tshisekedi, and Common Front For Congo (FCC), led by former president Joseph Kabila, resulted in a political deadlock during the year. As the conflict deepened, the president announced that he would form a new coalition that would allow him to better implement his vision for the country. In December 2020, the president terminated the FCC-CACH coalition and appointed an “informer” or official tasked with identifying a new parliamentary majority.

The COVID-19 virus was first reported in the DRC on March 10. The government immediately declared a state of emergency and took steps to stop the spread of the virus, including travel restrictions, closure of schools and places of worship, and bans on large gatherings. A presidential task force was established to coordinate the pandemic response. The government’s response to the pandemic was criticized for organizational weakness. CSOs took part in distributing hygiene kits to grassroots communities, educating the public about COVID-prevention measures, and pushing for transparency and accountability in the government’s use of pandemic-related funding.

Insecurity continued to plague the DRC’s eastern regions, especially Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu provinces. Many civilians were killed by armed insurgents or security forces between October 2019 and May 2020. The conflict has pushed more than 5 million people out of their homes, giving the DRC the highest population of internally displaced persons in Africa, according to the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees, who criticized the government’s failure to protect the region’s civilians. As many as forty-two aid workers, mostly working for international organizations in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, were kidnapped in 2020, compared to nine kidnappings in 2019, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Half of the kidnapped workers were still missing at the end of the year.

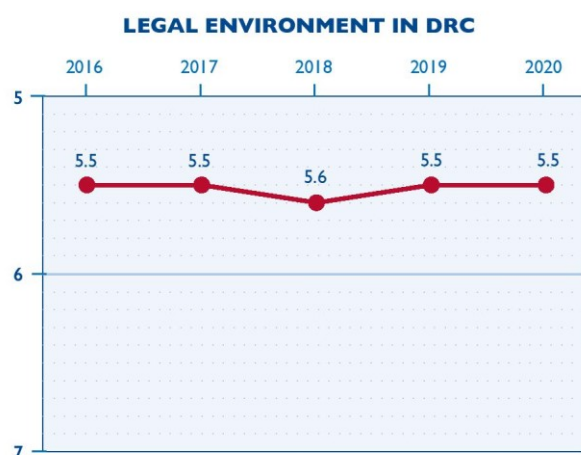
Violent demonstrations erupted in July 2020 following the appointment of a new head of the Independent National Electoral Commission, whom opposition parties accused of having been behind the electoral fraud in 2018. The police forcefully suppressed the demonstrations and killed several protesters, according to international news reports. In October, women’s groups led demonstrations in Kinshasa and other large cities to protest the country’s large number of unsolved war crimes, including many cases of gender-based violence.

The DRC experienced an economic slowdown in 2020 as the pandemic led to a surge in the cost of goods and services and a drop in the price of raw materials, which account for most of the country's exports. The economy was estimated to have a negative growth rate of 1.7 percent, which posed severe difficulties for the approximately 80 percent of Congolese who live below the poverty line. The World Bank ranked the DRC 135 out of 157 countries in its 2020 Human Capital Index, noting that 43 percent of the country's children are malnourished.

The overall sustainability of DRC CSOs did not change in 2020. Advocacy strengthened as CSOs engaged in more campaigns and were able to achieve concrete results despite the pandemic. All other dimensions of sustainability were unchanged.

According to the Ministry of Justice and Keeper of the Seals, 2,437 new and existing CSOs applied for legal personhood in 2020, of which nineteen organizations obtained legal status and 2,418 applications were still being processed at the end of the year. While it is not known for sure why so few applications were processed during the year, the pandemic may have been a hindrance.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.5



The legal environment for CSOs did not change in 2020, despite the hopes raised in 2019 as the government allowed civic space to expand and systemic state-sponsored harassment ceased.

CSOs continue to register under Law 004/2001 on associations and public benefit entities. The process for obtaining legal status is long and expensive. CSOs seeking to register must obtain the approval of their line ministries and then submit applications with bylaws to the Second Directorate of the Ministry of Justice and Guardian of the Seals. On receiving the applications, the ministry issues written receipts known as F92s, which are valid for six months. CSOs may continue to operate on F92s beyond six months if legal status is not granted in this period. Given the difficulty of traveling to Kinshasa,

CSOs in the provinces sometimes obtain provisional permission to operate from provincial governors, although their authority to grant such permission is ambiguous. Citizens' movements and human rights organizations have difficulty obtaining legal status and often operate with only F92s. Once registered, CSOs do not need to renew their registrations.

Articles 40 and 45 of Law 004/2001 state that the government may not interfere in CSOs' operations. CSOs must periodically submit activity reports to the Ministry of Planning and their line ministries. CSOs may be dissolved by the High Court at the request of their members or by the public prosecutor if they have violated their statutes, law, public order, or morality. CSOs may not be dissolved for politically motivated reasons. In accordance with Article 22 of Law 004/2001, legally recognized CSOs have the right to appeal the government's judgments and decisions.

The DRC's constitution and laws guarantee freedoms of association, expression, assembly, and opinion. CSOs are free to discuss any topic, criticize the government, and participate in demonstrations provided they comply with the law and do not harm public order or morality. But contrary to the situation in 2019, when the new government respected citizens' freedoms as guaranteed in the constitution and civic space was more open, CSOs were subjected to increased harassment in 2020. In Beni, North Kivu Province, in May, during a peaceful demonstration denouncing the killing of civilians in the region, a young activist from the pro-democracy citizen movement Fight for Change (Lutte pour le changement, LUCHA) was killed and his colleagues were arrested. In December, the police banned and dispersed a peaceful march organized in Kinshasa by the African Association for the Defense of Human Rights (Association africaine de défense des droits de l'homme, ASADHO) and the National Conscience (La conscience nationale) citizen movement to protest the deaths in Beni. Eight LUCHA activists who participated in a December 19 march in Beni for peace and against the lack of protections for civilians were charged with sabotage and violence against state security guards, according to Human Rights Watch. After a

one-month detention, the activists were acquitted by a military court in January 2021. Some CSOs were prohibited from passing to insecure areas unless they travelled with military convoys because of the dangers posed by armed groups.

CSOs do not pay taxes on donations or grants. Under Law 004/2001, legally recognized CSOs may claim exemptions from certain taxes upon application to the Interministerial Commission of the Ministries of Planning and Finance and with the approval of their line ministries. In 2020, out of 247 requests to the interministerial commission, thirty-eight CSOs, including six faith-based organizations (FBOs), received exemptions on fees and taxes. Eighteen of the thirty-eight organizations were foreign CSOs. Individual and corporate donors do not benefit from tax deductions on their donations to CSOs.

CSOs are legally allowed to collect revenues from the provision of goods and services, including through social enterprises. CSOs have the right to participate in government tenders under conditions set forth in the law on public procurement.

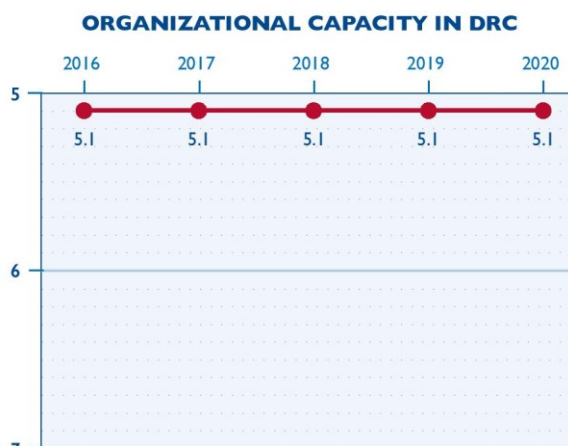
CSOs may engage in fundraising campaigns both inside the country and abroad. Congolese CSOs generally face no restrictions on accepting funds from foreign donors.

Lawyers specialized in CSO issues tend to work in large cities. The cost of their services is usually adjusted to the ability of CSO clients to pay. Attorneys may offer their services for free for certain causes, such as the arbitrary arrest of civil society actors.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.1

CSOs' organizational capacity did not change in 2020.

CSOs' interactions with communities remained largely the same in 2020. CSOs usually identify target groups, priority issues, and scopes of action in a participatory manner. CSOs also train local leaders in project management, so that they can organize follow-up activities on behalf of beneficiaries. This participatory approach allows CSOs to develop close relationships with their beneficiaries and local authorities. To measure their results, CSOs often engage beneficiaries in monitoring and evaluation. For example, the South Congo Network (Réseau Sud Congo), which works on the impact of mining activities in the former Katanga Province, involves target groups in designing, implementing, and evaluating its activities. CSOs typically find that the participatory approach is not only effective but also promotes communities' sense of ownership for their projects.



The missions and objectives of CSOs are clearly defined in their bylaws. Large CSOs such as Caritas Congo and Inades-Formation generally engage in strategic planning, which is guided by their missions. Many organizations had to revise their strategic plans in 2021 because of the pandemic. For example, the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Monitoring Reforms and Public Action (Coalition des organisations de la société civile pour le suivi des reformes et de l'action publique, CORAP) had planned to consult with other civil society actors about a national energy policy but delayed these consultations until 2021 because of the pandemic.

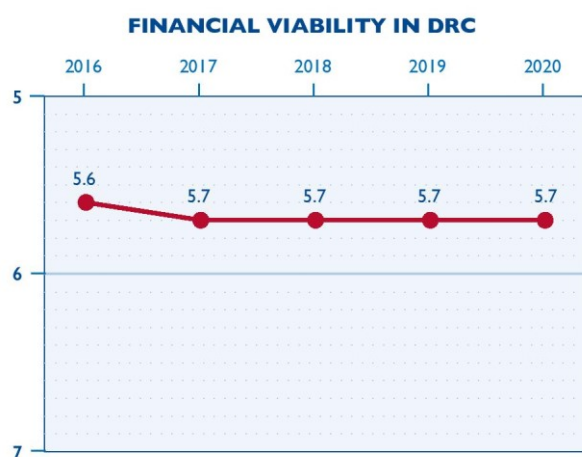
Law 004/2001 sets out precise rules for the internal governance of CSOs, including the need for regular general assemblies, the terms and authorities of boards of directors, the appointment and dismissal of management, and internal controls. CSOs' bylaws describe internal bodies and decision-making procedures, while administrative and financial management manuals spell out organizational and operational details. Some CSOs hold general assemblies and board meetings in accordance their statutes.

CSOs with donor-funded projects, such as Caritas Congo, Inades-Formation, and the National Support Center for Development and Public Participation (Centre national d'appui au développement et à la participation populaire,

CENADEP), are often able to maintain permanent paid staff. CSO staff usually have fixed-term contracts and job descriptions. CSOs sometimes organize training for staff or send employees on exchange trips to strengthen organizational leadership. Larger CSOs have accountants and computer specialists on their staff and rely on outside legal counsel when needed. Smaller organizations rely on volunteers if they are waiting for funding. For example, in September 2020, community members helped Women Hand in Hand in Kasai (Femmes mains dans la main du Kasai, FMMDK) decorate its office walls. CSOs usually feed volunteers engaged in energy-intensive work, such as the construction of water wells or toilets for schools. Few CSOs are able to recruit a sufficient number of volunteers.

Most CSOs have computers but are unable to upgrade them regularly unless they are implementing donor-funded programs. CSOs showed resilience during the pandemic by developing new ways to work despite the restrictions. Larger CSOs expanded remote work options for staff and used videoconferencing to meet with partners. Despite their lack of resources and poor internet connections in many areas of the country, even smaller CSOs relied increasingly on communications platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Zoom, and teleconferencing. CSOs have yet to work on cybersecurity issues.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.7



CSOs' financial viability did not change in 2020.

Congolese CSOs remain dependent on foreign sources of funding. The main donors are multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and European Union, as well as bilateral donors such as the United States, Belgium, United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, and Netherlands. In 2020, donors' funding levels were generally consistent with those of the previous year, although in some cases, donors redefined their in-country strategies to respond to the pandemic. Among donors contributing to the pandemic response, the Swedish Embassy provided funding to CONAFED to raise awareness and distribute hygienic materials in Maluku, with the support of the Swedish CSO Diakonia.

The government contracts with CSOs for services such as sanitation, road marking, and in-service training of employees. Caritas Congo has a contract with the government to pay teachers in certain parts of the country. In 2020, several CSOs served as local implementing agencies for the Central Coordination Office and the DRC Social Fund, which receives funding mainly from the World Bank. The Social Fund distributed \$11.6 million to ten local CSOs, including the Panzi Foundation, Heal Africa, and Alfa Ujuvi, along with one international CSO to serve as local implementing partners under the Gender-Based Sexual Violence Response project in eastern DRC.

Several local philanthropies exist in the DRC, and their funding levels were steady in 2020. The Widal Foundation provides in-kind support to health-care centers, underprivileged populations, orphanages, and schools and makes some grants available to CSOs. The Denise Nyakero Foundation provides in-kind support to schools and health-care centers.

Other local sources of funding are minimal, which leaves most CSOs unable to diversify their funding sources over the short and long terms. Large CSOs, such as Caritas Congo, Inades-Formation, and CENADEP, collect membership fees sporadically. FBOs usually obtain in-kind support from their members, and some CSOs obtain voluntary donations from their communities.

A few CSOs earn revenue through the provision of goods and services. For example, the Gender, Citizen Participation, and Development Consultancy (Bureau de consultation en genre, participation, citoyenne, et développement, BCGPCD) offers consultancy services to women who are the victims of violence. Caritas Congo generates income through hospitality services, room rentals, and catering and has created a social enterprise called

the Financial Institution for Development Work (Institution financière pour les oeuvres de développement, IFOD), which operates as a microfinance institution.

Because of the pandemic, local fundraising was not easy in 2020. Among the few organizations able to fundraise was the Congolese Women's Fund (Fonds pour les femmes congolaises, FFC), which mobilized funds for small grassroots organizations that have difficulty accessing resources.

Corporate sponsorships for CSOs have increased slightly in recent years, in part in response to CSO advocacy. For example, several women's organizations in Lualaba Province received micro-loans from area mining companies in 2020.

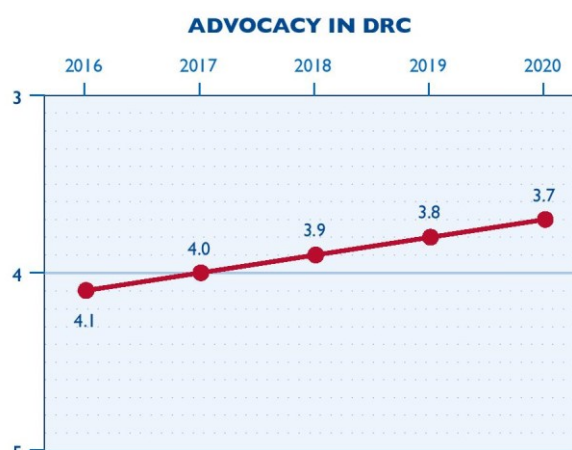
Large CSOs have fairly established financial management systems, including accounting software. They typically produce annual reports and financial statements and undergo regular independent audits, as required by donors. Other CSOs still find financial management a challenge, mainly because of a lack of management tools and trained personnel.

ADVOCACY: 3.7

CSOs' advocacy improved slightly in 2020 as they undertook more campaigns and achieved concrete results despite pandemic-related constraints.

CSOs engage in both formal and informal dialogue with government decision makers. In 2020, CSOs worked on several joint commissions that allowed them to hold decision makers accountable and monitor the implementation of public policies. For example, several CSOs served on a national economic governance working group, which analyzed the budget bill. Other organizations made recommendations to the parliament, which led to increases in support for the poor in sectors such as health care, energy, education, agriculture, and rural development. The National Confederation of Agricultural Producers in the Congo (Confédération nationale des producteurs agricoles du Congo, CONAPAC), Congolese Environmental and Human Rights Alert (Alerte congolaise pour l'environnement et les droits humains, ACDH), and Environmental Defense Council for Legality and Traceability (Conseil pour la défense environnementale par la légalité et la traçabilité, CODELT) served on the National Commission on Land Reform, a tripartite entity with government, donor, and civil society representatives that ensures that women, youth, native peoples, people living with disabilities, and traditional leaders are included in land reform efforts. The tripartite forums created by the government in 2019 to bring together government, business, and CSO representatives to discuss policy issues functioned with varying competency in 2020. Some tripartites were effective while others, such as the budget commission, had trouble meeting. On the local level, CSOs cooperated with the DRC's twenty-six provincial governments through provincial civil society consultative frameworks.

In other advocacy, the Observatory of Public Expenditure (Observatoire de la dépense publique, ODEP) published a report on the mismanagement of the 100 Days of the Head of State project, which aimed to construct 4,500 prefabricated houses for soldiers in the first 100 days of the new administration. The report led to the conviction for embezzlement of the director of the cabinet of the head of state and several associates. The coalition Congo is Not for Sale (Congo n'est pas à vendre, CNPAV) led a campaign denouncing the exorbitant price of Congolese passports in 2020. By publishing announcements in the media criticizing the opaque administration of passports and calling for the termination of the contract with the company that produced them, the coalition helped achieve a significant decrease in passport fees. CSOs also led peaceful demonstrations against insecurity in the eastern part of the country. These protests were sometimes forcefully repressed, as when a young LUCHA activist was killed and his colleagues were arrested during a demonstration in Goma in May.

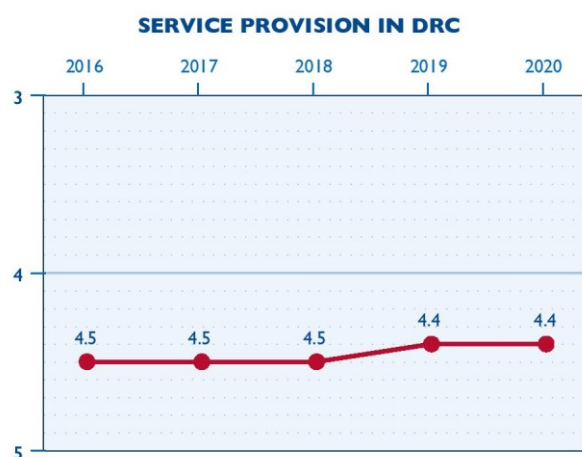


CSOs such as CENADEP, Network for the Promotion of Democracy and Economic and Social Rights (Réseau de Promotion de la Démocratie et des Droits Economiques et Sociaux, PRODDDES), Collectif 24, and National Committee for Women and Development (Comité national des femmes pour le développement, CONAFED) created the COVID-19 Citizen Dynamic platform to fight for transparency, respect, and good communications in the government’s pandemic response. A CSO grouping in Upper Katanga, which included Action Against Human Rights Impunity (Action contre l’Impunité pour les droits humains, ACIDH), Lualaba Provincial Civil Cooperation Framework (Cadre provincial de concertation civile de Lualaba), Action for Human Rights Defense (Action pour la défense des droits humains, ADDH), and Initiative for Good Governance and Human Rights (Initiative pour la bonne gouvernance et le droit de l’homme, IBGDH), strongly encouraged corporate leaders to support workers’ rights if they adopted COVID-19 prevention measures while continuing mining operations.

Because of restrictions on in-person gatherings, CSOs used videoconferencing to organize advocacy-related meetings in 2020. For example, CORAP organized a meeting of CSOs to demand transparency in the government’s contracting in the energy sector. Although the meeting was announced in a press release and press conference, the poor quality of the internet connection prevented large attendance.

CSOs believe that a favorable legal and regulatory framework is needed to guarantee their sustainability and effectiveness. In 2020, CSOs urged the parliament to consider amending Law 004/2001 to decentralize the registration system so that legal status could be granted at the provincial and local levels rather than at the central level only, thereby making it easier for CSOs to obtain tax exemptions, and to include CSOs in the process of allocating bilateral counterpart funds. The draft amendment to the Law No. 004/2001 on nonprofit associations developed by Framework for National Consultation and Dialogue of Congolese Civil Society (Cadre de concertation nationale et de dialogue de la société civile congolaise, CCNSC-RDC) was supposed to be put forth by a member of parliament in 2020, but this was not possible because of the pandemic.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.4



CSOs’ service provision was stable in 2020. CSOs continued to provide their regular services in a wide range of areas, including health care, education, housing, water, energy, economic development, and environmental protection. At the same time, many organizations also provided pandemic-related services, such as raising awareness about prevention measures and distributing masks and hand-washing supplies. Overall, CSOs’ service provision slowed down in 2020, particularly during the lockdown from March to July.

The goods and services provided by CSOs usually respond to the needs and priorities of their target groups. CSOs use social perception analysis, community consultations, surveys, and participatory action research to determine beneficiaries’ priorities. They also organize

participatory evaluations to identify any needed adjustments in project implementation. In 2020, Caritas Congo drilled boreholes in areas not served by the public water distribution network, with support from Oxfam and World Vision; the Health Mutual for Common Neighborhoods (Mutuelle de santé des quartiers populaires, MUSQUAP) facilitated access to health care by women farmers; Rural Cause (Cause rural) sensitized rural women in Kwilu to the benefits of pre-natal care; and Civil Society Health (Société civile santé) continued to distribute impregnated mosquito nets in Kwango. In response to the pandemic, CORAP, MUSQUAP, Economic Governance and Democracy Network (Réseau gouvernance économique et démocratie, REGED), and other organizations distributed hygiene kits to grassroots communities. MUSQUAP also used posters to educate the public about COVID-19 prevention measures. In April 2020, a presidential order created the National Solidarity Fund Against COVID-19, comprised of CSO and faith leaders. The fund supported the COVID-19 Multisector Response Committee in monitoring and detecting the virus and financed the purchase of personal protective equipment for the population, including health workers.

Most CSOs provide goods and services without discriminating between members and non-members. Some CSOs provide service directly to members, with other audiences benefitting indirectly. For example, the Center for the Study of Social Action (Centre d'étude pour l'action sociale, CEPAS) produces publications and studies that reach audiences beyond its primary audience in the Catholic Church.

CSOs do not aim to make profits on their goods and services, since, as nonprofit organizations, their primary purpose is to meet community needs. CSOs with expertise in particular fields sometimes provide the government and other CSOs with paid services, such as training workshops and advice for publications. Some organizations, especially FBOs, derive a portion of their operating revenue from renting out meeting centers and other spaces.

The government's recognition of CSOs as valued service providers is evident in its willingness to cooperate with the sector.

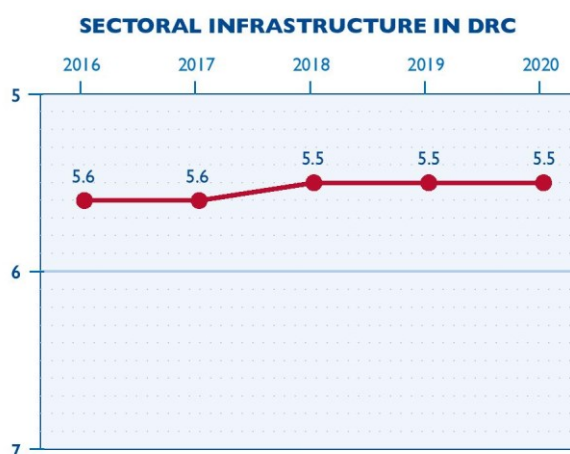
SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.5

The infrastructure supporting CSOs did not change in 2020. Resource centers and intermediary support organizations (ISOs) such as Inades-Formation continued to provide training, information, and technical support. The Center for Social Action Studies (CEPAS) distributed issues of the *Africa Congo* review compiled on USB sticks and CDs to CSOs. These institutions are often unable to meet the training needs of grassroots organizations because of their lack of funding.

Local community foundations and ISOs receive grants from technical and financial partners and re-direct the funds and provide technical support to communities and beneficiaries on the ground. For example, in 2020, the Widal Foundation supported community-based organizations by providing training in shoe-shining.

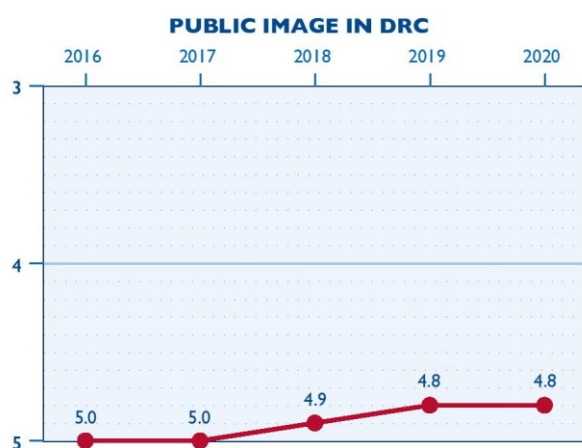
CSOs share information and organize joint activities through thematic coalitions such as CORAP, Platform of CSOs Working in the Mining Sector (Plateforme des OSC intervenant dans le secteur minier, POM), Coalition for the Governance of Public Enterprises (Coalition pour la gouvernance des entreprises publiques, COGEP), and the Publish-What-You-Pay-Coalition (Publiez ce que vous payez, PWVP). The Education for All (Education pour tous) coalition, which fights for free primary education, constructed and renovated school infrastructure and distributed teacher payments in 2020. The Platform of Organizations Promoting Health Insurance Cooperatives in the Congo (Plateforme des organisations promotrices des mutuelles de santé du Congo, POMUCO) supported its member CSOs in managing health-care risks. A consortium composed of leading coalitions in various sectors, including development, youth, human rights, agriculture, women, and security and justice, carried out projects to strengthen national networks in 2020.

Larger CSOs provided some training to other organizations during the year, generally in person and in line with pandemic restrictions. For example, Inades-Formation facilitated training and technical support for its members in areas such as agriculture, husbandry, and project management; COJESKI offered training in project management to twenty youth associations in Kinshasa; the National Council of NGOs in Development (Conseil national des organisations non gouvernementales de développement, CNONGD) strengthened the evaluation and internal governance capacities of about fifteen CSOs in Kinshasa; and the Network of Human Rights NGOs (Réseau national des ONG de droits de l'homme, RENADHOC) held a similar training in Kananga for about twenty local organizations. The workshops were usually inexpensive or free of charge. Training for provincial organizations is uncommon, since the larger CSOs have a weak presence in these areas. Local trainers skilled in CSO management and specialized areas are available in large cities. Private training centers exist but charge fees that are beyond the reach of most CSOs. Most training materials are in French, with very few available in local languages, such as Lingala, Tshiluba, Swahili, or Kikongo.



CSOs seek to work in partnership with the government, private sector, and media. For example, in 2020, COJESKI worked with the provincial police inspectorate and National Human Rights Commission to combat arbitrary arrests and detentions in Kinshasa. POM worked with the provincial division of mines, Revenue Service of Haute Katanga, and mining companies such as Ruashi Mining and Shemaf on mining royalties in decentralized territorial entities.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.8



CSOs' public image was unchanged in 2020, although the pandemic pushed CSOs to rely more heavily on social media and networks, resulting in greater visibility for their activities.

Public and private media may or may not cover CSOs' activities, depending on their editorial positions. Most media simply report on CSOs' activities rather than analyze their contributions. In the provinces, CSOs commonly have partnership agreements with community radio stations. CSOs do not usually receive free media coverage, although the media distinguish between community service announcements and corporate advertising and often offer discounts to CSOs. Exceptionally, Radio Okapi, funded by the UN, provides free coverage of CSO activities throughout the country.

Women's Radio, which was created in 2020 to broadcast in Kinshasa and Brazzaville, also provides free coverage of the activities of women's organizations.

The public has a poor understanding of the concept of CSOs and often confuses them with UN agencies, foreign organizations, or state services. But public perceptions are generally favorable, and communities feel ownership of CSOs' projects if they meet vital needs. Some people mistakenly believe that CSOs make a lot of money when implementing activities in the field.

Local and central governments and the private sector have increasingly positive views of CSOs insofar as their actions contribute to meeting community needs. CSOs serve as resource persons for businesses and government agencies more often thanks to their expertise in specific sectors and their proximity to grassroots communities. However, the government tends to discredit CSOs' efforts to promote human rights and citizen movements, especially if such efforts go against its interests.

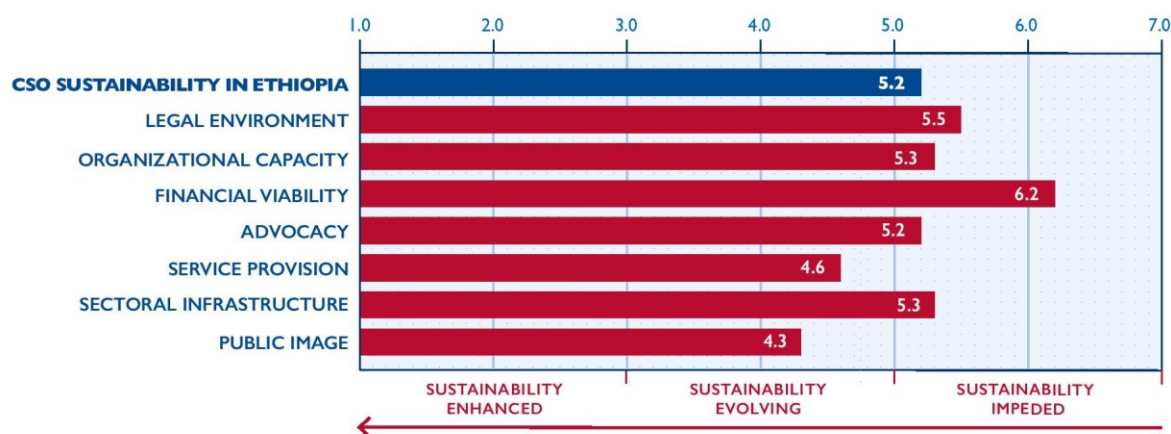
CSOs promote a positive image by involving journalists in their activities. For example, in 2020, the National Press Union (Union nationale de la presse du Congo, UNPC) worked with the National Civil Society Consultative Framework (Cadre de concertation nationale de la société civile) to denounce attacks on journalists during peaceful marches. Some CSOs used social media effectively to mobilize resources and ensure their visibility at prices lower than those charged by traditional media. FFC, CONAFED, National Council of Women's Organizations (Conseil national des organisations féminines), Afia Maman, and other CSOs used online platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and LinkedIn extensively in 2020 to carry out activities that would normally have taken place face-to-face.

CSOs prepared and adopted a code of ethics for the sector at the second National Civil Society Forum in late 2019. Some national organizations have individual codes of conduct as well as administrative and financial manuals to improve transparency and regulate the behavior of members and staff, especially with respect to corruption, harassment, embezzlement, and conflict of interest. National CSOs usually publish annual reports and post them on their websites. Local CSOs do not usually have websites and do not publish their annual reports.

ETHIOPIA

Capital: Addis Ababa
Population: 110,871,031
GDP per capita (PPP): \$2,221
Human Development Index: Low (0.485)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (22/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.2



Significant political and economic developments had vital ramifications for Ethiopian CSOs in 2020. The COVID-19 virus was first detected in the country in March, and on April 8, the government declared a six-month state of emergency. Schools were closed, social gatherings were banned, movement was restricted, and the wearing of masks became mandatory. The Ministry of Health and Ethiopian Public Health Institute mobilized an emergency preparedness and response plan that included testing, house-to-house screenings, contact tracing, and quarantines and self-isolation. CSOs engaged in the pandemic response by distributing personal protective equipment and raising awareness.

Ethiopia faced intense domestic insecurity in 2020. Tensions between the federal government and the government of Tigray Regional State were inflamed by the indefinite postponement of nationwide elections, which had been scheduled for August 2020. The Tigray government challenged the postponement and in September 2020 conducted its own regional election, in which the Tigray Peoples’ Liberation Party claimed victory with more than 98 percent of the vote. The federal government denounced the election as unconstitutional, and the House of Federation passed a resolution severing nearly all ties with the region. On November 4, following an attack by Tigray government special forces on the federal Northern Command, the federal government launched what it called a law-enforcement operation on Tigray Regional State. In the violent confrontations that followed, more than 45,000 civilians fled to Sudan and over 2 million people were internally displaced in Tigray, according to the United Nations (UN). Many Ethiopians anticipated that the conflict would lead to a lengthy civil war.

Benishangul Gumuz Regional State also experienced a surge of attacks against civilians in 2020. According to various reports, the attacks were conducted by ethnic Gumuz militia and targeted ethnic Amhara residents. A wave of violence and looting also occurred in parts of Oromia Region, Addis Ababa, and Dire Dawa following the assassination of a famous Oromo singer-activist. In response to the latter eruption of violence, which the government said resulted in at least 160 deaths, the government blocked the internet nationwide for three weeks, halted regional media broadcasts, arrested prominent opposition leaders, and charged more than 5,700 people. The independent Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) expressed concern about the attacks, murders, and displacement of civilians and called on the government to conduct an independent investigation, which the government promised to pursue.

The quest for regional statehood in the south remained a key political challenge in 2020. According to the EHRC, six lives were lost after a protest broke out in the Wolayita Zone in August 2020 following the detention of several officials and participants in a conference about statehood. The regional government reported that more than 170 persons were detained on charges related to the violence. The House of Federation accepted a request

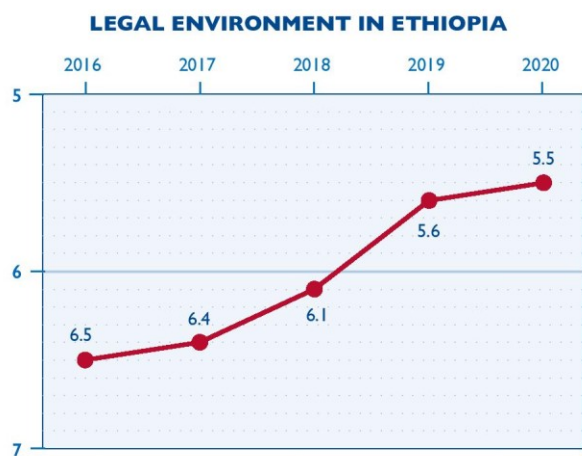
from zonal councils in Kaffa, Dawro, Kesheka, Kabench Sheko, West Omos, and Konta to form the South-West Ethiopian Regional State and referred the matter to the National Electoral Board to arrange a referendum.

According to the World Bank, Ethiopia's real gross domestic product growth rate slowed from 9.4 percent in 2019 to 6.1 percent in 2020. After a decade of robust poverty reduction, the slowdown was marked by increased food prices, rising unemployment, and growing poverty. A severe infestation of locusts in 2020 damaged crops and pasturelands, contributing to food insecurity. Steps taken by the government to protect the economy included tax exemptions, fiscal stimulus, interest-rate reductions, and loan rescheduling. In 2020–21, the government launched a new ten-year plan that aims to sustain Ethiopia's economic growth by emphasizing private-sector development.

The overall sustainability of Ethiopia's CSOs sector was slightly stronger in 2020 with six dimensions showing positive change. The legal environment improved slightly with the establishment of the CSO Council and CSOs' productive working relationship with the Agency for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO), the regulatory body. CSOs' financial viability was slightly stronger as foreign funding for the sector increased, much of it earmarked for pandemic relief. CSO advocacy was moderately stronger thanks to more effective cooperation with the government and several successful advocacy initiatives. Service provision expanded slightly as CSOs played a critical role in combating COVID-19. The infrastructure supporting CSOs improved slightly as local grantmaking and cooperation in the sector increased. CSOs' public image was enhanced by their ability to engage regularly with the media. CSOs' organizational capacity was stable.

As of December 31, 2020, the ACSO reported that 468 new CSOs were registered at the federal level during the year. The total number of registered CSOs in 2020 was 2,845, compared to 2,377 organizations in 2019.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.5



CSOs' legal environment improved slightly in 2020 as the sector enjoyed a productive working relationship with the ACSO, and the CSO Council was established.

Organizations register with the ACSO or, if working in one region only, with regional supervisory bodies in accordance with the CSO Proclamation, which replaced the draconian Charities and Societies Proclamation in 2019. In contrast to the former law, the CSO Proclamation stipulates clear and easy registration requirements. Applicants are expected to submit documents such as articles of association, board member profiles, and minutes of the founding assembly with their applications. The ACSO is legally required to issue certificates of registration within thirty days if all requirements are fulfilled. The period for the mandatory

re-registration of CSOs under the CSO Proclamation came to an end in April 2020. A total of 1,805 CSOs re-registered, which was equal to half the number of registered organizations declared by the ACSO's predecessor, the Charities and Societies Agency, which was dissolved in 2019. The disparity in numbers suggests that many local CSOs had been forced to terminate their operations under the former law.

The CSO Proclamation clearly delimits government oversight of the CSO sector. CSOs are expected to submit annual activity and financial reports to the ACSO in accordance with clear and simple reporting requirements. CSOs have access to legal mechanisms and judicial recourse to protect them from arbitrary and forced dissolution. There were reports of misunderstanding of the CSO Proclamation by regional authorities and a few officers at the federal level in 2020.

Under the framework of the new CSO Proclamation, the ACSO drafted directives to guide CSOs' operations. The draft directives include guidelines on procurement, project and administrative costs, income-generating activities, the administration of the CSO Fund, the disposal of CSOs' property, the appointment and mandate of liquidators, and the registration and administration of professional associations. The ACSO invited CSOs to comment on the draft directives, which are expected to be endorsed by the ACSO board in 2021. CSOs commended the

consultative process but expressed concerns that some of the draft directives threaten to restrict the space guaranteed by the CSO Proclamation.

Article 85 of the CSO Proclamation calls for the establishment of a CSO Council with the mandate of advising the ACSO on matters related to the administration of CSOs, enacting a code of conduct, and representing the interests of the sector. In a major milestone, the council was established in December 2020, with all registered CSOs members of the council by default. Three of the council's board members serve on the board of the ACSO.

In November 2020, the ACSO, regional bureaus of finance, and regional attorneys general signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a forum to ensure uniformity in their engagement with CSOs. This forum is expected to start work in 2021 and will include CSO representatives. The approval of a civic engagement policy was keenly expected in 2020, but the policy remained in draft form in the Attorney General's Office.

In 2020, the Civil Society Support Program 2 (CSSP2), funded by the governments of the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden, and Norway, conducted a mutual needs assessment of the ACSO. CSSP2 identified a number of gaps at the agency, including a poor understanding of CSOs' approach to program implementation, poor communications, a fault-finding mentality, weak team spirit, and an inability to value CSOs' contributions to national development. CSSP2 provided ongoing training to the ACSO to enhance its effectiveness and improve its provision of services.

In January 2020, the House of Peoples' Representatives endorsed a draft bill to amend the anti-terrorism law, which had been widely criticized by human rights groups. The bill was prepared by an independent expert team that included the Ethiopian Human Rights Lawyers and Ethiopian Lawyers' Associations and operated under the government's Legal and Justice Advisory Council, which oversees reviews of laws affecting democratic space. In February 2020, the House endorsed the draft Hate Speech and Disinformation Prevention and Suppression Proclamation after months of revision and public discussion. This bill drew criticism from the UN special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression as well as human rights groups, who argued that it violated Article 29 of the constitution, which guarantees freedom of expression.

The government adopted a new media policy in 2020 that is viewed as more liberal than the previous law. Among its provisions are the reduction of taxes on imported media equipment, incentives for media investment, and subsidies on printing and distribution costs. Accountability for public media was shifted from the executive branch to the parliament, and a new media council to promote self-regulation started functioning.

In February, the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia issued a directive recognizing the rights of local CSOs to provide civic and voter education. No regional state managed to enact a regional CSO law in 2020, although initiatives were underway in a few states, such as Amhara and Oromia.

CSOs are free to engage in any lawful activity within their approved mission areas. While political parties are sometimes denied the right to conduct peaceful demonstrations, there is no law prohibiting CSOs from taking part in public protests, although they are expected to remain non-partisan. International CSOs are not allowed to engage in civic and voter education or lobby political parties.

No state harassment was reported by CSOs in 2020.

CSOs are exempt from taxes on income from grants. Corporations may receive tax deductions of up to 10 percent of their taxable income on donations to CSOs. In practice, CSOs have yet to benefit from this provision.

CSOs are free to establish social enterprises and earn income from the provision of goods and services. CSOs may engage in government contracts and procurement provided they have business licenses. There is no restriction on CSOs' ability to engage in fundraising activities or receive foreign funding from legal sources.

Qualified lawyers provide professional legal services to Ethiopian CSOs. Most CSOs do not have lawyers providing services on a regular basis and engage them only when facing legal challenges.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.3

CSOs' organizational capacity remained the same in 2020.

While CSOs sought to build and strengthen their relationships with constituencies in 2020, their efforts were limited by widespread emergency conditions and a lack of funding. Because of the health crisis, many organizations

sought to limit contact with their constituencies to virtual channels in 2020, although CSOs providing services such as health care and livelihoods training continued to meet with beneficiaries in person while taking required precautions. Other CSOs had to cut back on activities requiring in-person gatherings, such as trainings, workshops, advocacy, and awareness-raising initiatives.

Most donors require CSOs to have short-term projects rather than long-term strategic plans. Program design is driven by donors' requirements, since CSOs are highly dependent on foreign funding. In areas afflicted by conflict, flooding, COVID-19, or the locust infestation, all of which caused large internal displacements, many organizations switched from a focus on sustainable development to relief services or pandemic response. For example, CSSP2 encouraged the more than 130 organizations that it supports to redesign their activities to combat COVID-19. In 2020, as the change in the law opened up space for advocacy organizations, many CSOs revised their objectives and plans to encompass human rights and democratic governance or reflect a rights-based approach to development. However, it has been observed that the sector still lacks the capacity to fully exploit this opportunity, and few organizations were able to achieve significant impact in these areas in 2020.

The law prescribes minimal organizational structures for CSOs, such as a general assembly, executive committee, managers, and auditor. Organizations are expected to have written policies or bylaws that define their structures and guide their operations. Most governing bodies are not seriously involved in the administration of their organizations, and executive directors usually manage all operations, including fund raising. Most organizations were unable to conduct general assemblies in 2020 because of the prohibition on social gatherings. The CSO Proclamation prohibits persons who are related through family or affinity to officers of the organization to serve as members of the board and stipulates that all members, officers, and employees must avoid conflict of interest. No CSO were reported to have engaged in mismanagement during the year.

After regulations classifying project staff salaries as administrative costs were relaxed in 2019, many CSOs were able to offer competitive salaries and hire more competent staff than in previous years. At that same time, the change in rules encouraged higher staff turnover, as staff migrated in search of better salaries. Budgets for staff capacity development are limited, as donors do not usually allow project funding to be used for this purpose. Staff payrolls are a mandatory legal requirement. More established CSOs usually have personnel policies and job descriptions, while smaller CSOs often do not.

The internet is accessible to most CSOs, particularly those based in the capital city. However, the quality of service is poor, and internet interruptions and power blackouts are common. The majority of donors do not show great interest in CSOs' technical capability and offer little support for the purchase of new equipment. In 2020, selected CSOs received training on digital security. A positive outcome of the pandemic is that it forced CSOs with access to the internet to learn to use digital technologies to conduct meetings and trainings.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN ETHIOPIA



FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.2

CSOs' financial viability improved slightly in 2020, as foreign funding for the sector increased, much of it earmarked for pandemic relief.

CSOs heavily rely on foreign funding. The United States, United Kingdom, European Commission, and Germany were among the major donors in 2020. For example, the European Union (EU) Civil Society Fund III awarded EUR 11.8 million (approximately \$13.5 million) to sixty-six CSOs. In 2020, humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia increased by about 10 percent to slightly less than \$1 billion, with funds for CSOs, about 25 percent of the total, going to Catholic Relief Services, International Red Cross, Save the Children, International Rescue Committee, and Norwegian Refugee Council, among other organizations, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund, which was founded in 2018, released its first funding to

FINANCIAL VIABILITY IN ETHIOPIA



CSOs in 2020, including the Gurmuu Development Association for a project to improve children's learning environment in four primary schools in Oromia Regional State and the Pro Development Network to develop water supplies for hard-to-reach communities using renewable energy.

Some donors made additional pandemic-related funds available. For example, USAID made available \$150,000 to address the increase in COVID-related gender-based violence (GBV), a portion of which went to local women's organizations in Amhara and Oromia. CSSIP2 released a small fast-track fund of GBP 500,000 (approximately \$615,000) for seventeen CSOs to work specifically on the pandemic response. Many donors coped with the pandemic by pivoting current funding

rather than making additional funds available, which caused CSOs to shift funds from existing projects to activities to combat COVID-19. Owing to this challenge, the ACSO, in collaboration with the Civil Society Resource Center (CSRC), a local CSO, organized two webinars in November and December 2020 on the financial impact of COVID-19.

Few organizations try to diversify their funding base by mobilizing local resources. The government, businesses, and philanthropic foundations offer little support to CSOs, and the sector's ability to mobilize resources from communities and constituencies is limited. The culture of corporate philanthropy is weak. Although legally permitted, there is no evidence that government bodies or local businesses contract with CSOs for services.

In 2020, the ACSO worked on operationalizing the CSO Fund, which was established in 2019 with the objective of, among other things, providing in-kind and cash support to organizations working with vulnerable groups. The fund's assets come from the properties of dissolved organizations as well as government subsidies. In 2020, the ACSO transferred to the fund the properties of two organizations, one of which was dissolved voluntarily and the other dissolved by agency. The ACSO also established structures and guidelines for administering the fund. No funding was disbursed in 2020.

There is a limited culture among Ethiopian CSOs of earning revenues from the sale of services or products or the rental of assets. For most of 2020, it was impossible to organize fundraising activities since public gatherings and events were prohibited due to the pandemic. A few organizations, such as the Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Associations (CCRDA) and Organization for Women in Self-Employment, earned income by leasing buildings that they own. Although CSOs may legally run businesses, only a limited number of CSOs, such as New Hope Center for Children and the Handicapped, Jerusalem Children and Community Development Organization, and Vision Ethiopia, engaged in such activities in 2020.

CSOs are legally required to keep accounts of their incomes and expenses, conduct independent audits, and submit the audit reports to the ACSO. Few CSOs publish their audit reports. Strong CSOs have trained finance personnel and procurement manuals, but the majority of CSOs have neither.

ADVOCACY: 5.2

CSO advocacy improved moderately in 2020 as the government and CSOs worked together more intensively and CSOs increased their involvement in various advocacy initiatives. CSOs conducted advocacy activities mostly through online channels, although after the state of emergency expired in October, in-person meetings started up again.

Under the liberalization allowed by the CSO Proclamation, parts of the government attempted to open up and involve civil society in their policy and programming processes in 2020. For example, the Ministry of Finance invited CSOs to provide comments on the draft partnership agreement between the EU and the seventy-nine member countries of the Organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States. CSOs' role in implementing the

agreement is clearly stated in the document, which is expected to help ensure a productive partnership between CSOs and the Ethiopian government.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed met with CSO representatives in August 2020 to discuss the importance of the CSO sector offering nonpartisan support to democratization and the rule of law. Meeting participants raised a number of issues pertaining to the CSO-government relationship, CSOs' participation in national initiatives and planning, and the need for greater attention to reviving the sector.

In August 2020, the Commission for Planning and Development invited several CSOs to provide comments on the country's new ten-year development plan. Among the CSOs involved in the review, members

of the Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations and other women-focused organizations conducted consultative workshops and then provided the Ministry of Women, Youth, and Children Affairs with a comprehensive assessment calling for gender-specific responses to the pandemic, migrant return and rehabilitation, and humanitarian assistance.

Incidents of violence against women increased during the lockdown, which prompted many CSOs and activists to engage in advocacy to reverse the trend. For example, the Network of the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa conducted a virtual meeting on sexual and domestic violence in Ethiopia during the pandemic. In response to these efforts, the government was forced to re-open courts and add technology to allow for virtual hearings of GBV cases, with funding from USAID. Women's rights organizations also encouraged law enforcement bodies and the judiciary to speed up their investigations, prosecutions, and trials involving crimes against women, women's land rights, and the rights of women in prison with their children. On the local level, Addis Hiwot Relief and Rehabilitation conducted research and drafted a policy document regarding incarcerated mothers with children that the regional government in Amhara Region accepted for consideration.

In February 2020, the Federation of Ethiopian National Associations of Peoples with Disabilities (FENAPD) cooperated with several government institutions to organize two days of workshops on HIV and disabilities. FENAPD also worked with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs on disability-inclusive quarantine measures and treatment centers.

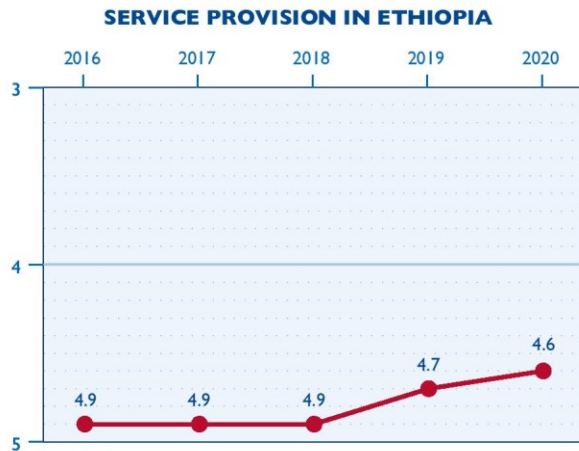
CSOs pushed for amendments of the law establishing the state of emergency, arguing that it constricted certain human rights. The EHRC released a number of statements during the year concerning gross human rights violations committed by government forces in some parts of the country. The EHRC also presented a performance report to the House of Peoples' Representatives in February 2020, which described human rights violations committed by state and non-state actors as well as the decrease in human rights violations by government security forces. In November and December 2020, the EHRC and other CSOs celebrated International Human Rights Day with radio programs, booklets, and educational programs for audiences as diverse as prison administrators and city hall officials.

The Federal Council of Constitutional Inquiry invited the Ethiopian Lawyers' Association to provide a legal opinion and participate as *amicus curie* on the postponement of the national elections, which were supposed to take place in August 2020. CSOs such as the Ethiopian Lawyers' Association, Consortium of Ethiopian Rights Organizations, Lawyers for Human Rights, and Ethiopian Human Rights Council played an important advocacy role during the revision of the Criminal Procedure Code by providing comments from a human rights perspective, including obligations under international human rights treaties.

Despite such varied advocacy in 2020, the CSO sector, and especially regional organizations, still lacked the skills and knowledge required for sustainable and effective advocacy. For example, the engagement of CSOs with government institutions is not institutionalized and depends mainly on personal relationships. In 2020, CSOs provided input on the ACSO's ten-year strategic plan and participated in the preparation of various ACSO directives but did not push forward the draft National Civic Engagement Policy.



SERVICE PROVISION: 4.6



CSOs' service provision was slightly stronger in 2020 as they played a critical role in mobilizing resources and services to combat COVID-19 and address other emergency situations, including flooding, the locust infestation, and internal conflicts. These pressing emergency situations forced many organizations to divert their funding to meet the immediate needs of affected communities.

CSOs provide services mainly in areas such as health care, education, agriculture, livelihoods, and water and sanitation. Many CSOs were obliged to redesign their service-provision programs to address the pandemic in 2020. For example, the 130 local organizations supported by CSSP2 were instructed to divert or restructure their activities to address the pandemic.

Most CSOs identify the needs of the communities they serve through previous studies or needs assessments. Individual CSOs collect information to make sure their contributions meet local needs but make no attempt to produce aggregate data at the country level. In 2020, the more enabling legal environment allowed the Ethiopian Human Rights Council, Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association, and other previously oppressed CSOs to open more branch offices across the country to offer legal aid services to the public.

CSOs are legally required to provide their services without discrimination.

Professional associations such as the Ethiopian Lawyers' Association, Ethiopian Economic Association, and Ethiopian Public Health Association provide services to audiences beyond their members. The CSO law encourages professional associations to serve the nation as a whole rather than only their members.

Almost all CSOs provide their services for free and sometimes even pay per diem and allowances to participants. CSOs are allowed to engage in business activities, but only a few organizations do so. For example, Setaweet, a feminist CSO, offers consultancy services focused mainly on gender-related research.

The government is keen to work in partnership with CSOs on service-delivery projects. During a meeting with CSO representatives in December, the prime minister acknowledged the importance of a vibrant non-partisan civil society in democratizing the country. In addition, the ACSO worked closely with CSOs to involve them in the pandemic response.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.3

The infrastructure supporting CSOs improved slightly in 2020 as local grantmaking increased and cooperation in the sector expanded.

The CSRC, which was established in 2019, played an important role in providing support to CSOs, including office space, training, and shared human resources. Since the center was still new in 2020, it had limited capacity and was unable to meet the large demand for such services. Network organizations such as CCRDA and the Consortium of Ethiopian Human Rights Organizations (CEHRO) also served as good sources of information and capacity building. A local CSO resource center, the Resource Center for Civil Society Group Association, operated in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region.

CSSP2 serves as an intermediary support program and channels funding from the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, and Ireland to local CSOs. CSSP2 also provides capacity building. The EU's Civil Society Fund III and the multi-donor-funded Ethiopian Social Accountability Program continued to provide financial support, technical assistance, and training to CSOs in 2020. The Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund mobilizes funds from Ethiopians living abroad and in 2020 supported five development projects proposed by CSOs.

More than fifty networks bring together CSOs on the basis of geography or area of interest. Cooperation within the sector improved in 2020 with the establishment of several new groups. The CSO Council was formed to serve as the apex body representing the interests of the sector and promoting self-regulation. In August 2020, the EHRC launched a new platform to coordinate CSOs and established a coalition to engage in voter education for the upcoming national elections. There are complaints that some network organizations are beginning to compete with their members by engaging directly in project implementation, even though this is not among their stated purposes and in fact is against the law.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN ETHIOPIA



In 2020, training was available in areas such as policy advocacy, media engagement, and digital security. Donor programs offered some training, mentoring, and technical assistance. For example, in January and February 2020, CSSP2 provided training to more than 130 CSOs on policy advocacy, outcome mapping, and a human rights-based approach to development. A training center specifically for CSOs does not exist, but organizations focused on capacity building, such as CSRC and CEHRO, are beginning to emerge. Pro-Just Research and Training Center developed training materials on CSO governance and rights-based approaches with the financial support of the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa. Some universities provide training on project management. The pandemic limited in-person training, but some training was provided virtually in 2020. For example, the CSRC organized various virtual trainings, mainly on the impact of COVID-19. In October, the ACSO signed a memorandum of understanding with the Society of Human Resources Management in Ethiopia for a study with recommendations to strengthen professional associations.

CSOs' partnerships with other sectors continued to develop in 2020. The ACSO and CSOs enjoyed a productive relationship, as seen in various joint initiatives during the year. For example, the agency collaborated with CSOs on capacity-building initiatives and events such as Human Rights Day. ACSO officials attend and speak at events organized by CSOs, and ACSO and CSO representatives attended a training in Turkey, organized by Farkmaker International, to learn about the ways in which CSOs and the Turkish oversight body work with mutual respect and shared goals. Annual or biannual government-CSO forums are active at the regional level and serve as effective mechanisms for addressing concerns or sharing experiences.

Only a few local CSOs effectively partnered with the private sector in 2020. Mekedonia and other local CSOs that work with the elderly, people with disabilities, and children have good relationships with businesses and managed to mobilize resources from them to support their work. CSOs' collaboration with media still needs development.

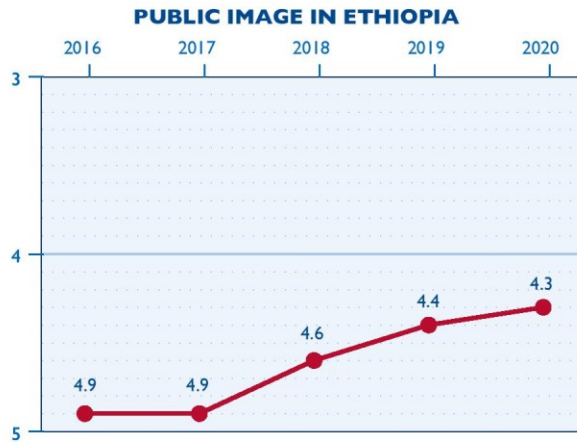
PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.3

CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020 as CSOs' ability to engage regularly with the media improved. The perception of CSOs by other stakeholders, such as the government and political parties, was also more positive.

Media interest in covering CSOs, including their involvement in contentious political issues, increased in 2020. Media such as Fana Broadcasting Corporation and Walta TV, which are owned by the ruling party and used to issue propaganda against CSOs, made a complete turn-around and covered CSOs' activities—in particular, their positive role in the country's development—constructively. The media also began to consider CSOs as good sources of expert opinion and played an important role in popularizing the CSO Proclamation.

Public perceptions of CSOs were unchanged in 2020. A significant segment of the public seems to see CSOs as self-serving institutions or sources of wealth. Some people criticize CSOs for their inexperience in dealing with crisis situations and their failure to mediate or express concern for communities affected by internal conflict. Other people view CSOs as contributing to the well-being of their communities.

The government's perception of CSOs continued to improve significantly in 2020. At a September government-CSO forum, both sides stressed the need to strengthen CSOs' ability to support democratic governance and the



social media to promote their activities increased in 2020. The number of CSOs engaging in awareness-raising on various issues through mainstream media is on the rise.

Only a few CSOs publish their annual financial and activity reports. One of the objectives of the CSO Council is to strengthen CSO self-regulation by embracing a code of conduct. In 2020, CSO representatives and the ACSO drafted directives that are expected to be adopted by the council in 2021.

country's development. In December 2020, the prime minister held discussions with political parties and CSOs on the elections scheduled for mid-2021. The discussions were preceded by a presentation of the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, including CSOs.

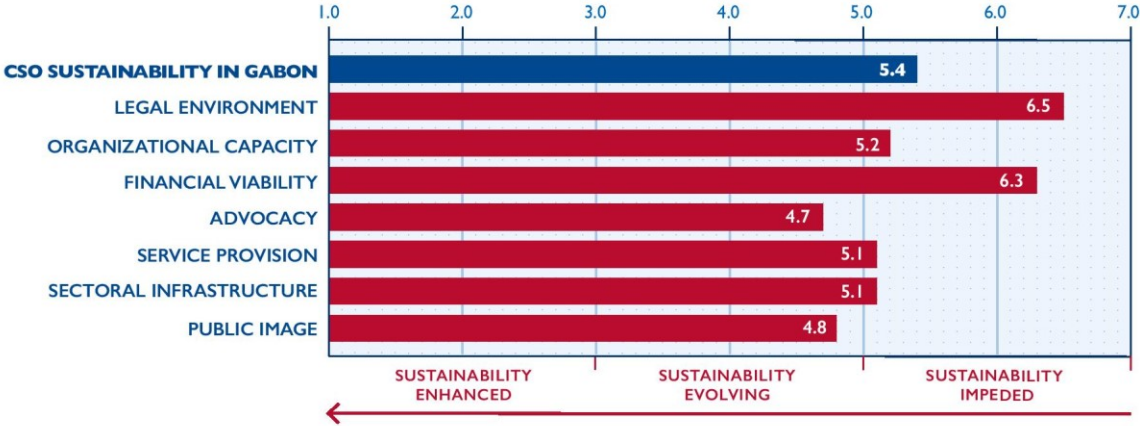
The private sector tends to view CSOs, especially international organizations, mainly as sources of income.

Despite their improved media coverage in 2020, CSOs do not promote themselves through the media or recognize the value of working with the media on public relations. No formal platform exists to bring media and CSOs together to share experiences. In view of this challenge, CSSP2 provided training to CSOs on working with media in December 2020. A similar training was provided by CEHRO in December 2020. CSOs' use of

GABON

Capital: Libreville
Population: 2,284,912
GDP per capita (PPP): \$14,950
Human Development Index: High (0.703)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (22/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.4



The COVID-19 virus was first detected in Gabon in March 2020. The government immediately declared a state of health emergency and introduced a response strategy that included widespread testing, the banning of gatherings of more than ten people, and the closure of schools, restaurants, and houses of worship. The state of health emergency was extended several times. The Gabonese people initially understood the need for these measures but later criticized their efficacy in controlling the spread of the virus. Many people believed that the government overestimated the number of cases to receive more international aid, which included \$9 million in financing from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and \$300 million from the International Monetary Fund’s Rapid Financing Instrument. Public dissatisfaction with the availability of social assistance was widespread during the year. By the end of 2020, Gabon had reported fewer than fifteen deaths from COVID-19.

President Ali Bongo Ondimba’s fragile health since suffering a stroke in 2018 prompted the parliament to revise constitutional provisions regarding interim authority in the event of a power vacuum. The amendments, which the parliament adopted in December 2020, provide for interim leadership by the presidents of the two chambers of parliament and the minister of defense. The parliament also voted to repeal provisions of the Criminal Code criminalizing homosexuality. For the first time in Gabon’s history, the president assigned a woman, Rose Ossouka Raponda, to serve as prime minister.

The country’s economic activity slowed down in 2020 as the pandemic took hold. According to the African Development Bank, Gabon’s real gross domestic product shrank by 2.7 percent, mainly because the country’s production of oil, its chief export, dropped at the same time that prices for oil sank on the world market.

The overall sustainability of Gabonese CSOs did not change in 2020. The legal environment deteriorated moderately with the adoption of a draft decree that could strengthen repressive measures against leaders of CSOs that receive foreign funding and amendments to the Criminal Code that criminalize organizing and participating in a prohibited demonstration. Service provision shrank slightly as pandemic-related restrictions made it difficult for CSOs to deploy in the field and organize activities for large numbers of beneficiaries. On the other hand, the sector’s public image improved slightly as CSOs enjoyed heightened visibility thanks to their help with the pandemic. CSOs’ organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, and sectoral infrastructure did not change.

There is no centralized database of CSOs in Gabon, making it difficult to determine the exact number of organizations. The last census, compiled in 2017 by the Gabonese Network of Organizations and Projects (Réseau des organisations et des projets associatifs du Gabon, ROPAGA), recorded 1,750 associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 6.5



The legal environment for Gabonese CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020 with the adoption of a draft decree that could strengthen repressive measures against the leaders of CSOs that receive foreign funding and amendments to the Criminal Code that impose prison sentences or fines for organizing and participating in prohibited demonstrations.

Freedom of expression, association, and assembly are constitutionally guaranteed. Under Laws 35/62, 18/92, and 3/94, which govern the creation and operation of associations, public-sector unions, and private-sector unions, respectively, all CSOs must register to operate. Registration procedures for the three types of CSOs are simple and low cost. Associations apply to the Ministry of the Interior and receive provisional receipts, which are

valid for three months while the ministry investigates the moral standards of the founders and, if it deems necessary, obtains assessments of organizational documents, activities, and compliance with relevant laws from other ministries. CSOs often operate on provisional receipts for much longer than three months. Unions register by submitting applications with their bylaws and names of board members to the mayor's office in the towns in which their head offices are located. They then receive registration receipts that allow them to operate. Associations with legal status may apply for public benefit status, which enables them to access certain types of government funding granted through sectoral ministries.

CSOs are not required to submit activity reports to the government. Associations may be dissolved by presidential decree. CSOs may freely sue and appeal court and government decisions that they consider unfavorable.

Although state harassment of CSOs continued in 2020, the intimidation, arrest, and beating of members of civil society and the repression of public demonstrations were less frequent than in previous years. Social-distancing restrictions imposed under the state of health emergency limited the right to freedom of assembly by banning gatherings of more than ten people, and the public and CSOs generally complied with the ban. However, a new set of legal reforms threatened to limit CSOs' activities. In August, as part of its fight against corruption, the embezzlement of public funds, and money laundering, the Council of Ministers adopted a draft decree proposed by the Ministry of the Interior that could strengthen repressive measures against leaders of CSOs and associations that receive foreign funding. CSOs view the decree as an attempt to exert control over foreign funding and, potentially, as a restriction of CSOs' access to funding. The decree does not specify the exact measures to be implemented. At the end of the year, it was unclear whether the draft decree had been signed by the country's president. In another threat to civil society, in June, the parliament passed Law 006/2020 amending the Criminal Code, Law 042/2018 of 2019. The new law imposes a prison sentence of up to six months or a fine of up to XAF 50 million (approximately \$85,000) for organizing and participating in a prohibited public demonstration.

The laws governing CSOs do not provide for their taxation. Law 027/2008 of January 22, 2020, on the General Tax Code provides simplified procedures that allow CSOs to benefit from exemptions from value-added tax on goods purchased for their operations and taxes on grants and donations. Corporate donors to CSOs benefit from tax deductions as long as they can prove that the funded activities are in the public interest. Individual donors are not eligible for tax deductions.

The law does not allow CSOs to collect revenues from the sale of goods and services. However, in practice, many organizations conduct income-generating activities and allocate most of their revenues to operating expenses. The Public Procurement Code allows CSOs to compete for public contracts.

Gabonese CSOs have access to the services of lawyers located mainly in large cities, such as Libreville, Port-Gentil, and Franceville. But their fees tend to be high, and few organizations needing legal advice have the means to pay for attorneys.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.2

Gabonese CSOs' organizational capacity was unchanged in 2020.

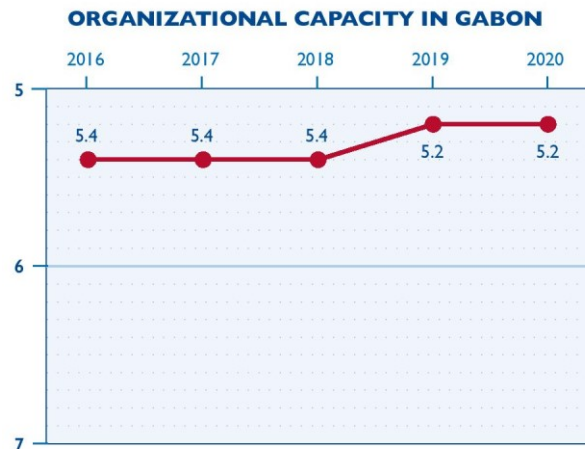
Certain types of organizations, such as trade unions and professional associations, have clearly identified members and target beneficiaries, such as workers and artisans. Women, orphans, and people living with HIV/AIDS are also often beneficiaries. CSOs use various means to identify their target groups, including the results of field surveys, the impact of current events, and needs expressed by communities themselves. For example, in October 2020, citizens in the Etimboué Department affected by an environmental disaster caused by Perenco, an international oil company, sounded an emergency alert, which spurred CSOs to provide multi-faceted support, including environmental assessments and advocacy. Although many CSOs found it difficult to mobilize their members in 2020, some organizations provided targeted support to help their members during the pandemic. The Be Nya Mam Be Ye Bikondom Association, for example, distributed food and health kits to 500 members in Bikondom District in Gabon's northern region. Besides helping individuals in need, this activity increased the number of applications for membership in the organization.

CSOs' missions are clearly stated in their founding documents, statutes, and internal regulations. However, the scarcity of funding drives many CSOs away from their main objectives to perform other activities for which funding is available. In 2020, many Gabonese CSOs found it hard to implement their action plans because of the pandemic. Some organizations deviated from planned activities to prioritize solidarity initiatives and joint actions in the fight against COVID-19. For example, Woman, Environment, Health, and Education (Femme, environnement, santé et éducation, FENSED) suspended its action plan temporarily to distribute food to families whose financial situations had declined because of the pandemic. CSOs rely on a variety of metrics to measure the results of their work, including impact indicators, evaluation reports, and audits.

CSOs continued to show two main variations in internal structures in 2020. A small number of organizations have clearly established governance structures and governing bodies that reliably participate in decision-making processes. In these organizations, a technical or management team realizes the vision and strategic direction defined by the governing bodies. But the majority of organizations do not have proactive boards or observe good governance practices, such as conducting audits or producing activity reports with financial information. They lack the resources to engage in strategic planning or develop procedural manuals, including hiring professionals to prepare these documents. Instead, their management is in the hands of the executive director, who usually reports to the general assembly.

Gabonese CSOs continued to find it hard to retain qualified staff in 2020. A few well-established organizations with project funding from international donors were able to maintain salaried employees and advertise for specific positions. Other organizations had insufficient funding to cover operating expenses, much less hire or maintain a team of diverse and qualified professionals. These organizations often sought the support of volunteers, most of whom were looking for jobs. Many CSOs relied on volunteers to implement pandemic-related activities, particularly the distribution of food and health kits. Employment contracts and the payment of social security contributions are not a standard practice among CSOs. Most organizations rely on training by international experts to develop their employees' skills. For example, in 2020, the local office of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) brought two international consultants to Gabon to build the strategic and operational capacity of eight local organizations.

Internet usage is growing quickly in Gabon. According to the Electronic Communication and Postal Regulatory Authority, more than 1.9 million people, or about 85 percent of the country's population, had access to the internet in 2020. In major and second-tier cities, CSOs access the internet easily via cell phones. Many organizations use social networks such as Facebook to promote their activities and WhatsApp for internal



communications. When meetings of more than ten people were prohibited during the lockdown, CSOs developed new approaches to work, such as holding meetings and training sessions on Zoom, Bluejeans, and other online platforms.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.3



CSOs' financial viability did not change in 2020, and access to funding remained a major challenge facing the sector.

The most important sources of funding for CSOs continued to be multilateral institutions, such as the European Union (EU), United Nations Development Programme, and International Organization of La Francophonie. Individual governments, such as those of the United Kingdom and the United States; private foundations, such as Maison du Monde and Franklina; and international CSOs, such as WWF, Act Together for Human Rights (Agir ensemble pour les droits de l'homme, AEDH) and Turn the Page (Tournons la page), also provided funding.

Several new funding opportunities arose in 2020. In the framework of the Central African Forest Initiative, the French Development Agency funded the development of a participatory mapping of forested land use by the platform Gabon, My Land, My Right (Gabon, ma terre, mon droit, GMTMD) and the Network of CSOs for the Green Economy in Central Africa (Réseau des organisations de la société civile pour l'économie verte en Afrique centrale, ROSCEVAC). In December, the EU launched calls for proposals for the Supporting and Strengthening CSOs in Gabon project to help civil society take part in democratic governance. Together with the Azobe program, which was launched in 2019 to encourage sustainable development, EU projects have a combined budget estimated at more than EUR 1.3 million (approximately \$1.5 million). In addition, many organizations received funding to help with the pandemic response. For example, the Environmental Investigation Agency gave Brainforest supplemental funding of \$8,400 to organize an awareness campaign to help forest communities face COVID-19.

Despite this increase in funding, particularly from the EU, many CSOs continued to experience funding shortages in 2020. Changes in donors' priorities and their temporary suspension of funding because of the pandemic cut the financing for many organizations' traditional activities in areas such as health care and legal and social support services. For example, funding for the Support to Improve the Contribution of Independent Observers in the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment project, which is implemented by Brainforest in partnership with Environmental Investigation Agency, was suspended in March because project activities could not be implemented during the pandemic.

Diverse domestic sources of funding are available to CSOs but are generally insufficient to support their operations. The criteria for government grants and donations are unclear, and they are allocated in a non-transparent manner, usually to organizations such as the Sylvia Bongo Foundation and National Support Center for Women's Organization Network–Gabon (Centre d'appui aux réseaux des organisations de femmes du Gabon, CENAF–Gabon). Contracts with companies for service provision are usually short term. CSOs benefit from corporate social responsibility programs primarily by requesting support or partnerships.

CSOs consider resource mobilization a priority and use all legal means to obtain financial support from their communities and target groups. Many CSOs depend on membership fees as their primary source of funding, although it is rarely sufficient to cover all costs. In 2020, new digital technologies helped some organizations mobilize resources. For example, in June, the Gabonese Association of Musicians and Performers (Association gabonaise des artistes, musiciens, et interprètes, AGAMI) conducted an online fundraising campaign to support Gabonese artists who were struggling financially because of the pandemic. In October 2020, Zoe Action used the internet to organize a collection of school materials for seventy-seven children affected by sickle-cell anemia.

Some CSOs generate income from services provided to companies and other users. For example, from January to March 2020, Educaf offered accelerated computer training at affordable costs to more than 100 people under the Africa Numérique program.

The majority of Gabonese CSOs have basic financial management systems. CSOs receiving foreign funds or state subsidies must set up more sophisticated systems, including external audits and financial management procedures overseen by trained accountants. Project audits and evaluations are still not affordable for many CSOs.

ADVOCACY: 4.7

The capacity of CSOs to influence government decision making was unchanged in 2020. Several CSO advocacy initiatives were not well received by the government, and channels of direct communication between the government and CSOs weakened. But these challenges were offset by the strong stance that CSOs took against corruption.

Several multi-party consultative frameworks bring together the government, private sector, and civil society in Gabon. These include the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Interest Group and the Tripartite Group on the Reform of the Labor Code. From March to September 2020, the National Interpretation Working Group on the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, which includes CSOs among its members, continued to work via Zoom on updating Gabon's national standard to meet international benchmarks.



But CSOs were left out of other decision-making processes. In March 2020, several CSOs, led by the Network of Free Civil Society Organizations for Good Governance in Gabon (Réseau des organisations libres de la société civile du Gabon, ROLBG), expressed outrage over civil society's lack of involvement in the steering committee of the national strategy to combat COVID-19. CSOs were eventually included in a supervisory committee of the national food bank project providing support to the public during the pandemic. In April 2020, the Gathering of Vital Forces of the Nation (Rassemblement des forces vives de la nation) unsuccessfully called for the establishment of a citizens' council to monitor the government's management of the pandemic response, including funding, arguing that citizen control of public action is guaranteed by the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council, National Human Rights Commission, public parliamentary hearings, and other mechanisms. CSOs mobilized public opinion on these issues using online platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp.

Civil society gave a strong signal of its intention to fight corruption and the embezzlement of public funds in 2020 by taking legal action against the new coordinator of presidential affairs, who is the son of the president. After a review of his real-estate assets identified properties apparently built with public funds, four CSOs—Enough is Enough (Ça suffit comme ça), Save the Republic (Sauvons la république), Dynamic Unity (Dynamique unitaire), and ROLBG—filed a complaint against him in early January. On February 14, 2020, the court rejected the complaint.

Among CSOs' other advocacy campaigns in 2020, Keva Initiatives, Citizen Actions for Local Development (Actions citoyennes pour le développement local, ACDL), Plurméa, Center of Actions for Sustainable Development and the Environment (Centre d'actions pour le développement durable et l'environnement, CADDE), and Brainforest sought to protect the mangroves of Cape Estérias. These and other CSOs involved in this effort shared videos, photos, tweets, and livestreams on Facebook and Twitter, which attracted the attention of the international press as well as national media such as Gabon Media Time, Gabon Review, and The Union. Ruling No. 35 of October 6, 2020, issued by the minister of water and forests, revised the list of projects subject to mandatory environmental impact studies to include those conducted in mangrove areas. Brainforest also continued to advocate for better management of conflicts between humans and animals, sometimes combining its advocacy with practical measures

such as distribution of an organic animal repellent to keep elephants away from community agricultural fields, in cooperation with Wild Aid.

Other CSO advocacy in 2020 included GMTMD's efforts to revise the methodology of participatory mapping to be used in developing a national plan for land allocation. In addition, the Gabon Conference of Free Trade Unions (Confédération gabonaise des syndicats libres, CGSL) and National Petroleum Employees Organization (Organisation nationale des employés du pétrole, ONEP) contributed to reforming the Labor Code.

Although CSOs are comfortable with the concept of lobbying, they rarely work directly with the parliament to influence legislation. In 2020, the government took advantage of the state of health emergency and CSOs' restricted engagement to develop or adopt legislation with controversial content, such as the decree proposed by the Ministry of the Interior to strengthen repressive measures against organizations receiving foreign funding. But in a significant lobbying success in 2020, a campaign initiated by the Fight against Ritual Crimes Association in 2005 finally led to the inclusion in the new Criminal Code of provisions allowing the punishment of the perpetrators and accomplices of crimes involving the removal of human organs.

CSOs are aware that a more favorable legal framework can improve their effectiveness. In 2020, they focused on protesting the draft decree that threatens to control their sources of funding. Their efforts took the form of online petitions, statements to the press, and position papers, since demonstrations were banned during the pandemic.

SERVICE PROVISION: 5.1



The capacity of CSOs to deliver goods and services diminished slightly in 2020. Pandemic-related restrictions, including the partial and total confinement of greater Libreville, where more than 65 percent of Gabon's CSOs are located, and the ban on gatherings of more than ten people, made it difficult for CSOs to deploy in the field and organize activities to benefit large numbers of beneficiaries.

Gabonese CSOs offer an array of basic social services, such as health care, education, and social care for the vulnerable. Other services include capacity building, awareness raising, legal assistance, and support for women's empowerment. Although the pandemic reduced CSOs' scope of action in 2020, some organizations continued to provide the services reflected in their

action plans. For example, in March 2020, Omanda conducted an awareness-raising event focused on women's rights, and in November, Brainforest trained environmentalists in Ngounié on local advocacy. Initiatives-Development-Research-Consulting (Initiatives-développement-recherche-conseils, IDRC)-Africa, in partnership with Wabouna, offered theoretical and practical training in sustainable agriculture as part of its 1,000 Agripreneurs in the Making program. But many organizations redirected their efforts from their usual activities to help the government fight the virus. For example, the Gabonese Association to Fight against Endometriosis and Diseases Potentially Causing Infertility (Association gabonaise de lutte contre l'endométriose et les maladies potentiellement infertilisantes, ENDOFI) organized a solidarity campaign to distribute food kits to health-care personnel at two hospitals in Libreville as well as orphans at the Friends of Soduco Center. CSOs such as the Group for Community Alternatives (Groupe pour l'alternative communautaires) in Libreville, Akanda, and Owendo distributed soap, masks, and sanitizing gel and raised public awareness of the need to comply with prevention measures.

The goods and services provided by CSOs generally meet the needs and priorities of target populations. CSOs usually identify needs through field surveys, study reports, project evaluations, alerts and requests from beneficiary communities, and even current events, as in the case of the pandemic. In 2020, the Foundation for Assistance and Community Development (Fondation pour l'assistance et le développement communautaire, FADEC) conducted an awareness-raising campaign for the One Gabonese, One Birth Certificate: Legal Support for Stateless Children project. Woman Arise (Femme lève-toi) offered sensitization on human rights to women victims of violence. Maisons Précaires helped eleven disadvantaged families acquire decent housing. GMTMD and ROSCEVAC were

selected to carry out a mapping of forested land use, which will allow rural communities to secure usage rights to land, even though their right to land ownership is not systematically acknowledged. To document the extent to which they meet the needs of local communities, CSOs often produce activity reports, studies, evaluations, and even illustrative videos.

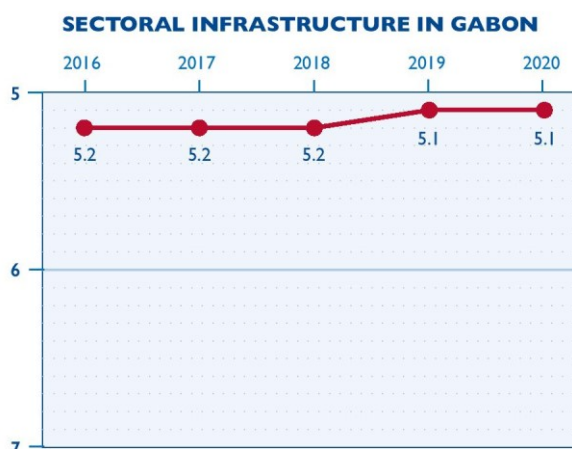
CSOs provide goods and services on a non-discriminatory basis to their members and other groups, including government, businesses, universities, schools, other CSOs, and people in vulnerable situations. CSOs usually provide goods and services free of charge. But it is not uncommon for CSOs to charge for their services, with fees based on users' ability to pay, which is usually minimal compared to the actual cost of the services. CSOs that contract to provide technical expertise to the government, the private sector, and international CSOs usually charge rates specified in calls for proposals. For example, ROSCEVAC generated income by advising Olam International, a palm-oil corporation, on its program offering support and capacity building to local communities in Ngounié.

Public authorities often invite CSOs to take part in participatory consultative frameworks on specific topics, because they recognize the value of CSOs' expertise and the trusting relationships that CSOs have developed with their communities.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.1

The sectoral infrastructure for CSOs did not change in 2020.

Several resource centers and intermediary support organizations (ISOs) continued to support Gabonese CSOs in 2020. The Civil Society House offered logistical support, office space, internet access, and technical support, such as help writing bylaws, internal regulations, procedural manuals, and other governance tools, for which it charged a small monthly fee. The Azobé Center offered financial and technical assistance. Foundations attached to the Bongo family provide targeted support to CSOs, usually in the form of capacity building and small-scale funding. For example, in December 2020, the Sylvia Bongo Foundation offered training on gender-based violence to women's rights associations.



It is difficult to assess how much funding the larger Gabonese foundations make available to CSOs. The Sylvia Bongo Foundation funds CSOs but in 2020 retargeted funding from CSOs to the COVID-19 Solidarity Program.

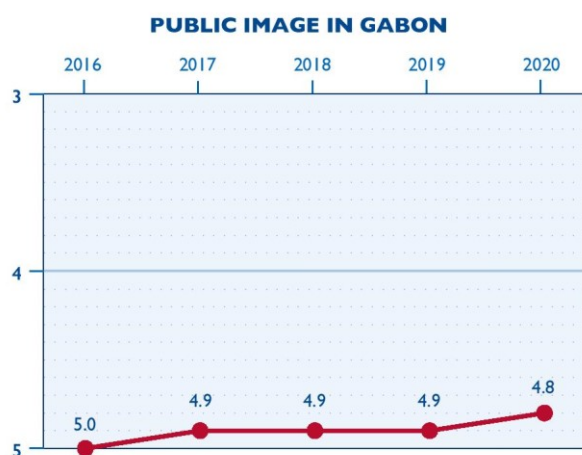
Several networks and platforms facilitate information sharing and joint activities among CSOs working in similar areas, such as health care, education, the environment, or the needs of indigenous peoples. Prominent networks include the Observatory for Women's Rights and Gender (Observatoire des droits de la femme et de la parité, ODEFPA), National Youth Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health (Réseau national des jeunes pour les questions de santé sexuelle et de la reproduction, RENAPS/AJ), and GAC. These platforms are often exemplary in their implementation of joint social actions and advocacy campaigns.

Gabonese CSOs usually have access to a wide range of training offered by local providers in areas ranging from strategic planning to financial management to advocacy. CSOs sometimes also benefit from training offered by international experts hosted by international organizations. Training is usually offered in the capital city, Libreville. In normal years, training opportunities meet the needs of local CSOs, although smaller organizations would benefit from more training on strategic planning and the design of strategic documents. However, in 2020, relatively little training, including online training, was offered to CSOs because of the pandemic. In one of the few in-person training events during the year, eight local CSOs working on a project about logging and palm-oil production received strategic and operational capacity building from WWF in November.

The expertise and community-based approaches of CSOs have improved their relationships with other sectors in recent years. Formal partnerships include the collaboration outlined in an agreement between the Ministry of

Agriculture, Sotrader, and IDRC–Africa to establish the Bolokoboué Seed Plantation in northern Libreville. But most cooperation is informal. For example, a tripartite group composed of government, business, and civil society representatives worked on reforming the Labor Code in 2020.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.8



CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020. CSOs' contributions to the fight against COVID-19, their participation in the debate on the government's management of the crisis, and their mobilization on various legal reforms and environmental concerns raised the sector's visibility and improved its reputation, especially with the public.

The media played an important role in heightening CSOs' public presence in 2020. The media is generally aware of civil society's mission and enhances CSOs' image by covering their activities and leaders. To obtain media coverage, CSOs must sometimes pay a small fee of between \$15 and \$35. Coverage is also often a function of the relationship that CSOs have established with specific media outlets.

In a country in which 78 percent of the people do not have confidence in the parliament, according to Afrobarometer, the proactive nature of CSOs generates considerable public support. For example, the public appreciates civil society's role in ensuring government oversight. During the pandemic in 2020, CSOs' help to communities in precarious situations was especially valued. Despite or because of these positive perceptions, the Gabonese people constantly ask CSOs to expand their activities.

The government and the private sector continued to have a positive opinion of CSOs that were supportive of their activities.

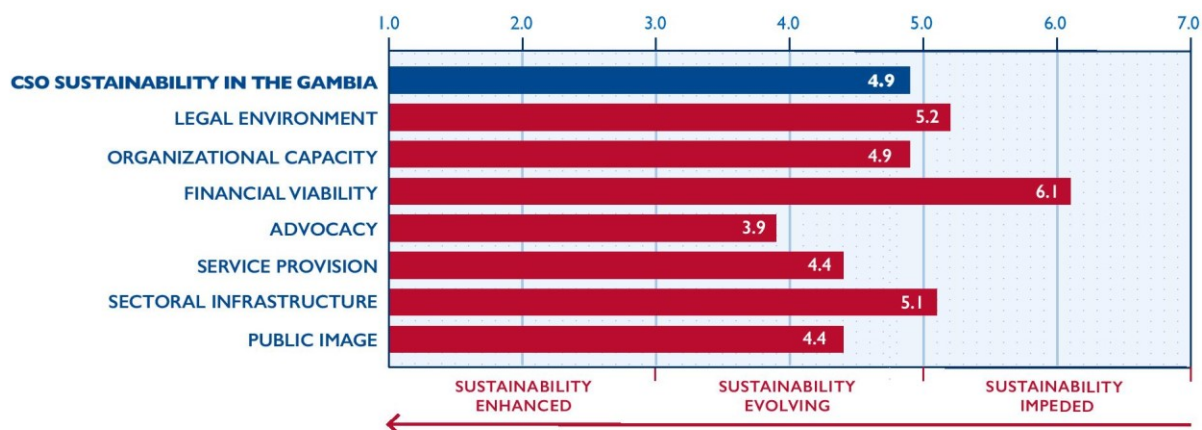
In the absence of funding for communications plans and experts, Gabonese CSOs typically rely on traditional print and broadcast media and social networks run by community managers to inform the public about their activities. For example, on International Women's Day in March, Omanda organized a press conference on women's rights. CSOs relied especially heavily on social media to organize meetings, share information, and advocate in 2020. For example, in June 2020, youth leaders from Gabonese and African CSOs organized a webinar on the contribution of African youth to preparations for the post-pandemic period.

Gabonese CSOs do not have codes of ethics, but ethical issues are usually addressed in their internal regulations and procedural manuals. The law does not require CSOs to publish annual reports, and only organizations with public benefit status or receiving foreign aid are subject to reporting requirements. CSOs that receive funds from international sources ensure transparency by submitting evidence of sound administrative, technical, and financial management to their technical and financial partners. A small number of CSOs make their annual activity reports available to the public online, via email, or in hard copy.

THE GAMBIA

Capital: Banjul
 Population: 2,173,999
 GDP per capita (PPP): \$2,600
 Human Development Index: Low (0.466)
 Freedom in the World: Partly Free (46/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.9



The year 2020 was eventful for Gambian civil society and included notable successes and setbacks.

In late 2019, President Adama Barrow seemed determined to ignore his campaign promise to serve a transitional term of only three years, which was due to expire in 2020. A massive protest organized by the Three Years Jotna (Three Years Is Enough) movement in January 2020 sought to force the president to honor his promise. After the protest, the government banned Three Years Jotna as a “subversive, violent, and illegal movement,” closed two independent radio stations, and arrested their journalists along with scores of protesters. Although the radio stations eventually re-opened, and the journalists were released without charges, Three Years Jotna remained banned. The eight leaders of the movement were charged with unlawful assembly and after about two weeks in detention were set free by the court in early February. But as they left the courtroom, they were immediately re-arrested by the police, which claimed later that they had found new evidence. New charges including rioting were still pending at the end of the year. In September 2020, the parliament voted down a draft constitution that would have imposed a two-term limit on the presidency and limited any one person from serving as president for more than ten years. The parliament’s rejection of the new constitution cleared the way for President Barrow to run again in 2021 and serve an unlimited number of terms.

The first case of COVID-19 was registered in The Gambia on March 17. The president declared a state of public emergency, which restricted public gatherings and movement and made social distancing and face masks mandatory. These restrictions were selectively enforced, with some groups able to hold public events, such as prayers, political meetings, and musical concerts, while other groups were denied the right to protest. In May, the government provided food relief to populations affected by the pandemic. CSOs as well as businesses, political parties, and individuals also carried out their own food distribution activities and provided other pandemic-related services, including awareness-raising, which sought to reverse the high level of public skepticism about the virus. Through their advocacy and awareness-raising activities, CSOs also acted as a major voice on issues of increasing public concern during the pandemic, such as corruption, the abuse of office, and inefficient service delivery.

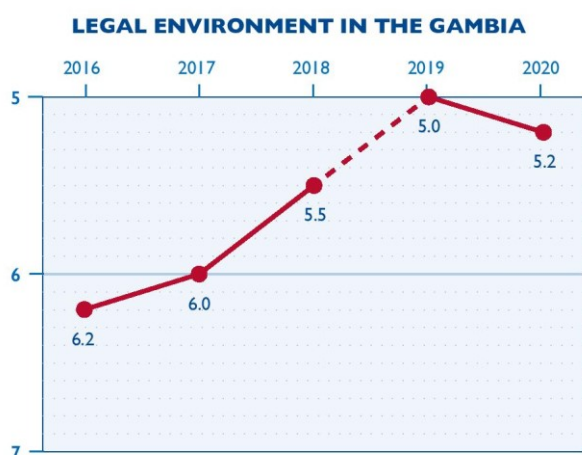
The pandemic inflicted huge damage on The Gambia’s economy. Many businesses, especially in the hotel, restaurant, and entertainment industries, closed for much of the year. The informal sector, which is the largest employer in The Gambia, shrank as public life dwindled. While the government eventually offered financial bailouts to a few businesses, such as hotels and media houses, some workers claimed they did not benefit. Informal businesses and individuals did not receive financial relief.

The overall sustainability of Gambian CSOs did not change in 2020. CSOs’ organizational capacity improved as many organizations increased their use of internet-based technology. Advocacy improved significantly as CSOs

scored several major successes, including the drafting and presentation to the National Assembly of an access to information bill. Service provision was moderately stronger as CSOs took the lead as early responders to the pandemic. The legal environment deteriorated moderately as the government disrupted protests, arrested and prosecuted civil society activists, and closed radio stations. CSOs' financial viability was slightly weaker in 2020, mainly because of their lack of skill at fundraising and limited opportunities to raise funds domestically. CSOs' sectoral infrastructure and public image were unchanged.

The total number of CSOs in The Gambia is unknown. TANGO had 80 registered members, while the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Affairs Agency reported 125 registered NGOs in 2020.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.2¹



The legal environment for CSOs in The Gambia deteriorated moderately in 2020 with the government's disruptions of protests, arrest and prosecution of civil society activists, and closure of radio stations.

The NGO Act of 2009 specifies the role of CSOs and sets out norms and expectations for their operations. Under the Companies Act, CSOs register as charitable organizations with the Ministry of Justice. Legally registered CSOs that have been in operation for at least two years may register as NGOs with the NGO Affairs Agency in the Ministry of Regional Governments and Land. The NGO Act requires NGOs to re-register annually and authorizes the minister of the interior to remedy any NGO's breach of the act in unspecified ways. The NGO Act is accompanied by a code of conduct for

NGOs and a protocol of accord that specifies the responsibilities of NGOs, the government, and other stakeholders. Few organizations seek NGO status, since it offers no substantial incentives or benefits. No difficulty with or rejection of registration was reported in 2020.

Harassment of CSOs in 2020 included the arbitrary banning of the Three Years Jotna movement; the arrest and the weeks-long detention of its leaders, followed by their re-arrest; the closure of two radio stations; and the arrest of the stations' journalists. Although the right to freedom of assembly is guaranteed by the constitution, the Public Order Act 2009 requires organizers of protests and other public gatherings to obtain police authorization in advance. The inspector general of police repeatedly denied or severely limited CSOs' ability to protest in 2020, citing security concerns and pandemic-related restrictions. Many CSOs and activists perceived the constraint on protests to be politically motivated rather than legally justified, especially as they limited CSOs' ability to hold the government accountable.

By the end of 2020, the government had undertaken only minimal reform of laws introduced during the Jammeh dictatorship, despite the president's campaign promise to do so. This was especially true of laws relating to fundamental rights. For example, the highly restrictive Public Order Act was never placed before the parliament for review. The parliament also failed to review the NGO Act or consider the draft Data Protection and Privacy Policy and Strategy. Security-sector reforms remained largely undone. However, the Media Services Bill, which would tighten regulation of the media and impose onerous fees on digital broadcasters and news site, was withdrawn from consideration in 2020.

CSOs do not pay taxes on grants or revenue from the sale of products and services. CSOs are eligible for waivers on duties for materials and equipment imported for their activities. Expatriate employees of CSOs do not pay income tax in The Gambia, but local CSO employees do. Local donors to CSOs receive no tax deductions.

¹ The score for the legal environment was recalibrated from 5.5 in 2018 to 5.0 in 2019 to better reflect the situation in the country and align it with other scores in the region. The score does not reflect a change in the legal environment, which remained largely the same as in 2018.

CSOs may earn income from the sale of goods and services provided such income is reinvested in programs to expand service delivery. A few CSOs that provide services in fields such as health care and education can sometimes obtain government grants. CSOs may engage in fundraising activities and receive funds from foreign donors.

Adequate legal capacity to handle CSOs' legal matters is available in The Gambia. However, most CSOs do not retain lawyers, because their fees are usually too expensive.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.9

CSOs' organizational capacity improved slightly in 2020 as many organizations increased their use of internet-based technology.

Gambian CSOs, especially those that work in areas such as agriculture, health care, or youth empowerment, have strong relationships with their constituencies. For example, Action Aid International The Gambia (AAITG) and United Purpose (UP) worked closely with local farmers' associations in 2020. Activista, Peace Ambassadors, and National Youth Parliament have built strong, country-wide communities of young people who can be mobilized on specific issues, such as the new constitution or gender-based violence. With the expansion of political space at the end of the Jammeh dictatorship in 2016, CSOs can engage freely with their constituencies on a wide range of important topics. As part of its advocacy for justice and accountability, for example, The Gambia Center for Victims of Human Rights Violations meets with victims around the country to document their cases, while Peace Ambassadors raise awareness about peace building and human rights in local communities. Beneficiaries commonly take part in CSOs' activities by providing volunteer labor for self-help projects. While pandemic restrictions constrained many CSOs' ability to conduct in-person activities in 2020, their patchy enforcement allowed some organizations to continue to work in their communities. Several youth groups organized a caravan to travel around the country to encourage participation in the constitutional referendum. Other organizations relied mainly on online platforms to meet with constituents and other stakeholders.

CSOs must have constitutions to register. They usually also have mission and vision statements, which confer legitimacy and are useful in the search for funding. Most CSOs do not have the resources to regularly develop or review strategic plans. CSOs that have strategic plans find them useful for fundraising and adjust them periodically to reflect funding opportunities.

Most CSOs have defined management structures, although they may lack a full complement of staff because of limited funding. Many CSOs do not conduct regular general assemblies. Boards are generally unskilled, and given the lack of general assemblies, new board members are rarely elected. Most CSOs endeavor to meet donors' demands for transparent management processes, such as the production of activity and financial reports.

Bigger, more established CSOs, including the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), AAITG, UP, ChildFund (CF), and SOS, tend to have permanent, highly qualified paid staff who ensure professional operations. Smaller, local CSOs, such as Think Young Women, Activista, Peace Ambassadors, Female Lawyers Association–Gambia, and Team Gomsabopa, have few paid employees and depend largely on volunteers. Some CSOs had to reduce their staffs in 2020 because of funding declines during the pandemic. However, several of the new CSOs that proliferated in 2020, including Gambia Participates and Beakanyang, obtained project funding that enabled them to hire paid staff. Established organizations such the Gambia Press Union (GPU) were also able to hire additional employees. Many CSOs rely on volunteers and interns, who are usually university students or recent graduates.

Larger, more established CSOs are usually able to afford modern equipment, while smaller organizations are less well equipped because of funding constraints. Most CSOs recognize the importance of social media and have social



media accounts even if they do not use them regularly. CSOs continued to expand their use of technology in 2020. Many CSOs shifted to working online because of the pandemic, and they became adept at using platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. However, online work was not a viable alternative for organizations whose staff lacked laptops at home or live in areas with poor internet connectivity. Some organizations could not afford internet services, which are expensive in The Gambia. Several partners, such as the International Republican Institute (IRI) and Westminster Foundation for Democracy, reimbursed CSOs for the cost of using the internet for their meetings. Cybersecurity is not a major issue for most CSOs, since the threat level is perceived to be low, and people are generally not well informed about cybercrime.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.1



The financial viability of Gambian CSOs was slightly weaker in 2020, mainly because of CSOs' lack of skill at fundraising and limited opportunities to raise funds domestically.

Nearly all large CSOs rely almost entirely on foreign sources of funding, including private foundations such as the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, international bodies such as the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU), and the embassies of European countries, including France, the United Kingdom, Sweden, the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain. Unless they are large and well-established organizations, such as AAITG, UP, and CF, most local CSOs do not have the capacity to meet the financial management requirements of international donors, especially the UN and EU.

Donor funding levels were more or less stable during the pandemic. Existing donors maintained their presence, and some redirected funds from planned programs to pandemic relief. For example, the Embassy of France approved a request from the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations in The Gambia (TANGO) to divert funds from a human rights educational project to the provision of pandemic supplies such as face masks and hand sanitizers. The diversion was justified on the grounds that during the lockdowns, public gatherings were suspended, and planned workshops and community gatherings could not take place. In new grant awards, Gambia Participates, a youth-led organization, obtained funding from the Africa Transitional Justice Legacy Fund and IRI for an anti-corruption campaign, and GPU received funding from the UN Democracy Fund to train journalists to report accurately on the pandemic.

Local support for CSOs is limited. The government provides little funding to CSOs, except for occasional grants to organizations working in education, such as Future in Our Hands and the Education For All Campaign Network, or health care, such as the Gambia Family Planning Association (GFPA) and CIAM Public Health Research and Development Center. The government also channels international funding for certain kinds of projects to CSOs. For example, in 2020, the government supported health-care services from AAITG, GFPA, and the Health, Education, Population, and Development Organization with funding from the World Bank and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. The government did not make funding available to CSOs for pandemic-related activities. Businesses usually provide support directly to communities or government institutions rather than CSOs.

Organizations such as the Gambia Bees Association sometimes raise funds from the sale of products and services, but any income is insignificant because their prices are low. Community-based organizations sometimes obtain in-kind support such as labor. Social enterprises do not exist in The Gambia.

Fundraising is a challenge for Gambian CSOs, mainly because of their lack of skill and limited opportunities. Although the practice is not universal, membership-based organizations sometimes charge annual dues. For example, TANGO members are required to pay yearly membership fees, but members of the Network Against Gender-Based Violence are not. Organizations that charge dues often do not enforce payment, and members can

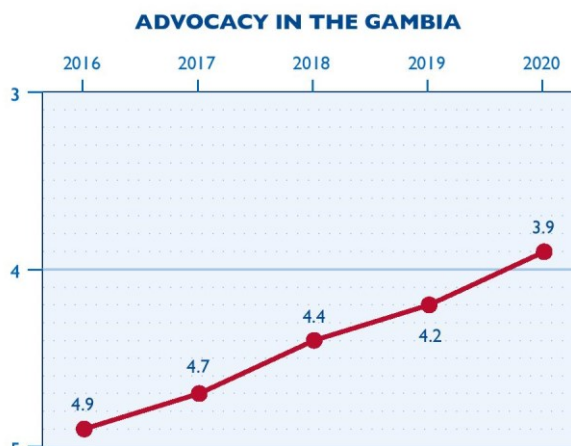
be in arrears for long periods. Fundraising events such as gala dinners are infrequent, and the practice of crowdfunding is almost non-existent.

Large CSOs, such as AAITG, UP, and CF, have proper financial management systems, including specialized staff, accountability procedures, and fully computerized operations. Smaller and local organizations usually have bank accounts and accountants but often lack standard internal controls. Donors usually stop funding CSOs that fail to comply with their financial management guidelines and in the past have sometimes asked for funds to be returned.

ADVOCACY: 3.9

CSO advocacy improved significantly in 2020 with several major successes, including the drafting and presentation to the National Assembly of an Access to Information Bill.

The working relationship between civil society and the government remained ambivalent in 2020. The relationship is usually cordial if focused on service provision. But the government remains wary of CSOs' involvement in governance issues, especially at the central level. Poor access to public information impedes the ability of CSOs to effectively monitor and track public policies and institutions. For example, CSOs do not obtain national budget estimates, reports from government studies or commissions, or government contracts in a timely manner, if at all. Most government institutions do not immediately post this type of information on their websites.



During the pandemic, CSOs became major voices on issues of public concern, especially corruption, the abuse of office, and inefficient service delivery. Through its Follow the Money initiative, for example, Gambia Participates exposed massive discrepancies in the government's use of and reporting on pandemic funds. Although a public outcry followed, the government did not take follow-up action. The Gambia Bar Association chided the president publicly for his repeated declarations of a state of emergency, calling them unconstitutional. Afterwards the president abandoned the practice and left it to the minister of health to issue targeted public-health regulations.

CSOs registered several major advocacy successes with lasting impact in 2020. TANGO and GPU led civil society's single-handed drafting of the Access to Information Bill, which they submitted to the minister of justice, who then placed it before the National Assembly for enactment in December. This is the first time that Gambian CSOs took the lead in drafting legislation, and they hope the bill will be passed in 2021. The Three Years Jotna movement exerted tremendous pressure on the president to uphold his campaign promise to serve only three years in office. Although its effort was unsuccessful and the group was banned, the campaign generated significant public attention. Led by TANGO, the Gambia Bar Association, and several youth groups, CSOs played a major role in raising public awareness about the need for a new constitution and submitted position papers to the Constitutional Review Commission, which continued to discuss a new constitution in 2020.

Since the end of the Jammeh dictatorship in 2016, CSOs have advocated steadily for transitional justice. Civil society actors serve on the eleven-member Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparations Commission (TRRC). Groups such as the Gambia Center for Victims of Human Rights Violations, African Network against Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances (ANEKED), April 10/11 Memorial Foundation, Women's Association for Victims' Empowerment (WAVE), and Never Again Network promote the credibility of the TRRC, encourage public interest in its work, advocate for services for victims, and push for security-sector and civil-service reforms. These and other CSOs also document victims' experiences and commemorate their sacrifices through events such as marches and symposiums.

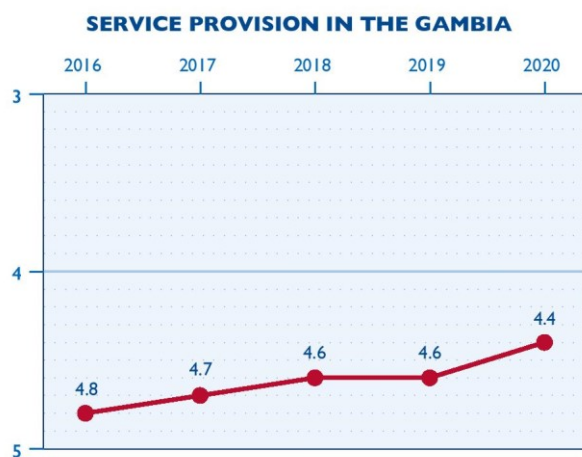
CSOs forced the government to change its position on several issues in 2020. When a civil society activist was arrested and charged with disseminating false information at a Black Lives Matter protest, CSOs led by TANGO and the Gambia Bar Association decried the arrest, prompting the police to drop the charges. After several media

houses published articles exposing government corruption and abuse of office, CSO activism led to the suspension of the minister of fisheries and water resources for allegedly taking bribes from Chinese companies. The rising incidence of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including child sex tourism, and allegations of rape against former president Jammeh and another government official became major issues in 2020. CSOs demanded government action, while women’s rights organizations continued to call for the increased representation of women in decision-making structures. While these efforts did not result in any legal reform, they heightened public understanding of the issues. CSOs also influenced public opinion and pressured the government on issues ranging from the environment to public finance and poor service delivery.

Several CSO coalitions engaged more actively in joint advocacy in 2020. In anticipation of the presidential elections in 2021, for example, the CSO Coalition on Elections reactivated and reviewed its structure, objectives, and membership with a view to improving its impact. Coalitions on anti-corruption, constitution building, and cyberbullying were also active and continued to grow.

CSOs made some effort to reform the laws governing the sector in early 2020, although the pandemic slowed their work. For example, a consultative meeting on the NGO Bill took place in February 2020. However, the Ministry of Justice did not share the latest version of the bill, and CSOs’ work on the initiative stalled after the government showed no interest in it. CSOs similarly discontinued work on the Public Order Act in 2020 after they failed to gain traction with the government on proposed reforms.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.4



CSO service provision improved moderately in 2020 as civil society took the lead as early responders to the pandemic.

CSOs deliver a wide range of services in areas such as health care, education, food relief, training, and awareness raising. In fact, CSOs are the major providers of goods and services, as the government’s provision of services is either inadequate or lacking altogether. When possible, CSOs partner with local government structures, but because the government’s decentralization policy has not had meaningful results, local governments have little capacity. CSOs often deliver services to rural communities on their own initiative and, given The Gambia’s high level of poverty, are major lifelines in many communities. CSOs’ service delivery is so widespread

that in some communities, they are referred to as local government agencies because of their prominence.

CSOs’ sense of purpose was especially evident during the pandemic, when youth groups such as Activista and Peace Ambassadors, women’s rights organizations such as Think Young Women, and Girls Agenda, and other CSOs such as AAITG and ADWAC were leading providers of relief and awareness-raising services well before the government or businesses intervened. Later in the year, several CSOs, including WANEP, Gambia Federation of the Disabled, and Gambia Red Cross Society, partnered with central and local governments to sensitize the public to the disease and provide hygienic materials, food, and other goods. The preoccupation with the pandemic was highest among CSOs that work directly with local communities. The pandemic forced most organizations to suspend non-pandemic-related activities because of restrictions on public gatherings and movements. Some organizations resorted to conducting meetings and training online—often successfully, although many organizations could not take part in online events because of the expense and their lack of internet services.

CSOs are usually well connected to their target populations and thus aware of their needs. For example, youth groups are usually formed by young people themselves, who are well positioned to reach out to peers in rural areas and provide them with civic education or skills training. Similarly, women’s rights groups target girls and women for work on issues ranging from political participation to SGBV.

The public generally expects CSOs, as charitable organizations, to provide goods and services for free. Several CSOs generate income by renting out halls or selling products. For example, TANGO offers conferences services, and the YMCA operates a school and hostel and rents out conference facilities. Many CSOs produce t-shirts to sell to their members, constituencies, and the public.

Governments at both the central and local levels recognize the value of civil society to the country's development. In his state-of-the-nation address in September 2020, the president acknowledged CSOs' contribution to the attainment of the National Development Plan. The president and the minister of health also made several mentions of the important role of CSOs in combating the pandemic.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.1

CSOs' sectoral infrastructure did not change in 2020.

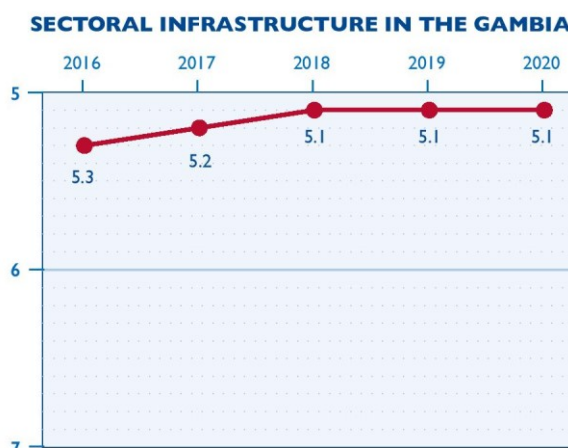
AAITG, TANGO, UP, and a few other large domestic organizations provide informational materials to CSOs. IRI occasionally brings in foreign experts to provide training. The Westminster Foundation for Democracy, which opened an office in The Gambia in 2018, provided training to CSOs working on disability issues and women's needs in 2020. Otherwise, resources centers do not exist, and services from intermediary support organizations are limited.

No local grantmaking foundations exist in The Gambia. A few international organizations provide grants to local CSOs. For example, IRI increased its support in 2020 in view of the pandemic, upcoming elections, and redrafting of the constitution. Several banks and companies and a few wealthy individuals offer limited support for specific activities.

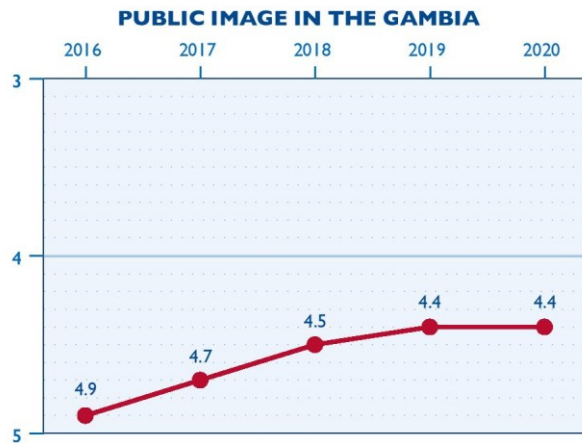
In recent years, networks and coalitions have proliferated on a wide range of issues thanks to the opening of civic space and CSOs' awareness of the benefits of networking and collaboration. The most active networks in 2020 included the Network Against Forest Fires, Gender Platform, and Network Against Cyberbullying. Coalition members usually exchange information on topics such as funding, training, and partnership opportunities and engage in joint activities, including awareness raising and activism. However, many networks lack strategies or are not sufficiently coordinated to pursue joint objectives through to the desired ends. They tend to be most effective at raising public interest and drawing the government's attention to issues of concern. For example, coalitions working on women's issues have raised public awareness of these issues but have yet to achieve gender quotas in politics or a robust government response to SGBV.

CSOs usually conduct in-house training activities. Some organizations obtain training from local training institutes or the University of The Gambia. In 2020, GPU sponsored experts from Ghana who offered training on access to information. Many training workshops were held online, which meant that the majority of CSOs were unable to take part in them because of the high cost of the internet, poor connectivity, or a lack of laptops. TANGO usually organizes capacity-building activities for CSOs but did not do so in 2020 because of the pandemic.

Partnerships between CSOs and other sectors were largely unchanged in 2020. While the government and CSOs do not agree on all political issues, they have cordial working relationships in areas related to the country's social and economic needs, such as the prevention of bush fires and maternal mortality. CSOs work regularly with the media to promote their causes and increase their visibility. The private sector does not provide grants to CSOs but values their work, if for no other reason than that CSOs are major customers of their goods, products, and services.



PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.4



CSOs' public image did not change in 2020.

CSOs enjoy extensive media coverage and positive relationships with individual journalists. It is common for CSOs to invite the press to their activities; the press in turn provides favorable reportage. Media outlets such as the public broadcaster Gambia Radio and Television Service, independent broadcast services, and online outlets such as West Coast Radio, Fatu Network, Kerr Fatou, and Star FM regularly reach out to CSO representatives for interviews or appearances on their talk shows and other programs. In 2020, coverage of CSOs' activities focused on their involvement in the pandemic response and activism on social justice issues. CSOs must usually pay to access the media and advertise their activities, although media houses such as Capital

Radio give free airtime to CSOs to discuss thematic issues such as gender, the environment, and governance.

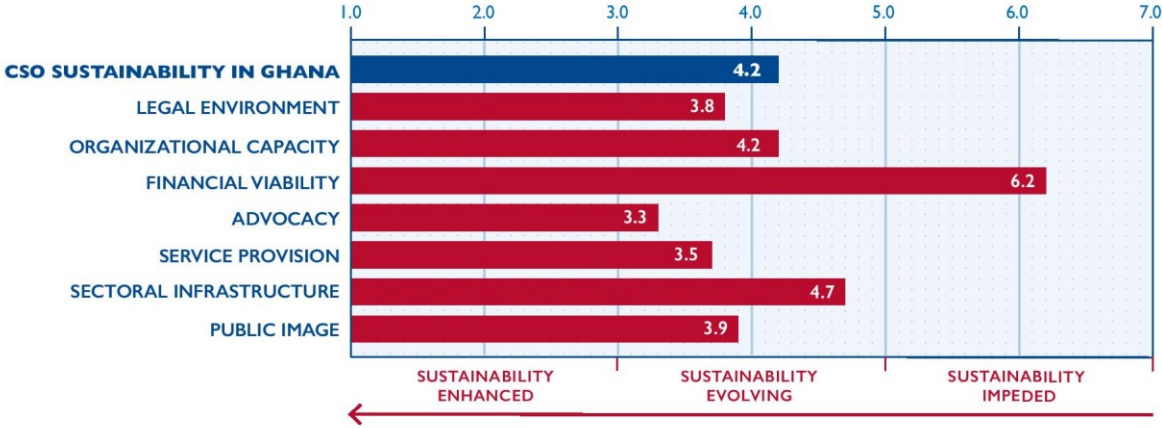
The public has positive perceptions of CSOs and usually regards them as its helpers. In many rural communities in Upper River, Central River, and elsewhere, CSOs are more visible and enjoy greater trust than the government. In fact, rural communities often refer to CSOs as the "little government" because of their prominence and provision of services.

Government and business perceptions of CSOs are generally positive. Both sectors recognize that CSOs provide immense support to the Gambian people and make valuable contributions to the country's development. The government relies on CSOs to provide essential services such as education and health care. However, the government sometimes makes negative statements about CSOs engaged in political and governance issues, such as the rule of law, corruption, human rights, and public-sector accountability. On many occasions in 2020, the president attacked civil society activists as enemies of the country, and his advisers and the minister of information attempted to caricature them for their criticism of the president or the government.

CSOs increasingly seek to publicize themselves and their work. Press conferences are growing more common and are usually conducted by a group or coalition of CSOs. Many organizations use social media often and effectively. For example, in 2020, Gambia Participates attracted significant public attention by using social media to display simplified infographics and short videos on public-sector corruption, the government's use of pandemic funds, and the 2021 budget.

Many CSOs have codes of conduct embedded in their constitutions. There is no sector-wide code, although TANGO has had a draft code for years. GPU has a code of conduct for its members and recently created a sexual harassment policy. CSOs agree that they should be as transparent and accountable as they expect the government to be. Few CSOs produce or disseminate annual reports.

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.2



Ghana’s political scene was polarized in 2020, with frequent hostilities erupting between the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the main opposition party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC). A major controversy was the Electoral Commission’s proposal to compile a new voter register, which CSOs and the NDC opposed as a waste of resources. In cooperation with a private citizen, the NDC filed a suit with the Supreme Court to restrain the Electoral Commission from excluding birth certificates and old voter identification cards as proof of citizenship by applicants to vote. A group of CSOs also opposed the proposal, but their attempt to join the case was quashed by the court. In its ruling, the Supreme Court affirmed the Electoral Commission’s jurisdiction to compile a new register as proposed.

Before presidential and parliamentary elections on December 7, the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) collaborated with the Office of the National Chief Imam of Ghana, National Peace Council, and National House of Chiefs to urge presidential candidates to pledge themselves to peaceful conduct. CSOs, faith-based organizations, traditional authorities, and other groups rallied to ensure a peaceful election. The voting process went smoothly at most polling centers, although the declaration of the final election results aroused violence in some constituencies, leading to eight deaths. The incumbent president, Nana Akufo-Addo, was re-elected to a second four-year term, while the parliamentary contest yielded a stalemate of 137 seats to both the NPP and the NDC. The NDC presidential candidate filed a petition with the Supreme Court challenging his opponent’s win, and the suit was still pending at the end of the year.

After Ghana recorded its first case of COVID-19 in March, the government introduced containment measures to manage the spread of the virus. These measures included emergency powers for the president, which he used to close land and air borders and impose lockdowns in Accra, the capital, as well as adjoining towns and parts of Kumasi. Schools were shut for most of the year, with only final-year classes resuming in the third and fourth quarters so that students could complete their studies. The public generally complied with pandemic restrictions. To cushion the harsh impact of the measures, the government set up the COVID-19 Impact Alleviation Program, which funded services such as the delivery of food to people in deprived communities and the provision of free water and electricity.

CSOs were significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions. Many CSOs worked remotely, while others had to shut down temporarily. Some donors cancelled projects or imposed restrictions on the use of already committed funds. Despite these setbacks, CSOs continued to contribute to the country’s political, social, and economic development, including the elections and pandemic response. The STAR–Ghana Foundation launched a COVID-19 Response Project to help CSOs implement activities to fight the virus.

Ghana's economy was fairly stable in the first quarter of 2020. However, after the pandemic took hold, government revenues fell drastically. Data from the Ghana Statistical Services showed -3.6 percent growth in the second quarter and -1.1 percent in the third quarter, the lowest rate in about three decades. Ghana received a \$1 billion aid package under the Rapid Credit Facility of the International Monetary Fund to offset the impact of the pandemic. The World Bank provided \$100 million for an emergency preparedness and response project to help the country improve its pandemic response.

CSOs' overall sustainability was unchanged in 2020. Pandemic-related measures such as the restriction on face-to-face meetings significantly undermined the organizational capacity of many CSOs. The sector's financial viability deteriorated moderately as grants were cancelled and donors channeled funds to pandemic-related activities. The sectoral infrastructure was weakened slightly by cutbacks in most training programs. At the same time, the legal environment improved slightly with the cabinet's approval of a new nonprofit organization (NPO) policy and associated directives. Service provision was moderately stronger as organizations launched targeted programs to supplement the government's pandemic relief programs. CSOs' public image also improved slightly in 2020 as they enjoyed favorable media coverage at both the national and local levels. CSO advocacy was unchanged.

The Department of Social Development (DSD) reported that 10,030 CSOs were registered at the end of December 2020. This figure represents an increase of 779 organizations, or 8 percent, over 9,251 organizations recorded in 2019. A reported 774 CSOs renewed their permits in 2020.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 3.8



CSOs' legal environment improved slightly in 2020 with the cabinet's approval of the new NPO Policy and directives for managing the sector in October. The policy, which was developed with minimal CSO input, aims to create an effective regulatory and coordinating mechanism for the nonprofit sector to enhance its contribution to national development. The policy provides a framework for a new NPO law, which continued to be developed for submission to the parliament in 2020. The directives outline the functions of the NPO Secretariat, which, despite pandemic-related restrictions, began operations in December 2020, assuming the oversight role formerly assigned to the DSD. Its duties include establishing eligibility requirements for licensing CSOs, monitoring CSOs for money laundering and terrorist financing, and developing

codes of practice in collaboration with the sector. It also seeks to maintain and publish a list of NPOs in good standing in the country.

Ghana's laws remain favorable for the establishment of CSOs. CSOs register under the Companies Act as companies limited by guarantee with the Registrar General's Department (RGD) and then register with the DSD (or, as of 2020, the NPO Secretariat). CSOs must renew their registration and business operating certificates annually. Although registration and re-registration are fairly easy, the associated red tape and fees pose difficulties for many CSOs located outside of the capital city. The new Companies Act passed in 2019 introduced several reforms to ensure good corporate governance practices. For instance, the act established a publicly accessible electronic database showing the names, addresses, and contact details of beneficial owners and the places of work and positions of politically exposed persons, or persons entrusted with prominent public functions. In recent years, the RGD has served notice that it will delist companies that fail to renew their business licenses, but this is not known to have occurred in 2020. The government dissolves CSOs only if they violate the country's laws. CSOs have recourse to the court to contest government decisions and policies.

CSOs' reporting and accountability requirements are clearly defined in the Companies Act. CSOs must report annually to the Register of Companies and the DSD through relevant district assemblies, but this requirement is

not strictly enforced. The Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service introduced a draft framework in 2020 that seeks to coordinate and harmonize the operations of CSOs in the educational sector.

CSOs have the right to take part in public debates and participate in public protests. CSOs continued to operate in 2020 without noticeable harassment or interference by the government. A vigil led by the social group Economic Fighters League to show solidarity with #BlackLivesMatter and unjustly killed Ghanaian citizens was disrupted by the police because it violated pandemic-related restrictions on mass protests. Some leaders of the protest were arrested, but charges against them were dropped in 2021.

The law allows for tax exemptions for CSOs, but in practice they are difficult to obtain because of bureaucratic red tape and CSOs' inadequate understanding of the application process. During the pandemic, the RGD and Ghana Revenue Authority extended deadlines for businesses, including CSOs, to renew permits and file taxes. The government also announced tax relief for organizations that donated to its COVID-19 Relief Fund.

CSOs are allowed to earn income from multiple sources, including foreign donors. Some CSOs are registered as social enterprises and can legally generate income to support their operations. CSOs may compete for government contracts.

Legal expertise for CSOs abounds in cities but is scarce in remote areas. Several legal firms offer pro bono services to CSOs, especially if they work on women's and human rights issues. A number of lawyers working in Ghana's CSO sector also offer legal advice.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.2

The pandemic introduced challenges that significantly undermined the operational capacity of many CSOs. A major challenge was the restriction on face-to-face meetings, which nearly all CSOs rely on to implement projects. Pandemic-related restrictions also affected CSOs' funding, operations, and retention and remuneration of staff. The crisis exposed most CSOs' lack of preparedness for emergencies, suggesting that the resilience of the CSO sector and, by extension, of individual organizations is low.

Restrictions preventing CSOs from directly interacting with their constituents affected organizations working in areas under lockdown and even in areas not under lockdown, as many outdoor activities could not be carried out. Nevertheless, some CSOs were able to

mobilize to advance the interests of poor and vulnerable groups left behind in the crisis. For instance, ahead of the new voter registration, SYPPA Ghana, a community-based organization (CBO) in Ashaiman, carried out activities to educate communities about enrolling for the new Ghana card, which establishes eligibility to vote. SYPPA persuaded the National Identification Authority to extend the enrollment for the Ghana card for persons in its communities that had missed the chance to enroll during the mass registration. CSOs sometimes dealt with new issues emerging because of the pandemic. Women's rights organizations such as Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) were inundated with calls and complaints about a spike in gender-based violence during the pandemic. WiLDAF mobilized police officers, counselors, lawyers, and psychologists to attend to victims around the country but did not have sufficient funds to support all victims, since pandemic-related funding programs did not provide funding to meet this need.

Under the new Companies Act, CSOs are required to submit constitutions clearly stating their missions and objectives. Many organizations have plans to guide their operations, and several urban and larger CSOs have comprehensive strategic plans. Smaller and rural-based CSOs are usually activity driven, although some are compelled by funders' requirements to prepare strategic plans. CSOs usually review their strategic plans periodically to incorporate emerging issues. For instance, during the pandemic, the Ghana CSO Platform on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiated the CSO COVID-19 Response Fund and used the proceeds to



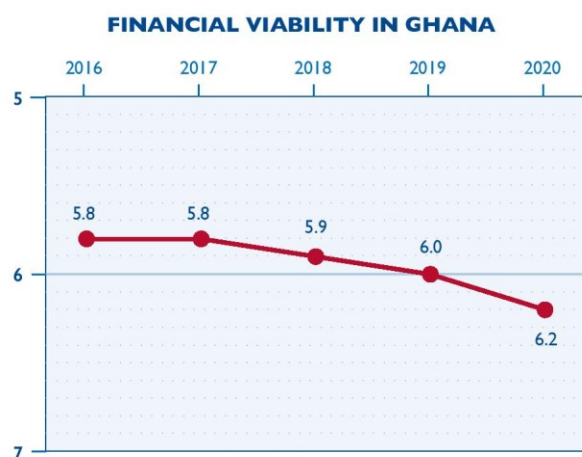
provide food items to poor and vulnerable groups, such as street children and the elderly in Accra, Kasoa, and Kumasi.

Most CSOs have clearly defined organizational and management structures, with clear distinctions between the roles of boards and staff. Larger organizations, such as WANEP, Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD–Ghana), Social Enterprise Development Foundation (SEND)–Ghana, and Northern Sector Action on Awareness Center (NORSAAC), have functional administrative structures along with policy documents to guide internal management. Some smaller and rural-based organizations such as Voice-Ghana also have such structures in place. Most large or urban organizations have functioning boards that provide strategic and policy direction, while the boards of smaller or rural organizations tend to be inactive after registration, although they may continue to exist. With the advent of the pandemic, CSOs' need for functional, dynamic boards was evident, as organizations without active boards found it more difficult to adapt and strategize. Capacity in using internet-based technologies was also crucial as virtual board meetings became the norm.

The cancellation of some donor-sponsored projects led to a retrenchment of staffing throughout the CSO sector in 2020. Both urban and rural CSOs had to annul staff contracts as funding shortfalls rendered them unable to pay salaries. Unlike in previous years, most organizations downsized or operated with skeletal staff in 2020. The pandemic brought the additional burden of staff working from home, a new phenomenon that incurred extra costs, such as internet data packages and equipment to create effective home working environments. In addition, some employees contracted COVID-19, and organizations bore extra costs to make sure that their medical needs were met. Because of pandemic restrictions, volunteerism was generally low, except during the peak of the election period, when most CSOs implementing election-related activities secured the services of volunteers to help with their work.

The gaps between urban and rural organizations in using computer-based technologies were prominent during the pandemic. While larger and urban CSOs were able to acquire the competence and equipment needed to engage with clients via video conferencing platforms such as Zoom, CSOs at the local level were limited both by their lack of skill and an unreliable internet infrastructure. For the most part, smaller and rural organizations depended on telephones to reach out to their constituents, which slowed down the implementation of activities, often beyond planned timeframes. During the pandemic, Ghanaian CSOs increasingly turned to social media as an effective channel for disseminating information and staying in touch with constituents.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.2



The financial viability of Ghanaian CSOs recorded moderate deterioration in 2020. Most CSOs continued to depend on foreign funding, which has declined significantly since Ghana's designation as a lower middle-income country in 2011. As the COVID-19 virus spread in 2020, some foreign donors cancelled grants to CSOs, while others re-channeled funds to support pandemic-related activities. Oxfam Ghana, for example, re-channeled more than \$600,000 in grants to support pandemic-related activities. This development made fundraising a major challenge for both urban and rural CSOs. Although in election years, governance and peace-focused CSOs typically engage in activities to educate the public and promote peace, with the pandemic's onset, many of these organizations lacked long-term projects, and only a few CSOs implemented election-related

activities in 2020.

Several CSOs were able to demonstrate resilience in the face of the existential threat of drastic funding cuts. For example, when NORSAAC lost about GHS 185,000 (approximately \$32,000) from ActionAid Ghana and Tools for Self-Reliance because of the pandemic, it was able to withstand the shock by leveraging its income from subsidiary profit-making ventures, including a village savings and loan association and an industrial village.

Although most urban and larger CSOs have multiple sources of funding, such funding is generally for periods of twelve to eighteen months. The short funding cycles are a constant strain for most CSOs, especially as donors refuse to offer core funding to cover overhead costs such as staff remuneration and office equipment.

The STAR–Ghana Foundation, Ghana’s largest local funder, finally transitioned from a program to an independent foundation in 2020. STAR–Ghana earmarked GHS 11 million (approximately \$2 million) for CSO activities in 2020, of which only GHS 8 million (approximately \$1.5 million) was disbursed because of donors’ cutback of about GHS 3.4 million (approximately \$600,000) in planned funding. Thirty-three grantees were affected by the cutback, and approximately twenty-five prospective grantees could not be considered for grants because of the budget cut. STAR–Ghana also canceled funding allocated to some grantees for election-related activities to fund projects responding to the pandemic. At a learning event in August, STAR–Ghana stated that its funding for pandemic-related projects had, directly and indirectly, benefitted more than 600,000 people.

Although Ghana has a long tradition of local philanthropy, local funding for CSOs remains underdeveloped. Individuals, businesses, and even local philanthropies offer limited support to CSOs. CBOs enjoyed some success in local resource mobilization in 2020, when individual giving temporarily spiked to support community pandemic-relief activities. In Ashaiman, individuals donated to community groups and households to help poorer residents connect to the public water-supply systems so that they could access water free of charge. Some individuals also contributed to the CSO COVID-19 Response Fund set up by the CSO Platform on SDGs.

Crowdfunding, usually initiated by individuals or groups for emergency health-care or relief services, is gradually gaining a toehold in Ghana. The payment of dues by members of CSO networks and associations is generally low. CSOs and CBOs often receive local in-kind support, such as free access to church auditoriums, community centers, classrooms, and other community facilities. In contrast, CSOs in urban centers or those considered large and well-off are usually charged for the use of facilities.

No specific government funding opportunities target CSOs. Private-sector support to CSOs remains low and ad hoc. Most corporate funding for pandemic-related relief services went to the government rather than CSOs.

Revenue-generating activities are uncommon. Only a handful of CSOs, mostly working in health care, education, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), register as social enterprises. Government and local businesses occasionally contract with CSOs for services.

Most CSOs that receive direct donor funding are required to have sound and transparent financial management systems. For instance, organizations that received STAR–Ghana funding for election-related activities were required to have written operating manuals and were audited at periodic intervals. Most urban and large CSOs with regular funding streams hire accounts officers and conduct regular independent audits. CSOs with subcontracts for service delivery from larger organizations are less obliged to show that they have strong financial systems and may have financial policies that they do not always follow. Smaller CSOs and CBOs with irregular incomes cannot afford to procure financial services, and their financial reports to donors are usually their main form of financial accountability.

ADVOCACY: 3.3

CSO advocacy was unchanged in 2020.

CSOs continued to engage directly with government policymakers at both the national and local levels. At the local level, most metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies collaborate with CSOs in sectors of interest, and the central government enables CSOs to hold it accountable and influence its decision-making processes. Engagements between CSOs and the government are both institutionalized and ad hoc. For instance, in 2020, members of the Local Governance Network participated in a review of a popular public-participation policy framework led by the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee. At the local level, in the heavily polarized electoral environment, CSOs worked with the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) to educate the public about the elections, particularly the problem of rejected ballots. For example, through its We Know Politics election project, WiLDAF urged women to support women candidates for parliamentary seats and called on various social and political groups to support the Affirmative Action Bill, which calls for quotas for women representatives.

Because of pandemic-related restrictions, the annual meeting between the president and CSOs did not take place in 2020. In general, the restrictions highlighted the importance of digital technology, especially internet platforms, for use in advocacy and civic engagement. For example, CSOs used Facebook and YouTube to disseminate press statements and make appeals to the government and stakeholders.

CSOs continued to undertake broad-based advocacy campaigns to shape public discourse in 2020. Major initiatives focused on the elections, corruption, and service delivery during the pandemic. CSOs campaigned against the new voter register, and the IMANI Center for Policy and Education, Conservative Policy Research Center, Institute for Liberty, and Policy Innovation

Alliance for Social Equity and Public Accountability (ASEPA) filed unsuccessfully to join the court case seeking to stop the register. IMANI also claimed that the Electoral Commission had committed fraud in the procurement of electoral materials in run-up to the elections and was condemned for being overly aggressive.

Pandemic-related advocacy activities were high on the agenda of most CSOs. For instance, the Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations issued a press statement to lament the lack of support to its members compared to other marginalized groups, as the country continued to observe the partial lockdown.

Informal social movements and groups emerge from time to time. In 2020, the environmental activist group Save Atewa Forest amplified its campaign against the destruction of the ecosystem caused by bauxite mining, which was allowed by a deal between Ghana and China. In response to the group's efforts, the International Union for Conservation of Nature passed a motion calling for urgent measures to protect the Atewa Forest.

Although lobbying is expensive and time-consuming, Ghanaian CSOs lobby effectively and frequently. CSOs have established cordial working relationships with members of parliament, who sometimes contact them for expert opinions. In 2020, although face-to-face contacts with the parliament were curtailed, CSOs continued to lobby actively. The Committee on Subsidiary Legislation invited CSOs to comment on the Lands Bill, and WiLDAF and other women's CSOs lobbied to include spousal rights in the bill. IDEG, CDD-Ghana, and the University Teachers Association urged the parliament to conduct wider public consultations on the Public University Bill, which will increase the government's influence on the governance of universities. The president later called for the bill's suspension.

Awareness of the legal framework for CSOs remains low, especially at the local level. The CSO Coalition on the NPO Bill continued to work with the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection to move the bill to the parliament, although this did not happen in 2020. Efforts are also underway to develop a comprehensive national regulatory framework for philanthropy, since existing laws are weak and fragmented.

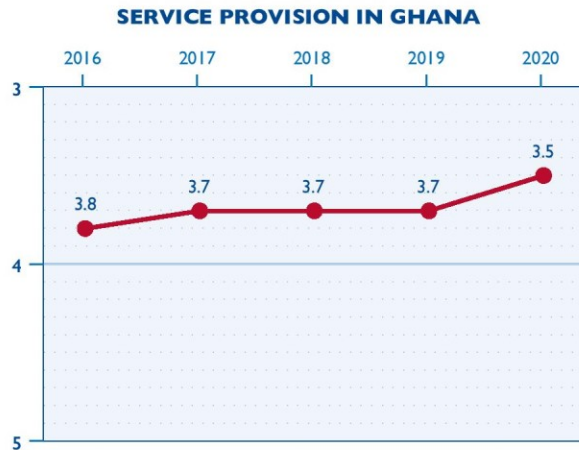
ADVOCACY IN GHANA



SERVICE PROVISION: 3.5

Service provision was moderately stronger in 2020 as CSOs launched targeted programs to supplement the government's pandemic-relief efforts.

The range of services offered by CSOs is highly diversified and covers almost all sectors. With the emergence of COVID-19, service delivery in some areas had to be cut back or suspended. At the same time, the pandemic highlighted the importance of CSO service delivery. Many CSOs provided essential services such as handwashing facilities, soap, veronica buckets (a Ghanaian hand-washing mechanism), and sanitizers. The STAR-Ghana Foundation launched the COVID-19 Response Project with the support of UK Aid and the European Union. The project awarded approximately GHS 4.8 million (about \$830,000) to eight organizations, including the Christian Health Association of Ghana and Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations, to help with COVID-19 prevention, management, and mitigation. Funded activities included public education, support to vulnerable groups,



and documentation of lessons learned. The UN International Children’s Emergency Fund helped CBOs in the northern part of the country provide handwashing facilities to vulnerable groups.

CSOs demonstrated their ability to meet their constituents’ needs by adapting to the crisis situation. For instance, with support from Tullow Oil Ghana Plc, the Youth Bridge Foundation reengineered a STEM education curriculum into a radio program so that students could continue to learn. This adjustment expanded the program’s reach to children in the western region, who had not been among the original beneficiaries. The Koforidua-based Matthew 25 House, which provides support services to HIV patients, partnered with St. Joseph’s Hospital, Akuse Government Hospital, and St.

Martin de Porres Hospital to provide 150 people living with HIV/AIDS with information about COVID-19, as well as groceries, face masks, financial support, medicine, and psychosocial counselling. The Hope For Future Generations (HFFG) donated sanitary pads to 100 adolescent girls in the Kwadaso Anglican and Kwadaso Ohwimase M/A Basic A and B Junior High Schools as part of its Pads for Girls Everywhere initiative.

The activities of most CSOs are backed by information or evidence from their focus areas. CSOs with donor funding are usually required to provide progress reports and monitor their activities during project implementation. Other organizations undertake mid-term and end-of-project evaluations with feedback from beneficiaries.

CSOs usually provide support and information to key stakeholders and members. Most CSOs distribute and market publications that they produce without discrimination and often for free. CSOs are aware of the market demand for their services. However, cost recovery remains difficult because of the not-for-profit orientation of their work.

The government continued to recognize CSOs’ role in service delivery at all levels in 2020. Most local authorities engage with CBOs and CSO-sector networks to help monitor and review their work, and they usually value CSOs’ feedback, unless it is negative or receives wide media attention. For example, in 2020, feedback from CSOs distributing government pandemic-related services and materials led local authorities to target people with disabilities for relief.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.7

The infrastructure supporting Ghanaian CSOs was slightly weaker in 2020. Although public and private institutions continued to provide training, most capacity-building programs were cut back or cancelled because of restrictions on face-to-face gatherings.

CSO resource centers and intermediary support organizations are limited in Ghana, especially outside of Accra. A few organizations, such as the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) and the African Women’s Development Fund, offer CSOs access to information, but they are generally unable to earn enough income from training programs to cover the operating costs.

STAR–Ghana Foundation is the country’s main local funder. In 2020, STAR–Ghana regranted international donor funds to local CSOs.



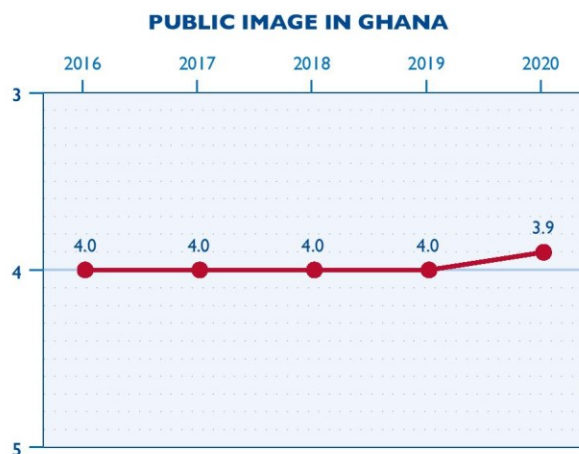
Information sharing in the CSO sector is limited and usually takes place in meetings or through joint activities. Although coalitions and networks exist, most of them are dormant because of funding constraints. A relatively active coalition, the Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS), used its annual conference to highlight the importance of WASH in the fight against COVID-19. CSOs sometimes work together in ad hoc groups. For instance, following the declaration of the 2020 election results, six national CSOs issued a joint press statement calling on the Electoral Commission to keep its national offices open and engage in dialogue with stakeholders to maintain peace.

The pandemic caused most training programs to be cancelled in 2020. Organizations that provide training on CSO management, such as STAR–Ghana, WACSI, The Fundraising Center Ghana, and some universities, had to curtail these activities during the lockdown. Some organizations organized training programs online. For example, WACSI offered tailor-made virtual training programs to grantees of funders such as the Embassy of France and the Hewlett Packard Foundation. The African Development Bank and the Economic, Social, and Cultural Council of the African Union organized a COVID-19 awareness webinar focused on CSOs’ role in building inclusive post-pandemic health systems.

The pandemic led to more deliberate, strategic engagements between civil society, the government, and the private sector in 2020. For instance, the Ministry of Health sought CSOs’ support in implementing interventions under the Ghana COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness and Response Project. The STAR–Ghana Foundation held a virtual discussion with the minister of information and representatives of the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection, the private sector, and Ghana Health Services on promoting collaboration during the pandemic. During the election period, NCCE and the media partnered with CSOs to offer public education on electoral issues.

Some CSOs have tried to partner with the private sector, but such partnerships are usually ad hoc and suggest low awareness of any mutual benefit. While the government’s COVID-19 Trust Fund received substantial support from the private sector, only a handful of private-sector actors supported the pandemic-related work of CSOs.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.9



CSOs’ public image improved slightly in 2020 as they continued to enjoy favorable media coverage at both the national and local levels. Urban and national-level CSOs provided ready content to the media, and CSO representatives served as panelists and analysts on media platforms. For instance, the media regularly invited IMANI, Media Foundation for West Africa, CDD–Ghana, Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition, SEND–Ghana, IDEG, and Ghana Integrity Initiative to provide analysis of national issues. The pandemic-related interventions of organizations such as STAR–Ghana funding recipients and the Human Rights Advocacy Center, which trained community groups to provide support and education on human rights aspects of the pandemic, also received media attention. However, a disparity continued to exist between coverage of urban CSOs, which sometimes

attract live and even prime-time coverage of their major public events, and rural CSOs, which typically do not draw coverage. Media rates for covering CSOs’ activities are often discounted, although CSOs pay the same fees as the business sector for advertisements in major print media.

The Ghanaian public has a positive perception of CSOs, and organizations are usually supported by the communities they serve. For instance, CSO-led public discourse and CSOs’ call for the termination of the Agyapa Minerals Royalty deal because of a lack of transparency was widely commended by the public. However, the bases of political parties often reject CSOs’ criticism of their parties.

Local and central governments generally have positive perceptions of CSOs’ work. At the local level, most district assembly officials rely on reputable CSOs for information and expertise. For example, the special education

division of the Ho Municipal Assembly engages regularly with Voice Ghana on disability issues. During the 2020 elections, district offices of the Electoral Commission worked closely with CSO leaders on voter education and the training of domestic election observers. Despite widespread recognition of CSOs' contributions to the country's development, however, political party activists often attack CSOs because of their divergent positions on national issues. For example, in 2020, CSOs that opposed the compilation of a new voter register were accused of working on behalf of the opposition. Business-sector perceptions of CSOs, although favorable, remain undeveloped.

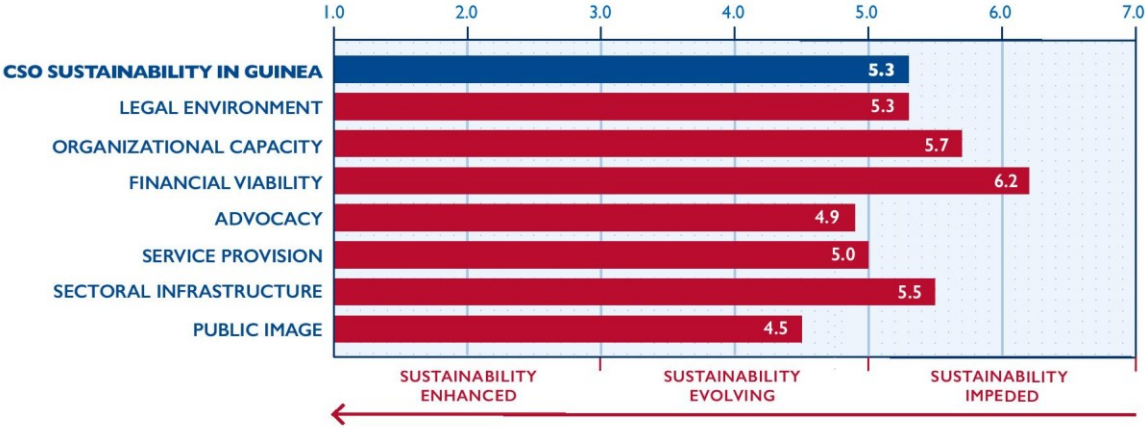
CSOs enjoy good relationships with the media at both national and local levels. Through STAR–Ghana, both urban and local CSOs have established productive relationships with the Ghana Journalists Association to publicize their work. CSOs also raise awareness of their activities through direct engagement with stakeholders. Urban CSOs with regular funding streams promote their public image with branding tools such as stationery items. For instance, SEND–Ghana and Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition produce annual calendars advertising their missions and activities. Larger and urban CSOs use online platforms, television, and radio to promote their activities. The pandemic enhanced CSOs' use of social media for public outreach and education.

CSOs in Ghana still do not have a standardized code of ethics. The absence of a centralized, widely accepted group representing the sector as a whole has hampered the development of a sector-wide code. However, the establishment of the NPO Secretariat may offer an opportunity, as the development of codes of practice is included in its mandate. Some CSOs have adopted accountability measures such as codes of ethics in their internal operating manuals. CSOs are generally transparent in their activities, especially with their funders, but only a few organizations make their annual reports public, to avoid demands for cash from their constituents.

GUINEA

Capital: Conakry
Population: 12,877,894
GDP per capita (PPP): \$2,562
Human Development Index: Low (0.477)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (38/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.3



Public attention in Guinea was focused on elections in 2020. On March 22, a referendum to approve a new constitution was held in conjunction with parliamentary elections. The new constitution proposed to reset presidential terms to allow incumbent President Alpha Condé to run for a third time rather than comply with the stipulated limit of two terms. Provisions banning female genital mutilation (FGM), under-age marriage, and one gender occupying more than two-thirds of government positions were also proposed in the new constitution. The National Front for the Defense of the Constitution (Front national pour la défense de la constitution, FNDC), a coalition of opposition parties and CSOs, opposed the new constitution and called for a boycott of the referendum. With voter turnout at about 58 percent, the constitution was approved by more than 90 percent of voters, clearing the way for the president to run for a third term. The president enacted the new constitution in April and was re-elected in the first round of voting on October 18.

Violent protests against the new constitution and the presidential election took place around the country during voting in March and October 2020. Security forces killed dozens of protesters, and material damage was estimated at billions of Guinean francs. Members of the FNDC were arrested and detained, and others reported intimidation and physical and verbal abuse. Social media platforms were blocked for thirty-six hours during the voting period in March.

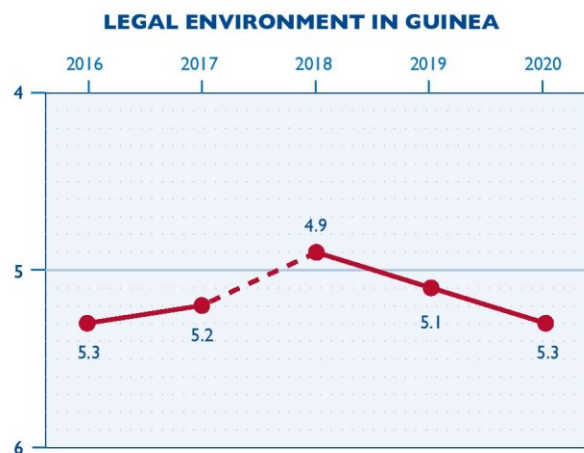
Guinea’s first case of COVID-19 was reported in Conakry on March 12, 2020. As the virus spread rapidly into the country’s interior, the president declared a thirty-day state of health emergency, which was extended repeatedly until the end of the year. The pandemic response included lockdowns, curfews, the mandatory wearing of masks, a ban on large gatherings, and a prohibition on trips between Conakry and the country’s prefectures. CSOs took part in the pandemic response by raising awareness and distributing hygienic materials.

Despite the twin crises of the pandemic and election-related tensions, Guinea’s economy grew by 5.2 percent in 2020, thanks to a strong demand for mining exports, according to the African Development Bank. Inflation rose to more than 10 percent in 2020. The United Nations (UN) World Food Program reports that more than half of the population of Guinea lives below the poverty line and more than one-fifth is food insecure. Many of the poor engage in subsistence farming.

CSOs’ overall sustainability was unchanged in 2020. CSOs’ legal environment deteriorated moderately as the government stopped registering CSOs, security forces used excessive force against demonstrators, and CSO leaders opposing the new constitution were arrested and detained. All other dimensions of sustainability were stable.

The latest data on the number of CSOs in Guinea is from 2017, when the Civil Society Support program of the European Union (EU) reported a total of 1,010 registered CSOs in Guinea. This figure included 941 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 39 networks, 12 platforms, 11 federations, 5 labor unions, and 2 CSO collectives. Most organizations are based in the capital city, Conakry.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.3¹



The legal environment for CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020 as the government stopped registering CSOs that it viewed as supporters of opposition political parties, security forces used excessive force against protesters, and CSO leaders opposing the new constitution were harassed, arrested, or detained.

Like the previous constitution, the new constitution guarantees freedoms of assembly, association, and expression. Law L/2005/013/AN on associations and L/2005/014/AN on NGOs are the main laws governing CSOs. All CSOs are strictly limited to working in development, human rights, and capacity building. Informal associations and organizations that do not compete for foreign funding may operate without state

recognition in narrow fields of activity. Organizations registered as NGOs must adhere to strict legal provisions governing their creation and operations and have broader areas of intervention. Depending on the geographic scope of their activities, both associations and NGOs must register at the prefecture and regional levels with the Regional Service for the Support and Coordination of Cooperatives and NGOs and the Department of Micro-Achievements. At the national level, CSOs register with the Service for the Regulation and Promotion of NGOs and Association Movements (SERPROMA) in the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD). Before they may operate fully, all domestic CSOs except for unions must be approved by ministerial order or, at the sub-national level, by governors and prefects. Once approved, registration is valid for three years.

Although the laws for CSO registration are generally favorable, registration and re-registration were nearly impossible in 2020. During the elections, the government largely stopped issuing certificates of recognition to CSOs that it categorized as entities supporting opposition political parties. Registration also halted during the pandemic. Although SERPROMA had previously issued provisional certificates allowing national-level CSOs to operate, MATD banned such certificates in 2020. CSOs without provisional certificates continued to operate but had limited access to donor funding, since donors require up-to-date legal recognition.

CSOs' internal governance structures and areas of intervention are clearly defined in their founding documents. Organizations must adhere to their stipulated areas of focus, and as long as they do so, the government does not interfere in their internal management. CSOs that stray outside of their stipulated areas of focus may be subject to suspension. Organizations registered with SERPROMA must submit activity and financial reports every six months. Because of the pandemic and SERPROMA's lack of resources, few CSOs faced repercussions for failing to comply with this obligation in 2020.

SERPROMA is responsible for conducting support, supervisory, and evaluative missions to CSOs but because of a lack of resources did not do so in 2020. CSOs are commonly subject to harassment and other forms of intimidation at the central and local levels if there are shortcomings in their plans or procedures for implementing projects. Harassment usually takes the form of statements by the MATD minister and local authorities against CSOs that attempt to conduct activities without prior authorization, as well as threats to detain or arrest CSO staff.

¹ The Legal Environment score was recalibrated in 2018 to better reflect the situation in the country and to better align it with other scores in the region. The score did not reflect an improvement in Legal Environment, which remained largely the same in 2018 as in 2017.

Under the law, CSOs may freely criticize the government and express opinions on subjects of national concern. CSOs usually temper their criticism with constructive recommendations and sometimes engage in self-censorship. CSOs may pursue legal action if deprived of their constitutional rights. For example, private press associations filed an appeal in 2020 to protest cronyism and nepotism in the distribution of grants by the High Authority for Communication. The trials of several investigative journalists with the Espace FM press group, who were incriminated in the disclosure of sensitive government files about contract awards and management, were cancelled in 2020. The Citizen Broom Unit (Cellule balais citoyen, CBC) appeared before the court of first instance of Dixinn on charges of disturbing the peace and civil disobedience after opposing the president's third term.

The government repeatedly and selectively cited pandemic restrictions to curtail the right to demonstrate and assemble in 2020. Demonstrations by opposition parties were prevented, while parties aligned with those in power were able to hold public gatherings without problem. Security forces used disproportionate force to break up demonstrations by opposition parties and civil society groups, especially during voting in March and October, when numerous deaths and serious injuries resulted. Activists and members of advocacy groups reported intimidation, harassment, arrest, and imprisonment. For example, members of the FNDC and the Free Union of Teachers and Researchers of Guinea (Syndicat libre des enseignants chercheurs de Guinée, SLECG) who spoke out against the new constitution were subjected to arrest and administrative actions. Legal investigations into the violence and fatalities did not conclude during the year.

Upon application to the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, CSOs registered with SERPROMA may obtain exemptions from taxes on products imported for their activities and other taxes imposed on private establishments. International organizations tend to obtain these exemptions more often than Guinean CSOs. Grants from donors are tax exempt. Corporations and individuals donating to CSOs receive tax deductions with government approval.

The law allows CSOs to conduct revenue-generating activities and found social enterprises as long as they scrupulously comply with associated laws and regulations and use the profits to support their operations. CSOs may bid on contracts with central and local governments provided they meet stated criteria. In 2019, the National Assembly revised Law L/2005/013/AN to allow NGOs meeting certain criteria to receive government funding as public benefit entities. However, the law was never adopted.

CSOs may conduct fundraising campaigns to benefit victims of natural disasters, the poor, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups. CSOs are free to accept foreign funding provided it supports their areas of intervention.

No lawyers specialize in CSO issues in Guinea. However, several members of the Guinean Bar Association and organizations such as Same Rights for All (Mêmes droits pour tous, MDT) and Lawyers Without Borders (Avocats sans frontières, ASF) advise CSOs on legal and judicial matters, sometimes on a pro bono basis. Large, established organizations often have solid working partnerships with private firms and individual lawyers.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.7

CSOs' organizational capacity was stable in 2020.

Many organizations use inclusive, participatory approaches to identify beneficiaries and stakeholders and determine activities before projects begin. Informal community-based associations and social movements typically implement projects that local constituencies say are important, such as the construction of schools, wells, roads, and health clinics. For example, in Hermakonon in Kankan prefecture in 2020, the Youth Association for the Development of Pellel Bantan (Association des jeunes pour le développement de Pellel Bantan, AJPDB) conducted participatory dialogues to identify humanitarian priorities and targets. As a result of the dialogues, AJPDB rehabilitated a rural road and renovated a primary school. A citizen health project



funded by USAID through FHI 360 and implemented by the African Training Center for Development (Centre africain de formation pour le développement, CENAFOD), in cooperation with Initiatives and Actions for the Improvement of the Populations' Health (Initiative et action pour l'amélioration de la santé des populations, INAASPO) and the Center for International Trade and Development (Centre du commerce international pour le développement, CECIDE), conducted a participatory analysis with community health and hygiene committees to identify needed support. During the pandemic, CSOs increasingly relied on intermediaries such as local child protection committees to ensure local representation in project design as well as compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures in project activities.

All CSOs define their missions in their founding documents, and organizations are legally prohibited from engaging in activities outside of their stipulated areas of focus. But as the pandemic evolved, this measure was lifted on an exceptional and provisional basis, so that CSOs that did not work on health issues could contribute to preventing COVID-19 through social mobilization and communication. Large organizations, such as the Africa Youth Network of Guinea (Réseau Afrique Jeunesse de Guinée, RAJ-GUI) and Platform of Citizens United for Development (Plateforme des citoyens unis pour le développement, PCUD), are usually required by technical and financial partners to have strategic plans. Most smaller CSOs do not have sufficient resources to develop strategic plans and are guided instead by their statutes and internal regulations. CSOs usually have internal monitoring and evaluation systems to measure their progress in implementing activities. Many CSOs were not able to implement planned activities because of pandemic-related restrictions in 2020. CSOs with sufficient resources, such as Accord Guinea, West Africa Network for Peace (WANEP)–Guinea, and Alliance for the Promotion of Governance and Local Initiatives (Alliance pour la promotion de la gouvernance et des initiatives locales, AGIL), were sometimes able to adapt by relying on videoconferencing and socially distanced activities.

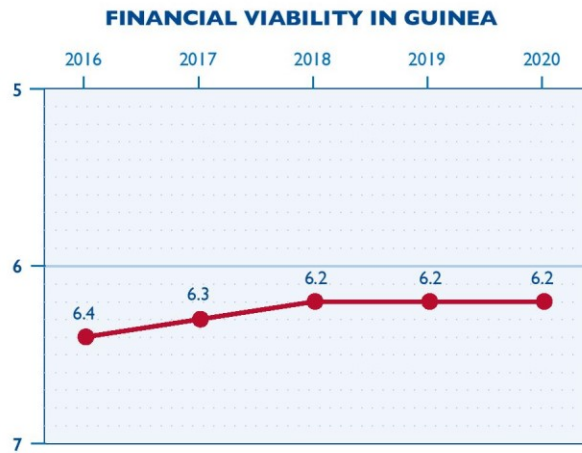
CSOs' internal decision-making bodies typically include general assemblies, boards of directors, and executive or national coordination offices. CENAFOD, for example, has a seven-member board of directors to ensure that the general assembly's recommendations are implemented by the executive directorate. Some organizations hold board meetings as required by their bylaws and internal regulations. But the lack of resources or transparency often prevents other organizations from fulfilling this requirement.

CSOs' administrative and accounting manuals lay out mandatory procedures for the award of contracts, recruitment of service providers and suppliers, and payment of invoices and other costs. Most CSOs comply with their manuals to minimize the risk of conflict of interest. Larger organizations also have additional written procedures and policies to guide their operations.

CSOs with short- and long-term funding, such as AGIL, Here Guinea, and Community Documentation and Study Center (Centre communautaire de documentation et d'études, CECODE), are generally able to maintain permanent staff. In 2020, reductions in funding resulted in layoffs or reduced income for staff at some CSOs. Nearly all organizations rely on volunteers to implement their activities. For example, in 2020, RAJ-GUI relied on the services of 270 volunteers for a project to encourage youth participation in health governance in Boké, Kindia, and Conakry regions. WANEP–Guinea deployed 600 volunteers in Conakry and Upper Guinea under the Cultural Cohesion for Peace and Prosperity project funded by the EU. In partnership with the Peace Building Fund of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), CENAFOD employed 450 volunteers to promote conflict prevention and management during the elections in Conakry and N'Zérékoré.

Most Guinean CSOs are not able to afford to replace or upgrade essential office equipment. Only organizations with established external partners, such as Young Leaders for Peace and Development (Leadership jeune pour la paix et le développement, LEJEPAD) and the Coalition of Young Leaders for Peace and Development (Coalition des jeunes leaders pour la paix et le développement, CoJeLPaiD), receive funding for this purpose. Internet access varies but is becoming more widespread. Some organizations have websites and use platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn to exchange information and heighten their visibility. During the pandemic, CSOs increasingly relied on digital formats such as video conferencing, webinars, and virtual meetings. A law on cybersecurity exists, but most CSOs are not well informed about its contents and do not always take advised precautions.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.2



CSOs' financial viability did not change in 2020.

Guinean CSOs rely largely on foreign funding. In 2020, the main foreign partners included USAID, Open Society Initiative for Western Africa, UNDP, World Bank, and EU. CSOs that obtain foreign funding tend to be larger, established organizations with known expertise and adequate capacity, including office space and equipment. These CSOs usually partner with international organizations as local implementers. Among the CSOs benefitting from such arrangement in 2020 were the Citizen Coalition for Elections and Governance (Coalition citoyenne pour les élections et la gouvernance, CoCEG), whose work on policy analysis and governance was funded by the National Democratic Institute; AGIL, which received funding from the Global Fund to Fight

HIV, Tuberculosis, and Malaria to help people with HIV/AIDS; and CENAFOD, which was a member of a consortium with the Research Triangle Institute to fight malaria with funding from USAID. In 2020, funding became scarce and was mostly focused on fighting the COVID-19 and Ebola pandemics.

CSOs bid freely on tenders for large-scale projects offered by the national and local governments. In 2020, the National Agency for Municipal Funding issued calls for tenders for a school sanitation project under the Citizen Engagement Mechanism, which is funded by mining revenue, the World Bank, and the French Development Agency. Several CSOs partnered with local communities to obtain funding from the National Agency for Municipal Funding under the World Bank's Support to Local Governance project. The Association of Bloggers of Guinea (Association des blogueurs de Guinée, ABLOGUI) obtained a contract from the commune of Kaloum to implement its communication plan.

Some CSOs generate income to support their operations by marketing products and services. For example, the Coalition of Women Leaders in Guinea (Coalition des femmes leaders de Guinée, COFEL) sells traditional Guinean cloth, and the Honey and Shea Butter Production Cooperative (Coopérative de production de miel et de karité, COPRAKAM) produces and sells products derived from shea butter and honey. TINKISO Antena, Medical Fraternity of Guinea (Fraternité médicale de Guinée, FMG), Farmer's House (Maison du paysan) in N'Zérékoré, and Guinean Association for Familial Wellbeing (Association guinéenne de bien être familial, AGBEF) also market products to generate income to support their operations.

Several organizations engaged in fundraising activities to support victims of COVID-19 in 2020. The Association of Guineans of France and Friends (Association des guinéens de la France et amis, AGFA) raised funds to support school enrollment for disinherited children; RAJ-GUI raised funds for evicted families; Foundation for Maternal and Child Social Promotion (Promotion de la santé maternelle et infantile, PROSMI) raised to support women who suffer from obstetric fistulas. Some CSOs have been successful in mobilizing resources through digital technologies. For example, in 2020, WANEP-Guinea raised funding through WhatsApp to purchase kits and food to help communities weather the pandemic.

Financial management professionals are usually on the staff of large organizations such as CENAFOD, AGIL, and ACORD. To improve their access to funding, smaller CSOs often arrange for organizations with greater capacity to manage any donor funds that they receive. For example, CENAFOD manages USAID funding for CoCEG. Tax receipts and financial reports certified by approved auditing firms are prerequisites for CSOs seeking to access funding from technical and financial partners. CSOs are required to report on their use of funds to their funders and submit financial reports to SERPROMA. All CSOs working at the national level are subject to regular external audits.

ADVOCACY: 4.9

CSO advocacy was largely unchanged in 2020.

CSOs take part regularly in government decision-making processes. At the national level in 2020, the Inter-Party Committee on the Electoral Process under the Independent National Electoral Commission brought together CSOs, political parties, national and international institutions, and technical and financial partners for consultations about the new constitution and proposed dialogues between opposing actors to maintain social calm. Participating CSOs included the National Council of CSOs in Guinea (Conseil national des organisations de la société civile de Guinée, CNOSCG), National Coalition of CSOs in Guinea (Coalition nationale des organisations de la société civile de Guinée, CONASOG), and Coalition of Guinean Women/Girls for Dialogue, Peace Building, and Development (Coalition des femmes/filles de Guinée pour le dialogue, la consolidation de la paix et le développement, COFFIG-DCPD). The group's recommendations were not heeded.

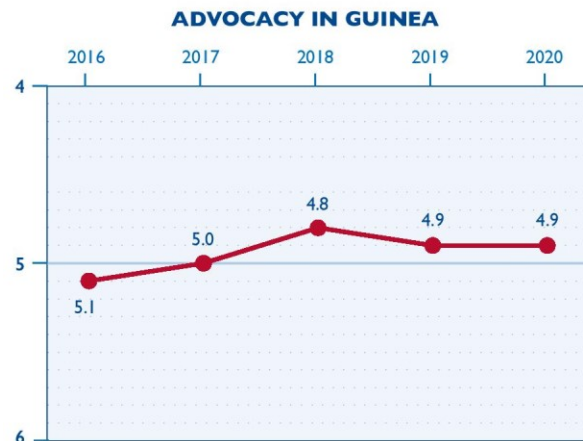
At the local level, the revised local governance code recognizes the role of CSOs and ensures that communications between local authorities and CSOs take place regularly. CSOs participate as advisory bodies in ordinary sessions of communal councils, and their opinions are usually taken into account. Technical orientation committees that assess proposals to ensure that social dimensions are considered are made up of state and civil society actors, including CENAFOD in Lower Guinea, Here Guinea in Upper Guinea, CECODE in Middle Guinea, and AGIL in Forested Guinea.

CSOs hold the government accountable through several platforms. Publish What You Pay (Publier ce que vous payer, PWYP) seeks to prevent corruption in the extractive industries and in 2020 contributed significantly to the preparation of a report for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. ABLOGUI regularly evaluates and publicizes the extent to which elected officials keep their campaign promises as part of the Lahidi project. CBC seeks to ensure that government officials, including officials with financial institutions, declare their assets. In 2020, CSO platforms such as CNOSCG, CoJeLPaiD, and CONASOG advocated to ensure that resources allocated to the pandemic were transparently managed and CSOs were included in the fight against COVID-19.

Both individually and through coalitions, CSOs commonly conduct awareness-raising and civic-education campaigns. In 2020, CoCEG disseminated information about peaceful elections as part of its project to strengthen citizen control of electoral and political processes. The Collective of NGOs for the Defense of Community Rights (Collectif des ONG pour la défense des droits des communautés, COD-DC) mobilized the public around the basic tools for mining management developed by the Ministry of Mines. RAJ-GUI campaigned to reform drug policy, and Search for Common Ground provided training to community leaders on the prevention of violent extremism.

Advocacy groups are often formed to challenge unpopular policies, defend citizens' interests, and promote democracy and legitimacy. In 2020, journalists' associations such as the Guinean Association of Independent Press Editors (Association guinéenne d'éditeurs de presse indépendante, AGEPI) and Union of Free Radio and Television Stations of Guinea (Union des radios et télévisions libres de Guinée, URTELGUI) sought to ensure that Law L/2010/02/CNT, which decriminalized press offenses, was respected to protect journalists from abuse as they reported on the alleged embezzlement of funds by a high-level government official, the situation of prisoners in detention centers, and the use of force by security forces during peaceful demonstrations. Thanks to the work of these groups, journalists were able to bring information to national and international attention despite many threats.

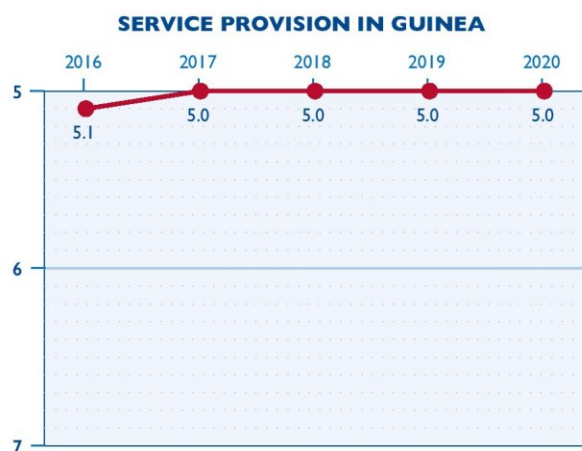
In 2020, several CSOs engaged in lobbying focused on the mining sector. CECIDE, Guinea Mine Action (Action mines Guinea, AMI), ACORD, and Club of Friends for Peace and Education (Club des amis pour la paix et de l'éducation, CAPE) pressured the parliament to revise the document dealing with the impact of mining throughout the country to affirm the right of victims to compensation and the obligation to restore plants and vegetation.



Several women's CSOs, including COFEL and the National Coalition of Guinea for the Rights and Citizenship of Women (Coalition nationale de Guinée pour les droits et la citoyenneté des femmes, CONAG-DCF), worked with the Ministry of Social Affairs to promote and prepare implementing regulations for the Children's Code. In both of these efforts, CSOs took part in the policy-making process, and their recommendations were incorporated into the final outcomes.

Guinean CSOs are not united in protecting their interests, as was evident in the debates over the constitutional referendum and elections in 2020. The FNDC's opposition to the new constitution was not shared by other organizations. Without a united front to present to the government, the platform played a limited role in shaping the debate over these issues. CSO Day, an event devoted to reflections on CSOs' work and strategic focus, was scheduled for October 25, 2020, but was cancelled in part because of CSOs' divergent positions on these issues.

SERVICE PROVISION: 5.0



Service provision by Guinean CSOs was stable in 2020.

CSOs' services range from the construction of roads and schools and assistance to populations devastated by floods and fires to awareness-raising about the importance of childhood education and conflict prevention. CSOs usually work in the areas of focus specified in their founding documents. For example, Aide Guinée, Guinean Association of Women for Equity and Governance INAASPO, and Platform of Civil Society Organizations to Support Vaccination (POSAV) are active in health care. The National Confederation of Peasant Organizations of Guinea (CNOPG) and Association of Young University Students for Environmental Protection (Association des jeunes universitaires pour la protection de l'environnement,

AJUPE) focus on land tenure. Plan Guinea, Aid and Action (Aide et action), Association of Fria Natives and Supporters (Association des ressortissants et sympathisants de Fria, ARSYF), and Tostan International educate girls.

In 2020, WANEP-Guinea, RAJ-GUI, CNOSCG, CoCEG, and CoJELPAID trained citizens to serve as election observers. The Guinean Association for Women's Involvement in the Electoral Process and Governance (Association guinéenne pour l'implication des femmes dans le processus électoral et la gouvernance, AGUIFPEG) and Tostan defended the rights of girls against FGM, exclusion from school, and gender-based violence. RAJ-GUI, CoJeLPaiD, WANEP-Guinea, Optima Formation, CNOSCG, and LEJEPAD provided pandemic-related support to vulnerable communities. Technical and financial partners required CSOs to comply with COVID-19 prevention measures and offered their partners the possibility of modifying their budgets to purchase protective kits and conduct informational and educational activities related to the pandemic.

CSOs use several methods to identify community needs, including community participatory diagnoses and data obtained from basic documents such as local development and investment plans. Feedback mechanisms include participatory monitoring and evaluation and surveys. In 2020, CSOs worked with the government to provide vital services to grassroots populations. Their services included campaigns to promote understanding of the pandemic, prevent and manage conflict during the elections, and curb violence against women and girls.

CSOs do not discriminate against any groups and in fact work against such practices.

CSOs frequently share information and cooperate with other CSOs, universities, businesses, and public institutions. For example, in 2020, CENAFOD and the Mahatma Gandhi University worked together on enhancing food security by economically empowering women in Labé, Kankan, and N'Zérékoré. CSOs generally benefit from this type of cooperation by receiving management fees and payments for staff assigned to the project.

The government acknowledges CSOs' contributions by partnering with them at both the national and local levels. In 2020, CSOs such as Guinea Ecology and AJUPE conducted activities to promote awareness of reforestation and forest protection in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment, Water, and Forests. AJUPE also hosted press conferences and community meetings with the Ministry of Citizenship and National Unity to promote the National Week of Citizenship for Peace.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.5

The sectoral infrastructure for Guinean CSOs was unchanged in 2020.

CSOs in Conakry and larger cities have access to services such as informational materials and internet access at regional libraries, the Press House, and centers and controlled-access urban areas for youth. CSOs in Guinea's interior do not have easy access to such services. Because of social-distancing requirements, nearly all CSOs refrained from using these resources in 2020.

Local foundations, especially those focused on humanitarian needs, provide grants to CSOs using locally collected funds or capital gains obtained by implementing large-scale projects. For example, the Kerfala Person Camara, Elhadj Djeriba Diaby, and PROSMI foundations finance projects to provide primary health care for women and vulnerable populations and assistance to disaster victims. Mining companies increasingly offer support to affected populations in local communities.

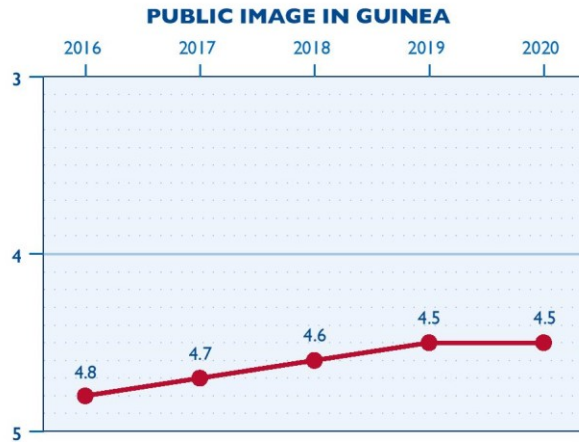
CSOs are not represented by a single organization that could speak effectively on their behalf. Coalitions, networks, and consortia support CSOs working in specific areas. For example, in the area of conflict prevention and management, WANEP–Guinea coordinates CSOs in Lower Guinea and ACORD unites organizations in Forested Guinea. In 2020, many coalitions focused on election monitoring, the fight against COVID-19, and combatting violence. However, because of scarce resources, networks and coalitions often compete against their own members for funding.

CSOs have access to specialized training on subjects such as advocacy, interpersonal communications, and social mobilization. Experienced and competent local trainers provide training on CSO management. Simplified documents such as guides to accounting and conducting meetings are translated into national languages and distributed by CSOs such as Tostan International, Guinean Center for Training and Education for Development (Centre guinéen de formation et d'éducation pour le développement, CEGUIFED), and Guinean Literacy Network (Réseau guinéen de l'alphabétisation, REGA). In 2020, because of the pandemic and political tensions, technical and financial partners offered limited capacity building to CSO staff and volunteers. By law, CSOs are supposed to benefit from government technical support, which should be based on evaluations conducted by SERPROMA. However, SERPROMA was not able to provide capacity building in 2020 because of its lack of financial resources and the restrictions related to COVID-19.

Several CSOs have developed fruitful partnerships with the private sector, government, and media. For example, Aide-Guinée, Gamal Abdel Nasser University of Conakry, and Menerga Sarl Company work together on the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere project, which aims to boost young people's employment skills with funding from the World Bank. CENAFOD works with Mahatma Gandhi University on women's economic empowerment as part of a food security project. The pandemic dampened CSOs' collaborative relationships with the media in 2020 because of the great decrease in meetings and discussions. However, AGEPI and CNOSCG were able to partner in 2020 to advocate for support for the media.



PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.5



CSOs' public image did not change in 2020.

CSOs have unfettered access to all public and private media services. The media understand the role of CSOs in preserving peace and national unity. In 2020, because of the pandemic, the media usually covered CSOs' activities via telephone interviews, published reports, and announcements. Media services are usually paid.

The public generally appreciates CSOs' services and their contributions to ensuring citizen oversight of government activities and holding the authorities accountable. CSOs make sure to provide local communities with information about their activities so that beneficiaries can participate in their efforts.

The government sees CSOs' activities as important because they have close ties to the people, especially at the community level, where their activities in areas such as citizen engagement, sanitation, and growing vegetables have an impact. However, in 2020, the government viewed platforms such as PCUD negatively because of their opposition to the president's third term.

The private sector also recognizes CSOs' valuable ties at the community level and works with them to educate and build the capacity of local communities. Mining companies, in particular, earn community support and protection by subcontracting with NGOs to implement projects in areas such as revenue generation, literacy, and agricultural products.

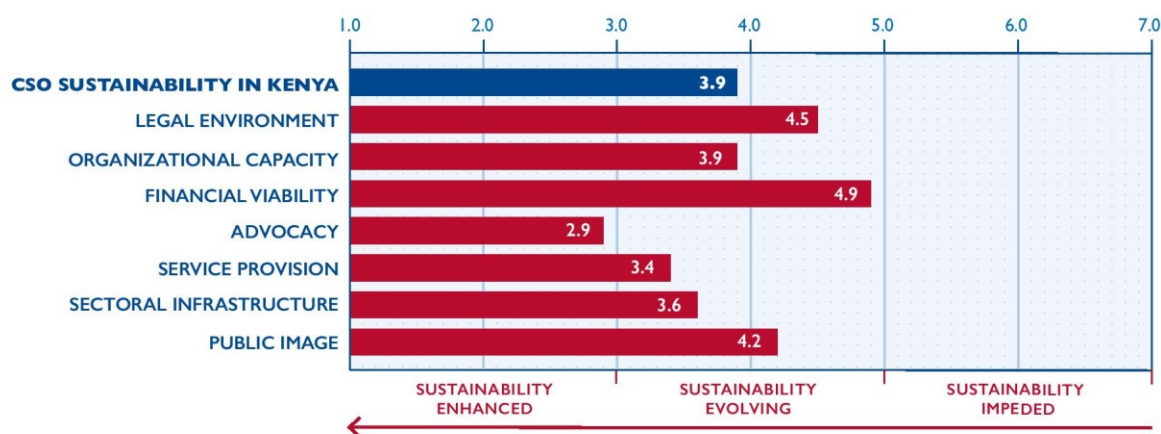
CSOs of all types recognize the importance of working with the media and often have media plans. CSOs also see media coverage as boosting their visibility with technical and financial partners and justifying donors' commitments to fund them. During the pandemic, CSOs took advantage of radio stations' offer of preferential pricing to broadcast public service announcements. In addition to relying on local radio and television stations, CSOs issued press announcements and publications and increasingly used social media and communications platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter, Imo, Zoom, Skype, and Facebook websites to communicate and spread information.

CSOs have a code of ethics from SERPROMA to regulate their operations and define the nature of collaborations. Several larger CSOs have their own codes of ethics, since they are important to foreign partners. Few CSOs publish annual activity reports, but some organizations share information about their work on their websites or in e-mails.

KENYA

Capital: Nairobi
Population: 54,685,051
GDP per capita (PPP): \$4,330
Human Development Index: Medium (0.601)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (48/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 3.9



The Kenyan Ministry of Health reported the country's first case of the COVID-19 virus on March 12, 2020, and confirmed the first death from the virus on March 26. Governments at the national and county levels immediately introduced measures to contain the pandemic, including a nighttime curfew, mandatory physical distancing, targeted mass testing, quarantines on incoming visitors, restrictions on travel and assembly, and a nationwide media campaign encouraging handwashing and the use of face masks. The government refocused resources to strengthen the health-care system and launched a program to stimulate economic activity and safeguard livelihoods. Cash transfers targeted vulnerable and severely affected populations; thousands of teachers and health-care workers were hired; and equipment was purchased to support digital learning after schools were closed. CSOs complemented the government response to COVID-19 by distributing food and protective equipment and conducting public-awareness activities on curbing the spread of the virus.

CSOs monitored human rights abuses by state agencies after security personnel used excessive force to enforce pandemic restrictions, especially when curfew restrictions commenced in March. The Network Action Against Corruption (NAAC) and African Uncensored jointly investigated complaints by health-care workers about a shortage of supplies, prompting the Kenya Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission to find that approximately \$7.8 million meant for the purchase of protective equipment and other medical supplies had been misappropriated. The scandal, known as the "COVID-19 Millionaires," involved the award of government tenders, in contravention of public procurement laws, to companies established only weeks prior without relevant experience or to politically connected businesses and individuals. The commission recommended that at least fifteen top government officials and businesspeople be prosecuted for their role in the misuse of funds.

After an intensive nationwide consultation, including with CSOs, the steering committee of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) made its report public in October. This joint initiative of the president and the leader of the main opposition party was launched in 2019 to unite Kenyans to end historical inequalities and marginalization. The report made a number of legal and policy recommendations and presented draft legislation providing a new framework for regulating public finance management and ensuring effective public participation at the national and county levels. Although a few organizations expressed concerns, CSOs did not take a strong unified position on the BBI process and proposed reforms.

Kenya continued to be subjected to attacks by al-Shabaab jihadists in 2020. On January 2, four people died when terrorists opened fire at a convoy of three passenger buses traveling with a police escort from Mombasa to Lamu. Later that month, a predawn attack by al-Shabab militants on the Manda Bay Airfield, which is used by the U.S. and Kenyan militaries, left one U.S. service member and two private contractors dead. After the attack in Lamu, CSOs

were unable to conduct normal activities because of security measures introduced by the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) and other government entities.

The Kenyan economy was hit hard by the pandemic in 2020. Containment measures, behavioral responses to the virus, and the disruption of trade and travel dampened domestic economic activity. Growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at just 1.4 percent in 2020, down from 5.4 percent in 2019, according to the African Development Bank. Unemployment increased sharply as revenues dropped, and the budget deficit grew to 7.5 percent of GDP in fiscal year 2020–21 as social and health expenditures increased. Kenya received approximately \$2 billion in pandemic-related support, including \$1 billion from the World Bank and \$739 million from the Rapid Credit Facility of the International Monetary Fund.

The overall sustainability of the Kenya CSO sector was unchanged in 2020. CSOs' public image showed slight improvement as they heightened their visibility on social media, and public views of CSOs were generally positive. All other dimensions of sustainability were unchanged.

The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Coordination Board in the Ministry of the Interior has yet to release information about the number of NGOs operating in Kenya in 2020. In 2019, the board reported that 8,893 NGOs were presumed to be active. More than 300,000 community-based organizations (CBOs) were registered as residential associations in 2013, the last year for which data are available. No information is available about the number of CSOs registered as companies limited by guarantee, societies, or trusts.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.5



The legal environment did not change in 2020. CSOs continue to register under the NGO Act No. 19 (1990), Companies Act (2017), Societies Act (2012), or Chapter 164 of the Laws of Kenya governing trusts. Organizations can register as companies limited by guarantee in a relatively fast and easy process that requires only a decision of the company boards followed by approval by the registrar of companies. Registration as a society or NGO or incorporation as a trust is more bureaucratic. CSOs registering as societies must file applications with the Registrar of Societies within twenty-eight days of their formation. To register as trusts, organizations prepare trust deeds, submit them for stamp duties, and then file them with the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning. Organizations registering as NGOs, which are the most visible type of organization, file applications and

supporting documents with the NGO Coordination Board, which has one month to process the applications. CBOs register with the Department of Gender and Social Services in the locations in which they will operate.

In 2020, a breakdown in communications between the main office of the NGO Board in Nairobi and its branch office in Mombasa caused unusually long waits for responses to registration applications. When the responses finally came, the board often required applicant organizations to clarify particular issues. The board does not always acknowledge receipt of reports or provide feedback on submitted applications. Organizations that do not qualify for registration are not provided with reasons for the denial.

The NGO Board has imposed burdensome requirements for CSOs to document their operations. For example, organizations must file mandatory annual financial reports with the NGO Board and seek approval from the board for any changes in bank accounts and signatories, which CSOs' boards of directors must first approve and report in meeting minutes. Furthermore, the NGO Board has a specific format in which minutes must be presented, which can be quite tedious to use.

In 2020, the government made little progress in implementing the Public Benefits Organization (PBO) Act of 2013, despite two court orders to do so. The act was passed by the parliament to replace the NGO Coordination Act of 1990 and create a more enabling legal environment for CSOs by introducing an independent regulator,

mandatory government support, and higher standards of governance and management through self-regulation. Consultations between the government and CSOs about the PBO Act continued to be stalled, which stakeholders attributed in part to the government's efforts to maintain control of civic space. In January, the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government assured CSOs that the PBO Act would come into operation after the commencement date was announced in the official gazette, which did not happen during the year.

CSOs did not report any cases of harassment by the authorities in 2020. Since public gatherings were banned, organizations were unable to organize demonstrations, which contributed to the lack of confrontation with the authorities. However, between March and April, twenty-two journalists were harassed, and several were victims of police brutality while reporting after curfew hours.

CSOs are categorized as not-for-profit organizations established for charitable activities or research or the provision of social services rather than profit or personal gain. CSOs rely on donations, which qualify as income subject to tax. The Kenya Revenue Authority tightened its revenue collection in 2020 and frequently notified CSOs about their tax obligations.

CSOs are legally allowed to bid for government contracts. However, they are usually reluctant to do so for fear of damaging their reputations or being subject to requests for bribes. CSOs may accept foreign funding, but the government scrutinizes funding sources to ensure that they do not support terrorism or money laundering.

Lawyers' fees are expensive and beyond the reach of many organizations. CSOs have access to several organizations that offer free legal services. For example, Kituo Cha Sheria offers legal advice to organizations that seek answers to general inquiries or support with litigation, especially if their funding is low. In 2020, Kituo Cha Sheria, in partnership with Amnesty International and Haki Afrika, filed a case on behalf of victims of brutality during police enforcement of the curfew imposed because of the pandemic.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 3.9

CSOs' organizational capacity was stable in 2020.

Kenyan CSOs generally have good relationships with their constituencies but were forced to restructure these relationships to accommodate pandemic restrictions in 2020. For example, the International Budget Partnership (IBP) and its partner organizations, which help marginalized communities advocate for improved services through the budgeting process, switched from meeting physically with constituents to engaging with them virtually through online platforms such as Zoom and WhatsApp. Although the online format slowed down program implementation, the change to virtual meetings allowed IBP to reach even more people at a lower cost. At the local level, however, IBP found that engaging with stakeholders could be difficult, since targeted audiences did not always know how to access online platforms or had poor internet connectivity.



Most CSOs have mission statements and strategic plans with clearly defined visions. CSOs' implementation of their strategic plans is dependent on funding. With limited funding available during the pandemic, some organizations were forced to cut back or revise their activities. For instance, Consumer Unity Trust (CUTs) was unable to build new partnerships with donors, did not receive any new contracts, and thus was unable to reach expected funding levels. In addition, existing donors required CUTs to assess the COVID-19 infection risk for each of its activities. Working with consultants, CUTs substituted online meetings for face-to-face meetings so that it could implement all funded activities planned for the year despite pandemic restrictions. Some organizations revised their activities, since donors found it impractical to fund activities that required movement, given pandemic restrictions. The East Africa Civil Society Organization Forum (EACSOFF), which works on regional trade issues, paused some planned activities to avoid spreading the disease but was able to take advantage of new programs targeting the pandemic to

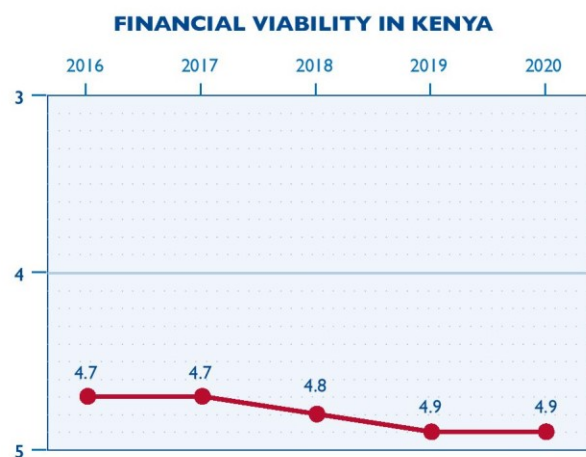
secure additional funding. One of its key activities was to seek ways to ensure that trade between the six partners states of the East African Community continued despite the pandemic.

Most CSOs had proper governance and management structures to enable them to implement their activities. For example, the Tax Justice Network Africa (TJNA) has a secretariat that manages day-to-day operations, an executive council that provides overall leadership, and an advisory council that offers political and technical direction. The highest decision-making organ at EACSO is the general assembly, which meets annually

CSOs usually find staff retention a challenge, since donors do not offer much funding for administrative support, which can induce employees to leave for better-paying jobs with other CSOs or county governments. For example, after CUTs failed to secure new funding, some of its employees accepted positions in other organizations. CSOs typically employ staff on a contractual basis, with contract renewals subject to available funding. In 2020, the Imani Collective faced legal issues when it attempted to temporarily lay off paid employees because it had insufficient resources to implement planned activities. This step caused difficulties with the labor office in Mombasa, which demanded that the Imani Collective pay three months' salary and leave days to furloughed employees. The organization had to meet this demand but then amended the contracts of remaining staff to shield it from future litigation. The African Council for Religious Leaders-Religions for Peace (ACRL-RfP) enabled its staff to work from home during the lockdown by providing equipment and internet access. IBP reduced operating expenses by operating online and did not have to lay off staff.

Depending on their financial ability, some CSOs adjusted to pandemic-related restrictions on movement and assembly by moving their operations online. Most larger CSOs, including Transparency International (TI)-Kenya, Econews Africa, TJNA, Institute for Social Accountability (TISA), and IBP, invested in or enhanced their internet capacity so that they could continue to implement their activities. These investments were often funded by savings in other areas, such as travel and accommodations. Many organizations made financial reimbursements to staff and other users for costs associated with working online. These adjustments were a challenge for most CBOs, which usually lack computers, reliable internet connections, and discretionary funding. The staff of smaller organizations often worked in offices in shifts to meet the COVID-19-mitigation requirements.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 4.9



CSOs' financial viability did not change in 2020.

Development partners are the main source of funding for many CSOs. Many organizations experienced funding uncertainties in 2020. As donors shifted their attention to the pandemic, some organizations were required to revise or pause their activities and experienced funding shortfalls. The Africa Policy Research Institute (APRI), for example, was not able to roll out all of its planned activities because of a loss of funding. Four CUTs projects ended between August and December and were not renewed. Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI) did not obtain new funding but did receive a no-cost extension from its donors that allowed it to complete existing projects. TI-Kenya received funding to support its planned activities and managed to earmark all of its

funding in 2020 for virtual activities. Some organizations saw their financial status improve slightly as the restriction on travel eliminated spending on travel and accommodations. ACRL-RfP, for example, negotiated new terms with its development partners to reallocate savings based on reduced travel costs. IBP also saved on travel and accommodation expenses after moving its operations online.

During the pandemic, CSOs received some support from the private sector. For example, Shining Hope for Communities received funding from several large businesses, including Safaricom, Jumia, Colgate Palmolive, and Kapa, to provide pandemic emergency-response services to 2.4 million people in urban slums. The Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) partnered with Isuzu East Africa to conduct a capacity-building program to improve women's business skills.

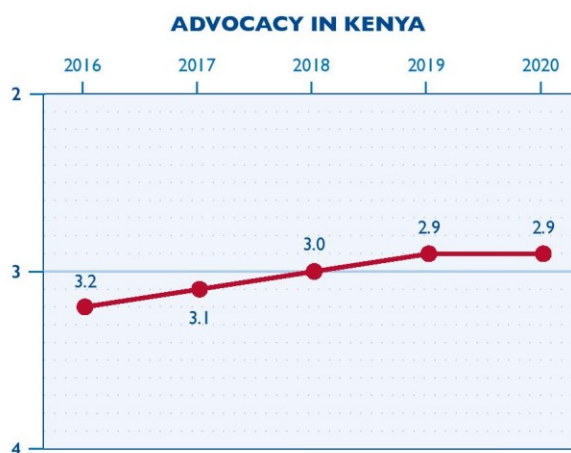
Some organizations managed to innovatively raise funds even with uncertainties caused by the pandemic. The Yetu Initiative, a project funded jointly by USAID and the Aga Khan Foundation, conducted a virtual boot camp in local resource mobilization that helped CSOs raise KES 1 million (approximately \$9,400) in cash and in-kind support from local communities. Thanks to the boot camp, the CBO Pamoja, for example, raised funds to enhance the learning of children living with profound deafness and provide quality hearing aids to students at Maseno School of the Deaf. Activate Action, a CBO, raised funds to provide care packs to street families as a preventative measure against COVID-19. Amref Health Kenya partnered with the Ministry of Health to implement pandemic preventive measures and launched a campaign to educate health workers on COVID-19.

Many CSOs have good financial management practices and keep adequate records of their financial activities, especially if required to do so by donors. NGOs that receive or spend more than KES 1 million (approximately \$9,300) are required to file audited accounts with the NGO Board. CSOs that moved their operations online usually had to obtain permission from their donors to realign their budgets.

ADVOCACY: 2.9

CSO advocacy did not change in 2020.

Kenyan CSOs continued to work effectively to influence government decision making, especially at the county level. EACSOE cooperated with local CSOs and county governments to ensure a continuation in trade in border towns during the pandemic. Uthabiti Africa met with the Kisumu County government to forge partnerships and support policy reforms focused on access to early childhood care, education, and development. The Daraja Civic Forum trained community representatives in informal settlements in Kibra, Mukuru, Mathare, and Huruma to demand transparency about the beneficiaries of expenditures on national budgets. At the national level, MUHURI collaborated with the Financial Coordination Center, Asset Recovery, and Kenya Bankers' Association to develop anti-money-laundering and counterterrorism policies.



In collaboration with Population Services International and the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, TJNA undertook campaigns on tax justice and transparency in company ownership during the pandemic. Econews Africa introduced a tool for online information sharing by mining companies, the government, the community of Kwale, and CSOs. Through live campaigns on Facebook, Econews, in cooperation with Haki Madini Kenya and TI-Kenya, educated Kwale community members about using the tool to bridge information gaps so that they could hold mining companies accountable.

Some CSOs focused their advocacy and watchdog activities on the pandemic itself. For example, NAAC and African Uncensored exposed the COVID-19 Millionaires scandal, which led to investigations by the Kenya Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission. ACRL-RfP worked with the national government to draw up pandemic-related guidelines for places of worship. MUHURI monitored government preparedness for COVID-19 in Mombasa and parts of the coastal region and conducted a survey of the impact of the pandemic on local communities. APRI, TISA, and the Elephant (Africa Uncensored) held an online discussion on the implications of pandemic restrictions on informal trade and food security. The Kenya Editor's Guild (KEG) released press statements castigating the government for its increased attacks on journalists seeking to report on the pandemic, especially during the curfew.

Several CSOs achieved important results on women's issues in 2020. APRI cooperated with international organizations such as the International Food Policy Research Institute to analyze the economic impact of the pandemic from a gender perspective. EACSOE engaged Morans, a warrior group in the Maa community, as champions of women's and girls' rights and raised community awareness about ending gender-based violence (GBV). Naret Ntoyie, a youth CBO that seeks to eliminate harmful cultural practices with transformative projects in rural communities, raised awareness about female genital mutilation, child marriage, and other forms of GBV on

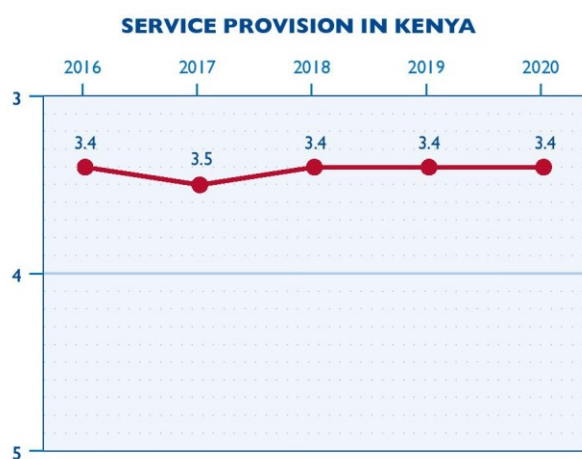
local radio stations. Naret Ntoyie also undertook community dialogues to establish safe places for girls and introduce other measures to curtail teenage pregnancies.

Many advocacy organizations moved to online platforms to continue their work more or less seamlessly at minimal cost. MUHURI, for example, conducted many of its advocacy activities virtually, even though this slowed down implementation.

In lobbying activity, Midrift Hurinet campaigned for enactment of Nakuru County's violence prevention policy, which was passed in 2020, and the county's Peace Building and Conflict Management Bill 2020, also passed in 2020. Midrift Hurinet and other CSOs and stakeholders also championed the Nakuru County Gender and Development Policy 2021–27.

CSOs' efforts to ensure implementation of the PBO Act did not progress in 2020 as the government continued to stall and failed to gazette the commencement date of the PBO Act.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.4



Service provision did not change in 2020.

CSOs continued to provide services and respond to community needs in areas such as emergency and relief assistance, water, health care, education, agriculture, governance, gender, and human rights. For example, the Center for Transformational Leadership (CTL) conducted a community scorecard on health-care services in Laikipia County, in which community members identified maternity services as a leading concern. Action Against Hunger provided food relief to schoolchildren and held a medical camp for pregnant women in West Pokot County. Rural Women Peace Link (RWPL) trained communities in Bungoma, Nandi, West Pokot, and Uasin Gishu counties about human rights, governance processes, and localizing the United Nations

(UN) Security Council Resolution 1325 on women in peace and security. RWPL also engaged communities in the development of community scorecards to measure health-care service delivery. The center shared its findings with county officials, who then introduced maternity services at the Weru dispensary in Subukia. Some organizations had to reduce the volume of their services because of the pandemic. Organizations doing governance work, for example, had to stop or decrease in-person activities such as training workshops and community forums because of restrictions on the size of gatherings.

A large number of CSOs provided services related to the pandemic. Midrift Hurinet provided people in Nakuru County who were adversely affected by COVID-19 with food vouchers, soap, and water tanks, with funding from Dignity and the Danish Emergency Relief Fund. Uraia Trust partners adjusted their ongoing activities, which mostly focus on accountability, to raise public awareness about the virus. For example, CTL distributed messaging through posters, radio stations, and social media. The CSO Forum in Nakuru County, with funding from SNV Netherlands, raised awareness and put up needed infrastructure in schools and vulnerable households. In collaboration with the Mombasa County CSO Network, MUHURI provided personal protective equipment to health institutions, with funding from the Norwegian Embassy.

Many CSOs moved at least part of their activities and services online because of pandemic-related restrictions. For example, ACRL–RfP conducted awareness-raising sessions about pandemic guidelines online, and the Daraja Civic Forum used social media to provide information about pandemic protocols. However, limited financial capacity and poor connectivity with beneficiaries was sometimes a barrier to such efforts.

CSOs usually offer their services free of charge since they are funded by donors. Most CSOs are not involved in income-generating activities or, if they are, raise only small amounts.

County governments recognize the contributions of CSOs that provided support in critical areas underfunded by the national government, such as early childhood development. For example, Daraja Civic Forum, a grassroots organization that seeks to enhance access to early learning, worked closely with the Nairobi City County government in 2020 to ensure responsive caregiving for children in informal settlements. The Nairobi City County government also recognized the Early Childhood Network for its help in developing policy frameworks for childcare facilities.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 3.6

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector was stable in 2020.

CSO resource centers, such as the Kenya Human Resource Commission (KHRC)'s Ndula Center in Kiambu County, Mapaka Center in Makueni County, and KCA Center for Journalists in Kisumu County, operated at minimal levels in 2020 because of pandemic restrictions. Online operations were also limited.

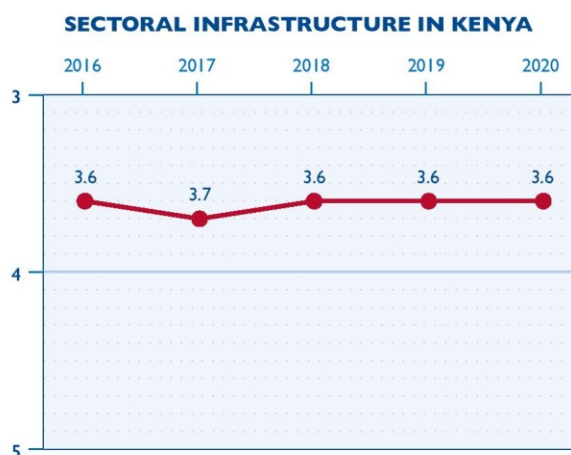
The Yetu initiative of the Aga Khan Foundation and USAID supported CSOs' local fundraising campaigns in 2020. KCDF provided funding under its Pamoja4Change program, which seeks to encourage local giving, and provided in-kind support to TechSoup Kenya's programs, which help organizations obtain software and cloud services at discounted prices.

CSOs continued to collaborate in 2020. The Health Rights Advocacy Forum, a coalition of CSOs working in the health-care sector, helped equip the Itunduimuni Health Center in Masinga Sub County, Machakos County, after developing a successful funding proposal. Access to Medicines platform, a coalition of CSOs advocating for sexual and reproductive health and rights, supported the review and formulation of relevant policies in Kisumu and Narok counties. TI-Kenya leveraged its partnership with the Center for Law and Research International to undertake a social audit of the health sector in Vihiga County, which, because of the pandemic, was facilitated by local CSOs. In 2020, TI-Kenya collaborated with the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya to produce and disseminate the Kenya Bribery Index 2019.

MUHURI and the Kenya Red Cross provided training on COVID-19 prevention to networks of CSOs in the coastal region. Access to Medicines trained its members on issues related to resource mobilization, budget advocacy and tracking, and gender responsive budgeting. The Kenya Civil Society Platform on Oil and Gas (KCSPOG) developed a training manual for media and CSOs on petroleum revenue management and sector-specific transparency and accountability reporting. CSRG, the Poverty Eradication Network, Community Research In Environment and Development Initiatives, and Ujamaa hosted a CSO forum in Nyeri County to discuss electoral and governance reforms.

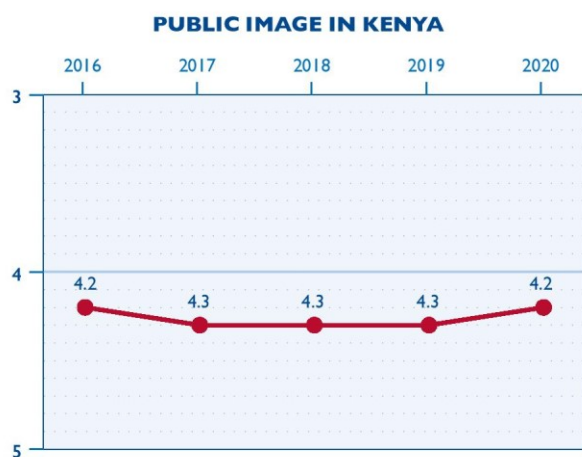
CSOs collaborated actively with the media in 2020. For example, the media exposé on the COVID-19 millionaires was based on joint research by NAAC and African Uncensored, an investigative media house. The Media Council of Kenya trained journalists on responsible reporting that would not violate the privacy rights of persons infected by COVID-19, as well as safety guidelines to reduce risks associated with the pandemic. KEG trained journalists on factual, fair, and accurate reporting and the detection and countering of fake news and disinformation. in online and traditional media.

CSOs continued to engage with national and county government entities on joint activities in 2020. For example, TI-Kenya collaborated with Global Financial Integrity and the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights to sensitize the public about the new Companies (Beneficial Ownership Information) Regulations of 2020 and their operationalization. APRI worked with UN Women, Commission for Revenue Allocation, and the governments of Busia, Samburu, Kilifi, Turkana, and Isiolo counties on the public expenditure management cycle.



Among CSOs' partnerships with the private sector, the Collaborative Center for Gender and Development and EACSOFF worked with the Mastercard Foundation to sensitize women and youth in Kwale County to the importance of menstrual hygiene and launched a GBV national hotline. KCDF worked with Isuzu East Africa's corporate social responsibility program to provide training and mentorship on starting small businesses, financial literacy, goal setting, leadership skills, and personal branding as part of their capacity building to empower women economically.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.2



CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020 as the transition to online activities heightened their visibility on social media and public views of CSOs were generally positive.

Mainstream media do not generally cover work performed by CSOs. This tendency was even more pronounced during the pandemic, when the harassment of journalists by security forces and politically motivated groups had a chilling effect on media coverage of civic issues. However, as CSOs' transitioned to online activities in 2020, their presence on social news media increased. For example, TISA and APRI took part in an online discussion about the impact of the pandemic on the informal sector hosted by Africa Uncensored. Radio also provided some coverage of CSOs' activities,

including TI-Kenya's discussions on Radio Kaya 93.1 FM about the operationalization of the beneficial ownership regulations.

The public is positive about the work of CSOs and tends to trust them more than government. The public views CSOs as its partners and links to the government since they are more easily able to access information about government activities. CSOs engaged in policy and accountability issues are seen as the voice of citizens, especially marginalized groups, in policy-making processes, while organizations offering services in sectors such as health care and agriculture are perceived as partners in local development and poverty reduction.

Government perceptions of CSOs vary, depending on their activities. County governments usually see CSOs as development partners if they work in areas that the government is unable to fund, such as early childhood development. For example, the government of Elgeyo Marakwet County has signed open governance partnership agreements with CSOs and is receptive to working with them on development projects. At the same time, some county governments seem to fear that CSOs are working against their interests and therefore seek to control CSOs' activities. The Uasin Gishu County government, for example, requires CSOs operating in the county to share their work plans to ensure adequate coordination of common activities. The national government does not usually question the quality of work by international organizations but may question whom they represent and whether they have local representation.

CSOs serve a watchdog role over private-sector operations, especially if they concern human rights violations. For example, KHRC and Ndula Resource Center have advocated against bad governance, human rights abuses, and the displacement of host communities by the operations of Kakuzi Limited, an agricultural cultivation and manufacturing company. Given CSOs' ongoing litigation and public campaigns emphasizing human and community rights, the relationship between Kakuzi Limited and the CSOs is not cordial.

Many CSOs increased their use of social media to provide updates on their activities in 2020. International CSOs such as Oxfam International, ActionAid Kenya, International Budget Partnership, TI-Kenya, and TJNA often took part in social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. They usually have communication teams to handle their media events and generate publicity.

Larger CSOs, such as Amref Health Africa and Access to Medicines platform, produce timely annual and financial reports. TJNA has placed its financial and procurement procedures manual in the public domain as part of its

transparency initiatives. Many larger CSOs in Kenya have codes of conduct, but they are rare among smaller CSOs, which instead rely on statements of their core values to guide their professional conduct.

LIBERIA

Capital: Monrovia
Population: 5,214,030
GDP per capita (PPP): \$1,428
Human Development Index: Low (0.480)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (60/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.9



Liberia confirmed its first COVID-19 case in March 2020. President George Weah declared a state of emergency on April 8, which the legislature approved for sixty days. Under the lockdown, schools and houses of worship were closed, and people could leave their homes only for medical purposes or to obtain essential commodities. As the number of cases of the virus rose, the state of emergency was extended into the summer. In cooperation with the United Nations (UN) World Food Program, the government established an LRD 5 billion (approximately \$25 million) Household Food Support Program to help socially disadvantaged groups in Liberia's fifteen counties who were affected by the pandemic.

The number of rape cases in Liberia rose steeply in 2020, not only because of the pandemic but also because of the low rate of conviction of those charged with the crime. In September 2020, largely in response to CSO advocacy, the president declared the rapid increase in rape a national emergency and established a security taskforce to oversee the fight against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), with an initial budget of LRD 400 million (approximately \$2 million).

Liberia's banking sector continued to struggle in 2020. In May, the government filed corruption charges against former senior officials of the Central Bank of Liberia who were involved in a scandal over the printing of banknotes in 2018. The National Legislature amended the law to give the Central Bank more operational autonomy and restore confidence in the banking sector. By December, however, chronic shortages of Liberian dollars strained the public's ability to purchase essential goods and services in the country's cash-based economy. In mid-term senatorial elections in December 2020, citizens reacted to the economic hardship by voting against the ruling party, the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC). Eight propositions, including a reduction in the duration of presidential and legislative terms, failed to pass in a referendum.

Liberia's real gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated by the African Development Bank to contract by 3.1 percent in 2020 because of the pandemic, coupled with currency depreciation, rising inflation, and a major decline in exports. An estimated 64 percent of Liberians live below the poverty line, and 1.3 million people live in extreme poverty, according to the World Food Program. In June 2020, the International Monetary Fund approved a \$50 million disbursement to help Liberia cope with the pandemic.

CSO sustainability showed overall deterioration in 2020. The legal environment weakened slightly as laws affecting CSOs were poorly implemented. CSOs' organizational capacity was slightly weaker because of staffing difficulties and challenges with remote work online. CSOs faced a slight decline in financial viability as donors postponed the disbursement of funds because of the pandemic. CSOs' service provision was moderately weaker because of

pandemic-related declines in funding and restrictions on movement and assembly. CSOs' advocacy, sectoral infrastructure, and public image did not change.

The Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Coordination Unit of the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Development accredited 710 (587 local and 123 international) CSOs in 2020, compared to 639 organizations in 2019. These figures only cover CSOs that apply for accreditation rather than all CSOs operating in the country. The number of unregistered organizations is thought to be high. Most of them exist in name only but are often quickly reactivated when grant opportunities arise.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.1



The legal environment for CSOs weakened slightly in 2020 as laws affecting CSOs were poorly implemented.

CSOs are governed by the Government-CSO Partnership Policy of 2006 and CSO Accord of 2012. These documents are the foundation of the National Aid and NGO Policy, which was passed by the President's Cabinet in 2019. Generally considered by CSOs to offer a positive framework for their work, the policy lays out the government's responsibilities to CSOs and mechanisms by which CSOs can hold the government accountable. The policy increases the government's ability to investigate CSO financing to curb money laundering and imposes limits on the number of foreign staff that CSOs may hire. The policy was officially validated in September 2020, although parts of it, such as

the annual reporting requirement, went into effect before the formal validation. During the last quarter of 2020, the government focused more on making sure CSOs understood the policy and its implications than on implementing its key tenets.

Although the laws are favorable for CSO registration, their implementation is inconsistent. To obtain legal status, CSOs register with the Liberian Business Registry for tax purposes, obtain accreditation from the NGO Coordination Unit, and then sign memoranda of understanding with the government ministries or agencies responsible for the sectors in which they will work. The failure to present required documentation slows down the accreditation of many CSOs. The process is also prolonged if an organization intends to work on controversial issues or takes a critical stance against the government. CSOs that align themselves with the government or remain neutral on controversial issues tend to face few barriers in registration. Organizations may operate without formal recognition, because no law compels them to obtain accreditation after they register with the Business Registry. However, unaccredited organizations may not apply for support from the government or foreign donors.

Registered CSOs must submit program reports to the NGO Coordination Unit and shorter activity reports to line ministries and renew their accreditations yearly. Organizations with budgets of \$50,000 or more must submit annual audited financial statements during reaccreditation, although this rule is not strictly enforced. The NGO Coordination Unit did not perform as many in-person inspections as usual in 2020, since many CSOs were not fully operational during the pandemic.

Although the constitution guarantees freedoms of assembly and expression, many CSOs believed that these freedoms were repressed in the case of organizations and media that did not support the government in 2020. In January, a prominent talk show host who was an outspoken critic of the government fled Liberia after the government sought his arrest on claims that he had entered the country on a forged laissez-passer. In April, the Press Union of Liberia vowed to pursue legal challenges against any effort by state prosecutors to shut down media outlets for disseminating "fake news" during the state of emergency, claiming that the government was using the health crisis to clamp down on the press. The same month, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reported that at least four journalists covering the pandemic in Liberia had been intimidated, detained, or physically assaulted in the course of their work. One of the journalists was called in for questioning for alleging corruption and the unequal application of quarantine rules by the government, and another was questioned after recording a group of

officers enforcing social-distancing rules in Monrovia. In July, a reporter with a private radio station was attacked by fifteen officers from the Drug Enforcement Agency after he photographed them arresting a motorcyclist. According to CPJ, the officers slapped, punched, and kicked the reporter before releasing him without charges.

A major public issue in 2020 was the death of four workers at the Liberia Revenue Authority. Although the public inquest and report did not find foul play in three of the four deaths, much of the public did not believe the report. The incident instilled fear in CSO activists advocating for justice, who believed that the government was targeting public-sector workers who were trying to expose corruption and that if no one was held accountable for the disappearances, the same would happen if CSO staff went missing. CSOs were again frightened in October by reports that key political actors were under daily surveillance by unknown agents. The sense of repression was reinforced during a protest in October demanding an investigation into the disappearance and presumed death of three young employees of the St. Moses Funeral Home. The police fired tear gas at the protesters, seized the equipment of two journalists covering the event, and arrested and jailed several protesters, who were later released. The Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL), Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD), Naymote Partners for Democratic Development (Naymote-Liberia), Accountability Lab Liberia, and other CSOs sought to hold the government accountable for the incident by issuing a statement saying they were deeply troubled by the wave of insecurity and panic across the country. The Civil Society Human Rights Advocacy Platform urged the government to adopt a national guideline specifying the role of state security forces during the state of emergency to avoid the violence that marred the 2014 Ebola response.

CSOs are exempt from taxes on their income unless they engage in profit-making business activities or other activities inconsistent with their charitable purpose. In such cases, they must pay taxes on the additional income. CSOs must also pay taxes on salaries. Many CSOs are not fully compliant with all of their tax obligations, although most donors prefer to work with CSOs that pay their taxes and include these expenses in their project budgets.

CSOs may earn income from the provision of goods and services, compete for government contracts, and receive funds from foreign sources.

Local CSOs find it difficult to hire qualified legal counsel because of their limited resources. However, some CSOs receive legal support either from board members with legal backgrounds or through pro bono legal representation.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.2

CSOs' organizational capacity was slightly weaker in 2020 because of staffing difficulties and challenges with remote work online. CSOs are financed mainly by donors and international organizations, which offer minimal funding for overhead costs and seem more concerned about project completion than CSOs' institutional growth. Staffing weaknesses were particularly troubling during the year. The health crisis also damaged the capacity of many CSOs to reach out to their constituencies.

CSOs stayed involved in many community activities in 2020, including advocating on issues that were of concern to their beneficiaries. Most CSOs focus on urban communities, and only a few organizations, such as Last Mile Health, have an interest in rural areas. CSOs have built the trust of their beneficiaries over the years, and many groups now cooperate with CSOs to improve their communities' well-being. However, in implementing projects, CSOs are sometimes not truthful with their constituencies or their donors and do not spend all project funds on meeting beneficiaries' needs. For example, in January 2020, The Last Well was alleged to have exaggerated its results and employed uncertified contractors for a project to provide safe drinking water to residents of five counties. These and similar reports make it difficult for reputable organizations to find donors who will trust them with funding. In addition, other CSOs working in the



same communities lose credibility with community members because of the actions of a few organizations that are less than transparent.

Many CSOs in Liberia lack clear visions for their work. CSOs often do not have annual work plans and wait for donors or the government to support their programs rather than creating the tools they need to achieve their stated missions and goals. CSOs that are serious about their work and seek to develop programs aligned with their visions, such as iCampus, CENTAL, IREDD, Naymote-Liberia, and Accountability Lab Liberia, are in the minority. Most CSOs direct their efforts to areas that donors are willing to fund. CSOs sometimes complain that when they design programs that will unfold over several years, they wind up having to redesign them to fit the demands of donors. For example, CSOs working on SGBV may find that in a particular year, donors are not focused on this area, and they must redesign their programs to adapt to available funding opportunities. CSOs often engage in projects in multiple areas, which can also distract them from their original purpose.

Many CSOs do not have defined internal structures to help their organizations grow. Because of poor capacity, CSO management teams and boards do not perform their duties adequately. International organizations and the Liberian public have identified poor leadership and unmet responsibilities as a major problem among Liberian CSOs. CSOs also find it difficult to ensure that their policy documents strengthen their institutions, since there is often a gap between written policies and actual practices. This is evident, for example, in the management of human and financial resources and program design.

CSOs' staffing challenges were especially acute in 2020, as many CSOs lacked funding to hire permanent paid staff. Many organizations also lacked funding to pay for highly qualified employees or offer professional development to core staff. Donors and international organizations often contribute to staffing problems by poaching good staff from local CSOs with offers of much larger salaries. Departing staff often represent a considerable investment by local organizations, which may have spent years developing employees' skills in areas such as payroll management, accounting, and information technology. Staff departures can leave critical, hard-to-fill gaps and discourage local organizations from building employees' capacity for fear that they will be poached by international organizations. CSOs complain that finding volunteers to work without pay has always been a difficult challenge, but now recruiting paid employees is just as hard.

Liberian CSOs are comfortable using modern technologies, and most organizations rely on social media to communicate. Although Liberia has one of the most expensive internet markets in the world, Orange Liberia and MTN Liberia, the two largest mobile network providers, provide free internet connections to a few CSOs. They also reduced their rates during the pandemic. Donor organizations and private businesses have helped CSOs build their capacity in using internet-based technologies and sometimes provide computers and funds for internet subscriptions and other communication expenses. Nevertheless, many CSOs did not have sufficient technological infrastructure or financial resources to support remote work after pandemic-related restrictions forced many staff to work from home in 2020. Limited or unstable electricity supplies were also an impediment to remote work during the lockdown. Some smaller organizations struggled to adapt to internet-based platforms and lacked the skills needed to use apps such as Zoom.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.1

CSOs' financial viability deteriorated slightly in 2020. Liberia is one of the poorest countries in the world, with an underfunded CSO sector and a discouraging fundraising environment. CSOs faced funding vulnerabilities in 2020 as major donors such as the Daphne Foundation postponed disbursements because of the pandemic.

Most CSOs rely on foreign funding, which has dropped steeply from levels in the immediate post-war years and the aftermath of the Ebola crisis. In 2020, the major donors to Liberian CSOs were the governments of the United States, Germany, France, Sweden, and Denmark and the Qatar Charity, according to the Financial Tracking Service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Other major donors included the European Union (EU) and Global Environment Facility. Funding from some donors, such as the EU, remained static in 2020, while other donors, such as the U.S. government and World Bank, increased their commitments. Much of this funding was directed to the government's pandemic response, which did not incorporate Liberian CSOs, although several donors, including the UN Development Programme (UNDP), funded CSOs directly. International partners seemed interested in working largely with service-providing organizations and overlooked advocacy CSOs, especially if they

engaged on topics that are highly political. CSOs often struggle to raise funds from international sources, because they lack the capacity to write grant applications and do not have direct access to funding agencies.



The government rarely provides direct grants or contracts to CSOs, other than small amounts to organizations providing services that complement the government’s agenda. The government did not incorporate local CSOs in its pandemic response in 2020. For example, funding for the distribution of food aid was channeled through the World Food Program, and cash transfers to students were disbursed through GiveDirectly.

Business organizations generally support CSO service delivery through their corporate social responsibility programs. International companies are usually required in concessions agreements to support CSOs. All major banks and mobile phone companies have active partnerships with CSOs. In 2020, the steel and mining

company ArcelorMittal Liberia announced that it would disburse \$800,000 for community development projects in agriculture, education, roads and bridges, water, health and hygiene, community cohesion and peacebuilding, and housing in the vicinity of its plants in Nimba, Grand Bassa, and Bong counties. Multiple businesses donated food and sanitation materials to orphanages and other institutions in need.

Given Liberia’s lack of a culture of giving and necessary infrastructure such as credit cards, many CSOs have grown indifferent in recent years to discussions about building their financial capacity and creating an environment conducive to fundraising. However, in 2020, an explosion in local fundraising helped support disadvantaged communities during the pandemic. This fundraising was mainly ad hoc and led by individuals, especially young people. The initiatives often relied on mobile money and online campaigns to mobilize members of networks to contribute funds. For example, Camp for Peace Liberia raised nearly \$2,000 during an emergency appeal to fight COVID-19. Some of the funding eventually was turned over to CSOs for pandemic-related projects. Teach for Liberia (TFL) received funding from a local foundation to provide relief such as food and sanitary supplies to underprivileged communities. Some observers are hopeful that the uptick in giving will solidify into a permanent practice, although it is difficult to predict whether local fundraising will be as effective in non-emergency contexts.

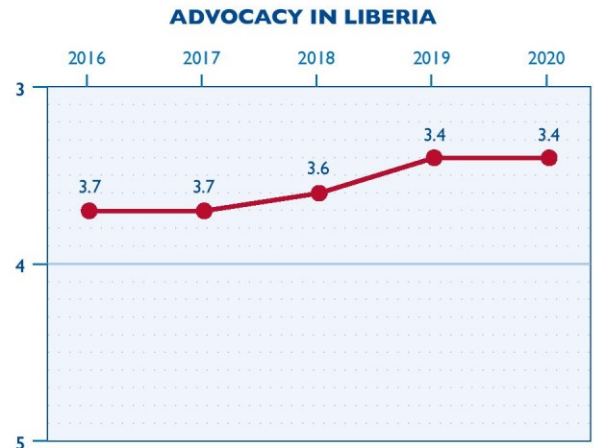
A few organizations rent out their facilities to earn income. For example, SMART Liberia, an organization that equips young people with technical and entrepreneurial skills, made rentals one of its core activities in 2020 because it could not host students on campus. Most CSOs lack the capacity to use online technologies and the extensive networks needed to support online campaigns. A few organizations, such as iCampus, Accountability Lab Liberia, and LEAD Monrovia Football Academy, successfully used social media to raise funds for their programs in 2020.

Most CSOs have weak financial management systems and operate with little transparency concerning their finances. CSOs usually cannot afford to obtain professional financial management services or hire qualified financial management staff. They often do not produce financial statements that adhere to widely accepted accounting standards. Most CSOs do not conduct independent audits because of the high cost. In 2020, Liberian organizations continued to face questions from donors about the adequacy of their financial management. Some CSOs argued that it is unfair to characterize their financial systems as weak when local laws set different standards than those applicable to donors and international CSOs.

ADVOCACY: 3.4

CSO advocacy was stable in 2020. Many CSOs shied away from engaging in controversial topics, and activists were afraid and even feared for their lives after the government sought to arrest a talk show host who was critical of its policies despite lacking evidence that he had committed a crime. At the same time, CSOs scored several important advocacy successes, including an audit of the government’s pandemic response, the president’s declaration of rape as a national emergency, and the launch of the National Aid and NGO Policy.

Formal and informal lines of communication exist between CSOs and policymakers at both the central and local levels. CSOs are usually invited to provide input into government programs and validate national policies, although their level of involvement varies by sector. For example, the Ministry of Education’s Education in Emergency program includes many CSO representatives on its various committees, and CSOs are actively involved in developing scripts and distributing materials for the government’s remote learning program. CSOs serve on many ministerial committees and technical working groups and cooperate with policy makers on issues of importance to their communities. For example, in 2020, the Ministry of Justice allowed the Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA) to visit overcrowded prison compounds to identify prisoners in long pre-trial detentions. LNBA advocated for the expedited and safe release of hundreds of pre-trial detainees to stop the spread of COVID-19, and it also provided the prisoners with aid such as food. From April to June, LNBA’s advocacy triggered the court-ordered release of nearly 200 pre-trial detainees.



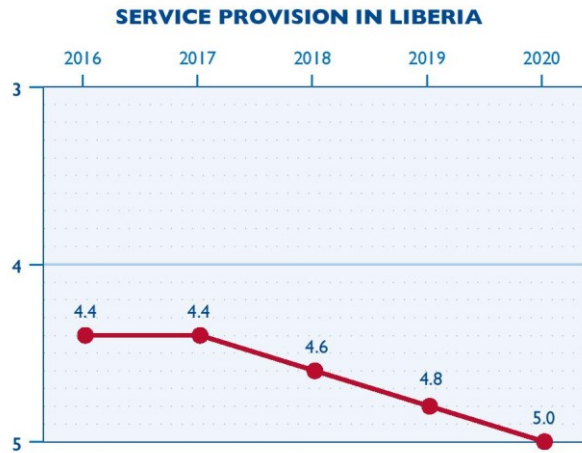
While policy makers generally welcome opportunities to work with CSOs, most government officials are uncomfortable sharing information, and the government’s lack of transparency remains a challenge to effective advocacy work. For example, CSOs were unable to obtain information about the mysterious deaths of employees of the Liberia Revenue Authority and the disappearance of employees of St. Moses’ Funeral Home in 2020. In April 2020, IREDD, Naymote–Liberia, Accountability Lab Liberia, CENTAL, and other organizations called on the government to account for all resources spent on the pandemic response. In response, Liberia’s General Auditing Commission (GAC) published a full audit of the government’s pandemic response in December 2020. But while these leading organizations were consistently outspoken in their advocacy, other organizations carried out their advocacy campaigns quietly and at a low level, focusing on less controversial topics such as child abuse. Some organizations pulled back from advocacy altogether because they did not want the government to see them as unsupportive of its agenda.

An important advocacy campaign in 2020 was the effort of an ad hoc group of CSOs composed of the Affiliation of Women and Child Rights Advocates, the Liberian Children’s Parliament, and other organizations to raise awareness about the prevalence of rape in the country. Following three days of national protests and repeated calls to the government to act, these groups were able to get the president to declare rape as a national emergency and establish a national task force to oversee efforts to fight SGBV. However, the president chose not to meet with the protesters, which was one of their demands. Three CSOs received funding from the EU and UN for a project to curb SGBV in Montserrado, Nimba, and Grand Cape Mount counties by increasing awareness at the community level.

CSOs are comfortable with lobbying but often unsuccessful in achieving their desired results, especially because members of the legislature are often slow to respond to CSOs’ requests. In 2020, a group of CSOs known as the Coalition for Legislative Advocacy unsuccessfully petitioned the legislature to set up a committee of experts to conduct an independent review of all loans and grants received by the government, the legality of their acquisition, and the government’s use of funds to fight the pandemic. The coalition said its action would increase public confidence and erase speculation about corruption and the misappropriation of public funds. CSOs also expressed concerns about details of a stimulus package and the Household Food Support Program, which were not shared with the public.

The launch of the National Aid and NGO Policy of Liberia in September 2020 culminated years of effort by CSOs to reform the legal framework for the sector. Many CSOs and CSO coalitions contributed to various drafts of the policy, suggesting, for example, that the accreditation and reporting schedule be changed from every year to every three years and provisions be included that would allow CSOs to hold the government accountable for not fulfilling its obligations.

SERVICE PROVISION: 5.0



CSO service provision deteriorated moderately in 2020 as funding declined and pandemic-related restrictions on movement and assembly prevented CSOs from reaching their targeted groups. Many service-providing CSOs that were not directly involved in COVID-19 relief efforts scaled down their operations and staffing. For example, SMART Liberia, which focuses on improving students' access to college and supporting young entrepreneurs, delivered its programs remotely and operated with only a core team of essential program staff. After the government closed schools, other CSOs without the means or expertise to deliver services online closed down their educational programs completely.

CSOs provide services in many fields, including health, education, and energy. In 2020, CSOs helped meet

pandemic-related needs by raising awareness and distributing cash and food. For example, Last Mile Health and International Rescue Committee partnered with the Ministry of Health to erect billboards across Monrovia to increase awareness of preventative measures and ways to access health-care services. CSOs established a task force that engaged in many activities to stop the spread of COVID-19, drawing on lessons learned during the fight against Ebola. For example, iCampus helped the public understand that washing hands and following other preventative measures can prevent infection.

Some CSOs focused on health care continued to provide routine services with COVID-related activities embedded into them. But CSOs' provision of certain key health-care services declined because of the pandemic. For example, the number of outpatient consultations, prenatal hospital visits, and childhood immunizations declined because of pandemic restrictions and the redirection of resources to the pandemic response, according to the Global Financing Facility. Many CSO workers were reluctant to work in hospitals and other health-care facilities for fear of contracting the disease, especially after many of their colleagues died during the Ebola crisis. Many organizations focused instead on educating citizens about COVID-19 and distributing food and sanitation supplies to local communities.

Because CSOs are dependent on donor funding, they usually implement projects that reflect donor priorities without properly consulting with their constituents. Many CSOs complain that it is too expensive to organize community consultations if they must pay beneficiaries to attend the meetings, as is usually the practice. Local and, more often, international organizations usually collect data at the end of projects to assess the success of their interventions. For example, Solidaridad Liberia and Tear Fund Liberia hired external firms to conduct evaluations of their agricultural projects in rural Liberia.

CSOs generally provide their goods and services without discrimination on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation. For example, the Liberian Albinism Society runs a medical center that treats non-albinos, and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Clinic caters to non-Muslims.

Most CSOs do not seek to recover the costs of service provision, since they usually work with constituencies that cannot afford to pay. Among the few CSOs that offer paid services, the Liberia Media for Democratic Initiatives (LMDI) produces programs on good governance and peaceful co-existence that are broadcast across the country, with funding from UNDP, USAID, and other donors.

The government recognizes the value of CSO service provision at the local and national levels. In 2020, the Ministry of Education acknowledged organizations such as U-Movement and Rising Academy for helping with the design and implementation of the government's distance learning program.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.8

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector did not change in 2020.

Liberia's resource centers and intermediary support organizations (ISOs) are few in number and provide limited support to the CSO sector. Two of the major resource centers are iCampus in Monrovia and Development Education Network of Liberia (DEN-L) in Gbarnga, which offer training, rental space, internet access, and logistical support. iCampus rental rates and internet costs are typically too high for local CSOs, especially in 2020, when the pandemic caused the financial viability of many organizations to decline. However, iCampus host several free virtual and in-person events during the year. DEN-L offers hostel and catering services that are cheaper than they would be in

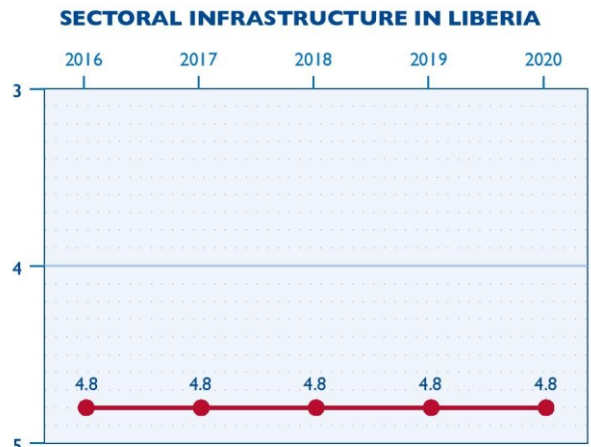
Monrovia, although its main client base still tends to come from Monrovia. Other prominent centers include the Center for Media Studies and Peace Building, which focuses on convening dialogues and workshops, and the Media Resource Center (MRC), which is open to the public and provides free training and services. MRC generates income by renting its space for training and meetings and charging for internet access. Most centers lack funding to offer substantial support in areas such as grant writing and internal procedures, which CSOs feel would be helpful.

Liberia has few local foundations. Those that exist usually implement programs directly, do not have large endowments or extensive structures to support multiple projects, and do not fund CSOs. Some local organizations regrant limited amounts of donor funding to CSOs to work as implementing partners in local communities. For example, DEN-L supports small CSOs through the EU Spotlight Initiative. Most local grantmakers redirected any available funding to the pandemic response in 2020, although several organizations offered limited support to advocacy CSOs.

There are few local coalitions or networks through which CSOs cooperate or share information. The main coalition is the Liberia NGOs Network (LINNK), which unites CSOs working in a variety of sectors and serves as a watchdog, advocate, and lobbyist to improve the quality of governance in Liberia. LINNK cooperates with government bodies and international CSOs to host discussions, organize petitions, and coordinate and monitor fund transfers to local CSOs. Multiple networks with different priorities and members exist in some sectors. For example, the National Education Coalition of Liberia and the Education NGO Forum both provide training, share information, and engage in advocacy on behalf of their members. Most coalitions do not have functioning websites or databases for sharing information about their activities, members, or plans. Organizations typically pay a monthly fee of about \$50 to maintain their memberships, and it is not uncommon for an organization to belong to more than one network.

Liberian CSOs usually enjoy a varied program of training. For example, international organizations offer training programs to employees of local CSOs and government agencies. Most training was suspended in the first part of the year because of the restrictions on movement and the departure of many international organizations. Some training was available to Liberian CSOs in the second half of 2020, although not all organizations that needed training were able to access it. Liberian CSOs had access to training and learning workshops at iCampus on topics such as grant writing, partnership formation, and the impact of COVID-19 on the educational sector. In October 2020, DEN-L hosted twenty CSOs in a capacity-building program on advocacy, management, administration, finance, human resources, and resource mobilization, as part of the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative. The four-year Supporting Effective Advocacy in Liberia project, funded by the EU and implemented by Mercy Corps in partnership with the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, offered training to enhance organizational development and gender mainstreaming at eleven CSOs. Training is usually conducted by experienced local trainers. Most CSO staff receive sitting fees and transportation allowances to attend training provided by USAID and other large donors.

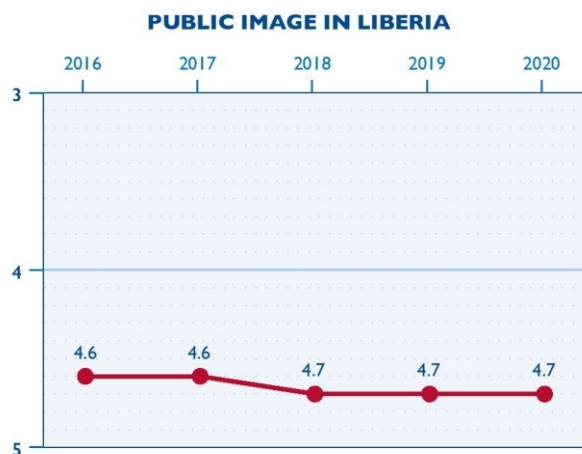
Liberian CSOs engaged in many intersectoral partnerships in 2020. International CSOs, faith-based organizations, and other domestic CSOs supported the government's pandemic relief efforts by donating food and medical



supplies. CSOs also worked on issues of policy and strategy with the ministries of health and education. The Liberia Media Development Program, sponsored by USAID and implemented by Internews, supported Local Voices Liberia's efforts to report from rural Liberia to audiences in urban communities and the diaspora using social media.

CSOs and businesses have a good relationship, and many businesses support CSOs either through direct donations or gifts in kind. For example, the International Bank Liberia has helped the Kids' Educational Engagement Project build a reading room for children. Many businesses supported CSOs and the government's pandemic relief efforts in 2020.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.7



The public image of CSOs was unchanged in 2020.

CSOs rely on the media to enhance civic engagement, disseminate information, and mobilize public support. But the media are selective in their choice of stories, and in 2020, as the government increasingly harassed private media outlets, tensions between the media and CSOs grew more pronounced. While some outlets offered a platform to CSOs to discuss critical national issues, others did not want to cover CSOs' activities or air controversial topics. For example, it was impossible for CSOs that accused the government of corruption to appear on Freedom FM, which is privately owned by a government official. Some media outlets avoided criticizing senior government officials for fear of legal sanctions or to avoid losing revenue from government

advertising, their largest source of revenue, according to the Press Union of Liberia. CSOs must normally pay for coverage from both electronic and print media, which many organizations cannot afford.

Over the years, CSOs have managed to build their credibility with local communities, and citizens depend on them to speak on their behalf. The public greatly supports CSO advocacy and often trusts CSOs more than the central government. In 2020, the public especially appreciated CSOs' efforts to help the families of the missing employees of St. Moses Funeral Home. Communities responded well to CSOs' help during the pandemic and generally observed the protocols and prevention measures endorsed by CSOs.

The government's relationship with CSOs is ambivalent. The government generally does not like or trust their advocacy efforts and sees them as the enemies of its development agenda. This view was evident in 2020, when the government largely excluded CSOs from working on its pandemic-response program, although they had played an active role in the fight against Ebola.

Businesses perceive CSOs as essential actors in developing Liberia and often provide financial donations or gifts in kind or partner with them to deliver services through their corporate social responsibility programs.

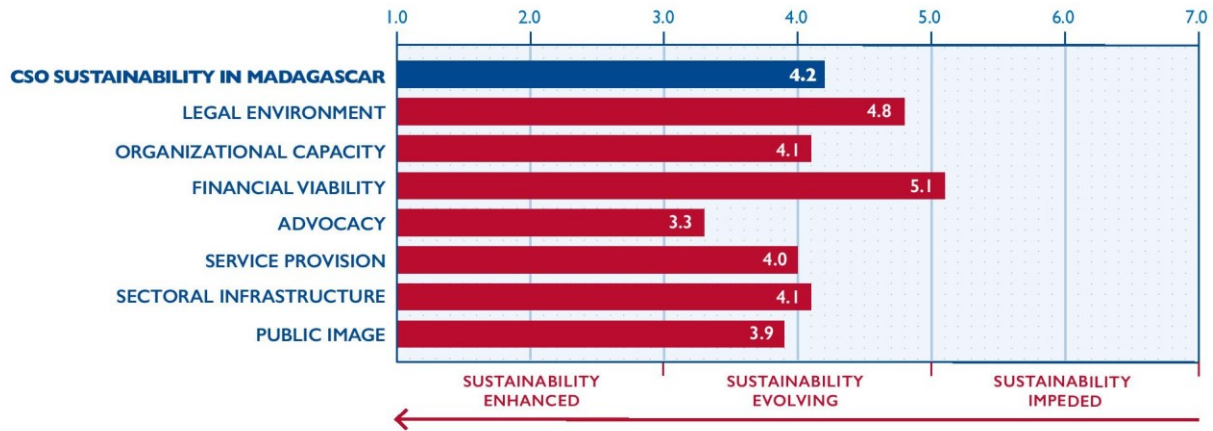
Although CSOs do not have staff devoted to public relations or community affairs, many organizations send out bulletins and radio announcements to communicate about their activities. In 2020, CSOs increasingly used social media such as Facebook to distribute information and communicate with their supporters. For example, the organizers of the protest against the rise in rape during the pandemic used Facebook to distribute information about the protest logistics. Collaborating Political Parties, a merger of four opposition parties and the Council of Patriots, a major opposition pressure group that includes a number of small informal CSOs, used social media in October and November to distribute information and plan protests to pressure the Elections Commission to cancel the 2020 voter roll update.

CSOs are gradually adopting internal code of ethics and otherwise seeking to demonstrate transparency and greater adherence to international best practices. More established CSOs share their annual reports online, but most CSOs do not have websites and do not share their annual reports with the public.

MADAGASCAR

Capital: Antananarivo
Population: 27,534,354
GDP per capita (PPP): \$1,647
Human Development Index: Low (0.528)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (60/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.2



The year 2020 was difficult in Madagascar, as it was marked by climatic disaster, economic downturn, and the pandemic. After the first case of the COVID-19 virus was reported on March 20, the government decreed a nationwide state of health emergency and prepared a multi-sector emergency plan that included the distribution of masks and food kits and money transfers to families affected by the lockdown. Travel was restricted, public demonstrations were banned, and schools, universities, and airports were closed. The International Monetary Fund approved two payments totaling \$337.9 million in emergency support, while bilateral and multilateral partners provided medical equipment and other supplies to health-care centers throughout the country. Despite facing significant challenges of their own, CSOs helped communities overwhelmed by the pandemic while keeping a watchful eye on the management of pandemic funds.

After a peaceful transfer of power through presidential elections in 2019, indirect senatorial elections on December 11, 2020, did not generate much interest among political actors or most of the public. Opposition parties boycotted the elections, claiming that President Andry Rajoelina’s order to reduce the size of the Senate from sixty-three to eighteen members was a power grab rather than an effort to curb government spending, as he claimed. The number of applications for accreditation from election observers filed with the National Independent Election Commission increased by 80 percent. But CSOs’ presence in the field during the election was disappointing, since more than half of accredited organizations did not submit their required reports. About 12,000 mayors and municipal councilors elected twelve new senators, all from parties that supported the president.

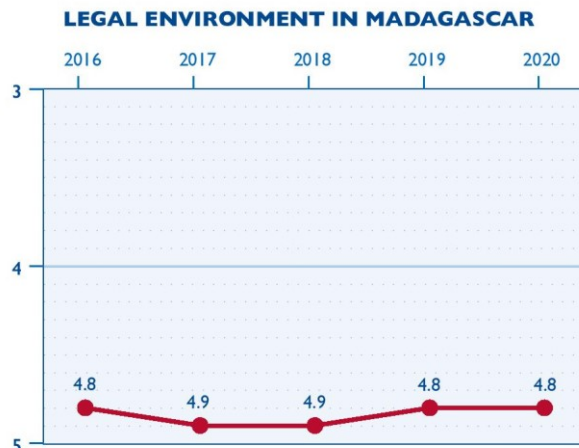
Before the pandemic, Madagascar had begun to make a sustainable economic recovery and was progressing in its fight against poverty, according to the World Bank. The pandemic reversed this trend by causing recession in almost all sectors, with the most extreme losses in the hotel and restaurant, export-oriented manufacturing, and extractive sectors. Low rainfalls and limited water resources in the south pushed food insecurity to the brink of humanitarian disaster, the World Food Program reported. At the same time, heavy rains, cyclones, and floods devastated other regions, adding to the country’s economic challenges. Unemployment grew by more than 25 percent in 2020, according to the African Development Bank, severely stressing the 80 percent of the population living below the poverty line.

CSOs’ overall sustainability improved slightly in 2020 as the sector showed impressive resilience. CSOs’ organizational capacity improved slightly as they continued to develop their internal structures and increasingly used social networks to collaborate. Advocacy was slightly stronger as organizations and coalitions contributed to the government’s decision-making processes and engaged in intense, often successful advocacy campaigns. Service provision also improved slightly as CSOs mobilized to help with the pandemic response. The sectoral

infrastructure showed slight gains as CSOs' participation in the pandemic response encouraged them to come together to combine efforts more effectively. CSOs' public image was slightly enhanced by strong media coverage. CSOs' legal environment and financial sustainability did not change.

Official statistics on the number of CSOs in Madagascar are unavailable. The sector consists of associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), unions, foundations, cooperatives, savings and credit groups, religious and cultural groups, community-based organizations (CBOs), and informal village associations.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.8



There was no change in the overall legal environment governing CSOs in 2020. CSOs may register under various legal regimes. The majority of CSOs obtain legal status as associations under Order No. 60-133 in a simple process that involves submitting an application with a declaration of existence and bylaws. Organizations that choose to register as NGOs under Law 96-030 must also file an application with regional bipartite committees. NGO status opens the door to more funding opportunities as well as the ability to own real estate and generate income. Trade unions register under Decree No. 2011-490 in a similar process. Registration as an association or an NGO is usually completed within two weeks and is rarely denied. The main barriers to registration in 2020 continued to be logistical in nature, such as difficult and time-consuming travel to the offices

of registering authorities.

CSOs may operate freely even without registration, as the right to freedom of association is recognized in the constitution as well as Ordinance No. 60-133. However, in the commune of Antoetra Zafimaniry, in the Amoron'i Mania region, local authorities have required tourist guide associations to register and obtain tax identification numbers before carrying out any activities.

Except as provided under the constitution, CSOs' activities may not be restricted in any way. CSOs have legal protection against any excessive exercise of power by the government. The government is obliged to give reasons for its decisions, such as refusing to authorize demonstrations or suspending or dissolving an organization. If CSOs feel that they have been treated unjustly, they may file appeals with the courts. CSOs are usually reluctant to bring court cases because of the burdensome administrative requirements.

CSOs were generally able to express themselves openly in 2020. They engaged frequently on controversial issues, including the government's management of pandemic-relief funds, its priorities in the national budget, and its respect for human rights. However, CSOs reported some instances of intimidation during the year. The National Platform of CSOs (Plateforme nationale des organisations de la société civile, PFNOSCM) and Organization of Citizens for the Defense of the Common Interest and Good (Organisation des citoyens pour la défense des intérêts et des biens communs, ROHY) labeled the arrest of an activist in February an effort to silence human rights defenders. Similarly, CSOs noted that the head of a coalition of environmental organizations was required to appear in court for the second time in December on trumped-up charges of rebellion, destruction of public property, and arson. CSOs interpreted the case as a warning to environmental activists. Under a pandemic-related ban on the disruption of public order and public safety during exceptional situations, interactive radio shows on various topics with listener call-ins were suspended. Media were required to report only official information about COVID-19 in Madagascar.

The state of health emergency imposed other strictly enforced restrictions on constitutionally guaranteed freedoms of assembly and expression. For example, a demonstration planned by the Union of Nurses and Midwives of Madagascar (Syndicat des infirmiers et sages-femmes de Madagascar, SISFM) to protest their poor working conditions, which was to take place in a hospital, was stopped by officials on the grounds that such gatherings were prohibited during the pandemic.

Associations have minimal internal structures and do not submit annual activity or financial reports. NGOs have more complex structures, including general meetings, boards of directors, management committees, and oversight entities, such as statutory auditors. NGOs must file annual activity or financial reports and detailed operational plans for the following fiscal year. Many organizations neglect to submit the required reports, but this omission is rarely penalized.

CSOs are entitled to few tax or customs exemptions. Religious, social, educational, and cultural associations are exempt from income tax. CSOs with public benefit status, which is granted at the government's discretion largely to charitable, humanitarian, and cultural organizations, are exempt from duties and taxes on profits and transfers. Donations to foundations and organizations with public benefit status are tax deductible within specified limits. CSOs that carry out profit-making activities are subject to the same tax regime as commercial companies unless otherwise agreed. Many CSOs comply with administrative and tax formalities only when it is in their interest to do so. For example, some organizations in southern Madagascar have begun to comply with their tax obligations in order to access donor funding. In 2020, CSOs were entitled to defer their payment of taxes because of the health crisis.

CSOs may engage in fundraising, accept donations and bequests, bid on public tenders, and receive public subsidies and foreign funding. CSOs with public benefit status are eligible for support from the state, provinces, or municipalities. Madagascar lacks a law on social enterprises, but a proposal for such a law is in the works as an initiative of the USAID Hay Tao project, which seeks to create an enabling environment for resilient livelihoods and biodiversity conservation.

No lawyers specializing in CSO law are available in Madagascar, although experienced lawyers in major cities specialize in relevant areas, such as land rights, labor and union laws, environmental law, and freedom of the press. Attorneys' fees are usually unaffordable for CSOs, although large organizations such as Transparency International-Initiative Madagascar (TI-IM) sometimes pay them for specific cases. Several lawyers defend members of civil society, particularly journalists, on a pro bono basis. Only a few CSOs, such as the Alliance Voahary Gasy (AVG) and Bright Future (Bel avenir), have lawyers on their core staff.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.1

CSOs' organizational capacity improved slightly in 2020 as CSOs continued to develop their internal structures and effectively used social networks for collaboration and communication.

Malagasy CSOs strive to maintain good relationships with their beneficiaries and members, normally by prioritizing face-to-face meetings. In 2020, because of restrictions on personal interactions, CSOs sought to stay in touch with their target groups through social networks. The Youth Observatory (Observatoire de la jeunesse), for example, inquired about the expectations of its base via Facebook, thereby enabling it to prepare a list of high-priority needs. As soon as lockdown measures were announced, unions grew concerned about the fate of their members and other private-sector employees and denounced the furloughs, forced leave, and early termination of many workers' contracts. The trade union movement Unionism and Corporate Life (Syndicalisme et vie des sociétés, SVS) strengthened its program to assist both members and non-members and kept this service open seven days a week.

Few organizations engage in multi-year programming adhering to a strategic direction defined by their general assemblies. To obtain funding, Malagasy CSOs are often reduced to serving as service providers to technical and financial partners and must conform to their partners' strategies and objectives. This role can cause Malagasy CSOs to lose their sense of identity, and they may find it difficult to project a vision of themselves into the future. A survey of forty CSOs in the southern region conducted by the Socio-Sanitary Action Relief Organization (Action socio-sanitaire organisation secours, ASOS) in 2020 confirmed this weakness, as none of the respondents reported

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN MADAGASCAR



having a strategic vision. A number of years ago, the general assemblies of a few larger CSOs began to debate their strategic direction and now regularly translate their decisions into multi-year plans. This trend is growing more pronounced as Malagasy CSOs seek to professionalize their work. For example, the Andohatapenaka Development Council (Conseil de développement d'Andohatapenaka, CDA) consistently evaluates its operational, technical, and financial strategies before adopting a new plan every five years. In 2020, Alefa Menabe launched a call for consultants to help it develop a five-year strategic plan and procedural manual.

It is standard practice for CSOs to report to their general assemblies. In some associations, the president makes unilateral decisions and then informs the board of directors after the fact. But in recent years, targeted training has encouraged CSOs to strengthen their internal governance practices. In 2020, the SVS general assembly re-invigorated its governance by revising its statutes, drafting internal regulations, and electing new officers to the national executive board for five-year terms. Similarly, the Peasants' House (Maison des Paysans), which had been in decline for several years, revitalized its operations by requesting its members to review its internal structures and then obtaining public benefit status. Other CSOs have focused on improving their management as membership organizations. The lockdown gave the Youth Observatory, for example, time to update its membership list. These lists are sometimes needed to apply for funding, but at most CSOs, especially informal organizations, they are maintained haphazardly at best.

The lack of financial resources has led to chronic problems with the quality and stability of CSO staff. Staff members are usually engaged for the duration of specific projects, and very few organizations have permanent paid staff who have contracts or are registered with the National Social Security Fund and company health organizations. Most organizations make do with a small, multi-skilled team of about five employees. Exceptionally, CDA employs about 100 salaried staff, volunteers, and trainees. CSOs can occasionally rely on volunteer labor. The Youth Observatory and SVS, for example, rely entirely on the voluntary work of their members, and during the health crisis, many citizens showed solidarity by volunteering to work with local organizations. Volunteers and consultants are usually brought on for limited periods. The impermanence of employment in the CSO sector does not encourage succession planning. However, Fikambanana Fampivoarana ny Tantsaha (FIFATA), a network of farmers' organizations, began to train its executive and board leadership in tandem a few years ago with the aim of strengthening leadership skills while preparing for succession at both the executive and board levels.

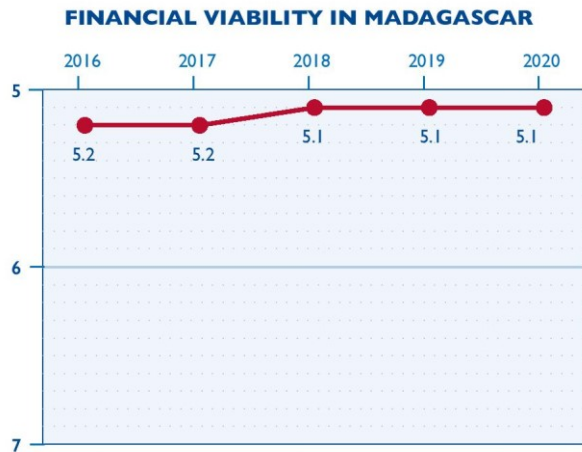
CSOs' limited resources usually prevent them from acquiring or updating computer equipment or purchasing high-speed internet subscriptions. But during the pandemic, CSOs relied heavily on social media or prepaid phone cards to share information and confer. Larger CSOs with good computer systems or the resources to improve their equipment were able to move their work online. For example, the Conference of Workers in Madagascar (Conférence des travailleurs de Madagascar, CTM) organized remote meetings with the support of the International Labor Office, which paid for internet subscriptions. CARE Madagascar prioritized remote work and held all training and hiring tests online. Leaders of two unions, Union of Independent Trade Unions in Madagascar (Union des syndicats autonomes de Madagascar, USAM) and SVS, used social media to address urgent issues even more quickly than they could in person and put together a timely, compliant application for funding from the Fanainga program (formerly the Common Fund) using WhatsApp. The Action Against Hunger Consortium (Consortium Action contre la faim, ACF), ASOS, CARE Madagascar, and Doctors of the World conducted the first meeting of the steering committee overseeing CSOs' response to the pandemic online. In contrast, smaller organizations in urban and rural areas continued to rely on e-mail or text messaging, which does not require sophisticated equipment or generous resources.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.1

CSOs' financial viability did not change notably in 2020.

The main donors in 2020 continued to be the European Union, United Nations (UN), World Bank, International Organization of la Francophonie, USAID, and the development agencies of France, Japan, Germany, Switzerland, and Monaco. Some foreign missions offer funding that can be accessed by small and medium-sized CSOs. For example, the Special Ambassador's Self-Help program of the U.S. Embassy offers small grants of \$3,000 to \$10,000 for community development projects. The Swiss Embassy also has a small-grants program.

Foreign funding is increasingly captured by international CSOs and UN agencies, which in turn sub-contract with Malagasy CSOs. Technical and financial partners increasingly prefer to entrust the management of projects,



especially large-scale projects, to consortia of international and domestic CSOs. Many organizations compete against each other and submit proposals geared toward bringing in short-term funding rather than securing longer-term sustainability. In 2020, many donors reallocated available funding to the pandemic response. As many as half of all organizations are thought to have experienced funding losses because of the pandemic, although some organizations with experience with health crises actually benefited financially.

CSOs' capacity to mobilize resources varies. The largest and oldest associations and those with well-established reputations are usually familiar with the procedures for applying for funding and have a better chance of winning grants than newer and smaller organizations, which can

be disadvantaged by their low profile and lack of technical and organizational capacity. However, support from various capacity-building programs is starting to show results, and 45 percent of the proposals approved by the Fanainga program in 2020 came from small CSOs. Unregistered, informal organizations usually stand little chance of accessing donor funding.

While CSOs have legal permission to mobilize funding locally, the country's economic decline has made this an unlikely prospect. The central government's financial contributions and in-kind support, such as material, equipment, and human resources, remain modest. Communal budgets earmark funding to CSOs unsystematically. Large companies, particularly in the industrial, resource extraction, commercial, agricultural, cell phone, real estate, and financial services sectors, attach importance to corporate social responsibility programs and have traditionally partnered with CSOs. But in 2020, these partnerships were threatened by corporations' changing priorities and the country's economic challenges. For example, as mining operations began to end in Ambatovy, CSOs throughout the region had to cut back their operations.

Any income derived from membership fees is usually symbolic and insufficient to cover even minor operating expenses. Members are not usually in a rush to pay their dues. For example, few journalists pay the suggested MGA 10,000 (\$2.60) annual contribution to the Order of Journalists, which has approximately 1,250 members.

Many CSOs are reluctant to venture into fundraising, because it is usually not worth the effort unless they have a large network of contacts. Some CSOs rely on sponsorships. For example, Bel Avenir has a Sponsor a School program costing EUR 12 (approximately \$14) per month. CSOs owning assets sometimes generate income through the sale of products or property rentals, but such efforts are rarely enough to balance their budgets. CDA earns only 15 to 20 percent of its budget from the sale of products and the contributions of beneficiaries.

The lack of a specific law on social enterprises discourages CSOs from developing this form of sustainable income streams that would reduce their dependence on foreign donors. Local CSOs do not seek to finance projects through crowdfunding. While target communities often supply in-kind contributions and labor, financial support from communities and beneficiaries remains hypothetical in a country in which most of the population lives below the poverty line.

Large CSOs try to implement solid financial management systems and usually share their financial reports with the government and donors. Smaller CSOs maintain ledgers of transactions and present brief statements of income and expenses to their general assemblies or boards of directors. Other than large-scale organizations that receive funding for this purpose, few CSOs can afford to hire accountants or audit firms.

ADVOCACY: 3.3

Advocacy by Malagasy CSOs improved slightly in 2020 as organizations and coalitions contributed to the government's decision-making processes and engaged in intense advocacy campaigns that were often successful.

CSOs participate in the government's development of laws and sectoral policies through institutionalized frameworks. For example, in 2020, a steering committee representing stakeholders in the mining sector, including

CSOs, made recommendations and proposed changes to a highly contested draft mining code. CSOs also participate in regional budget conferences and local consultative structures that provide all development actors with an opportunity to comment on the national budget. As part of the national anti-corruption strategy, the independent anti-corruption office created complaint mechanisms, such as Vondrona Angaroa, in December 2020, which allowed 215 CSOs in five districts in the Menabe region to raise the alarm about acts of corruption. The Ivotro Administrative Information and Referral Center receives complaints from users of public services, including CSOs.

CSOs made progress in several advocacy campaigns in 2020. A group of forty-one CSOs and CSO platforms were able to postpone the review of a draft framework law on land with special status, which was on the agenda of the National Assembly for May. In April 2020, ASOS and the Malagasy Coalition to Reinforce Health Systems and Vaccinations (Coalition malagasy pour le renforcement des systèmes de santé et de la vaccination, COMARESS), working with organizations such as Bilo, Zatoma, Malagasy Red Cross, Antsiva Miray, Foloay, Soalia de Sakaraha, and Matezatsara d'Ampanihy, successfully convinced the Atsimo Andrefana regional operational command center to involve law enforcement in efforts to monitor compliance with pandemic prevention and response measures.

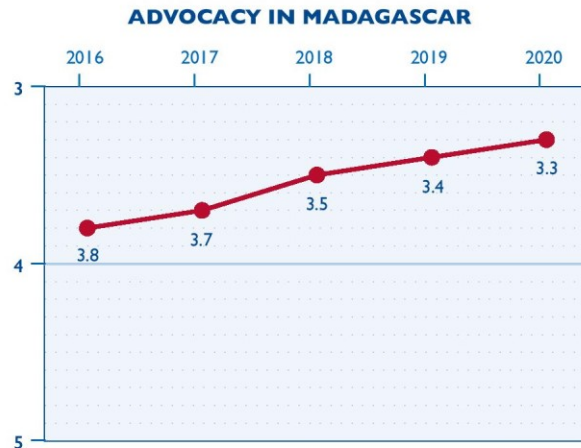
The Federation of Women's Development Associations (Fédération des associations femme développement, FAFED) and the civil society platform Sun Nutrition HINA ensured that nutrition is considered in development plans in the Atsinanana region. PFNOSCM and ROHY successfully pushed for the transfer of the case of a human rights activist arrested in February from the court in Ihosy to Antananarivo to avoid judicial bias.

During the senate elections in December, CSOs such as the National Election Observation and Citizen Education Committee (Comité national d'observation des élections-Education des citoyens, KMF-CNOE) and Safidy Observatory implemented informational campaigns about the role of senators and the electoral college. Throughout the voting process, CSO observers reported anomalies, including those reported by citizens calling hotline numbers.

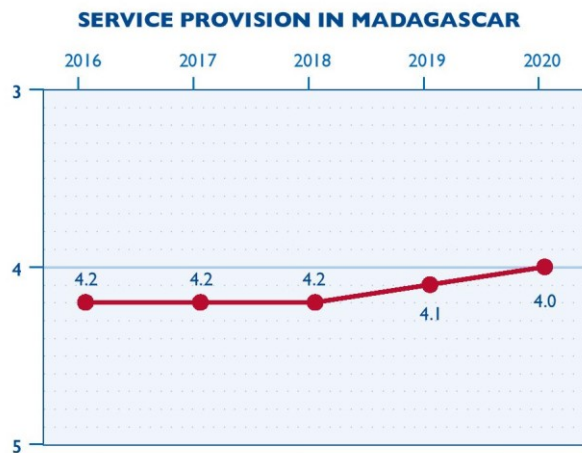
CSOs advocated fiercely for greater transparency in the management of COVID-19 funding in 2020. The organizations involved in this effort publicized their campaign through meetings, open letters, press releases, and Facebook. The Ministry of the Economy and Finance published a provisional report on the funding and its allocation and later established an online platform that displays both receipts and expenses.

An intense lobbying campaign on the draft law on access to public information, which was conducted by CSOs and the High Council on Integrity for more than a decade, concluded in 2020 as the text was finalized for submission to the Council of Ministers. Ny Sahy continued to advocate against the adoption of the law on the production and marketing of *toaka gasy*, or artisanal rum. Although the draft law was on the agenda for the last session of the Senate, it did not move forward.

In 2020, CSOs worked on a proposal for a law on social enterprises under USAID's Hay Tao project. The aim of the law is to promote social entrepreneurship and conservation enterprises to increase the involvement of women and youth in the community management of natural resources. It appeared that the initiative garnered widespread government support, as multiple ministries participated in stakeholder discussions about social and conservation enterprises. Ongoing discussions will address the most appropriate legal status for the enterprises and identify a feedback mechanism on relevant issues.



SERVICE PROVISION: 4.0



Service provision improved slightly in 2020 as CSOs mobilized on an impressive level to help with the pandemic response, whether or not they had funding. Citizens initiatives included the Solidarité Madagascar movement, which brought together doctors, young inventors, and ordinary citizens to conduct awareness-raising activities and produce and distribute protective visors for health-care personnel. Autism Madagascar, Order of Physicians, Coalition of Radios, Malagasy Red Cross, and SISFM cooperated through the Tantsoroka COVID-19 Madagascar movement, which led a multi-faceted effort to distribute protective equipment, safety and hygiene products, aid, and educational materials in simplified language and sign language, with funding from the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa.

Compassion Madagascar provided pregnant women with free transportation to health-care centers, and the Famelogno Association in the Analanjirifo region embarked on an awareness-raising campaign long before it received a grant from the Fanainga program. During June and July, the Akamasoa Association produced 30,000 washable masks with the support of the Alliances Association and Mérieux Foundation. While some donors allowed part of their funding to be allocated to pandemic-response activities, many CSOs used their own resources to make cloth masks or homemade handwashing stations.

CSOs work in all sectors at both the national and local levels. Fields of activity include education, health care, water and sanitation, civic engagement, human rights, environmental protection, and gender equity. In 2020, the Christian Association for Development and Environmental Action in Madagascar (Association chrétienne pour le développement et l'action environnementale de Madagascar, ACDEM) opened legal aid clinics in Ihozy and Betroka, and AVG expanded its legal aid clinics in Antsiranana, Mahajanga, Maroantsetra, and Morondava. Many CSOs were unable to provide all of their planned services in 2020 because of the health crisis. CSOs providing school lunches, for example, were unable to work while schools were closed.

CSOs demonstrated strong flexibility in meeting community needs during the pandemic. CSOs usually determine needs through field visits, target group consultations, and research. For example, Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) has adopted a participatory approach that requires target groups to self-diagnose their needs, and the Support for the Financing of Agriculture and Inclusive Sectors South program of Agriculture and Finance Consultants involves stakeholders in collecting and analyzing data to obtain reliable indicators. During the lockdown, CSOs kept up with their communities' needs through their neighborhood representatives, work sessions with regional COVID-19 command centers, and central and local government offices. The goods and services that CSOs provide do not always coincide with actual needs but instead may reflect donor directives.

CSOs provide their services without discrimination. For example, clinics attached to the Lutheran Church welcome patients of all denominations. CSOs such as Rural Training Institutions Liaison Office (Bureau de liaison des institutions de formation rurale, BIMTT), Youth Observatory, and Association for Farmers' Progress (Association pour le progrès des paysans, FIFATA) reach large audiences through research services, workshops, and publications.

CSOs sometimes charge for services involving health care, drinking water, and education, but their prices rarely cover real costs. In other areas, such as curriculum development and capacity building, CSOs offer services at cost. For example, Hajavao requested a modest financial contribution from CSO project leaders that applied to the national Fihariana entrepreneurship program. The pandemic stimulated CSOs to explore creative ways to generate income. Three CSOs in Atsimo Andrefana tripled their income by making cloth masks and recycling oil containers into handwashing stations. The Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar was able to earn significant income by creating "vegetable gardens in bags" in the Atsinanana region.

Government authorities, especially at the local level, appreciate CSOs' work and do not fail to show their appreciation in public and private. For example, the government's COVID-19 operations command center sent a

letter of gratitude to CSOs. The effectiveness of Malagasy CSOs is also recognized internationally. The Tatamo Miray an'Andranobe community, which is part of the *fokonolona* or local community network of natural resource managers, won the 2020 Equator Prize, which recognizes outstanding community and indigenous initiatives that advance nature-based solutions for local sustainable development. USAM and SVS were recognized with the 2020 Human Rights Trophy by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.1

CSOs' sectoral infrastructure was slightly stronger in 2020 as pandemic-related challenges encouraged CSOs to combine efforts more effectively.

Resource centers and intermediary support organizations continued to provide technical and financial support in 2020. For example, the resource center of the Direct Sowing Group of Madagascar (Groupement semis direct de Madagascar, GSDM) offered training, technical expertise, and funding advice to partners of the Center for International Cooperation in Agricultural Research for Development (Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement, CIRAD). GSDM also ran an up-to-date documentation service on direct seeding techniques. The multidisciplinary team at the Social Development Resource Center (Centre de ressources en développement social, CRDS) of the Institute of Social Work Education (Institut supérieur du travail social, ISTS) offered training and consultancies in various fields, including new topics such as support to entities engaged in child protection.

Organizations such as the Sanitation Support Fund, Aga Khan Foundation, Global Environment Fund, Tany Meva Foundation, Professional Training and Agriculture Improvement Program (Programme de formation professionnelle et d'amélioration de la productivité agricole, FORMAPROD), and Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria support CSOs directly or provide funds to local organizations that then finance CSOs. For example, AVG received financial support from the International Union for Conservation of Nature to implement the SOS Lemurs project. With the Research and Support Center for Development Alternatives–Indian Ocean (Centre de recherches et d'appui pour les alternatives de développement–océan indien, CRAAD–OI), AVG also obtained funding from the African Women in Mining Alliance and Rural Women's Assembly to set up a support program for women in communities affected by the Base Toliara mining project and a monitoring and referral unit for victims of violence against women. The Tany Meva Foundation awarded twelve CSOs grants as part of its Grand Sud project, and the Fanainga program supported twenty-four initiatives valued at MGA 1.5 billion (approximately \$385,000) as part of its pandemic response. Fanainga also set up a post-crisis line of credit for its partner CSOs, which gives them the option of allocating up to 10 percent of the funding to organizational strengthening, strategic restructuring, training, general assembly meetings, and even networking and discussions.

CSOs group together according to their spheres of intervention and geographic locations. In southern Madagascar, which faces climate, food, and health challenges, thirty-five humanitarian CSOs from five districts of the Atsimo Andrefana region are combining their efforts to manage emergency responses more effectively. A similar approach has been taken by the international CSO Action against Hunger (Action contra la faim, ACF) and ASOS, which work in partnership in the Androy and Atsimo Andrefana regions. Active thematic platforms include the Local Management of Marine and Coastal Resources (Mitantana Harena and-Ranomantina avy eny Ifotony, MIHARI) network, which comprises more than 200 associations and twenty-five NGOs in Atsimo Andrefana. In 2020, CSOs formed new networks to work on child protection and in communities affected by drought. Experience-sharing among CSOs working in similar fields is becoming more common. For example, CSOs involved in water, sanitation, and hygiene in Analamanga came together in a workshop in 2020 to learn about the good practices of Water Aid and WSUP. Medical Care Development International mobilized networks of CSOs and village savings

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN MADAGASCAR

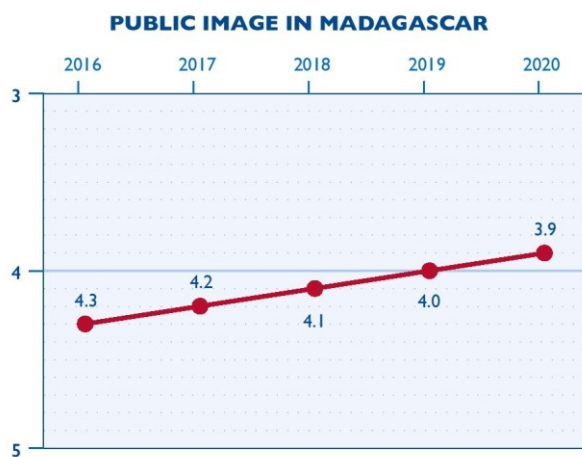


and loan associations to facilitate access to hygiene devices and transfer technical knowledge related to designing handwashing devices.

CSOs, platforms, and technical and financial partners organized online and in-person training on a wide range of topics in 2020. The Collective of Citizens and Citizen Organizations (Collectif des citoyens et des organisations citoyennes, CCOC) provided online training on the state budget, and SVS hosted weekly sessions on technical unemployment. USAID's Hay Tao project strengthened the communications skills of its CSO partners. Organizations belonging to the CSOs in Extractive Industries platform received training about the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. Training for peer educators on reproductive health took place throughout the year. After the state of health emergency was lifted, the Fanainga program resumed capacity building in areas such as strategic planning, advocacy, and results-focused management. Training sessions are usually held in major cities and are conducted by local trainers in the Malagasy language.

Cross-sectoral partnerships continued in 2020. In Amoron'i Mania, collaboration between CSOs, communes, law enforcement agencies, and ministry regional offices reduced the number of bush fires and restored security in rural areas. In Atsimo Andrefana, CSOs and the Regional Directorate of Communication joined forces to raise awareness about the fight against COVID-19. The Regional Directorate of the Environment and Sustainable Development in Vakinankaratra partnered with GSDM, Seed of Life (Graine de vie), Tafo Mihaavo, and Heart of the Forests (Coeur des forêts) on the Reverdir Madagascar reforestation campaign, and the Vakinankaratra Regional Directorate of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene signed a partnership agreement with the NGO Ran'Eau to create a database about the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector. AVG helped train the environmental units of twenty-one departments of the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development. The Support Program for Rural Micro-Enterprise Centers and Regional Economies works with a network of businesses and service providers to develop a culture of entrepreneurship and savings and loans.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.9



CSOs enhanced their visibility in 2020 thanks to strong media coverage of their activities and public positions. CSOs' press releases were widely echoed in the media, reflecting a positive view of their role.

CSOs receive extensive coverage on all media outlets in 2020. Journalists continued to see CSOs as reliable sources of information and contacted them often. The press was no longer content to summarize CSOs' press conferences or reprint their press releases but instead invited many organizations to take part in interviews, news shows, special programs, and television talk shows, which have very large audiences. In addition, certain outlets, such as public radio stations and television channels, granted airtime to CSOs.

CSOs generally enjoy a good reputation with the public.

As government activities slowed down dramatically in 2020, the public increasingly turned to CSOs to work on their behalf. For example, people in Vohilava Mananjary relied on the Center for Research and Support for Development Alternatives–Indian Ocean, Earth Defense Collective (Collectif pour la défense de la terre, TANY), National Platform for Civil Society Organizations in Madagascar (Plate-forme nationale des organisations de la société civile de Madagascar, PFNOSCM),

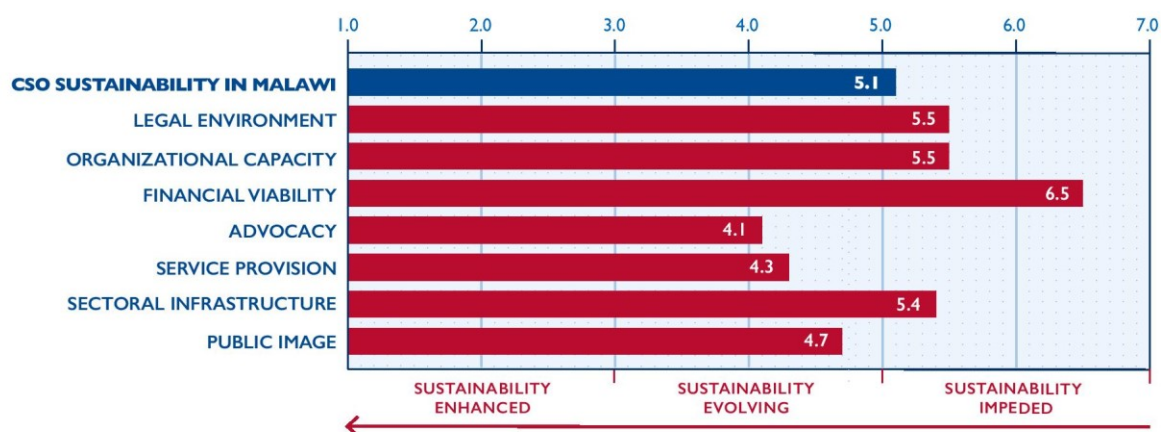
Voifiraisana, and National Independent Human Rights Commission (Commission nationale indépendante des droits de l'Homme, CNIDH) to expose the catastrophic effects of a controversial gold mine. Similarly, the residents of two Anosy municipalities asked the Tolagnaro CSO Platform to intervene with the authorities about an increase in malaria cases and difficulties accessing health care. Once informed, the authorities handled the situation quickly, thereby boosting the platform's reputation. At the same time, the public sometimes criticizes CSOs' generous budgets and equipment or judges them according to their political leanings or frequency of aid distribution.

CSOs are positively perceived by the government and businesses, as shown by their many partnerships. Although sometimes discomfited by CSOs' questions and positions, the government relies on CSOs' community contacts and increasingly seeks to benefit from their skills and expertise. CSOs are equally well regarded by the corporate sector. The foundation of the Axian Group, for example, partners with a network of 170 associations and NGOs in health care, education, community development, humanitarian aid, and the environment and sustainable development.

Malagasy CSOs are concerned about their visibility, especially if it will help with raising funds. Some organizations have developed unique approaches to promoting their image. For example, Liberty 32 has its own show, *Soampiampita*, on Radio Don Bosco, and the ACF consortium, CARE, ASOS, and Doctors of the World distributed newsletters devoted to their response to COVID-19. The consortium formed by ten CSOs to monitor the funds allocated to the pandemic response has produced a monthly newsletter since June 2020.

Malagasy CSOs grasp that transparency and accountability increase trust. Platforms and thematic networks such as the ROHY movement have their own codes of conduct. CSOs are getting used to producing reports for local and international supporters and the government and have begun to make these documents available online. The production of activity reports is increasingly routine. For example, the Center for the Development of Andohatapenaka (Centre de développement d'Andohatapenaka, CDA) produces activity reports twice yearly, and Bel Avenir regularly publishes its technical reports and audited accounts.

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.1



Two key events shaped the context for Malawian CSOs in 2020: the presidential election in June, following the Supreme Court’s annulment of the 2019 election result, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

After incumbent president Peter Mutharika was declared the winner of the presidential election in May 2019, the opposition alleged voting irregularities and contested the result in court. The controversy prompted CSOs to organize demonstrations in 2019 and the first half of 2020 disputing the management of the elections. On February 3, 2020, the High Court nullified the election result on account of gross mismanagement by the Malawi Electoral Commission and ordered a new presidential poll within 150 days. The Supreme Court later upheld the ruling. CSOs played an active role in providing voter education during the run-up to the new election, which took place on June 23. The polling was largely peaceful and regarded as free and fair. Lazarus Chakwera of the Malawi Congress Party secured 59 percent of the vote to defeat the incumbent president. The change of government in June helped reduce tensions and mistrust between CSOs and the government, as the new administration was more receptive to working with civil society than its predecessor.

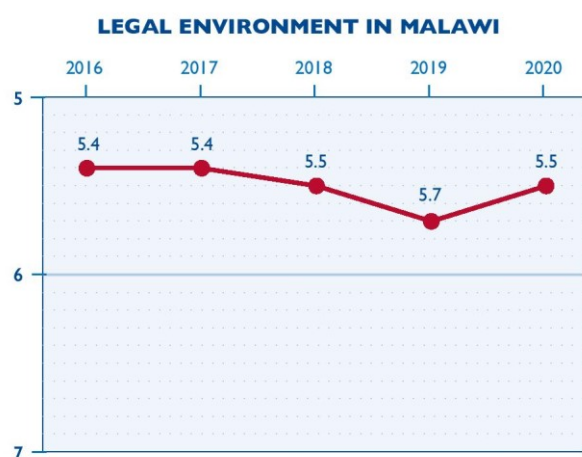
The first cases of the COVID-19 virus were recorded in Malawi in early April. The government had already proactively declared a state of national disaster on March 20 and appointed a multi-stakeholder presidential taskforce to oversee the pandemic response, which included several CSO representatives. The government earmarked MWK 6.2 billion (approximately \$8.5 million) for the pandemic response and closed schools, limited attendance at public gatherings to fifty people, and reduced business hours for bars and restaurants. As the number of viral infections and deaths increased, CSOs provided support services such as distributing hand soap, sanitizer, and personal protective equipment and soliciting medical equipment from donors. A full lockdown was not implemented in Malawi.

The combination of the pandemic and unstable political environment weakened Malawi’s already fragile economy in 2020. At the beginning of 2020, the World Bank estimated that Malawi’s economy would grow by 4.8 percent during the year. However, this estimate was revised down to 1 percent as the pandemic and political uncertainty undermined business activity and investment and disrupted global supply chains, tourism, and the inflow of remittances. During the year, the Malawi National Planning Commission prepared a new national development blueprint, known as Malawi 2063, which was launched in early 2021. The plan seeks to transform Malawi into a wealthy, self-reliant, industrialized upper middle-income country by 2063. CSOs took part in the plan’s development and under the plan will serve on technical working groups advising the government on needed interventions.

Overall CSO sustainability improved slightly in 2020. The legal environment governing CSOs was moderately more favorable as the new government adopted a more constructive stance towards CSOs and operationalized the 2017 Access to Information Act. Advocacy improved moderately as the change in government opened space for CSOs to influence public policy. CSOs also enjoyed a moderately more positive public image as the media turned to them for their opinions and the government projected a positive opinion of the sector. On the other hand, CSOs' financial viability deteriorated moderately as foreign donors redirected their funds to the government's efforts to fight the pandemic. CSOs' organizational capacity, service provision, and sectoral infrastructure were unchanged.

According to the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Board, 774 CSOs were registered in Malawi at the end of 2020, an increase of 17 percent over the 671 organizations registered at the end of 2019. The actual number of organizations is higher, since many CSOs do not register because of a lack of funds and frustrating registration procedures, among other reasons.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.5



The legal environment for CSOs in Malawi improved moderately in 2020 as a government that was more receptive to CSOs came to power and the Access to Information Act was operationalized.

CSOs are governed by the 2001 NGO Act, which was unchanged in 2020. All CSOs, other than faith-based organizations (FBOs) and informal organizations without written constitutions, must register under the NGO Act before beginning operations. To register, organizations apply to the Office of the Registrar General, which approves the applications directly or refers them to the minister of justice for approval. CSOs must also register with the NGO Board and the Council for Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi (CONGOMA), both of which are statutory entities established under the

NGO Act. Community-based organizations (CBOs) register only with district social welfare offices.

A bill to amend the NGO Act that was introduced in 2017 remained on the legislative agenda in 2020 but was not debated because of an injunction against it that CSOs had obtained in 2018. The bill would vest all authority to register, regulate, and deregister CSOs with the NGO Board, thereby excluding CONGOMA. In the absence of the new law, CSOs continued to be subjected to a dual-regulatory environment in 2020, in which they were expected to submit to oversight by the NGO Board and self-regulate through CONGOMA. CSOs are required to submit annual technical and financial reports to the NGO Board and CONGOMA. While this dual structure continued to create some confusion, CSOs could also take advantage of it by, for example, deciding which body to report to, if at all.

The new government took several steps to establish better relations with civil society in 2020. In October, CSO leaders attended a face-to-face meeting with the new president, who committed to reviewing the NGO Amendment Bill to address CSOs' concerns about the concentration of powers with the NGO Board. The president created the office of the special presidential advisor on NGOs and civil society and appointed a former director of a human rights CSO to the position. The current law requires CSOs to pay annual affiliation fees to the NGO Board, but the new government allowed CSOs to pay the fees in installments, which helped organizations that were struggling financially because of the pandemic. In many cases, the NGO Board did not actively enforce CSOs' payment of the fees because of the pandemic, with the result that many organizations did not pay them at all. The new government also placed a moratorium on the significant hike in registration fees proposed by the previous government, which many CSOs believed was meant to shrink the space for civil society.

The Access to Information Act passed in 2017 finally came into effect in September 2020. The law empowers citizens and the media to hold public officers and political leaders accountable by accessing information. Although the structures legally mandated to anchor implementation of the act, such as the Public Information Commission, had not yet been instituted, government officials were noted to be more forthcoming with information.

CSOs continued to address matters of public debate and enjoyed the right to assemble and organize protests in 2020. For example, demonstrations were held against pandemic restrictions limiting the number of people able to attend public gatherings. Several protests and demonstrations against gender-based violence (GBV) unfolded peacefully. While the previous government and ruling party militias often organized counterdemonstrations and unleashed violence against protesters, the new government did not engage in such repression or block the internet.

CSOs are allowed by law to receive grants and donations and generate income. The National Decentralization Policy requires CSOs to inform the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development of any assistance that they receive, but most CSOs do not fulfill this requirement. Some district commissioners have threatened to expel CSOs that do not comply on the grounds that they are not transparent.

Like other nationally registered entities, CSOs are required to pay taxes on all income, including grants. The Malawi Revenue Authority receives CSOs' tax returns and scrutinizes them to confirm that they comply with the Taxation Act. Registered CSOs may receive exemptions from taxes on essential imported goods from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning, and Development.

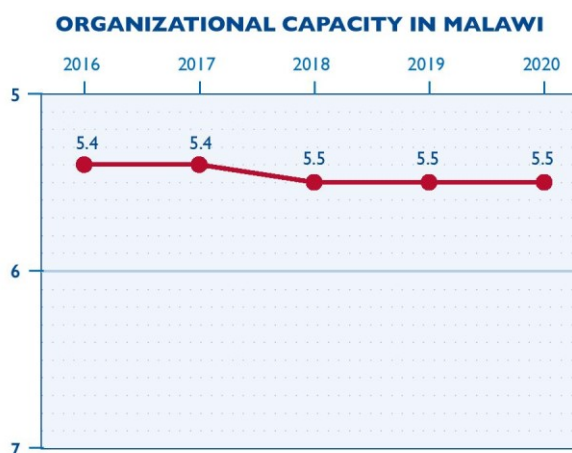
CSOs have access to courts and use them frequently to hold government accountable. However, the costs of hiring legal counsel are high and beyond the reach of most organizations. A culture of pro bono legal advice does not exist.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.5

The organizational capacity of Malawian CSOs did not change in 2020. CSOs generally seek to coordinate with their constituencies and involve them in project planning and implementation. However, the pandemic reduced the frequency of interactions between CSOs and their constituencies, not only because of social-distancing rules but also because funding shortfalls reduced the number of activities that they were able to organize. Some CSOs used social media to maintain contact with their constituents, but as a rule CSO did not rely on online platforms as a substitute for face-to-face interactions.

Most international and large domestic CSOs have well-defined missions and visions, which they use as reference points for decision making. Local and smaller CSOs tend to lack these tools. Although CSOs often have strategic plans, they are used largely for fundraising and are not kept up to date. In fact, in its 2020 annual report, the NGO Board noted that the absence of current strategic plans is a common problem among Malawian CSOs. Operational pressures, including the struggle to raise funds, can cause the strategic direction of many organizations to get lost or distorted and push CSOs into activities for which they lack expertise or that fall outside of their organizational mandates. For example, in 2020, as donors redirected funding to pandemic-related activities, most CSOs sought to get involved in public sensitization efforts. CSOs showed their adaptive capacity by responding to the immediate problems posed by the virus, but their flexibility sometimes involved moving away from core areas into new activities. This shift could compromise the quality of interventions, since organizations were sometimes learning about the health-care sector even as they were implementing projects in this area.

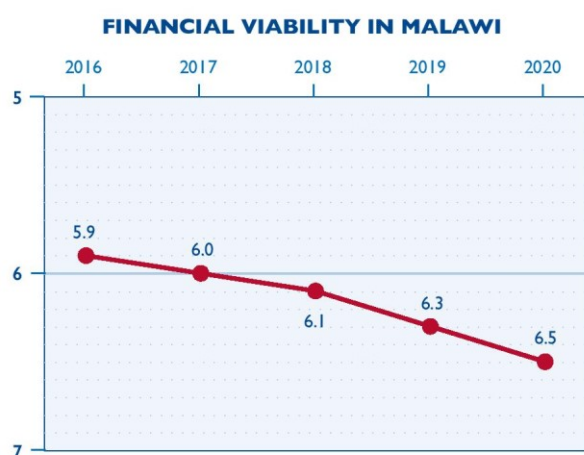
CSOs usually have clearly defined management structures on paper. However, a strong culture of founder's syndrome permeates Malawi's CSO sector, with executive directors, who are usually also the founders, all powerful in their organizations. CSOs are required under the NGO Act to have boards of directors, but these bodies are usually ceremonial and symbolic. Even if CSOs have functioning boards, they are often subservient to the executive directors, who call board meetings only when it suits their interests. Accordingly, CSO boards rarely meet or do not provide needed oversight, compromising governance standards at their organizations.



Understaffing in the CSO sector remained a widespread problem in 2020, largely because of uncertain and declining donor support. As the pandemic disrupted CSOs' financial flows, some organizations had to lay off staff and downsize operations. Most national-level CSOs are unable to draw on core or volunteer support from their constituencies and in 2020 could not rely on volunteers to help with pandemic- or election-related services. As community driven organizations, CBOs are better equipped to engage volunteers, and in fact relied heavily on volunteer labor in 2020.

The Digital Report ranked Malawi as having the most expensive mobile data charges in Africa in 2020. Internet penetration is low, and only 20 percent of Malawians had access to the internet during the year, according to a survey by Afrobarometer. The high charges hindered CSOs' outreach, although their use of social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook was growing. CSO leaders sometimes experienced cyberbullying and cyberthreats, mainly from political actors, and reported such cases to the law enforcement agencies for investigation.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.5



The pandemic moderately weakened CSOs' financial viability in 2020. Most CSO funding comes from foreign donors. In 2020, many donors redirected their funding to the government's efforts to fight the pandemic. For example, during the first six months of the year, the United Nations (UN) office in Malawi re-programmed \$50.2 million to fight COVID-19, which significantly reduced the resources available to CSOs. Some donor funding redirected to the government eventually reached CSOs. For example, the government involved the sector in disseminating information about the disease. Organizations such as the Malawi Healthy Equity Network were asked by their funders to redirect funds from previously agreed projects to pandemic-related activities. The Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) had some projects postponed and was requested by a development

partner to redirect funds earmarked for training school management committees to a COVID-19 awareness campaign.

The main sources of funding in 2020 were bilateral donors such as Norway, the United States, Ireland, the United Kingdom (UK), Japan, and Germany and multilateral donors such as the World Bank and African Development Bank. As in previous years, CBOs continued to face challenges in accessing donor funds because of strict and onerous requirements imposed by funders. Some of the requirements include registration with the NGO Board, a proven capacity to match funds provided by donors, and past experience implementing donor-funded projects. For example, the Malawi Innovation Challenge Agriculture Fund, which is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UK AID, required applicants to "demonstrate capacity to implement their proposed project, and . . . sound financial performance and clear corporate governance." Most smaller organizations, especially CBOs working in local communities, failed to meet these criteria and thus were unable to obtain funding. CBOs were further disadvantaged by their lack of access to the internet and newspapers, where calls for proposals were often announced. The NGO Board and CONGOMA have yet to resolve complaints by local CSOs that international organizations implement projects directly without involving local organizations.

Most CSOs were left without local sources of funding in 2020. The Tiltonse Foundation, a major local grant-making institution, focused narrowly on the "political economy of urban governance," thereby excluding many CBOs, which tend to be largely rural in focus. The semi-local grantmaker Tithetsa Nkhanza, which focuses on GBV, substantially reduced its operations and funding in Malawi in 2020 because of the pandemic, depriving local CSOs of funds for projects in this area.

Few CSOs in Malawi benefit from corporate philanthropy or corporate social responsibility programs. When such funding becomes available, it usually bypasses CSOs. For example, in 2020, local philanthropists and corporate philanthropic programs responded to the government's appeals and donated directly to the government's

pandemic-response activities. CSOs in Malawi invest very little effort in raising funds from their communities, since most community members are poor and in need of support themselves.

Crowdfunding remains a new phenomenon in Malawi, and the absence of tax incentives for domestic donors keeps its possibilities from being explored. Membership-based organizations collect dues, but in 2020, because of the poor economic environment, most associations encountered difficulties in collecting their members' contributions.

As not-for-profit organizations, most CSOs are not legally able to engage in business ventures to generate funds. An exception is membership bodies such as the Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which rents out its conference facilities during much of the year. Timveni Child and Youth Media, a local child and youth media organization, is one of the few CSOs to have adopted a business plan that seeks to generate advertising revenue through its various media platforms.

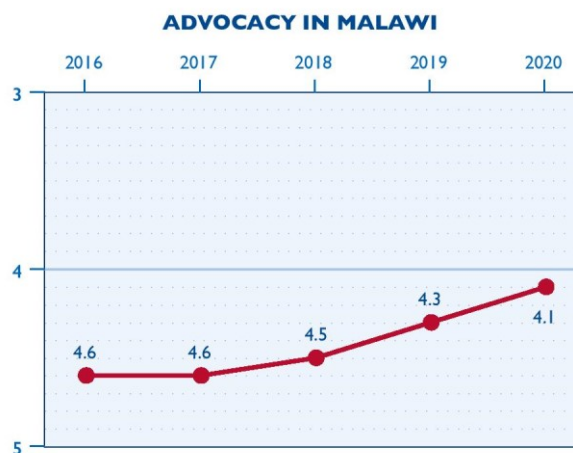
Most large CSOs have adequate financial management systems and engage the services of auditors, since audits are a key donor requirement. Smaller CSOs rarely invest resources or personnel in such systems because of funding constraints. In general, many CSOs do not account for the sources and use of their funds in an open and transparent manner, although they demand accountability from the government. In 2020, the NGO Board noted that out of more than 774 CSOs registered with the board, fewer than 100 had submitted their annual financial reports as required by law. The NGO Board claimed that funds channeled to CSOs in the 2020 financial year amounted to about MWK 1 trillion (approximately \$1.36 billion) or equivalent to half of the government's national budget, while CSOs accounted for only about one-quarter of this amount in their reporting. In fact, most CSOs do not report to NGO Board because they view the requirement as compromising their independence and shrinking civic space.

ADVOCACY: 4.1

CSO advocacy improved moderately in 2020. The annulment of the 2019 presidential election result by the High Court was considered as a vindication of CSO-led demonstrations, which started in June 2019 and continued throughout the first half of 2020. As a result of the annulment, in June 2020, Malawi acquired a new government, which significantly improved its relations with CSOs.

The change of government in 2020 opened space for CSOs to advocate and influence public policy. CSOs participated in public affairs in part through the new special presidential advisor on NGOs and Civil Society and the newly established Ministry of Civic Education and Unity. In October, the presidential advisor on CSOs indicated that the president was "ready to be challenged and engaged with constructive ideas" after receiving CSOs' suggestions about nation building. There was a widespread sense that some of the most vocal CSOs became less critical after the new government came into power, partly because the government was reaching out to CSOs and accommodated their input on policy matters. It also helped that a long-time leader of the Human Rights Defenders Commission (HRDC) was appointed the minister of civic education and unity in the new cabinet in July.

Despite these favorable developments, the avenues for CSO-government engagement, especially at the national level, remained largely ad hoc in 2020. For example, the Public Affairs Committee (PAC) was able to meet with the president because of his spontaneous invitation rather than as a formally structured interaction. At the district level, CSOs working in service provision and policy advocacy engaged frequently with local officials. The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, for example, advocated for transparency in resource allocation and usage through its Citizen Voice and Accountability project. The project was partially successful, with some government officials providing the relevant information, while others did not.



CSOs played a prominent advocacy role in the campaign to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The presidential taskforce on COVID-19 included several CSO representatives, including the Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM), Malawi Congress of Trade Union and Industry, CONGOMA, and Asian Business Community. The Malawi Human Rights Resource Center unsuccessfully lobbied the government to appoint more women to the taskforce. In April 2020, HRDC obtained a court injunction stopping the government from imposing a national lockdown without providing safety-net support to poor households.

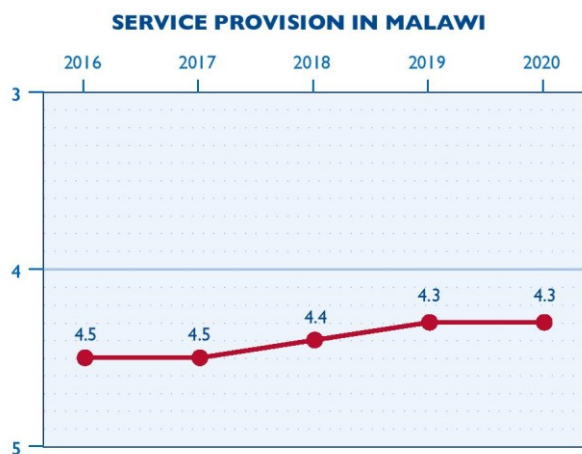
CSOs continued to advocate for better governance and accountability from the new administration in 2020. PAC, a quasi-religious organization, met with the new president to discuss the nepotism, corruption, and human rights violations that characterized the previous regime. Following public complaints of nepotism in the appointment of new cabinet members, HRDC requested and was granted a meeting with the president to urge him to view merit as the main criterion for official appointments. CSOs also pressured the government to adhere to the rule of law. For example, after the government appointed commissioners to the Malawi Human Rights Commission without consulting CSOs, as required by law, the Center for the Development of People and Center for Human Rights and Rehabilitation challenged the appointments in court, and they were withdrawn. A new selection process then took place in which CSOs were able to propose a set of nominees, from which the government eventually selected new commissioners. CSOs usually hold the government accountable through direct engagement, media statements, demonstrations, and court petitions rather than social media, given the high cost and limited penetration of the internet.

Either individually or through broad-based coalitions, Malawi’s CSOs sought to actively shape the public agenda on important issues in 2020. In October 2020, for example, the Women’s Manifesto Movement and Women Lawyers Association organized demonstrations to protest the low number of women appointed to the cabinet and boards of state-owned enterprises. The government refrained from reconstituting the cabinet and boards to include more women.

Although CSOs meet regularly with legislators, they generally do not lobby, because they cannot afford the large allowances and out-of-town trips that members of parliament often request. However, in 2020, a grouping of CSOs under the banner Coalition for the Prevention of Unsafe Abortion led efforts to persuade the parliament to pass an abortion bill first proposed in 2017. Other groups, mostly religious organizations such as the Episcopal Conference of Malawi and Evangelical Association of Malawi, counter-lobbied with the parliament to not even discuss the bill, and debate on the bill was postponed until 2021.

CSOs continued to seek reform of the laws governing the sector in 2020. In September, President Chakwera met with representatives of CONGOMA and committed to review their concerns about the NGO Amendment Bill of 2018 and the hike in registration fees implemented in 2017.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.3



CSO service provision was unchanged in 2020.

CSOs in Malawi offer diverse services. These services are sometimes offered by organizations with a specialized focus, such as Coffey, which focuses only on GBV. But more often, Malawian CSOs are opportunistic in offering services that align with available resources. Organizations often coordinate with local governments to support projects that are identified through grassroots development structures, such as village and area development committees. Many CSOs undertake project evaluations to demonstrate their contributions to meeting local needs, but the evaluations are generally regarded as a ritual for the benefit of funders, and the collected data is not always utilized to inform the design of subsequent programs.

CSOs in Malawi compliment the government by providing goods and services that the government does not provide. CHAM, for example, provides 30 percent of Malawi's health-care services and trains up to 80 percent of Malawi's health-care providers. The Independent Schools Association of Malawi provides educational services in private learning institutions. CSOs and CBOs, such as the Catholic Development Commission of Malawi and Action Hope Malawi, provide other key social services to grassroots communities. While the government does not provide financial support for these services, it sometimes enters into agreements under which CSOs provide services and the government meets some of the costs. Such an arrangement was in place in 2020 between the Ministry of Health and hospitals under CHAM as well as the Ministry of Education and grant-aided schools.

CSOs' service provision was hampered in 2020 by the difficult economic and political environment and the pandemic. Most CSOs struggled to raise resources to provide their regular services. In several cases, contracts with donors for existing projects were postponed, especially if they required direct contact with beneficiaries, according to reports in The Nation newspaper. Following the outbreak of the pandemic, many CSOs retooled their service delivery so that they could partner with the government's campaign to reduce the spread of the virus and mitigate its effects. For example, WaterAid Malawi solicited and distributed equipment and supplies from donors along with posters promoting preventative practices and offered training on infection prevention for medical and non-medical staff. PAC promoted messages on social and behavioral change, and Concern Worldwide reached more than 36,000 people with critical supplies and messages to prevent the spread of the virus in a suburb of the capital city, Lilongwe. The UN Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) collaborated with several CSOs, including PAC and the Malawi Red Cross Society, to train youth to make and distribute face masks to vulnerable individuals. Members of Parents and Child Health Initiative Malawi, a youth CSO based in central Malawi, worked with UNICEF to train health staff to vaccinate the public. With financial support from Development and Cooperation, a local CBO, the Foundation for Rural Children Empowerment distributed books to underprivileged children in central Malawi while schools were closed because of the lockdown.

CSOs also provided election-related services in 2020, led by the National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) and Malawi Electoral Support Network (MESN). Hundreds of NICE volunteers served as election monitors on election day, playing a critical role as no international observers monitored the second poll. MESN volunteers provided voter education during the elections.

Malawian CSOs generally do not discriminate in their service provision unless targeting a specific clientele. For example, the Center for Development of People works mostly with the gay community and targets this group without discriminating on the basis of gender or ethnicity. The Association for People with Albinism focuses on providing service to its members. There is no evidence that membership associations provide goods and services to individuals beyond their own members.

The law makes it difficult for most CSOs that register as nonprofit organizations to generate income by charging fees for their services. Except for some organizations working in health care and education, most CSOs provide services to the poor and rarely seek to recover costs.

The government recognized the efforts of CSOs to help with the pandemic response and serve as a partner in the country's development.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.4

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector remained unchanged in 2020.

Malawi has few resource centers serving CSOs. A major source of information for CSOs are the libraries in NICE offices across the country, which are stocked with books and newspapers and are open to the public free of charge.

Local grantmakers are few in number and reduced the scale or scope of their grantmaking in 2020. For example, because of the pandemic, the semi-local grantmaker Tithetsa Nkhanza substantially reduced its funding for projects on GBV, while the Tiltonse Foundation narrowed its focus to urban governance, thus excluding many organizations not active in this field.

The most active CSO coalitions in 2020 included HRDC, CSEC, CONGOMA, National Advocacy Platform, Civil Society Agriculture Network, Media Institute of Southern Africa–Malawi, Malawi Health Equity Network, and

Malawi Justice Economic Network. These and other coalitions seek to promote common approaches and goals among organizations working in specific sectors. Several new and emerging coalitions were also active in 2020. For example, the Digital Rights Network lobbied for cheaper internet costs, and the Coalition for Prevention of Unsafe Abortion led efforts to lobby parliament to discuss and pass an abortion bill. CSO coalitions depended on bilateral, multilateral, and charitable organizations for funding to implement their activities.

Pandemic-related restrictions on public gatherings and travel reduced CSOs' networking opportunities in 2020. Although several CSOs, including Youth Net and Counselling, Timveni Child and Youth Media, and Youth and Society, used internet-based platforms to communicate, their usefulness was limited by poor connectivity, exorbitant costs, and unreliable electricity supplies. Some networks were undermined by some CSOs' refusal to collaborate with other CSOs in an effort to maintain an individual identity. Networks competed among themselves to attract donor attention. This competition led to increased transactional costs and problems with coordination.

Several training institutions, such as the Malawi Institute of Management and the Staff Development Institute, offer training specifically for CSO managers. Private universities are also venturing into providing specialized training customized for CSOs. CSO leaders may enroll in professional management courses offered by professional associations such as the Institute of People Management Malawi and in academic programs and short courses offered by public and private universities. These training programs are usually available in the main cities and, increasingly, online. In 2020, training opportunities were limited as public gatherings were restricted and educational institutions were closed for several months beginning in March. Access to short-term and long-term training was also hampered by the lack of scholarships to enable CSO staff to attend.

The government and CSOs worked in several partnerships to battle COVID-19 in 2020. For example, Timveni Child and Youth Media and Youth Net and Counselling received government funding to disseminate information about the pandemic. CSOs' relationship with the media tends to be commercially structured, as CSOs pay for broadcast time and space in print media. Under the Growth Accelerator Malawi COVID-19 Tourism Entrepreneurship Challenge managed by the Malawi Government's Ministry of Tourism and UNDP, CSOs partnered with profit-oriented businesses to access financing and technical assistance to revive tourism in Malawi during the pandemic.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN MALAWI



PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.7

PUBLIC IMAGE IN MALAWI



CSOs enjoyed a moderately improved public image in 2020 as the media turned to them for commentary during the political and health crises and the government projected a positive view of the sector.

CSOs in Malawi receive widespread coverage in print, electronic, and online media. They are key newsmakers on a daily basis, and the media widely covers their activities and seeks their opinions on emerging national issues. In 2020, CSOs' views were of particular interest to the media during the political crisis prior to the June elections. CSOs also provided expert opinions on the government's pandemic response based on their interactions with communities. Not all of the coverage was positive. HRDC, for example, was branded a "terrorist group" by the government-owned Malawi

Broadcasting Cooperation after it organized a series of demonstrations protesting the 2019 presidential election. However, HRDC was publicly vindicated when the Supreme Court annulled the election. CSOs typically pay for coverage at reduced fees adjusted to the frequency of publication or airtime.

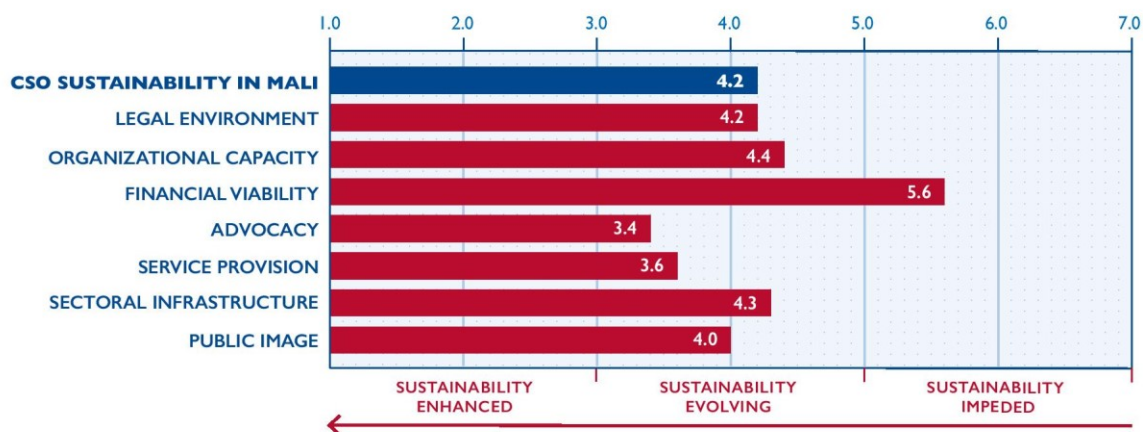
The public generally understands the concept of CSOs and supports their activities. CSOs enjoy legitimacy because they are seen as influencing government decision making and representing the will of people. For example, when HRDC obtained an injunction that stopped the government from enforcing a national lockdown in April 2020, many Malawians supported the decision, according to a survey by the Institute of Public Opinion and Research in May and June 2020. Service-providing CSOs tend to be viewed as the government's partners in development, although there is a general sense that, over the years, CSOs have spent billions of dollars with minimal improvement of the lives of ordinary people. Some segments of the public suspect that CSOs are no better than the government when it comes to misusing resources and have called on CSOs to be more accountable.

Unlike the previous government, the government that came into power in 2020 did not take a confrontational approach to its interaction with CSOs. The government opened up to CSOs and engaged them in a discussion of issues of national interest. Government officials conveyed the view that they see the sector as a partner in development, albeit one that sometimes oversteps its role to interfere in government operations. The private sector views CSOs in much the same way.

CSOs do not engage public relations staff to raise awareness about their activities or promote their image. However, they usually invite the media to cover the launch of new projects and hold press conferences or issue press statements to promote awareness of their activities and campaigns. For example, CONGOMA ran a series of advertisements in the local media to report on the agreements that were reached during its meeting with the government in October 2020. The pandemic forced CSOs to intensify their use of social media, especially Facebook and WhatsApp. Very few organizations have active Twitter accounts or up-to-date websites.

CSOs self-regulate through CONGOMA, which has limited technical, human, and financial capacity to fulfil its mandate. An objective of the stalled NGO Amendment Bill is to develop a robust CSO code of conduct emphasizing principles of fiduciary integrity, public accountability, and democratic decision-making. Very few organizations publish timely annual reports with financial statements. For example, a review of CSO websites in 2021 showed that few organizations had posted annual reports for 2020.

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.2



The year 2020 in Mali was marked by the resignation of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and the seizure of power by a military junta on August 18. After parliamentary elections in April, the Constitutional Court had overturned some election results to the advantage of the president's party, the Rally for Mali (RPM). Anger at this decision turned into a mass demonstration demanding the departure of the president and the formation of the Movement of the June 5 Rally of Patriotic Forces (M5-RFP), led by former ministers, anti-corruption activists, and supporters of the imam Mahmoud Dicko. Following a strike by teachers and a long series of violent demonstrations led by M5-RFP, the president resigned in August in what some described as a voluntary act and others as a military coup d'état. The military junta stayed in power until September 2020, when, after mediation by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), it declared that it had completed the work of M5-RFP and yielded power to a transitional government under a newly sworn-in president, vice president, and prime minister.

The political turmoil occurred amid the severe security crisis that has enveloped Mali since the Tuareg rebellion in 2012. A report of the United Nations (UN) secretary general noted that Mali's security was deteriorating at an alarming rate in 2020 as terrorist groups proliferated in the Ménaka, Gao, Mopti, and Segou regions as well as areas in the southern part of the country. As attacks on civilians by armed Islamist groups intensified, intercommunal violence surged in central Mali in 2020. During the election period, Islamist groups kidnapped scores of civilians, including aid workers, local government officials and political leaders, and an opposition presidential candidate, who was later released. Government security forces were also implicated in the deaths of suspects and civilians. The violence caused the number of internally displaced persons in the Mopti and Segou regions to reach well over 300,000, many of them suffering from hunger.

The implementation of the 2015 Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Mali continued to be slow and uneven in 2020. Important decisions were postponed as signatory parties failed to reach agreement. Implementation of the disarmament, demobilization, cantonment, and reintegration processes was a struggle since important actors, including parliamentarians, local elected officials, and CSOs, were not familiar with the content of the agreement and the process was never debated in parliament. A small sign of progress was the nine-month inclusive national dialogue that concluded in Bamako on December 22, 2019. Resolutions emerging from the dialogue included legislative elections before May 2, 2020; a referendum on revising the 1992 constitution; the redeployment of reconstituted defense and security forces; and a review of certain provisions of the 2015 agreement. Other than the legislative elections, no progress was reported on achieving these goals during 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic arrived in Mali on March 25, 2020. President Keita declared a state of emergency and instituted a nighttime curfew, introduced screening and quarantine measures, limited large gatherings, and made

the wearing of masks mandatory. After the number of cases rose exponentially during the course of the year, the government announced a full lockdown on December 18, with all bars, restaurants, and some businesses closed for a two-week period and private and public educational institutions closed until January 10. The government adopted a XOF 214 billion (approximately \$365 million) plan to deal with the crisis. In April, the World Bank approved \$25.8 million in grants and credit from its International Development Association (IDA) to help improve COVID-19 screening, detection, and treatment services.

The triple onslaught of political turmoil, extreme insecurity, and the COVID-19 pandemic battered Mali's economy in 2020. The World Bank estimates that Mali's real gross domestic product contracted by 2 percent in 2020, reflecting the decline in global demand, supply challenges, domestic restrictions, and the poor performance of the agricultural sector. The World Bank also reported that the poverty rate increased 5 percent in 2020 to nearly 50 percent.

CSOs' overall sustainability was unchanged in 2020. CSOs' service provision was moderately stronger as many organizations helped with the pandemic response. All other dimensions of sustainability were unchanged.

According to the Grassroots Development Support Unit of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, about 2,500 formal local organizations existed in Mali at the end of 2020, an increase of about 25 percent over 2019. More than 2,200 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were registered, compared to 2,150 in 2020. The number of informal organizations is unknown.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.2



CSOs' legal environment was stable in 2020.

CSOs continued to be governed by the 2004 Law 04-038-PRM on associations, which provides them with a great deal of flexibility. CSOs gain legal status simply by submitting a declaration to the government and, once the declaration is approved, publishing an announcement in the official gazette. CSOs seeking to work nationally register in Bamako, the capital city, while organizations intending to work in specific localities register with district, regional, or prefecture offices. CSOs may operate without registration and may benefit from funding from technical and financial partners without legal status. For example, the Youth Association for an Active and Democratic Citizenry (Association des jeunes pour la citoyenneté active et la démocratie, AJCAD) grants

funding to youth organizations without legal status through its Youth Action for Peace program.

In practice, CSOs encounter significant difficulties with registration, since the process includes several steps that often take an inordinate amount of time. The town hall must review and legalize the declaration document before it is submitted to the district office, and the applying organization must request a morality investigation at a local police station, which triggers the preparation of a report that is forwarded to the National Police Force for review and approval. But the process was slightly less onerous in 2020, particularly in districts where the registering offices are more flexible than in Bamako. Whereas in the past, the slowness of the registration process could seem like a deliberate effort by the government to block registration, the easing of registration procedures in 2020 seemed to stem from a real desire of transitional authorities to include CSOs in the process of rebuilding the state. This change contributed to a boom in CSO registrations in 2020. For example, despite the country's extreme political, security, and health challenges, the Women's Peacebuilding Network (Réseau des femmes pour la consolidation de la paix, RFCOPA) in Bamako was formed and immediately carried out activities during the year. RFCOPA was aided by its knowledge of the legal procedures and deadlines for registration, which is not always the case with new organizations and can contribute to their difficulties with the registration process.

Associations may gain status as NGOs after three years of activity, provided they submit annual reports and certified financial statements and sign framework agreements with the government. NGO status confers eligibility

for certain types of state support and tax exemptions. NGOs must submit annual activity and financial reports and undergo annual audits by the national, regional, and local governments. In practice, few NGOs comply with these requirements. CSOs can also obtain public utility status, which is a condition for bidding on government contracts, by decree from the Council of Ministers following a decision by the Supreme Court and a probationary period of at least five years.

The law does not include rules about CSOs' internal governance, and organizations have the freedom to administer their operations as they choose. Organizations normally define their internal structures and systems in their bylaws and internal regulations. All CSO directors must undergo background checks. CSO staff must register with the National Institute of Social Welfare and are subject to monitoring. The central government may not dissolve CSOs for political or arbitrary reasons, and organizations are rarely deregistered.

CSOs did not experience any significant state interference in their internal operations or activities in 2020, although a few organizations were prevented from carrying out certain activities. For example, the transitional authorities prevented Popular Democratic Movement (Mouvement démocratique populaire, MDP), Yerewolo Standing on the Ramparts (Yerewolo debout sur les remparts) platform, and other organizations from carrying out activities denouncing French foreign policy in Mali. The authorities justified its action on the basis of the pandemic and the political crisis. Attacks by armed groups on humanitarian agencies in the northern part of the country undermined their ability to deliver aid, according to Human Rights Watch.

All CSOs in Mali may seek funding from public and private donors provided they use the funds to realize their missions. CSOs may accept foreign funding on a tax-free basis. Organizations with public utility status may bid on government contracts.

The tax system is generally favorable to CSOs. Organizations with NGO status may obtain tax exemptions on imports such as vehicles, provided they have operating certificates indicating that they have submitted their annual activity reports and certified financial statements. NGOs with framework agreements with the government may benefit from tax rebates on the purchase of taxed products, although since the procedure for obtaining the rebates is long and complex, most organizations seek to benefit from it only for sizable purchases. Individual and corporate donors are not eligible for deductions.

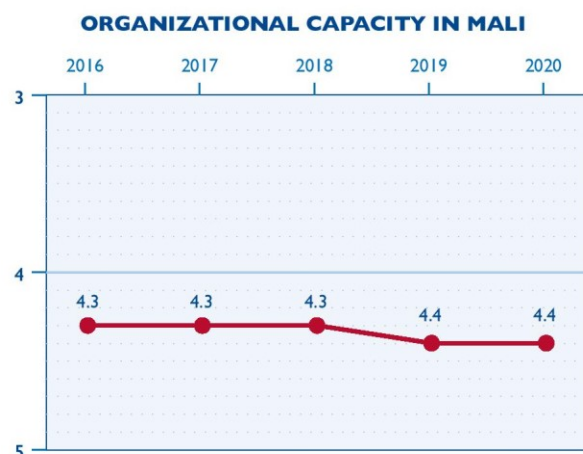
CSO human rights specialists and the staff of umbrella organizations such as the National Council of Civil Society (Conseil nationale de la société civile, CNSC), Coordination of Women's Associations and NGOs (Coordination des associations et ONG féminismes, CAFO), and Association for the Advancement and Defense of Women's Rights (Association pour le progrès et la défense des droits des femmes, APDF) have expertise in the laws governing the CSO sector. Few lawyers specialize in CSO law, and CSOs rarely seek their services.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.4

CSOs' organizational capacity did not change in 2020. Because of the political, security, and health crises, CSOs were not able to focus on developing their organizational capacity during the year.

Social-distancing requirements and other pandemic-related restrictions forced most organizations to suspend field activities requiring travel and face-to-face meetings in 2020. Some CSOs worked remotely, but poor internet access in the country's interior prevented many local organizations from implementing such arrangements.

CSOs' management structures usually include management and coordinating groups and boards of directors. CSOs' bylaws, internal regulations, and procedural manuals normally identify and differentiate among the responsibilities of these groups. In some CSOs, these structures function well. However, CSO staff do not always follow their procedural manuals and internal regulations, as they are generally more concerned with

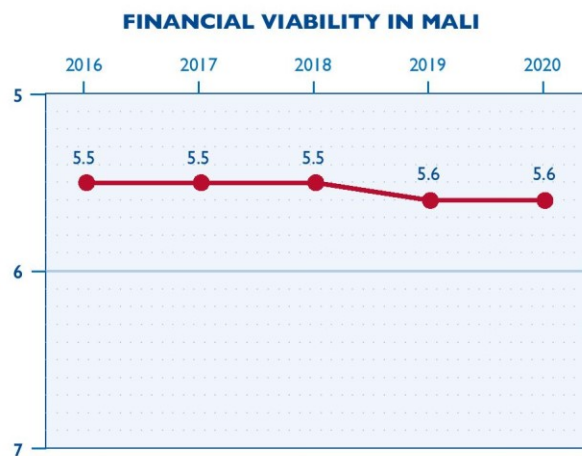


following the procedures set by their international partners. NGOs are typically better organized than other CSOs, both because they are required to complete external audits and submit activity reports and because they generally have more ample resources.

CSOs with strong organizational capacities, such as the Malian Institute for Research-Action for Peace (Institut malien de recherche-action pour la Paix, IMRAP), function with permanent core staff as well temporary employees hired for the duration of funded projects. Such organizations may also employ interns, who sometimes receive allowances. Other CSOs rely almost exclusively on volunteers and have few permanent staff.

The pandemic marked a turning point in CSOs' use of the internet as they were forced to turn to virtual platforms to continue functioning. This trend was encouraged by a drop in the cost of internet services and the improved quality of internet connections. During the year, CSO staff increasingly met virtually and engaged in telecommuting because of pandemic restrictions. Many CSOs expanded their presence on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp or developed their websites. However, in the interior, poor internet connectivity and uneven electricity supplies because of load shedding during warm periods prevented many organizations from working remotely.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.6



CSOs' financial viability did not change in 2020.

Malian CSOs are heavily dependent on foreign funding. In 2020, as in previous years, the main international partners were the UN, European Union (EU), and governments of France, the United States, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands. Detailed information about their levels of funding in 2020 is not available, but they are not believed to have changed significantly. Malian CSOs tend to be sub-contractors for international CSOs, which have stronger technical capacity and more transparent management practices. Foreign funding for Malian CSOs is usually short-term, and competition for the funding is intense. In a trend encouraged by financial partners, Malian CSOs increasingly set up consortia to compete for funding. For

example, the Observatory for Elections and Good Governance in Mali (Observatoire pour les élections et bonne gouvernance au Mali), a platform of thirty-six CSOs working on elections and democratic governance, was funded by the Embassy of Denmark in 2020.

In 2020, many donors redirected their funding from existing programs to the pandemic response, including the government's COVID-19 fund. This shift had a considerable impact on several sectors of CSO activity, especially education, the environment, reproductive health, and the promotion of peace and coexistence. Organizations working in these areas were often unable to carry out planned activities because of a loss of funding. Some organizations received funding from foreign donors to help fight the pandemic. For example, the Alliance to Rebuild Governance in Africa (Alliance pour refonder la gouvernance en Afrique, ARGAM)-Mali received six months of funding from FHI 360 to fight the virus through awareness-raising activities.

Several CSOs receive medium- and long-term funding for three to five years for projects in security, reconciliation, and peacebuilding. For example, AJCAD received funding from Norwegian Church Aid to promote women's role in the peace process in Mali over a three-year period. Several international organizations and donors closed their programs and released staff after the coup, including the U.S. Institute of Peace, which discontinued its four-year counterterrorism project launched with a budget of more than \$500,000.

There is no report of the government allocating funding to CSOs to help with the pandemic response. Private-sector enterprises have minimal contact with CSOs, although the Malian Textile Development Company (CMDT) and several irrigation-management companies have supported CSOs in the localities in which they operate. Telecommunications companies such as Orange have created foundations that sometimes support CSOs.

CSOs made little effort to fundraise or generate income by selling products or renting facilities in 2020.

Most CSOs keep accounts and prepare annual financial statements. CSOs that receive funding tend to have sound financial management systems and conduct annual audits, which they must submit to the government and their donors. Otherwise, audits are rarely conducted.

ADVOCACY: 3.4

CSO advocacy was unchanged in 2020. After engaging actively for years to find solutions to the country's challenges, CSOs engaged in limited advocacy in 2020 because of the political crisis and pandemic restrictions, and their efforts had little impact on government decisions.

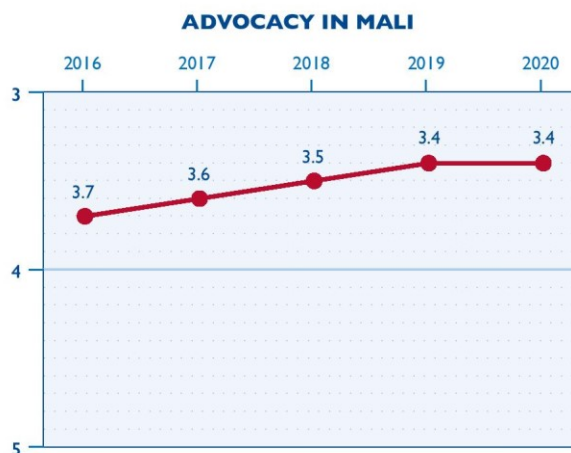
CSOs engaged with the government in some important decision-making frameworks in 2020. After the coup, CSOs took part in negotiations to set up the transitional government and worked alongside the government to help end the crisis. CNSC, the Coordination of Women's Associations and NGOs of Mali (Coordination des associations et ONG féminines du Mali, CAFO), and the Citizens' Coalition for Peace, Unity, and National Reconciliation (Coalition citoyenne de la société civile

pour la paix, l'unité et la réconciliation nationale, CCSC/PURN) participated in major debates on the transition roadmap and were members of the body that appointed the transitional president and vice president. During the mediation led by ECOWAS, the mediator met with several CSOs, including CNSC and CSO Forum, and requested that they support the transition.

In other regional and national consultative processes, CSOs were asked by the authorities and their partners for their opinions about the challenges of the transition and to propose solutions. In November 2020, ARGAMali organized a forum on the transition, which produced concrete proposals about the transition process that were submitted to the government. The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), ARGAMali, IMRAP, RFCOPA, and other organizations working on security issues conducted campaigns to democratize the security sector, implement the 2015 Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, and institutionalize inter- and intra-community and national dialogue. Through workshops and forums, these organizations drew the attention of the transitional government to the urgent need to reconstruct Mali's fragile social fabric, but they otherwise had little concrete effect.

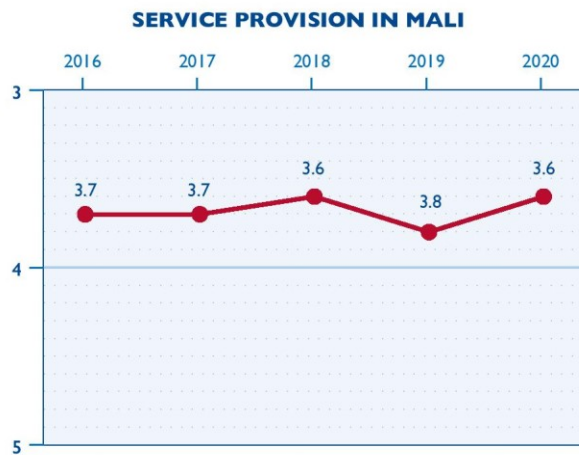
Other advocacy was fairly timid in 2020. Among CSOs' few advocacy successes, women's rights organizations convinced the authorities to work on adopting a law against gender-based violence (GBV). Their initiative gained momentum after a case of spousal abuse generated considerable publicity. The minister for the promotion of women, children, and the family submitted a draft bill to the parliament, but it was later withdrawn under pressure from Muslim religious leaders, who demanded the minister's resignation. In another advocacy initiative, AJCAD fought successfully to have the price of the national identification card publicized.

CSOs are aware that Law 04-038-PRM is outdated and needs revision. However, efforts to restructure the legal framework that were underway in 2019 were suspended in 2020 because of the political crisis and restrictions related to the pandemic.



SERVICE PROVISION: 3.6

CSOs' service provision improved moderately in 2020 as many organizations were called on to help with the pandemic response.



CSOs provide services in a variety of areas, including health care, education, humanitarian assistance, housing, water, and energy. CSOs typically seek to save the lives and alleviate the suffering of vulnerable populations, such as children, women, displaced persons and refugees, and the elderly. For example, AJCAD works on reproductive health, citizenship and youth rights, and crisis management advocacy, and Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) provides legal assistance to victims of GBV. In 2020, Youth Forum for Law (Tribune des jeunes pour le droit, TRIJEUD) provided assistance to victims of rape, kidnapping, and violence at schools and universities and monitored more than 150 court cases.

CSOs take the needs of their target groups into account by involving them in the planning process. These needs are often identified in focus groups facilitated by field agents recruited from targeted communities. Community-based organizations typically collect data to assess local needs. During the pandemic, many CSOs had to cut back on face-to-face consultations with target groups.

To help communities in the fight against the pandemic in 2020, CSOs organized awareness-raising campaigns for religious and traditional authorities, conducted community debates, installed hand-washing kits, and distributed masks. For example, in Kayes, the regional Civil Society Council conducted awareness-raising campaigns over several weeks after the region recorded dozens of positive cases. Similarly, a consortium of local CSOs formed by the National Federation of Collectives of Women's Organizations of Mali (Fédération nationale des collectifs d'organisations féminines du Mali, FENACOF-Mali) and Association of Women's Leadership and Sustainable Development (Association femmes leadership et développement durable, AFLED) undertook awareness-raising activities with financing from the Women's Voices and Leadership (Voix et leadership des femmes, VLF) Musoya Rapid Response Fund, launched in 2019 by the Canadian organizations Center for International Study and Cooperation (Centre d'étude et de coopération internationale, CECI) and SOCODEVI. International organizations helping with the pandemic response included Help, Enabel, Join For Water, Protos, ACTED, International Rescue Committee, Terre des hommes, and World Vision.

CSOs often produce publications and organize training or awareness-raising workshops that reach large audiences. For example, TRIJEUD conducts legal, psychosocial, and sociological analyses of the cases of rape, kidnapping, and other violence and shares them with public authorities and technical partners. DoniBLog, a bloggers' association, has produced more than fifteen publications on slavery and sexual violence.

CSOs adhere to the law and do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, even in very insecure and uncontrolled areas where the incidence of discrimination is high. CSOs generally do not take part in conflicts or become involved in political, military, or religious affairs. Most CSOs that provide goods and services adhere to principles of humanity, impartiality, and independence.

The government values its cooperation with CSOs, which enables it to stay informed about conditions at both central and local levels. CSOs enjoy opportunities to interact with the government at all levels on issues such as the environment, education, and health. At the local level, the government consults CSOs about its economic, social, and cultural development programs, although it does not always incorporate their suggestions.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.3

The infrastructure supporting CSOs was unchanged in 2020.

CSOs worked to strengthen their existing consortia to address shared challenges and seek funding through joint projects in 2020. Active consortia included ARGAMali, Malian Association for Survival in the Sahel (Association malienne pour la survie au Sahel, AMSS), Association for Citizenry and Resilience through Community Action (Association pour la citoyenneté et la résilience par des actions communautaires, ACITRACO), and Club for Contemporary Education (Club d'éducation actuelle, CLEDUCA). These organizations conducted training and awareness-raising activities and offered micro-project financing as part of their fight against violent extremism.

Training is highly developed and covers many areas, including conflict prevention, violent extremism, human rights, and security-sector reform. In 2020, the Coalition for Peace, Unity, and National Reconciliation in Mali (Coalition citoyenne de la société civile pour la paix, l'unité et la réconciliation nationale au Mali, CCSC-PURN) defended the interests of its members and encouraged information-sharing through publications, panel discussions, and seminars. Regional workshops were organized in Segou and Mopti to benefit CCSC-PURN branches. These activities complied with pandemic protocols, such as the obligatory wearing of masks, social distancing, and a maximum of fifty participants.

Collaboration between national and local governments and CSOs improved in 2020. Although the coup d'état and COVID-19 crisis inhibited the realization of joint initiatives to develop the CSO sector, CSO and government representatives met in dialogues, workshops, and seminars to discuss needed reforms in areas such as youth employment and public service.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN MALI



PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.0

PUBLIC IMAGE IN MALI



CSOs' public image was unchanged in 2020.

CSOs have no difficulty accessing the media, and their activities are covered at the local and national levels by public and private media and traditional channels such as town criers. For example, the Network of Traditional Communicators publicizes CSO advocacy campaigns. CSOs are the primary voices on local radio stations. In 2020, public and private television channels, radio stations, and private media in Mali covered the launch of the national CSO campaign on food and nutrition security. However, the media is generally uninformed about the work of CSOs and usually covers their activities without analysis. CSOs must pay for media coverage and the costs are very high, so CSOs often cannot afford to cover their initiatives.

The public's opinion of CSOs is generally positive since CSOs work to fulfill public needs. CSOs enhanced their reputation in 2020 by offering communities vital pandemic-related services and supporting the government in realigning its mission.

The government both before and after the coup in 2020 had a positive view of CSOs because of their help with the political crisis and pandemic response.

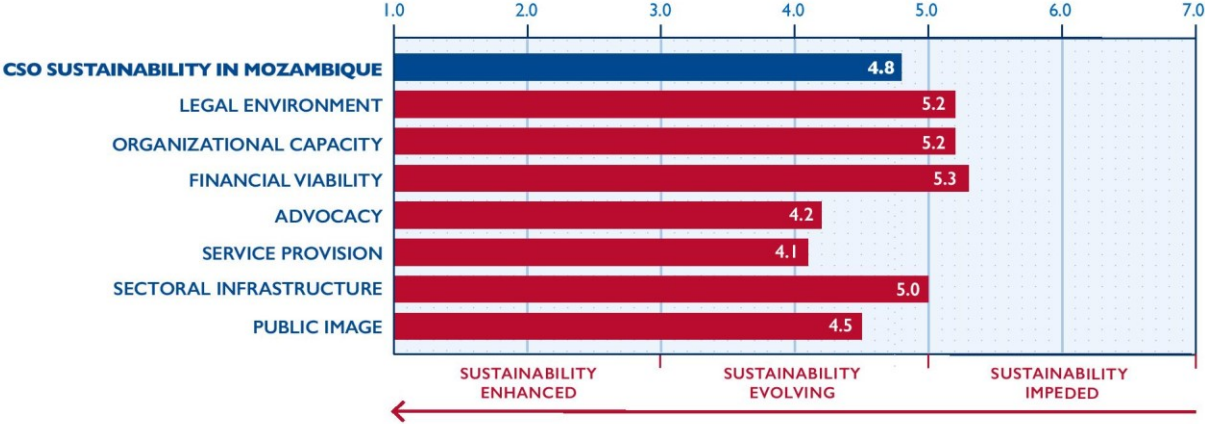
CSOs increasingly used social networks as essential tools in 2020. Organizations such as the Tuwindi Foundation and Democracy Tech Squad offered CSOs training in using social media and developing a stronger online presence. Among the many CSOs communicating through social networks were the Platform for the Fight Against Corruption and Unemployment in Mali (Plateforme de lutte contre la corruption, CCP), which campaigned for access to government documents, and Benbere, a publishing platform that addresses topics such as sexual and reproductive health, female genital mutilation, GBV, corruption, and insecurity.

CSOs typically demonstrate openness and transparency by producing activity reports and sharing them with donors and other supporters. Malian CSOs do not typically have codes of conduct.

MOZAMBIQUE

Capital: Maputo
Population: 30,888,034
GDP per capita (PPP): \$1,281
Human Development Index: Low (0.456)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (43/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.8



The year 2020 was marked by a sharp increase in the intensity, brutality, and spread of attacks by violent extremists in Cabo Delgado in northeastern Mozambique. Armed incursions against both government forces and civilians have left more than 2,000 people dead since 2017. At least 530,000 people were displaced from their homes in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Zambezia, and Niassa in 2020 alone, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Audiences worldwide were shocked by a video circulated on social media in September 2020 showing a naked woman in Mocimboa da Praia being beaten and shot thirty-six times by men who appeared to be members of the Mozambique Armed Forces (FADM). The incident was one of many grave human rights violations alleged by the U.S. Department of State, international human rights groups, and the recently created Mozambican Network of Human Right Defenders to have been committed by the FADM and mercenaries from private militia. Witnesses reported that journalists were harassed and arbitrarily arrested during a government clampdown on media coverage of the conflict during the year.

The peace accord signed in August 2019 by Mozambique’s ruling party, the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), and main opposition party, the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), opened the door to the disarmament, demobilization, and social reintegration of RENAMO armed forces in 2020. Nearly 1,500 RENAMO soldiers, or just under 30 percent of the forces targeted for reintegration, were demobilized nationwide, including a man widely believed to be the deputy leader of the RENAMO military junta.

The first case of the COVID-19 virus was reported in Mozambique on March 22, 2020. The government immediately declared a state of emergency and introduced measures to stem the spread of the virus, including closing international borders, schools, religious establishments, and businesses; requiring mandatory social distancing and hygienic practices; and limiting travel and public gatherings. The pandemic had a devastating economic effect on a country already struggling with violent conflict, severe climatic conditions, and one of the lowest rates of human development in the world (181 out of 189 countries on the 2020 Human Development Index). Expecting Mozambique’s economic growth to decline by 0.4 percent in 2020, the World Bank approved a \$100 million grant from the International Development Association to support the government’s pandemic response program.

In a landmark trial in 2020, six members of an elite security force were convicted of the October 2019 murder of Anástacio Matavel, executive director of the Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations in Gaza (FONGA) and member of the Sala da Paz platform for electoral observation. The murder occurred during tense general elections marred by violence and electoral irregularities. The convicted men were sentenced to between three and twenty-four years in prison. CSOs welcomed the trial’s outcome but pressed the judiciary to deepen its investigation into the crime and hold those responsible for it accountable.

Mozambique's hidden-debt scandal involving some \$2 billion in fraudulent debt by state-owned companies continued to dominate public attention in 2020. In a case brought by the Mozambican Budget Monitoring Forum, the Constitutional Court voided two loans totaling more than \$1 billion and state guarantees for \$1.57 billion in loans arranged by Credit Suisse and the Russian bank VTB. Mozambique's former minister of finance continued to be detained in South Africa on charges of corruption while awaiting a decision on his extradition to Mozambique or the United States. CSOs continued to press for further investigations of the scandal.

The overall sustainability of Mozambican CSOs did not change in 2020. Advocacy was slightly more effective as CSOs won important victories in the Constitutional Court ruling concerning the hidden debt scandal and convictions in the murder of a prominent CSO leader. CSOs' public image was burnished by increased media coverage. All other dimensions of sustainability did not change.

While no official data are available, the number of CSOs in Mozambique is thought to be around 10,000. The largest share of organizations focuses on education, health care, social development, governance, and public policy.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.2



The legal environment for CSOs was unchanged in 2020.

The law governing CSOs, Law 8/91 on Associations, did not change in 2020. CSOs may register at the national, provincial, or district level, depending on the geographical scope of their work. Organizations seeking to register must publish their articles of association in the official gazette, *Boletim da República*, and pay the costs of publication. Although this and other registration costs did not increase significantly in 2020, the cost of publishing articles of association is unaffordable for many organizations and prevents them from completing the registration process. The government is aware of this problem, and district administrators, provincial governors, and the Ministry of Justice issue letters of approval of registration that allow CSOs to begin

operations before they publish their articles of association. CSOs encountered few other barriers to registration in 2020. One high-profile exception remains the Mozambique Association for Sexual Minority Rights, which has been waiting for the government to recognize its registration request since 2008, although it is able to operate.

Article 10, No. 2, of the Law on Associations authorizes the attorney general to disband associations if they have fewer than ten members whose payment of membership fees is up to date. Many CSOs would qualify for dissolution under this rule, but the government has never applied it. No CSOs were dissolved in 2020.

CSOs did not view government oversight as a problem in 2020. This was especially true for organizations working at the provincial and local levels and even for CSOs focused on sensitive areas such as corruption and good governance, which are often accused of aiding the opposition. CSOs avoid misunderstandings with the government by keeping the authorities informed about their programs and activities from the outset. This cautious approach, which may slow down their work but does not really impede it, is especially important in Cabo Delgado, where CSOs working with youth are closely watched because of the recruitment of young people by insurgents. Some national-level organizations working on politically sensitive issues such as the hidden-debt scandal continued to be the target of anonymous threats in 2020. Some organizations—especially those located in the capital city, Maputo—continued to self-censor on controversial topics in 2020.

Tax exemptions are available to organizations with public utility status. The law leaves the exemptions undefined and states only that exemptions and other benefits may be granted to public utility associations at the discretion of the Council of Ministers. The application process for public utility status is long and complex and not always successful, so few organizations have such status.

CSOs may charge for their services as long as any profits are returned to the organization. There is no restriction on CSOs' eligibility to compete for government funding, although few organizations do so or are successful if they try. CSOs may engage in fundraising and accept funds from foreign donors.

High-quality legal advice is available in Mozambique. Usually only Maputo-based and well-established provincial organizations contract for legal services because of their high cost. Most other organizations obtain free legal advice by relying on personal relationships. The Tete Law Enforcement Association and the Provincial Law Enforcement Arbitration and Sustainable Development Network–Environmental Justice for Communities provide limited legal support to some community-based organizations (CBOs).

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.2

The sector's organizational capacity was unchanged in 2020.

Despite the restrictions on face-to-face interactions, organizations at the community level were able to clearly identify communities' needs in 2020. Informal groups such as saving associations demonstrated stronger, more sustainable relationships with their communities and local governments than CSOs working on the provincial and national levels. These smaller, informal groups tend to enjoy stronger mandates from their communities and are less reliant on donor funding, which does not always match community needs. In 2020, small community groups, including more than 100 women's savings groups in Niassa and Cabo Delgado, continued to work and experienced continuous growth. CSOs at the provincial and national levels were unable to interact with their communities and had to resort to virtual meetings via Zoom and Microsoft Teams. At the district level, where access to computers and internet is more limited, many organizations had to suspend or downsize their activities.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN MOZAMBIQUE



When designing projects, CSOs draw on government social and economic plans for basic data and guidance about the priorities of local authorities. After their proposals are funded, they conduct baseline surveys to confirm current conditions and then adjust the focus of their projects. Some CSOs claim that they carry out baseline research prior to the submission of proposals, but this is not borne out by the project notes that they regularly submit to donors, which show needs for adjustment once the reality on the ground is documented. CSOs' failure to carry out prior research is due mostly to their lack of funding and insufficient in-house experience. In 2020, CSOs were often unable to conduct baseline surveys because of pandemic restrictions on large meetings.

Local CSOs' knowledge of their communities is not fully appreciated or utilized by larger national and international organizations and academic institutions, which do not see the capacity to penetrate into communities as a valuable skill and marketable asset, although they often use local CSOs to collect data. Monitoring and evaluation is another area that tests the capacities of Mozambican CSOs. Many organizations comply with donor reporting requirements but still find it challenging to undertake quality post-project research. The majority of organizations still do not understand theories of change, and CSOs that grasp the basic concept continue to see their methodological approach as a one-off exercise rather than as a living document that needs constant review and adjustment.

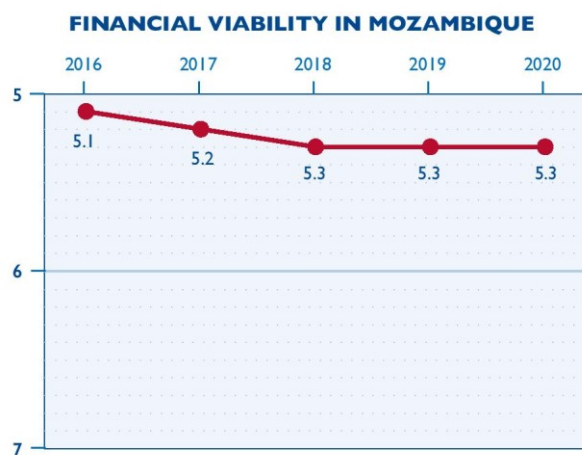
CSOs seek to follow their missions and visions as stated in their constitutions. However, funding opportunities can cause them to move away from their missions to ensure their survival. Only larger, well-established CSOs, such as the Mozambican Debt Group and Center for Public Integrity (CIP), have the financial means to contract with specialized consultants to develop strategic plans. Smaller organizations do not have strategic plans and work off of annual operational plans. CSOs with strategic plans usually find it difficult to carry them out, since funding for planned activities is not always available. In 2020, this challenge was heightened by the pandemic and donors' shift in focus to humanitarian needs in the northeastern part of the country.

CSOs' constitutions define the roles of their internal bodies, but CSOs usually lack understanding about the appropriate division of responsibilities. Tension between the governing and executive bodies is not unusual, given that the executive earns a salary while the members of governing bodies are volunteers, which some members find difficult to accept. Governing bodies often lack the capacity to discharge their responsibilities effectively. This is especially true of mandatory financial oversight committees, which can misunderstand their role and elect members who do not have the required experience or professional profile. Conflicts of interest still exist at some organizations, typically in the form of the employment of friends or family members in management and oversight positions. Many CSO executive directors persist in this practice out of gratitude to people who supported them through difficult times when no funding was available. In addition, some executive directors are content with the status quo since it protects their leadership position.

The recruitment and retention of qualified staff continued to be a major challenge for CSOs in 2020. Most organizations do not have reliable mid-or long-term funding and therefore cannot offer their employees job security. Because of limited funding, employees' experience and qualifications often fail to meet the level of specialization increasingly required by donors. In a classic chicken-and-egg scenario, organizations do not have staff capable of designing proposals that will win the funding needed to hire capable staff. The cost of professional services, even short-term or one-off jobs, from specialists such as accountants, computer technicians, and lawyers is out of the reach of most CSOs. Local residents, activists, and, to a lesser extent, students often volunteer to implement projects on the community level. During the pandemic in 2020, CSOs increasingly relied on volunteers and community structures to help with activities such as the distribution of masks.

Many CSOs, particularly in Maputo and provincial capitals, have access to basic office equipment and internet services. Internet services are limited at the district and local levels, but the government has introduced free hotspots in a few districts, such as Chiure. Mozambique's telephone network continued to expand in 2020, and a growing number of people, especially youths, have access to smartphones. CSOs' use of digital technology increased in 2020 as pandemic restrictions forced staff to learn to use platforms such as Zoom and Teams for conferences and meetings. Facebook and WhatsApp were also popular platforms for discussions and information sharing.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.3



CSOs' financial viability did not change in 2020.

Mozambican CSOs are almost entirely dependent on foreign donor funding. Key donors include the governments of the United States, Switzerland, Ireland, United Kingdom, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Canada. Smaller amounts of funding are also available from the embassies of Germany, France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. Most donor funding goes to traditional areas such as health care, education, water and sanitation, humanitarian assistance, human rights, peace and social cohesion, and employment generation. In 2020, several donors, including the Norwegian Embassy, made new funds available for pandemic-related activities. Other donors such as the European Union (EU) did not have special funding available for the pandemic but allowed

CSOs to allocate pandemic-related work to their budget line for unforeseen costs. CSOs perceived the overall level of funding and the number of funders to decrease in 2020, particularly at the local level, where many organizations closed or were only partially operating while waiting for the next funding opportunity. Larger organizations in Maputo did not experience the same difficulty in finding funding, although their search was certainly more competitive than in the past.

A small number of larger, well-established organizations in Maputo and provincial capitals, such as the Civil Society Learning and Training Center (CESC), Nweti-Communication for Health, Rural Observatory (OMR), and Institute for Social and Economic Studies (IESE), have diverse funding sources. They often obtain funding for periods of one

to three years and partner with CBOs on project implementation. The majority of smaller organizations, especially at the district level, have one funder or none at all. Their financial plight is complicated by the requirement of some donors, such as the EU and USAID, that they publish their statutes in the official gazette, which thus serves as a barrier to accessing funding. Other donors, in particular intermediary support organizations (ISOs) such as the Foundation for Community Development (FDC) and CESC, are more flexible and recognize the letters issued by the authorities as sufficient proof that an organization has authorization to operate and is therefore a valid partner.

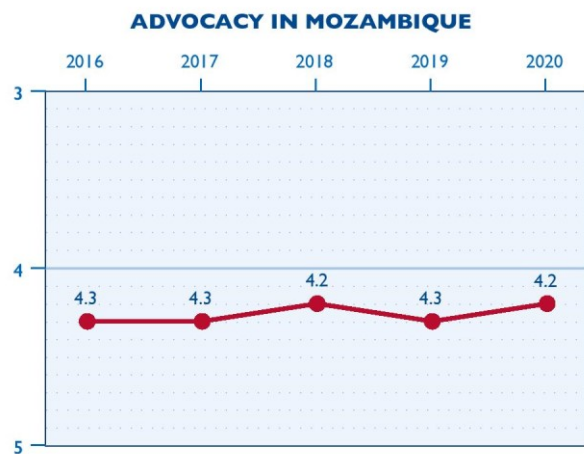
Some local foundations, including FDC, MASC Foundation, and Joaquim Chissano Foundation, offered limited support to CSOs in 2020. Otherwise, CSOs make little to no attempt to raise funds from local sources. Community members are generally unable to support CSOs financially (although they contribute regularly to faith groups, which raises questions about their level of trust in CSOs). CSOs and CBOs can usually count on in-kind contributions such as labor from volunteers, provided they offer small subsidies, transportation, or cell-phone credit. A few businesses, such as Total, Sasol, and Vale, support CSOs on an ad hoc basis. The government rarely provides funding to CSOs. Although CSOs are able to bid on government services, they rarely do so because of a perceived lack of transparency in the award process.

CSOs have limited experience earning revenue from the sale of services or products or the rental of assets, which in fact they rarely own. Any income generated from members' fees is negligible. The concept of social enterprises is still new in Mozambique, and few CSOs work in this area.

CSOs have improved their financial management in recent years. The sophistication of their financial management systems generally corresponds to the amount of funding that they receive and the number of trained staff they are able to hire. Most organizations have financial management approaches that are appropriate for small amounts of funding but do not meet donors' standards for managing large sums. Professional management services remain out of the reach of most CSOs. Audits are easily available in Maputo but remain costly and difficult to conduct without donor support. In the provinces, audits are even more unlikely to take place since auditors' transportation from Maputo adds to the expense. While a few local audit companies operate outside of Maputo, donors usually do not accept their work and instead demand audits by internationally recognized providers.

ADVOCACY: 4.2

CSO advocacy improved slightly in 2020 with two major advocacy achievements. First, the Budget Monitoring Forum scored a major victory in the hidden-debt scandal when the Mozambican Constitutional Court ruled in its favor and voided two loans totaling more than \$1 billion as well as state guarantees for \$1.57 billion in loans from Swiss and Russian banks. CSOs continued to exert pressure to bring the case to court outside of Mozambique. Second, CSOs kept media attention focused on the assassination of the executive director of FONGA as they pushed for answers and followed each phase of the investigation. This pressure helped ensure that security forces responsible for the assassination were brought to justice with convictions and sentencing. The convictions increased CSOs' trust in the justice system and help them feel safer in pushing for justice, which has not always been the case because of political interference.



Key advocacy issues continued to be identified in calls for proposals from donors in 2020. But CSOs increasingly take campaigns forward on their own initiative. This is a positive development and illustrates the confidence, experience, and capacity of Mozambican advocacy organizations, particularly at the national level. The creation and consolidation of multiple CSO movements, including the Human Right Defenders Network, Mozambican Budget Monitoring Forum, and Humanitarian Support to Cabo Delgado, also demonstrates CSOs' greater maturity and ability to join hands on larger, more complex advocacy issues. For example, in October 2020, CESC conducted research and monitored 108 schools to ascertain whether the buildings provided adequate conditions for children

to return safely to schools during the pandemic. The results were presented with recommendations to various ministries and other key stakeholders.

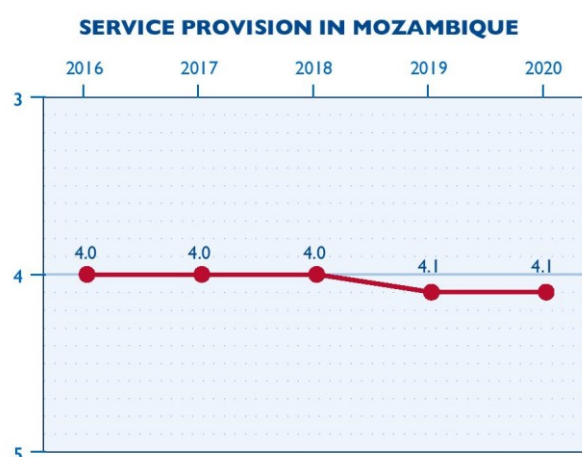
Despite the difficult political environment, CSOs enjoyed positive interactions with the central government in 2020, usually in areas that were convenient for the government or increased its credibility and visibility. For example, the Citizenship Observatory of Mozambique worked in coordination with the Ministry of State Administration and Civil Service to analyze the law on decentralization and identify areas for improvement. Organizations such as the Civil Society Forum for Child Rights (ROSC), CIP, Forum Mulher, OMR, and OCS met with government officials to ensure that funding for the pandemic response included accountability mechanisms as well as support for vulnerable communities such as children and the elderly.

At the provincial and district levels, lines of communication between the government and CSOs have improved in recent years. Development observatories offer an important formal framework for CSOs and policy makers to discuss local governments' social and economic plans. Provincial development observatories in some provinces, such as Niassa and Inhambane, continued to meet in 2020. However, the observatories typically have limited impact since they serve a consultative rather than deliberative function. The number of development observatories has decreased in recent years, and ActionAid Mozambique is working to make them operational again, with the government's cooperation. In the provinces where the observatories did not meet, CSOs participated in district consultative councils, although their membership is often selected on the basis of partisan politics.

Many coalitions focused on the hidden-debt issue and human rights in 2020. This advocacy was generally led by CSOs in registered networks, and few spontaneous citizen-led or grassroots campaigns were observed. In September 2020, Forum Mulher campaigned for accountability in the case of the filmed beating and death of a naked woman by Mozambican soldiers. Twenty-five CSOs led by Forum Mulher, ROSC, and the Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust continued to demand safety for women and justice for the Matalane victims. After evidence was released on social media in August showing that police instructors had sexually assaulted women trainees and impregnated fifteen of them, CSOs successfully demanded that the police commander suspend the instructors, offer support to the pregnant students, and allow them to participate in future training.

CSOs are aware of the need to adjust Law 8/91 on Associations and in 2018 submitted a proposal to update the law to the Assembly. To date there has been no official response to the proposal, although the Joint League of NGOs follows up on it regularly.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.1



CSOs' service provision was unchanged in 2020.

CSOs work in a variety of fields, including education, health, water and sanitation, governance, natural resources, agriculture, the environment, and emergency aid. In 2020, many organizations were involved nationwide in the distribution of masks, sanitizer, buckets, videos, posters, and other pandemic-related supplies and awareness tools.

CSOs believe that their services meet the needs of the communities that they serve, although their impact is sometimes weakened by the mismatch of community priorities with available funding. CSOs identify local needs through their contacts on the ground, backed up by provincial social and economic plans, their own experiences, and, when feasible, baseline surveys. When

carrying out baseline research, CSOs sometimes discover that issues that they wanted to address are no longer a major concern, and they then work with their donors to adjust their interventions.

CSOs often work in partnership with other national and international organizations and, at times, with consultancy firms. They thus share their expertise and knowledge of local conditions with a broad audience of users. All CSOs

provide their services to beneficiaries beyond their own members and do not usually discriminate on the basis of race, gender, or other factors.

The sale of services to generate income is not widely practiced by CSOs in Mozambique. Most constituents at the community level have no way of paying for CSOs' services. CSOs do not appreciate the importance of market demand to ensuring sustainability.

The national and local governments recognize the potential value of CSOs in the provision and monitoring of basic services. The relationship between the government and service-providing CSOs is generally positive, since CSOs help the government fill gaps in services and work in areas that the government is unable to reach. This relationship contrasts with the government's attitude to CSOs working on good governance, which it often views as the opposition.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.0

The infrastructure serving the CSO sector was stable in 2020.

No resource centers exist in Mozambique. ISOs such as We Effect, Oxfam, and Diakonia offer basic training in areas such as management and advocacy under the AGIR Mozambique program, which is funded by the Swedish, Dutch, and Norwegian embassies.

A number of national organizations, including FDC and MASC Foundation, regrant international donors' funds. For example, FDC, along with the National Aids Council and World Vision, regranted funds for health-care programs from the Global Fund to Support AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis in 2020.

Despite pandemic-related restrictions, coordination between CSOs increased in 2020 as virtual meetings proved far easier to organize than traditional in-person conferences. Thematic forums are particularly widespread and include such groups as the Women's Forum, Children's CSO Forum, ROSC, Forum Terra, CSOs Working with People with Disabilities, and Budget Monitoring Forum. These networks encourage CSOs to work together on advocacy issues, mainly on the national level. Provincial-level forums continue to operate, but many of them are rebuilding since their mandates have often been taken over by thematic forums and informal networks. Some provincial forums have sought to assert a dual role of regrating donors' funds and implementing programs directly, but this path takes them into competition with their own members, creating friction and affecting their ability to unite member organizations, as happened with the NGO Forum in Niassa. Rotating the leadership of networks helps address this concern.

Capable CSO management trainers offer basic training at the provincial level, but few organizations are able to afford them. More specialized training in strategic planning, proposal writing, monitoring and evaluation, and similar topics is not readily available outside of Maputo. The training that donors offer to their grantees is considered adequate for implementing specific projects but does not meet CSOs' need to acquire broad expertise. Training materials are published mainly in Portuguese and occasionally the main local languages.

CSOs' partnership with government at the local level is generally positive, particularly when the two sides work together to monitor the quality of basic public services. The relationship is less positive when CSOs' work takes them into more sensitive areas, such as debt, corruption, or the abuse of power.

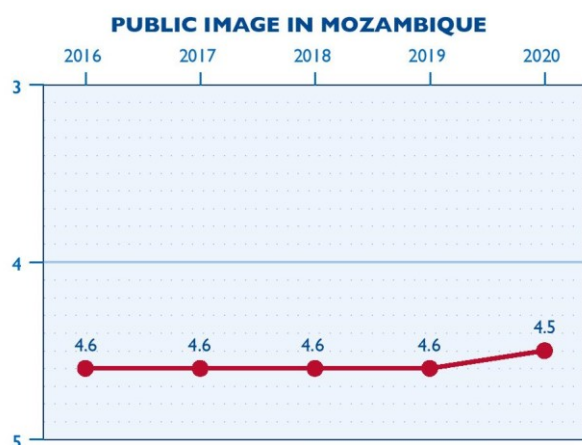
Collaboration between CSOs and the private sector is still limited. A new project in 2020 was the Civil Society Platform for Monitoring the Total Gas Project, a joint initiative to monitor the performance of the Total company in social and environmental areas. The project began with training in 2020 but was not able to launch the monitoring component because the pandemic and extremist attacks limited travel to involved areas in the north of Cabo Delgado.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN MOZAMBIQUE



Cooperation between CSOs and the media is productive, with the media positively covering CSOs' activities and publicizing their issues. The NGO Forum of Gaza, Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM), and the Organization for Community Development (OCSIDA) worked with the national public broadcaster TVM to disseminate pandemic support to the neediest populations in Gaza Province.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.5



CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020 with greater media coverage at all levels. On the national level, coverage was particularly widespread in the written press. Local community radio stations are the main media outlet covering locally based organizations, and although CSOs must pay for airtime, the stations often charge reduced rates to broadcast CSOs' programs and public service announcements. Television coverage is more difficult to obtain, given the need to pay the costs of moving equipment and crews, which most CSOs cannot afford. In general, CSOs' relationships with independent media are positive and their issues and viewpoints are given space, even when they involve more controversial topics. State-controlled media is selective in the issues that it chooses to publish or put on air.

At the community level, where CSOs are most active, the public is aware and appreciative of CSOs' work, especially insofar as it sees CSOs supplying services that the government is unable to provide. A negative reaction is sometimes triggered when project funding ends and a CSO pulls out, leaving a community aggrieved and uncertain. On the whole, the public does not fully grasp the concept of CSOs, which may be another reason that few people contribute to them financially.

The government recognizes that local CSOs' foothold in communities is useful for public-awareness campaigns and the provision of basic public services. The government has a divided view of CSOs, approving of their work providing services, engaging in humanitarian assistance, and conducting training but disapproving of their efforts to expose corruption and demand accountability.

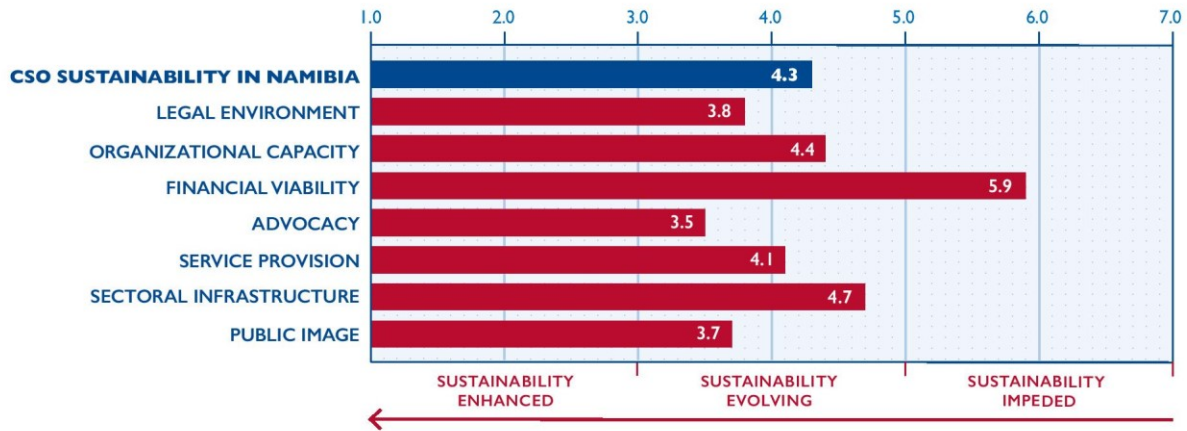
Few CSOs are aware of the need to promote their overall role in society as opposed to publicizing specific project-related events. Nevertheless, CSOs have positive relationships with journalists and are learning to package their information to make it relevant and attractive. Journalists also increasingly understand CSOs' role and work, according to focus group discussions in Niassa, Gaza, and Cabo Delgado in 2020. Most large, well-established organizations use social media to share information and conduct campaigns. On the local level, beneficiaries have limited access to the internet, making social media a less attractive option for local CSOs.

A sector-wide code of conduct for CSOs exists but many organizations lack information about its contents. Funders such as the MASC Foundation make signing the code an obligatory part of their contractual process. CSOs usually present detailed annual financial reports to their general assemblies, and larger organizations provide semi-annual updates to their donors and members. CSOs rarely publish their annual reports in newspapers because of the cost. Some organizations post their annual reports online. CSOs' financial and audit reports are rarely made publicly available.

NAMIBIA

Capital: Windhoek
Population: 2,678,191
GDP per capita (PPP): \$9,637
Human Development Index: Medium (0.646)
Freedom in the World: Free (77/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.3



The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic had a tumultuous effect on Namibian society. After the first case of the virus was detected in March, the government imposed a state of emergency, which lasted until September. Fundamental freedoms such as the right to move around the country and hold public gatherings were suspended or limited, and a night-time curfew was imposed for much of the year. However, the rights to freedoms of expression and of the press were not seriously affected, and Namibians continued to protest publicly over a variety of issues while following health guidelines. The government introduced a short-lived emergency grant for the unemployed along with a number of measures to help businesses. The private sector assisted in the roll-out of these and other pandemic-related programs, but CSOs were not directly involved. In general, CSOs adapted well to the restrictions—for example, by organizing socially distanced demonstrations and limiting attendance at gatherings. Many CSOs quickly switched to holding internal staff meetings and public engagements online after the lockdown was introduced in March.

Continuing corruption scandals, combined with an economic recession that began in 2016, led to a loss of popular support for the ruling SWAPO party in local and regional elections in November 2020. No single opposition party emerged to challenge SWAPO. The Independent Patriots for Change did well in the coastal settlements of Walvis Bay and Swakopmund and the Landless People’s Movement took control of the Karas and Hardap regions in the south of the country. For the first time since independence, SWAPO lost its majority in the capital, Windhoek, when an alliance of opposition groups assumed control of the city council.

The Fishrot corruption case, revealed at the end of 2019 in reports by media outlets such as Al Jazeera, Wikileaks, The Namibian newspaper, and the Icelandic public broadcaster, continued to dominate the headlines in 2020. Seven suspects, including the former ministers of fisheries and justice, remained behind bars awaiting trial on charges of receiving at least \$10 million in bribes to ensure that fishing quotas went to an Icelandic fishing company. At least some of this amount was transferred to entities linked to SWAPO. The high-level nature of corruption in Namibia was underlined when the Supreme Court ruled in April 2020 that the former minister of education could not appeal her conviction for corruption after she was found guilty of favoring her relatives in the allocation of social housing. CSOs led by the ACTION Coalition, which is composed of organizations working in the governance sector, continued to press for Namibia to operationalize its 2017 whistleblower protection law, especially after the Fishrot case underscored the importance of whistleblowers in rooting out corruption.

Namibia retained its top spot as the freest media environment in Africa in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index of Reporters Without Borders. However, the country’s reputation as an open society was undermined by police

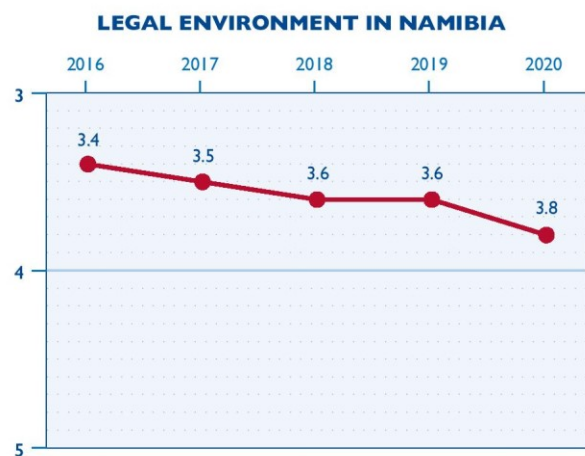
clashes with demonstrators protesting sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in October. More than twenty protesters and journalists were arrested, but the charges were later dropped.

The Namibian economy shrank by 8 percent in 2020, according to the Bank of Namibia. At the end of year, the Ministry of Labor confirmed that more than 12,000 people—probably an underestimate—had lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic. A survey commissioned by the Namibia Employers Federation that was released at the end of October 2020 found that 19 percent of responding businesses had closed, while 26 percent had reduced their staff and 39 percent had imposed wage cuts. The Bank of Namibia said that pre-COVID-19, Namibia had received more than 40,000 tourists a month but between September and December 2020 received a total of only 6,700 tourists. The economic gloom was lifted slightly by an exceptional rainy season, which ended a four-year drought in most of the country and replenished the country's dams.

CSOs' overall sustainability was unchanged in 2020. The legal environment deteriorated moderately as government bodies made a greater effort to monitor the sector and posed bureaucratic obstacles to registration. Pandemic-related restrictions complicated CSOs' strategic planning and internal management, causing the sector's organizational capacity to deteriorate slightly. The sector's financial viability was slightly weaker as the pandemic disrupted and diverted international funding streams. CSO service provision was also weaker because of declining funding coupled with pandemic-related restrictions. Advocacy was moderately stronger as CSOs actively engaged in social justice issues and played an important, often successful role in influencing policy and public opinion. The public image of CSOs improved slightly thanks to increasingly favorable coverage of CSOs. CSOs' sectoral infrastructure did not change.

No recent official data are available on the size of the CSO sector in Namibia. At the end of 2020, 220 active CSOs were listed on the website of CIVIC +264, a voluntary association that serves as an information-sharing network for CSOs.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 3.8



The legal environment for CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020 as CSOs observed more concerted efforts by government bodies to monitor and control the sector. In particular, CSOs felt threatened by the Financial Intelligence Center (FIC), which seemed to regard them as a major risk for money laundering and the financing of terrorism. CSOs also complained of worsening bureaucratic obstacles during registration.

CSOs register as trusts with the Master of the High Court or as companies not for gain with the Business and Intellectual Property Authority. CSOs offering health-care or educational services must also register with relevant line ministries, and organizations involved in child protection activities must comply with additional registration requirements. Both trusts and companies not

for gain continued to face delays and red tape when seeking to register, update details, or deregister in 2020. For example, smaller organizations such as the Eoolo Permaculture Initiative struggled to gain clarity from the authorities about regulation requirements, and the Namibian Media Trust (NMT) encountered difficulties while trying to gain national certification for its media-related training courses, which would establish NMT's eligibility for the state subsidy scheme.

CSOs felt pressured in 2020 by ongoing attempts to revive a government-civil society partnership policy and create an umbrella body for the whole of civil society. A foreign development agency acting on behalf of the Ombudsman's Office was widely seen as the main driver of the initiative. CSOs saw the agency as forcing the issue and were concerned that they were not involved as equal partners and the effort was overly rushed. The agency ignored a request for a meeting from the ACTION Coalition and set what CSOs believed were unrealistic deadlines for the agreement to be finalized and the umbrella body to be established. The initiative petered out at the end of the year.

As the FIC, which is attached to the Bank of Namibia, prepared for a review of Namibia by the Financial Action Task Force in 2021, it maintained that civil society posed a significant risk for money laundering and terrorism financing. Some CSOs disputed the FIC's proposed requirement that all nonprofit organizations register with it under the Financial Intelligence Act 13 of 2012. Other CSOs subscribed to the overall aim of preventing money laundering and terrorism financing but questioned why the FIC was targeting civil society when Namibia's major money-laundering scandals concerned government-linked bodies, private companies, and politicians. By the end of the year, the FIC was still consulting with CSOs, including churches, in an effort to persuade them to register with it and supply financial information. Some CSOs also found it difficult to meet the more stringent compliance requirements imposed by their banks in 2020, usually under anti-money laundering regulations. For example, the requirement to file many mandatory forms posed a heavy administrative burden on CSOs with little capacity. The bank serving the Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET) threatened to close the CSO's account when it had not filled out certain forms by a set deadline.

A long-standing dispute over the constitutionality of the Research, Science, and Technology Act of 2004 continued to drag on in the High Court in 2020. Three organizations—the Legal Assistance Center (LAC), Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), and The Namibian newspaper—have challenged the law and its regulations, claiming that it imposes draconian controls on bodies conducting any kind of research. Government attorneys have offered to revise the law but still had to come up with acceptable amendments in 2020. The Access to Information Bill, which CSOs see as crucial for opening up the information landscape, was finally presented in the parliament in early 2020 but then stalled after going to a standing committee. CSOs hope that the law will be passed in 2021.

A peaceful demonstration by the #ShutItAllDown movement in October 2020 was disrupted by security forces, who detained twenty-three protesters and three journalists. Although the charges against the detainees were later dropped, the police and government responses to the demonstrations came across as ham-fisted and uncaring. The incident followed several cases of heavy-handed policing in several special operations, including one in which civilians were assaulted and some lost their lives.

There are no legal controls on foreign funding of CSOs. CSOs may compete for government contracts and engage in income-generating activities but rarely do so.

All CSOs pay pay-as-you-earn tax on permanent employees' salaries. CSOs are exempt from value-added tax (VAT) except when they provide services or sell products for commercial purposes. In 2020, several CSOs, including the Society for Family Health, complained that the government took too long to refund VAT payments and the delays were undermining their financial viability. Charitable, religious, and welfare organizations are exempt from taxes on income, including funds from donors. After the minister of finance proposed taxing any income that charities derive from commercial activities, the government began to draft relevant legislation in 2019 and continued in this effort in 2020.

Private legal services are available to CSOs but are costly. LAC normally provides legal advice to CSOs on a pro bono basis. In 2020, its capacity to provide legal advice was severely strained when its office was closed during the lockdown.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.4

CSOs' organizational capacity deteriorated slightly in 2020 as pandemic-related restrictions complicated their strategic planning and internal management. These strains were intensified by the ongoing challenges of limited financial and human resources.

Pandemic-related restrictions on travel and public gatherings disrupted CSOs' operations in grassroots communities in 2020. Workers for health-care CSOs, such as the Society for Family, could not travel from region to region for a period of several months, while state health-care workers moved more easily. NaDEET was unable to transport school children for educational sessions because of occupancy restrictions on public transport and the high cost of hiring private buses.

CSOs that could not move their activities online had to curtail or delay activities, especially during the most extreme lockdown from March to May. Contacts with the government were also limited by pandemic restrictions. For example, the newly established civil society coordination hub, CIVIC +264, found it hard to reach government officials during the lockdown since many of them were working from home with limited connectivity. However,

some organizations found that they actually had better access to constituents via online platforms. For example, IPPR had a productive discussion with the minister of finance and his senior staff about budget transparency using Zoom. NMT successfully moved its training courses for journalists online and provided course attendees with data on their mobile devices so that they could attend various webinars from home.

Some CSOs neglected their core mandates in 2020 to pursue whatever funding was available so that they could maintain their operations. The search for funds became urgent for some organizations. Donors increasingly demand internal documents such as strategic plans, vision statements, and detailed monitoring and evaluation reports. Given their limited resources, many CSOs find it difficult to produce these documents, which constrains their ability to apply for funding successfully.

Many CSOs continued to be hamstrung by weak boards in 2020. Few professionally qualified and experienced Namibians are willing to serve on CSO boards, given the challenging circumstances and lack of remuneration. Once appointed, board members often display a lack of commitment to their organizations.

Given ongoing financial shortfalls, CSOs continued to struggle to hire, train, and retain competent and experienced staff in 2020. For example, NaDEET, NMT, Elolo, and the Namibia Development Trust (NDT) all experienced capacity challenges, and some of these organizations had to lay off staff in 2020. Few organizations have the resources to fill permanent positions, and most CSOs operate with a limited number of employees hired only for the duration of funded projects. Staffing constraints limit CSOs' capacity to bid on funding opportunities, especially at smaller organizations, and their ability to hire support and administrative staff is severely constrained. To mitigate staffing gaps, many CSOs make use of local and international volunteers, who pose administrative challenges such as the need for supervision and training, legal obligations, and mandatory recruiting guidelines.

Many CSOs lack core funding for office costs. Some government ministries and institutions allow CSOs to access basic office space. Many organizations had to unexpectedly invest funds in digital technologies in 2020. Several CSOs, such as NMT and IPPR, made use of online tools such as livestreaming and podcasts to conduct activities more effectively and more cheaply. Panel discussions and consultations via online services such as Zoom were also increasingly prevalent. The Namibia Institute for Democracy (NID) was able to broadcast regular panel discussions on human rights and democracy-related issues via Facebook Live. Smaller CSOs found it harder to switch to online operations.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN NAMIBIA



FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.9

FINANCIAL VIABILITY IN NAMIBIA



The financial viability of CSOs in Namibia deteriorated slightly in 2020 as the pandemic diverted international funding streams and disrupted CSOs' relationships with donors.

Namibian CSOs are dependent on foreign donors. Most donor funding is allocated to government institutions. While exact levels of foreign funding are difficult to obtain, many CSOs experienced a decline in funding in 2020. Among the hardest-hit organizations, NMT experienced shortfalls for its work in media development and the promotion of freedom of expression. Some donors made funding available for pandemic-related activities instead of existing projects. For example, DW Akademie and the Hanns Seidel Foundation provided financial support to IPPR's fact-checking project, which

actively countered disinformation related to the pandemic. Few local CSOs have the capacity to absorb and manage sizable, multi-year funding opportunities, such as those offered by the European Union (EU).

The decline in tourism affected CSOs in the usually resilient environmental conservation sector. NaDEET, for example, experienced a marked decline in financial support as the local tourism industry collapsed and private-sector donations dried up. Community conservancies were also deprived of income because of the lack of tourists.

Government support for civil society has always been limited. With the country's fiscal crisis worsening, the government did not release any funds to CSOs in 2020. As many activities were limited by the pandemic, CSOs found it very difficult to expand opportunities for earning their own income during the year. The depressed local economy also minimized private-sector support.

Since most Namibian CSOs are very small and operate on a project-to-project basis without core funding, they find it difficult to develop their financial management systems. Very few CSOs publish financial information.

ADVOCACY: 3.5

CSO advocacy improved moderately in 2020 as CSOs were actively involved in social justice and policy issues, including SGBV, police brutality, corruption, poverty, illegal timber harvesting, and cross-border tensions with Botswana.

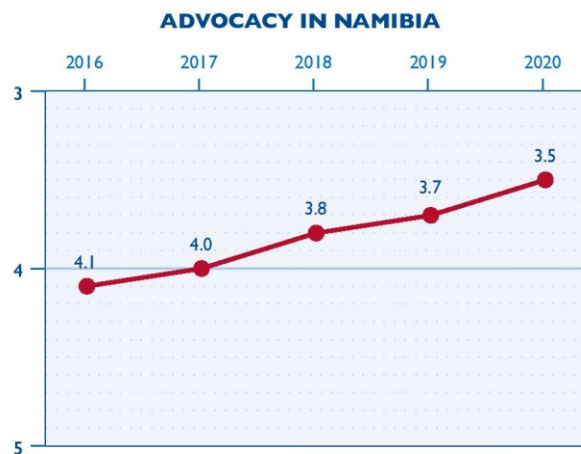
Namibian CSOs play an important and often successful role in influencing policy and public opinion, in part because of the rise of vocal social movements, which are often driven by young activists disillusioned with the government's failure to address the country's socio-economic challenges. CSOs cooperated with the government on drafting policies and legislation in 2020. For example, LAC worked closely with the Ministry of Justice on the new Child Care Protection Act and its regulations. NDT took part in policy formulation on forestry-related issues with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. President Hage Geingob appointed CSO representatives to the national governing council for the African Peer Review Mechanism, which will assess Namibia's governance standards. CSOs also served on a commission looking at ancestral land claims that delivered its report to the president in July. The government used CIVIC +264 as a contact point for identifying and contacting CSOs to participate in various policy initiatives in 2020.

Growing public anger over the country's high rates of SGBV led to the #ShutItAllDown initiative in October. A loose coalition of activists and organizations coordinated protests in a number of towns that attracted hundreds of participants. In addition to protesting specific high-profile cases of violence against women, the #ShutItAllDown movement challenged a culture of toxic masculinity and political lethargy. The activists effectively used social media, especially Twitter, to promote their cause and coordinate their activities. The protesters met with government officials towards the end of the year but failed in their calls to have the minister of gender removed from office.

Protests also took place in Katima Mulilo and Windhoek against the killing of four Namibian fishermen by the Botswana Defence Force on Namibia's north-eastern border. The protests were organized by a new group called Zambezi Lives Matter.

On December 23, more than 2,000 employees of the large Shoprite, Checkers, and Usave retail chain went on strike over low wages and poor working conditions. The Namibian Food and Allied Workers Union called on consumers to boycott the shops, a move that the Labor Ministry supported. The strike ended one month later with most of the workers' demands met.

The revival of the Basic Income Grant (BIG) coalition in 2020 brought together a range of human rights, labor, and religious groups to pressure the government to roll out a monthly universal grant for all citizens. The government



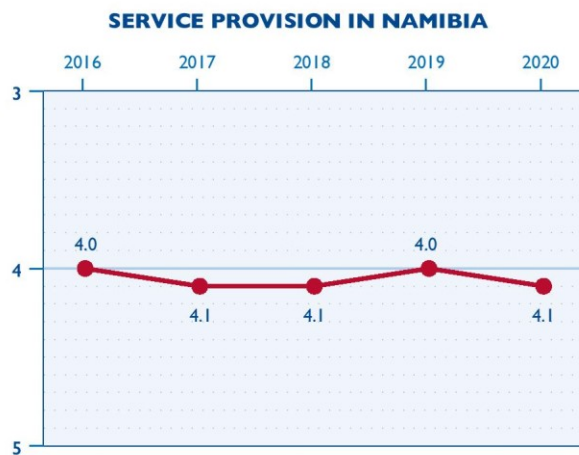
responded with a more targeted, short-lived emergency income grant to help households with incomes below the tax threshold during the pandemic.

LAC objected to a plan put forward by the Judicial Service Commission to make it easier to hold court hearings in secret. The proposal raised fears that hearings and court documents referring to sensitive political cases could be kept away from the public eye. As of the end of 2020, this issue was still unresolved.

CSOs led by the ACTION Coalition were able to push the Access to Information Bill to the parliament. The bill was then stalled by a dispute over the composition of the parliamentary committee, and no further progress was made on it during the year. CSOs such as IPPR urged the government to operationalize the Whistleblower Protection Act without success. At the end of the year, the law remained unimplemented three years after it was passed by the parliament.

There were no attempts by CSOs to reform the legal framework for the sector in 2020, although inconclusive talks held under the auspices of the Ombudsman's Office addressed the linked issues of a possible partnership agreement with the government and the official registration of recognized CSOs. Ultimately, several leading CSOs lost trust in the process after they felt they were being pressured to finalize an agreement with unrealistic speed.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.1



CSO service provision deteriorated slightly in 2020 as a result of declining funding coupled with pandemic-related restrictions. For example, LAC was unable to provide some litigation services and legal advice during the lockdown. Similarly, NaDEET was unable to offer educational sessions on the environment as schools and colleges closed or operated on a limited basis. Because of poor connectivity in many communities, online learning was not a viable substitute for many students.

The Shackdwellers Federation of Namibia continued to build affordable houses for low-income earners around the country, while the Society for Family Health provided health services at the grassroots level. Few organizations directly re-oriented their work to meet needs related to the pandemic. One exception was Development

Workshop Namibia, which provided hands-free urban sanitation units known as tippy taps to informal settlements to reduce the infection rate among poor communities. IPPR devoted much of its fact-checking service to countering COVID-19 disinformation.

CSOs and communities often come together to organize activities aimed at helping the poor and marginalized. For example, when a fire in an informal settlement in the coastal town of Walvis Bay left more than 1,000 people homeless, CSOs, the government, businesses, and local communities assisted with tents, food, and other supplies. CSOs also helped establish community-based initiatives to supply basic necessities such as food and toiletries for poor and vulnerable communities most affected by the pandemic. A new organization, Co-Feed Namibia, helped collect donations from businesses, churches, and private individuals and distribute goods to orphanages, schools, soup kitchens, and households in need. However, CSOs' overall ability to offer services responding to community needs during the pandemic was limited. Partly because of its own financial problems, the government did not fund CSOs' community work in 2020.

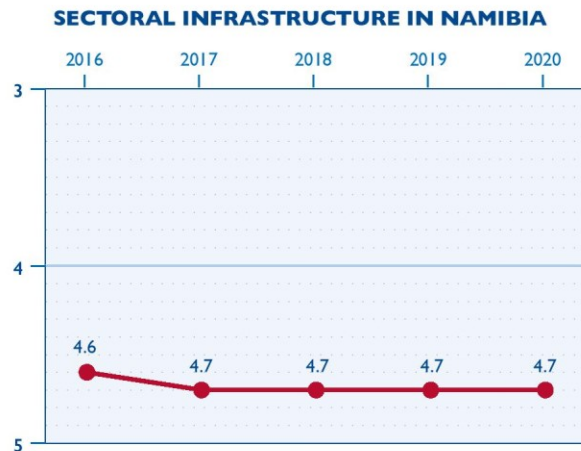
Most CSOs do not seek to generate income from their services, since they serve mostly poor communities.

Despite its lack of financial support, the government displayed a more tolerant attitude to CSOs in 2020 and recognized their contributions to the pandemic response.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.7

The infrastructure supporting CSOs did not change in 2020. In general, the infrastructure is limited, and CSOs make do with little infrastructural support.

The only general resource center offering capacity building or operational space to CSOs in Namibia is the House of Democracy, which, outside of the lockdown period, provided office facilities to a number of CSOs, including NID, IPPR, Economic Association of Namibia, and CIVIC +264. During the lockdown, many CSO offices were closed, with staff working from home and engaging with each other online. The House of Democracy, with support from the Hanns Seidel Foundation, invested in online tools such as Zoom, which could be used by its partners for internal meetings and engagements with the public.



Coordination between CSOs is intermittent and fragmented, particularly since no umbrella body coordinates joint undertakings for the sector as a whole. The Namibia Non-Governmental Organizations Forum (NANGOF) continued to exist in 2020 mostly as a legal entity rather than an active body. CIVIC +264 focuses on networking and information sharing for CSOs but is not an umbrella organization and does not speak on behalf of civil society. Some organizations working in the same sector cooperate effectively. For example, in 2020, the ten members of the ACTION Coalition advocated for better access to information, and CSOs acting together under the #ShutItAllDown banner successfully focused public attention on SGBV. The health sector was negatively affected by its umbrella organization's loss of status with its main funder, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

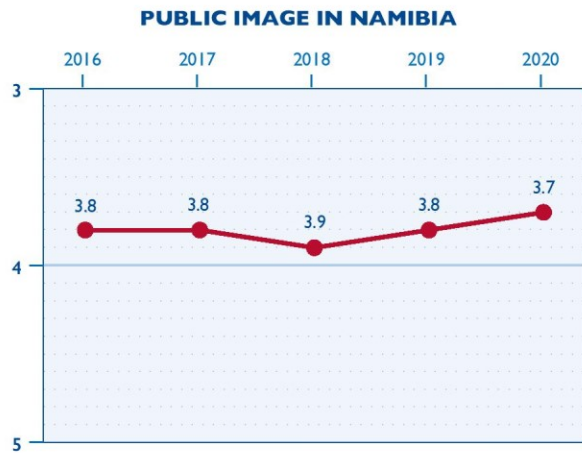
Donors occasionally offer project- or sector-specific workshops to their civil society partners. For example, the Hanns Seidel Foundation offered training on project management to its partner CSOs in 2020. The EU's five-year capacity-building program, Enhancing Participatory Democracy in Namibia, which was launched in 2019, was limited to a couple of preliminary activities, such as briefings for parliamentary staff, because of pandemic-related restrictions.

Cooperation between civil society, the private sector, and the government was limited in 2020. Areas of joint interest include the prevention of wildlife crime, which brings together environmental CSOs, community conservancies, security services, and the Ministry of Tourism and the Environment for regular discussion and coordination. CIVIC +264 helped smooth interactions between the government and the sector as a whole by providing a clear point of contact for government officials. CIVIC +264 also acted as a conduit of information from government ministries and other bodies that wished to consult with CSOs on policy development. The National Planning Commission, for example, was able to identify CSO stakeholders through CIVIC +264.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.7

The public image of CSOs improved slightly in 2020 as CSOs received favorable media coverage and improved their use of social media platforms.

Reporting about CSOs' activities in traditional media such as newspapers, television, and radio was largely positive in 2020. In Namibia's open media environment, many publications and broadcast channels use civil society experts as commentators on current affairs and regularly approach CSOs engaged in research to take part in television and radio talk shows. These media include independent newspapers and private radio and television stations as well as state-controlled media. The Namibian Chamber of Environment is often asked to comment on proposed environmental regulations, while IPPR representatives are asked to participate in public discussions on corruption and the economy. In 2020, civil society activists made regular appearances on the Namibian Broadcasting



Corporation’s COVID-19 update programs to talk about issues such as the public health response, countering disinformation, and the state of emergency legislation.

The public reacted positively to CSO initiatives in 2020. Public approval of CSOs was especially evident on social media.

Unlike in previous years, government representatives rarely attacked CSOs publicly in 2020. Although the relationship between some media houses and the office of the president deteriorated, CSOs were able to communicate constructively with the government and voice criticism of its actions. This more tolerant attitude on the part of the government probably resulted in part from its recognition of CSOs’ contribution to the pandemic response.

There were very few announcements of private-sector support for CSOs in 2020.

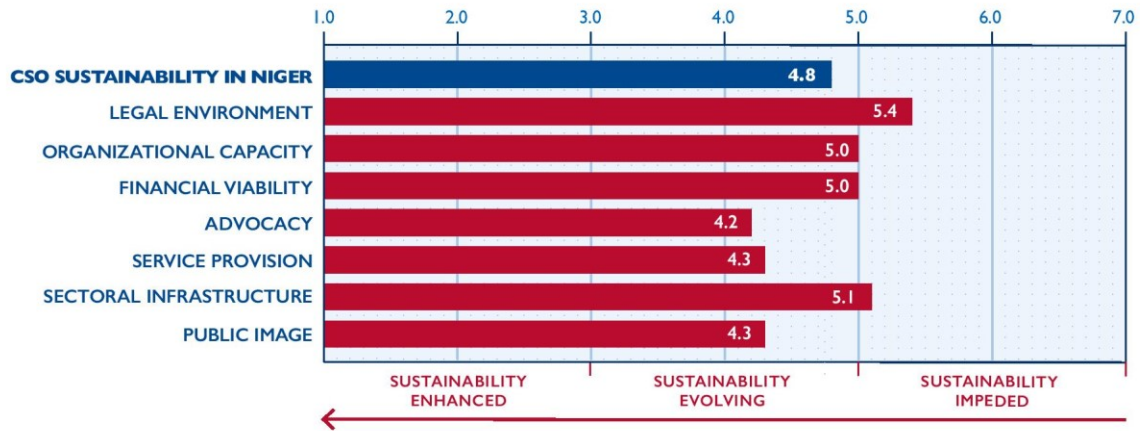
CSOs have become more adept at using social media platforms to highlight their work and promote their causes. Co-Feed maintained an active Facebook page detailing donations, recipients, and sponsors. The #ShutItAllDown initiative received coverage in international media and expressions of solidarity from many organizations thanks to its extensive use of social media. With the pandemic severely limiting public engagements, CSOs depended more on the media for coverage of their programs and key messages in 2020. For example, ACTION Coalition members spoke to a range of community radio stations across the country about the meaning of an access to information law for ordinary people. NMT effectively used its YouTube channel for short broadcasts and discussions of access to information and media-related issues. NID organized a series of online discussions on issues such as mental health, the Sustainable Development Goals, and SGBV, which were broadcast live on Facebook. The launch of the CIVIC +264 website in November provided a much-needed public interface for civil society and facilitated contact with CSOs by members of the public and government officials. There were indications that Zoom-type public events hosted by CSOs were well attended.

There were no attempts by CSOs to self-regulate in 2020. Only a small number of CSOs published annual reports including financial details. IPPR was ranked fifty-third among the world’s think tanks for its quality assurance and integrity policies and procedures in the 2020 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report produced by the University of Pennsylvania.

NIGER

Capital: Niamey
Population: 23,605,767
GDP per capita (PPP): \$1,225
Human Development Index: Low (0.394)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (48/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.8



The year 2020 in Niger was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which slowed nearly all aspects of social, economic, and political life and left enormous grief in its wake. On March 13, before any cases of COVID-19 had been detected in the country, the government imposed a blanket ban on all public gatherings as a preventive measure. After Niger announced its first case of COVID-19 on March 19, the government immediately introduced requirements to stop the spread of the virus, such as social distancing, school closures, nightly curfews, and restrictions on travel to and from the capital city, Niamey. The World Bank, United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and other funding partners provided support to facilitate the rapid procurement of medication and equipment and enable cash transfers to vulnerable populations. CSOs worked with the government to raise public awareness about COVID-19 prevention measures and distributed hand-washing kits, masks, and other equipment.

President Issoufou Mahamadou served his last year of office in 2020. This fulfillment of his pledge to respect the constitutional limit of two terms of office opened the door to Niger’s first democratic transition of one elected official to another since attaining independence in 1960. Local elections took place on December 13, 2020, and legislative and the first round of voting for president took place on December 27, 2020. Of the thirty candidates running for president, none won a majority, and a second round of voting was scheduled for February 2021. When the Independent National Election Commission announced the results of the first round of voting, opposition parties and several CSOs, including the Stand Up Niger action framework (Cadre d’action Niger debout, CADND), protested irregularities in the conduct of the election. Young people took to the streets in Niamey, burning tires, looting markets, and destroying cars. Hundreds of demonstrators were arrested, and some were still in prison at the end of the year.

After publication of an audit report indicating large-scale corruption in military procurement, peaceful protests in Niamey on March 15, 2020, called for an investigation into the alleged misuse of funds by the Ministry of Defense, which accounts for about 20 percent of the national budget. The demonstrations were announced before the government imposed a ban on large gatherings, but the organizers were nevertheless charged with breaking pandemic-related restrictions, which went into effect two days before the demonstrations. Security forces forcefully dispersed the protesters with tear gas, and at least three people were killed. Sixteen activists were arrested and charged with organizing an unauthorized gathering and complicity in damaging public property, arson, and manslaughter. Three of the activists were detained for six months. In April, violent uprisings over the pandemic restrictions broke out in Niamey. The police responded with tear gas, and more than 100 people were arrested. To calm the situation, CSOs and religious leaders conducted public-awareness efforts in cooperation with the central government.

Niger and its partners and neighbors continued to fight terrorist attacks by the Islamic State, Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, and other jihadist groups in the eastern and western parts of the country in 2020. The conflicts continued to cause massive civilian displacements and loss of livelihoods. As in previous years, national and international resources earmarked for basic social service delivery were diverted to meet security needs. To close the gap in services, development CSOs such as Alternative Citizen Space (Alternative espace citoyen, AEC) in the Zinder region and Karkara in the Tillaberi region helped meet the needs of local communities with support from foreign funders. However, their support was somewhat constrained by the government's requirement that CSOs use security escorts to go to rural municipalities, which was often not covered in their budgets, as well as pandemic-related restrictions on meetings and public gatherings for many months.

Because of the terrorist attacks and the pandemic, Niger's real economic growth fell from 5.9 percent in 2019 to 1.2 percent in 2020, according to the African Development Bank. The poverty rate rose slightly to 42.9 percent. Niger ranked last out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index of the United Nations (UN) Development Programme. In September 2020, the International Monetary Fund approved SDR 83.66 million (about \$114.49 million) in disbursements under the Rapid Credit Facility to help Niger meet the fiscal challenges posed by the pandemic.

CSOs' overall sustainability deteriorated slightly in 2020. The legal environment for Nigerien CSOs deteriorated moderately with the adoption of a new law on the interception of communications. All other dimensions of sustainability were unchanged.

According to the most recent data from the Ministry of Community Development and Land Management (MDC/AT), in 2019, 2,895 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and associations were registered under Implementing Decree No. 84-49 for Law No. 84-06 on associations. Twelve union organizations and 26,000 farmers' organizations were recognized under other legislation the same year.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.4



The legal environment for Nigerien CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020 with the adoption of a new law on the interception of communications.

The legal regime in Niger is favorable for CSO registration. The 2010 Constitution, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, African Charter on Human and People's Rights, and Law No. 84-06, as amended by Law No. 91-006, govern the CSO sector. CSOs may register as associations, which act to benefit their members, or as NGOs, which act to benefit people other than their members. CSOs intending to work nationwide apply to Niamey municipal authorities, which send their applications for authorization by the Ministry of Interior, which in turn consults with MDC/AT and the line ministries. CSOs intending to work at the regional

level sign master agreements with their line ministries and implementation agreements with the regions, departments, or municipalities in which they will operate. International organizations obtain accreditation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in addition to registering with MDC/AT. Apart from associations of an ethnic or regional nature, which are sometimes viewed as disrupting national unity, CSOs do not usually encounter impediments to registration. However, issuance of their authorizations can be delayed unless they follow up with the authorities regularly.

CSOs are overseen by their line ministries, which monitor and audit their activities. Domestic and international CSOs must file activity reports, financial reports, and action plans with MDC/AT by March 31 of each year. CSOs that do not file annual reports are not eligible for state support. CSOs may be suspended if they fail to file reports for two years. CSOs have legal protection against arbitrary actions by the state, including the right of appeal.

CSOs may work in all areas and freely address critical issues as long as their activities do not break the law, contravene their terms of reference, or clash with public order and morality. The government may dissolve, suspend, or put on notice organizations that violate these restrictions. CSOs fear that this provision is open to abuse, especially in the case of organizations that deal with controversial topics, such as political or economic governance. Despite the blanket ban on demonstrations that the government imposed as part of its pandemic response in 2020, CSOs viewed the government as allowing political parties to gather their supporters for the election campaign while preventing meetings and workshops between CSOs and their communities. For example, during the demonstration on March 15, 2020, which had not been legally prohibited, sixteen people were arrested, six of whom were imprisoned. In April, an activist in the extractive industries was taken into police custody. The civil society coalition Turn the Page (Tournons la page) called for the authorities to release the detained individuals, which eventually happened after a considerable delay. CSOs dealing with topics likely to displease the government increasingly self-censored in 2020.

On May 29, 2020, the National Assembly adopted a Law on the Interception of Communications, which gives the government sweeping powers to intercept electronic communications in the interest of national security and the fight against terrorism. CSOs fear that this law and the 2019 Cybercrime Law criminalizing the dissemination, production, and making available of information that may disturb public order will seriously infringe on CSOs' freedom of expression and expose them to persistent surveillance. About one dozen people were arrested between March and April 2020 under the Cybercrime Law after the government intercepted their communications on Facebook and WhatsApp. One of the individuals was charged with disturbing the peace and given a three-month suspended prison sentence for criticizing the government's management of the pandemic in a private WhatsApp conversation.

CSOs may benefit from various tax exemptions, although the procedures for applying for them are rigid, and the exemptions are difficult to obtain. The tax authorities sometimes view associations as profit-making companies and require them to pay registration fees and value-added tax, which are not anticipated in CSOs' budgets. For example, Nigerien CSOs have had trouble obtaining value-added tax and customs exemptions on their vehicles or the exemptions are temporarily suspended if they are found to have failed to comply with the law or have used the vehicles for personal purposes. Corporate and individual donors may deduct their donations to CSOs but rarely do so, usually because they are unaware of the possibility.

CSOs are free to build up assets in accordance with the law. They may engage in fundraising and accept funds from foreign donors, provided the source of funding is not illicit. The government monitors the sources of CSOs' funding for the possible financing of terrorism.

CSOs that report annually to MDC/AT are eligible for government support. However, state funds are distributed erratically and sometimes intentionally go to organizations that are not in compliance with this requirement.

CSOs may generate revenue from the sale of membership cards, membership fees, and services. Any income must support their operations and may not be distributed to members. CSOs that charge for services must do so at prices that do not give them an unfair advantage over private-sector entities that do not receive government support.

Most lawyers knowledgeable about CSO-related laws are located in Niamey but are usually willing to travel to defend their clients. A growing number of lawyers, especially younger ones, defend CSOs at no cost because they support their work. Few lawyers are specialized in CSO law or work at the local level.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.0

CSOs' organizational capacity remained the same in 2020 as CSOs managed to maintain solid communications with their target groups despite pandemic-related restrictions and, overall, adapted well to pandemic conditions.

In 2020, there was no real change in CSOs' effectiveness in engaging with constituents, since many organizations compensated for the loss of in-person contact by relying on social networks. CSOs usually build relationships with their target groups and constituencies after performing baseline studies to determine priorities, actors, and possible beneficiaries. The studies can involve a number of innovative and relevant approaches. For example, Counterpart International, in partnership with the Network to Support Local Initiatives (Réseau d'appui aux initiatives locales, RAIL), AEC, Diko, and Karkara, organized focus groups in the Zinder, Diffa, Agadez, Tillabery,

and Niamey regions to determine public health-care, educational, and safety needs. This research allowed the organizations to advocate at both the local and national levels for policies that take the stated needs into account. Local CSOs and informal social movements, including women's groups and neighborhood youth groups known as fadas, maintain especially close relationships with their communities. CSOs often depend on their beneficiaries to help implement projects and, in fact, many of their activities would not be possible without the involvement of beneficiaries. For example, in 2020, when RAIL implemented a drinking-water supply project in Dogondoutchi Department, the trenches for the water pipes were made by members of the local community as an in-kind contribution. Larger, more formal CSOs tend to be concentrated in larger urban centers and mobilize their constituents around shared interests.



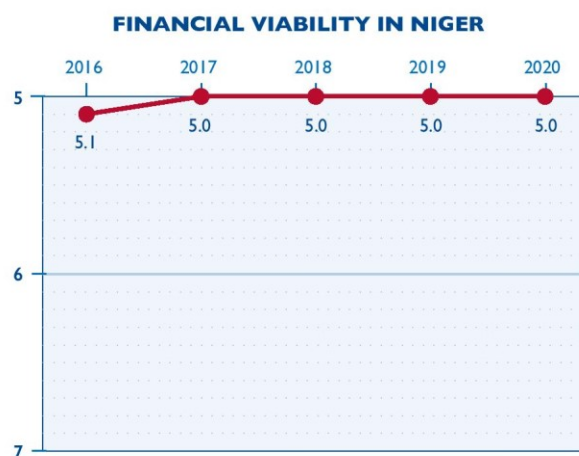
CSOs' missions are clearly defined in their statutes and bylaws, and most organizations adhere to them. Although the resources may be lacking, all CSOs have annual or multi-year operational plans, since they are a requirement of the oversight authority. Some larger CSOs have strategic plans and integrate planning into their decision-making processes. Organizations often adjust their plans to accommodate changes in the national and international context and their own development needs. For example, in November 2020, RAIL developed a strategic plan for 2021–30, which addressed security and humanitarian issues that had not existed when the previous plan was made. CSOs define indicators in advance to measure the success of their work and incorporate them into their operational plans.

The roles and responsibilities of the board of directors should be clearly defined in a CSO's internal documents. Ideally, boards act as the operational arm of the general assemblies, meeting twice a year or once a quarter to look at the implementation of activities by the executive secretariat and plan activities for the next period. In practice, only large CSOs hold regular board meetings. Smaller organizations often lack the means to hold meetings, and as a result, the executive directors or founders decide everything. Few CSOs have leadership transitions (although they criticize the government for the same failing). Most organizations seek to operate accountably and transparently by reporting periodically to donors. Some CSOs seek to avoid conflicts of interest, while others pay little attention to the issue.

Staff functions vary from one organization to the next and are usually defined in procedural manuals or internal staff regulations. Nigerien CSOs maintain permanent staff if they have project funding from donors. A small organization typically has one or two paid positions such as an executive director and program director. CSOs typically offer their staff members job descriptions and contracts, which must be approved by the National Employment Agency. Many CSOs prepare for the next generation of personnel by developing the skills and competencies of existing employees and recruiting interns or volunteers, who learn on the job and may be hired if project funding becomes available. Most organizations hire outside consultants for needed accounting, auditing, computer, and legal services.

CSOs' resources are generally insufficient to purchase modern office equipment. Small and rural CSOs usually do not have computers. Most CSOs have poor internet access, and employees rely on their personal cell phones to connect to the internet. A few large CSOs, such as the Nigerien Association for the Defence of Human Rights (Association nigérienne de défense des droits de l'homme, ANDDH), Local Development Support Committee (Comité d'appui au développement local, CADEL), and Youth Movement for Development and Civic Education (Mouvement des jeunes pour le développement et l'éducation citoyenne, MOJEDEC), have wi-fi in their offices. Pandemic-related restrictions in 2020 forced CSOs to make extensive use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp, Zoom, and Facebook to meet and communicate with beneficiaries and donors. In rural areas especially, WhatsApp is slowly becoming more widely used, especially by young people. CSOs' improved skills in using digital technologies helped to offset restrictions on freedom on the internet introduced by the new laws on cybercrimes and interception of communications. CSOs are careful to prevent their websites from being hacked.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.0



CSOs' financial viability reflected no major changes in 2020. As in previous years, the vast majority of funding for the CSO sector came from foreign sources. Major partners include the European Union (EU), World Bank, UN agencies, and the U.S., German, and French governments. Security and humanitarian aid continued to be the main focus of funding in 2020. Funding to Niger for humanitarian assistance jumped 58 percent from \$221 million in 2019 to \$378 million in 2020, according to the Financial Tracking Service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. This funding included \$76 million in COVID-19 related funding, as many donors responded to the Niger government's call for support to respond to the pandemic. As donors refocused some of their funding to fighting COVID, some CSOs benefited and were able to conduct activities that

they had not planned on at the beginning of the year, such as distributing COVID prevention kits. Some CSOs receive donor funding directly, while others subcontract with international organizations.

The government sometimes contracts with CSOs for services. For example, with funding from the government of Luxembourg, the Dosso regional council regularly invited qualified associations to submit bids to implement micro-projects for the recovery of degraded land in 2020. Local and central governments sometimes provide grants to CSOs to implement activities on the ground, but no grant is known to have been awarded in 2020.

Corporate subsidies for CSOs are not common in Niger. A few companies, such as cellular telephone providers and the parastatals SONIDEP and NIGELEC, offer funding to CSOs through corporate social responsibility programs. Otherwise, large businesses fund social infrastructure projects directly.

CSOs have access to multiple opportunities for funding which they have yet to tap into. For example, although fundraising is permitted, CSOs rarely seek to raise funds from local sources. Exceptionally, in 2020, CSOs cooperated with the National Commission for Human Rights on a fundraising campaign to raise money for the Thomas Sankara Memorial honoring the former president of Niger. The members of associations are usually expected to pay dues on a regular basis but often do not. Some organizations have begun to deal with this challenge by refusing to allow members to vote during general assemblies if they are not up to date with their dues. Many CSOs earn revenue by selling membership identification cards to their members. The external partners of CSOs such as RAIL and the Educational Network for Sustainable Development (Réseau d'action éducative pour un développement durable, RAEDD) often require beneficiary communities to contribute in-kind support, such as gravel or sand, to ensure their sense of ownership in funded projects.

Certain CSOs have created social enterprises to generate income. For example, the Nigerien Association for Familial Well-Being (Association nigérienne pour le bien-être familial, ANBEF) offers maternal and infant health services that generate income with fees that are manageable for the public.

Some national CSOs, such as AEC, Niger Organization of Innovative Educators (Organisation nigérienne des éducateurs novateurs, ONEN), CADEL, and AID Kookari have strong financial management systems. These larger organizations typically have qualified financial management professionals on staff or outsource such services, provided they receive funding to cover the costs. Nigerien CSOs that receive donor funding increasingly operate in a transparent manner, especially in their handling of external funds, which is usually subject to independent audits. Established organizations such as Karkara, Association for the Reinvigoration of Livestock Raising in Niger (Association pour la redynamisation de l'élevage au Niger, AREN), and Contribution to Rural Development (Contribution au développement rural, CDR) conduct annual or end-of-project audits even if donors do not request them. Rural CSOs commonly lack computers and use accounting ledgers to manage their funds. Since 2019, the government has required CSOs to publish their annual financial statements in the official journal. However, only a few large national organizations complied with this requirement in 2020.

ADVOCACY: 4.2

CSO advocacy was stable in 2020. Although pandemic-related restrictions disrupted communications between the government and CSOs, public policy requires the public to have access to government decision-making processes, and the government generally views civil society as an important actor in policy formulation and implementation. CSOs continued to take part in groups such as the Independent National Election Commission, National Commission on Human Rights, Public Contracts Regulatory Agency, High Commission on Personal Data Protection, and National Coordinating Commission to Prevent Human Trafficking. New groups with CSO participation in 2020 included the Interministerial Committee to Manage the COVID-19 Crisis, which was expanded to include CSOs, and the Migration Discussion Group.



At the local level, Article 16 of the General Code of Territorial Communities requires each commune to establish a framework to bring together elected officials and CSOs for consultation about the management of local affairs. Only communes supported by donor-funded projects have managed to establish these consultative frameworks. In 2020, these frameworks did not function well because of the pandemic. For example, discussion frameworks in the municipalities of Baleyara, Ouallam, and Tillaberi did not meet during the year.

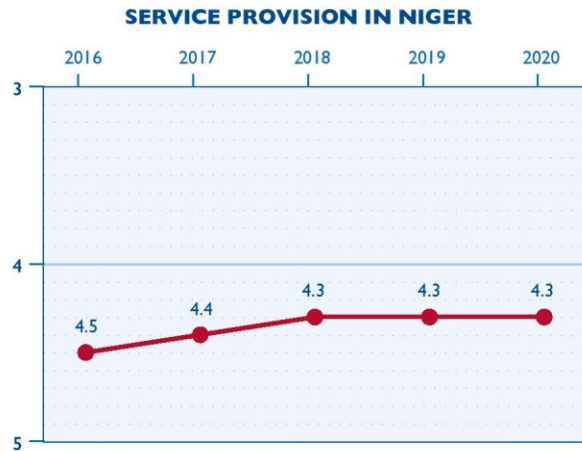
Avenues for CSO advocacy were limited by the ban on public gatherings in 2020. In Niger, it is difficult to conduct advocacy without meeting face to face, because the internet does not play a significant role in most people's daily lives. CSOs were temporarily unable, for example, to mobilize people in person to demand an audit of Ministry of Defense funds because of the pandemic. However, after the Turn the Page coalition called on the government to open an investigation into the embezzlement of funds from the Ministry of Defense, the government assigned the case to an investigating judge. The case was still under investigation at the end of the year.

CSOs that have access to the internet rely extensively on digital technologies to pursue their advocacy activities. For example, in December 2020, CSOs worked through social networks such as WhatsApp and Facebook to protest fraud in the first round of the presidential and legislative elections, which helped induce the opposition to file complaints for review by the court responsible for election disputes. Some of these appeals were considered, although they did not significantly change the election results. Issues that are first raised in social networking groups, such as the embezzlement of Ministry of Defense funds, often become a focus of CSOs' efforts.

While there are no anti-liberal groups in Niger seeking to undermine democracy, some CSOs, such as the Citizen Action Framework (Cadre d'action citoyenne, CAC) and Maikoul Zodi Movement of Young Republicans (Mouvement des jeunes républicains de Maikoul Zodi), are close to the government and tend to dissociate themselves from other advocacy organizations that demand more openness from the government or are considered close to the opposition. CSOs aligned with the ruling party and those close to the opposition rarely work together to promote certain issues. The government sometimes discourages advocacy, either directly or indirectly, if it considers its organizers to be in the pay of or working on behalf of the opposition.

In 2020, CSOs engaged in limited advocacy to improve the legal framework for the sector because of the pandemic.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.3



CSO service provision did not change in 2020. CSOs continued to provide services in a wide range of areas, including health care, education, shelter, water, energy, economic development, environmental protection, governance, and self-sufficiency. In 2020, CSOs worked with the government to raise public awareness about COVID-19 prevention measures and supplied hand-washing kits, masks, and other equipment. For example, SOS Civisme Niger produced and distributed masks, and RAIL Niger helped the Dogondoutchi prefecture purchase COVID-19 protection kits.

CSOs place their beneficiaries at the heart of their activities and usually conduct surveys or baseline studies to determine their needs. With the trend towards decentralization, CSOs must harmonize their

interventions with communal and regional development plans. For example, RAIL Niger worked to recover land through revegetation in the Kéché municipality with financial support from the Dosso regional council. Hed-Tamat worked with regional councils and municipalities in the Agadez region to strengthen their capacities in governance and in the local development sector.

CSOs do not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, religion, color, gender, social class, or sexual orientation. Discrimination is prohibited by law, and victims of discrimination can file complaints against organizations that discriminate. Most CSOs other than trade unions and associations provide services to beneficiaries other than their members.

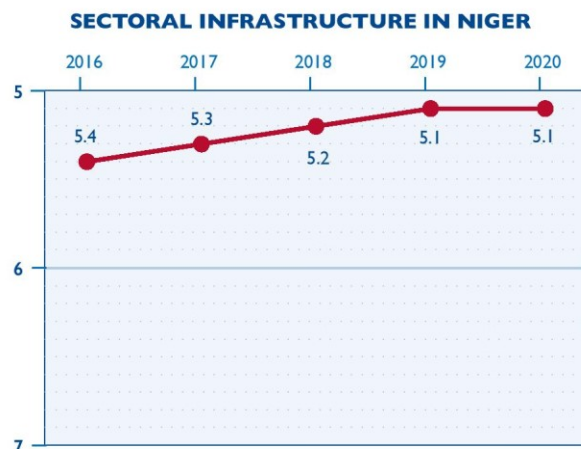
CSOs sometimes seek to recover the costs of their operations by charging fees for their services. CSOs sometimes subcontract with government agencies, as in the project to recover degraded land in the Dosso region, or earn income by consulting with other CSOs and universities.

The government recognizes the contributions of CSOs from the reports that they file at the local and central levels and their real and perceptible impact on the ground. Each year, MDC/AT estimates the percentage that CSOs have contributed to achieving the government's plans and presents this information publicly in published reports.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.1

The infrastructure supporting the sector was unchanged in 2020.

No resource centers serve CSOs in Niger. CSOs' need for meeting spaces and other facilities was minimal in 2020 because of the pandemic-related restrictions. The proposal for MDC/AT to create the CSO House, which surfaced in 2019, never materialized. Several intermediary support organizations (ISOs) seek to strengthen the capacities of Nigerien CSOs. For example, seven Nigerien ISOs received funding from the EU's Civil Society Support program in 2020 to strengthen the capacities of small CSOs, and the USAID Sahel Human Voice in Governance Activity program supported capacity building and grants for twenty-seven CSOs.



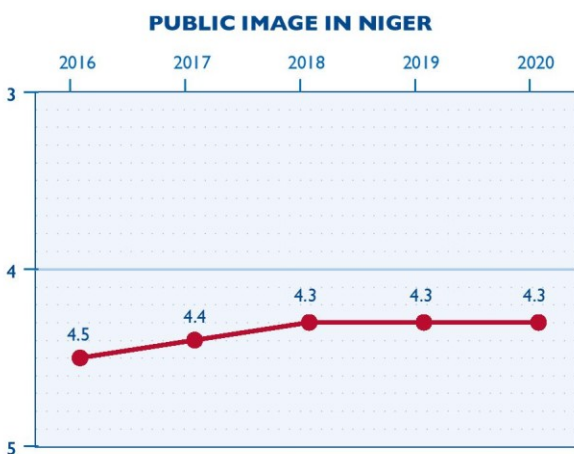
Local foundations infrequently support CSOs' activities. Some local foundations fundraise and conduct field activities, but others, such as the Salou Djibo Foundation, are largely inactive. No Nigerien foundations re-grant funds to local CSOs.

Several CSO platforms and networks allow CSOs to cooperate on joint projects, share information, and promote their common interests. Major coalitions include the Consultation Framework for NGOs and Development Associations (Cadre de concertation des ONG et associations de développement, CCOAD), Confederation of NGOs and Women's Associations of Niger (Confédération des ONG et associations féminines du Niger, CONGAFEN), and Network of NGOs and Associations in the Health Sector (Réseau des ONG et associations du secteur de la santé, ROASSN). The coalitions complement the work of member CSOs by sharing useful information, such as calls for proposals and government press releases.

Workshops and seminars were banned by the government in 2020 because of the pandemic. No training is known to have moved online during the year. International organizations such as Counterpart International and the National Democratic Institute provided technical support to help CSOs connect to online services such as Zoom and Google Meet. Consultants specialized in CSO management offer specialized training and equipment in several areas, including gender, social inclusion, and security. Basic management training is usually offered by funders in the capital rather than secondary cities. Training materials are usually available in French, although attempts are being made to translate some training modules into national languages. Training to women's and farmers' groups is sometimes offered in pictorial form.

Nigerien CSOs were able to further partnerships with other sectors in 2020 despite the pandemic. For example, the GeoAnalytics Center, RAIL, and Network of Journalists for Security and Conflict Prevention (Réseau des journalistes pour la sécurité et la prévention des conflits, RJ-SPC) worked together to implement a project to strengthen relations between the Defense and Security Forces and the media. RAIL hosted virtual dialogues between defense and security forces and residents of the Niamey 5 communal district to improve cooperation in implementing curfew measures introduced during the first wave of the pandemic. The project was successful, since, according to the police commissioner, that district was the only one in which young people did not attack law enforcement.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.3



CSOs' public image was stable in 2020.

In Niger, newspapers are not widely read, and most people rely on television, radio, or social media for news. Media coverage decreased during the first and last quarters of 2020, as CSOs conducted fewer events and physical interventions because of the pandemic. Coverage picked up in the second and third quarters of the year, when COVID-19 cases decreased and CSOs' activities temporarily resumed. The coverage was largely favorable, as the media recognize CSOs' contributions to society. For example, national and private television covered the celebration of ten years of decentralized cooperation between commune of Cesson-Sévigné in France and Dankassari in the Dosso Region by the Network of Educational Actions for Sustainable

Development (Réseau d'actions éducatives pour un développement durable, RAEDD) in September 2020. Although CSOs must pay for coverage of their activities, the media offers discounts for public service announcements.

The public appreciates CSOs' work on the ground. CSOs are seen as the voice of the people, able to state out loud what people are saying or feeling. The public increasingly understands the concept of CSOs, views CSOs' missions as an integral part of their lives, and appreciates the work of organizations that provide services at affordable prices. CSOs working for transparent, free, and credible elections generally were able to avoid politicization during the elections, which left their reputations untarnished.

The central government recognizes CSOs' place in a democratic society and trusts them to act in the public interest. For example, the government asked CSOs to participate in the COVID-19 educational campaign in 2020, and in their speeches, government officials sometimes encourage CSOs working with foreign CSOs to ensure implementation of their projects. Central government representatives also make statements to the effect that the country needs a strong, responsible civil society for proper oversight of public activities. At the same time, officials often see CSOs as enemies if they have firm political or policy opinions, especially related to the defense of citizens' interests.

The business sector has a positive view of CSOs because they operate transparently when contracted to drill wells, build classrooms, or evaluate projects.

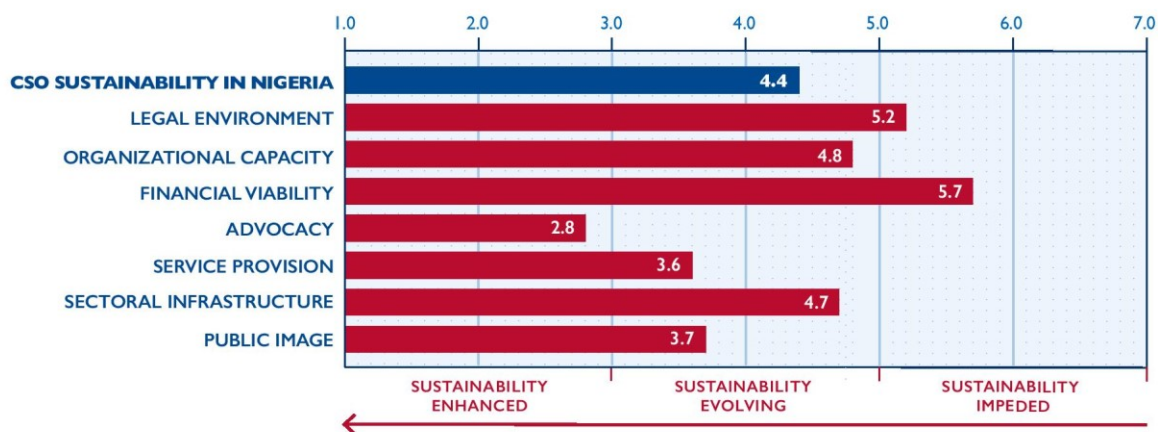
CSOs seek to burnish their image when carrying out advocacy activities. For example, the Network of Organizations for Transparency and Budget Analysis (Réseau des organisations pour la transparence et l'analyse budgétaire, ROTAB) works with the media outlets Labari and Bonferey to raise awareness about the results of its investigations of issues of national interest. CSOs have productive relationships with journalists and work with them on joint activities. In 2020, RAIL Niger and the GeoAnalytics Center collaborated with the journalists' network organization on a project with law enforcement agencies to improve their communication with the public. CSOs have a growing presence on social media, as was evident when CSOs relied on social media to raise awareness about COVID-19.

Major organizations submit their annual activity reports to MDC/AT, publish their financial reports in the government's official journal, and transmit their reports to donors. Smaller organizations do not. Most CSOs, especially organizations with fewer resources, do not have codes of ethics.

NIGERIA

Capital: Abuja
Population: 219,463,862
GDP per capita (PPP): \$5,136
Human Development Index: Low (0.539)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (45/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.4



On February 27, 2020, Nigeria recorded its first case of COVID-19. The federal government introduced lockdowns in Lagos, Ogun, and Abuja in March and later extended them to other parts of the country. CSOs responded vigorously to the pandemic by distributing protective equipment and food and conducting public-awareness campaigns. In parts of the country affected by persistent violence, CSOs working with the government and international organizations faced the difficult task of preventing the spread of the virus while providing humanitarian support.

Nigeria's political scene was relatively peaceful for most of 2020. In contrast to national elections marred by violence in 2019, state elections in Edo on September 19 and Ondo on October 10 unfolded without incident. But in October, Nigeria was rocked by nationwide protests demanding an end to police brutality and the dissolution of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), which was known for its corruption and abusive treatment of civilians, especially young men. Tagged #EndSARS and led in part by CSO activists, the peaceful protests escalated into violence on October 10 when the police and military attempted to disperse protesters using tear gas and live ammunition. Over the next two weeks, dozens of protesters and bystanders were killed and as many as 1,500 people arrested. Although the government responded by disbanding SARS and setting up a commission to investigate police brutality, many observers were not convinced that these steps would deal effectively with the roots causes of the protests.

Conflicts continued unabated in the northeast in 2020, as Boko Haram attacked and killed civilians and military personnel and have displaced over 2.9 million people since 2009. In the northwest, bandits abducted more than 300 school children, and at least 1,100 people were killed by bandits in the first six months of the year, according to Amnesty International. Aid workers in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states were increasingly at risk in 2020. In January, Boko Haram attacked a United Nations (UN) housing facility in Ngala, Borno State, and killed twenty internally displaced people. In June, five aid workers were killed after they were abducted from an illegal checkpoint set up by the insurgents in Borno State. In December, one aid worker and two local officials were abducted by the Islamic State West Africa Province in a village in Borno State.

Many CSOs called on the government in 2020 to sack the country's top military leaders and strengthen its security architecture to stem the violence. A few state governors, particularly from the main opposition political party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), blamed the central government for the widespread insecurity. For example, the governor of Benue State in Northcentral Nigeria called on the central government to allow citizens to bear licensed arms to defend themselves, since the central government has failed in its responsibility to protect the people. This proposal was rejected by the central government. On January 9, the governments of six southwestern

states formed the Western Nigeria Security Network, an action that the central government declared unconstitutional. The issue was later resolved after the central and state governments met, and the state governments agreed to give legal backing to the network in their various states. The network is now operational.

The pandemic coincided with tremendous economic strains, especially falling global prices for oil, Nigeria's main export. In the third quarter of 2020, Nigeria plunged into its second recession in four years, potentially pushing another 5 million Nigerians into poverty, according to World Bank estimates. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that the number of people in need of urgent assistance in Nigeria rose from 7.9 million at the beginning of 2020 to 10.6 million after the pandemic took hold. The situation improved slightly in the fourth quarter of the year as the country exited recession with a 0.11 percent growth rate, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

Overall CSO sustainability in Nigeria deteriorated slightly in 2020. The legal environment was moderately weaker as harassment increased and the president signed the Company and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) 2020, which introduced stringent new provisions to regulate CSOs. Organizational capacity deteriorated slightly as the pandemic forced many CSOs to become inactive. The pandemic also resulted in cuts in funding, moderately undermining CSOs' financial viability. At the same time, advocacy improved moderately as CSOs recorded significant successes despite challenges posed by the pandemic. Service provision was strengthened slightly by CSOs' engagement in the pandemic response. Better information-sharing through mobile and online platforms helped improve the sectoral infrastructure slightly. CSOs' public image was unchanged.

Nigeria's CSO sector is diverse and in 2020 included more than 500,000 organizations registered at various levels. Nearly 94,000 CSOs were registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) in 2020, a slight rise from 93,000 organizations registered in 2019. The number of CSOs registered with state and local governments is difficult to determine. Many CSOs operate without formal registration.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.2



The legal environment for CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020 as government harassment of CSO activists increased, especially during the #EndSARS protests, and the president assented to CAMA 2020, which introduced stringent new provisions to regulate CSOs' activities.

The regulatory environment for CSOs changed in August 2020 when CAMA 1990, the main act regulating CSO registration and operations at the national level, was repealed and replaced with CAMA 2020. The new act aims to improve the ease of doing business in Nigeria. Although CAMA 2020 contains most provisions of CAMA 1990, its enactment renewed apprehension in the CSO sector that the government was seeking to stifle CSO operations. In particular, new provisions in Part F of

CAMA 2020 authorize the state arbitrarily to withdraw or revoke CSO certificates and dismiss CSOs' trustees and appoint interim managers. The new act places an additional reporting burden on CSOs by requiring them to report semi-annually rather than annually to the Federal Inland Revenue Services; empowers the CAC to order the involuntary merger of associations without a showing of necessity or due process; authorizes excessive interference by the CAC in the affairs and management of associations; permits warrantless searches of association premises; authorizes the dissolution of associations holding "dormant" bank accounts without adequate findings or due process; and authorizes dissolution of associations on open-ended grounds without affording an opportunity to rectify violations. CAMA 2020 was slated to take effect on January 1, 2021. CAMA 2020 still requires national-level CSOs to register with the CAC and foreign CSOs to register with the CAC and the National Planning Commission. The CAC retains excessive discretion to reject registration applications.

Because of the pandemic lockdown, the CAC provided only skeletal services in 2020, thereby limiting the ability of new CSOs to register. The CAC's online presence was minimal, and it rarely responded promptly to CSOs'

requests for information about registration. The CAC withdrew the registration certificate of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, a socio-cultural group, in June on the grounds that the group had switched from socio-cultural affairs to acting as a political organization, therefore violating the purpose for which it was registered. The organization lodged an NGN 500 billion (approximately \$1.4 billion) lawsuit against the commission and later withdrew the suit after the commission restored its certificate.

The CSO sector vehemently opposed the CSO Regulatory Commission Bill 2019, which, if passed into law, would stifle CSOs' operations by allowing legislative scrutiny of their activities, imposing a code of conduct, and creating a database for registration renewal, which CSOs fear could be used to deny registration to organizations perceived to be critical of the government. The sector heaved a collective sigh of relief when, in March 2020, the Senate withdrew the bill after CSO advocacy. However, many observers view CAMA 2020 as containing equally restrictive provisions. In March, the Senate also organized a public hearing on the Protection from Internet Falsehood and Manipulation Bill 2019, commonly referred to as the social media bill, which criminalizes the online spread of falsehoods viewed as damaging to the country's security, public health, or public safety. CSOs believe that the bill, if passed into law, would violate their right to freedom of expression and its ambiguous definition of falsehood could be used to victimize individuals and organizations perceived to be critical of the government. CSOs strongly opposed the bill and, under the leadership of the Center for Liberty and Concerned Nigerians, staged a protest calling on the Senate to withdraw the bill, which did not happen. At the state level, Adamawa became the latest state to approve a policy to generate a database of CSOs operating in the state.

Because of the lockdown, the state restricted protests in most parts of the country during the year. Government harassment of CSO activists and journalists increased, especially during the #EndSARS protests in October. The police and military forces dispersed peaceful protesters with tear gas and live ammunition, and armed thugs suspected of working for politicians attacked protesters and vandalized the facilities of several media outlets in Lagos. According to Amnesty International, fifty-six people were killed during the protests. Rumors spread that the federal government had ordered the military to kill protesters at the Lagos Lekki Toll Gate. The inspector general of police reported 1,500 arrests, and the bank accounts of several CSO leaders of the protests were blocked by the Central Bank of Nigeria based on allegations that they had financed terrorism. At least twelve journalists covering the protests were assaulted, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

While tax legislation governing CSOs did not change in 2020, a new Finance Act was passed, due to take effect on January 1, 2021, under which CSOs will continue to be largely exempted from income tax. Because of the significant fall in government revenues, the federal and state governments searched for internal sources of revenue in 2020, including from the CSO sector. For example, in Delta State, CSOs were required to file delinquent tax returns from 2016 to 2020.

CSOs are legally allowed to earn income from the provision of goods and services, engage in fundraising campaigns, and compete for government contracts. CSOs may receive funds from foreign sources but must register with the Special Control Unit on Money Laundering. Many organizations have yet to do so because of poor enforcement.

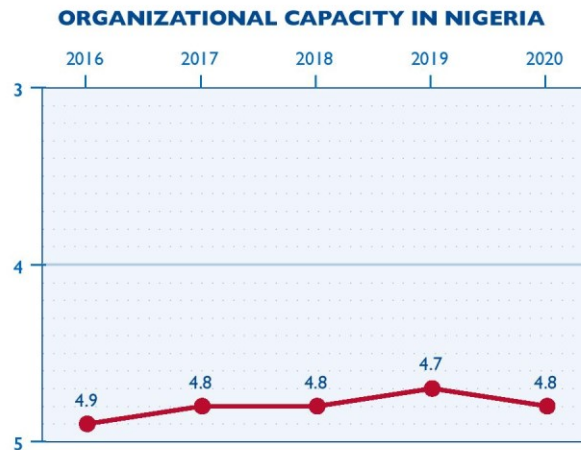
CSOs in major cities continued in 2020 to enjoy pro bono legal services from the Legal Aid Council and several human rights organizations, including Lawyers Alert, Human Rights Law Service, and the Legal Defense and Assistance Project.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.8

CSOs' organizational capacity was slightly weaker in 2020 as the debilitating effects of the pandemic forced many organizations to become inactive for most of the year.

The year was challenging for CSOs across the country. During the lockdown, only CSOs involved in health care or the distribution of pandemic-relief materials could engage directly with their beneficiaries. As other CSOs, such as the Parent-Child Intervention Center based in Enugu, were unable to work directly with their constituents because of restrictions on public activities and outreach, their relationships with beneficiaries deteriorated. Eventually, the state government involved the center in distributing food items to local communities, which helped it maintain contact with constituents. Few CSOs maintain databases of the beneficiaries of their programs or update their information when new beneficiaries are added.

CSOs' abilities to use their missions and strategic plans to guide their work were significantly weaker in 2020. Large organizations in major cities continued to pursue clearly defined missions and strategic plans. But many other organizations were unable to follow their missions and plans because they could no longer access grants for that purpose, and instead had to adjust or wind down their activities. For example, for the first time in its existence, the Center for Gender Economics engaged in the distribution of food and protective materials in communities in the Southeast to bring in income. CSOs' access to support for strategic planning also suffered. Large CSOs normally offer training on planning to community-based organizations (CBOs). But after training twenty-nine CBOs on strategic planning in January, ActionAid Nigeria was unable to hold similar trainings for the rest of the year.



CSOs' internal management structures did not change significantly in 2020. Only a few large CSOs maintained active boards with responsibilities clearly distinguished from those of staff. Because of the pandemic, many boards were unable to engage in governing their organizations, especially if they lacked the capacity to organize online meetings. Large CSOs in major cities continued to maintain written policies and procedures to guide their operations and avoid conflicts of interest in line with donors' accountability requirements. But these good management procedures went unimplemented in 2020, since many CSOs were largely inactive for most of the year.

CSOs' staff and volunteer capacity deteriorated moderately in 2020. Because of their difficulty attracting grants during the pandemic, CSOs were often unable to pay employee salaries, which led to staff attrition at many organizations. Because their programs were inactive, CSOs' volunteer recruitment was significantly lower than in 2019, when a large number of volunteers took part in election-related activities. CSOs also reduced their reliance on professional advisors such as lawyers as the pace of registrations slowed down. Despite these difficulties, most CSOs maintained adequate human resource practices, including job descriptions, contracts, and personnel policies.

Leading CSOs at the national and state levels continued to have modern office equipment, such as computers, printers, and cell phones in 2020. During the lockdown, staff at many urban-based CSOs worked from home, using social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and online communications platforms, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Skype. Their ability to move their operations online allowed these CSOs to remain fairly well managed. In contrast, rural CSOs lacking internet access were hit hard by the pandemic. For example, they had limited access to online training programs that could help their operations. Cybersecurity remains uncharted territory for most of the CSO sector.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.7

CSOs' financial viability deteriorated moderately in 2020 as donors cut or shifted their funding in response to the pandemic and many grantmaking activities stalled. Apart from support for the distribution of pandemic-relief materials, CSOs had limited funding opportunities, and many CSOs, especially in rural areas, had no access to any funding during the year.

CSOs continue to depend mainly on foreign sources of funding. CSOs typically receive support from a diverse range of donors, including private foundations and bilateral and multilateral agencies. The major foreign donors to CSOs in 2020 included USAID; the United Kingdom's (UK) Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO); the European Union; and the MacArthur Foundation. U.S. aid to Nigeria increased slightly in 2020, with a large portion going to health care and population services, humanitarian relief, and governance. The UK's aid to Nigeria declined about 10 percent, with health care, the government, civil society, and disaster relief receiving the largest portion. During the year, many donors shifted their focus to pandemic-related activities and put on hold projects requiring face-to-face activities such as meetings or research. For example, the FCDO-funded Child



Development Grant Program temporarily suspended activities such as baseline data collection and conducted only activities that could be performed remotely.

The government contracts with CSOs largely for service provision. In 2020, government agencies, ministries, and philanthropic organizations focused on engaging local CSOs and CBOs to distribute pandemic-relief materials and monitor the distribution of these materials during the lockdown. The governments of Kwara, Lagos, Kogi, Ebonyi, and Cross Rivers states also engaged CSOs to provide COVID-19-related services to vulnerable populations. However, the income realized from these activities was marginal in comparison to foreign donor support. Transparency was limited in the procurement process for pandemic-related services.

Nigerian CSOs have access to a few local sources of funding, including the TY Danjuma and Tony Elumelu foundations. During the pandemic, local philanthropic organizations, such as the Cuppy and Dangote foundations, supported CSOs' services to poor and vulnerable populations or provided these services themselves.

CSOs continued to use crowdfunding to fundraise for their activities during the pandemic. For example, CSO activists used crowdfunding to raise funds for the #EndSARS protests in October. Urban-based CSOs such as ActionAid Nigeria also relied on crowdfunding to raise funds. Social media platforms, including Facebook and WhatsApp, served as valuable tools in these efforts. Membership and professional organizations continued to rely heavily on members' dues to finance their activities.

CSOs' ability to earn income by providing services and products was severely undermined by the pandemic, since many CSOs were either completely or partially closed and thus unable to pursue income-generating activities.

Large CSOs typically have sound financial management systems. Small CSOs in rural areas have more rudimentary financial management practices. The pandemic coupled with CSOs' dwindling revenues hampered their ability to hire professional management services or retain skilled financial management staff. However, most large CSOs continued to operate in a transparent manner and in line with donor accountability requirements in 2020. Larger organizations often produce annual reports with audited financial statements, although overall this is not a common practice.

ADVOCACY: 2.8

Advocacy improved moderately in 2020 as CSOs recorded significant successes at the national and state levels despite challenges posed by the pandemic. In fact, the pandemic provided new opportunities for CSOs to collaborate with governments at the national and state levels in 2020. Connected Development (CODE) and BudgIT worked with the federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management, and Social Development to monitor the distribution of food and hygienic supplies to vulnerable persons. The Center for Gender Economics collaborated with the federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development to ensure that women were included as members of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19. At the state level, the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) collaborated with the Delta State government in the distribution of palliatives to indigent persons.



Collaboration and communication between the government and CSOs are increasingly inclusive of CSOs, as both the federal and local governments consider them to be important stakeholders in the development process. Some government projects and programs, such as the Open Government Partnership and the National Cash Transfer Program, are designed to include CSOs specifically to hold government accountable. The National Cash Transfer Program, for example, has a grievance redress mechanism that allows CSOs to monitor the program and report irregularities to program implementers. CSOs are usually invited to attend public hearings on appropriation bills and other bills at the federal and state levels. Although Nigeria has been relatively slow to adopt digital technologies to ensure open government and public access to government information, large CSOs such as Budget and CODE use such technologies to demand accountability from the government, especially in the budgeting process.

CSOs achieved several important advocacy successes in 2020. At the national level, one of the most effective advocacy campaigns was the #EndSARS protests against police brutality in October. The campaign eventually led to the dissolution of SARS, which was known for its high-handedness and victimization of Nigerian youth. After the protests, CSOs worked with the Human Rights Commission, Citizens Mediation Center, and youth representatives in judicial panels of inquiry set up to investigate alleged human rights violations by SARS agents. The police filed a lawsuit claiming that the panels were unconstitutional but later withdrew the suit.

Another important advocacy campaign in 2020 fought rape and gender-based violence (GBV). Women Against Rape in Nigeria, ActionAid Nigeria, Connected Development, Education as a Vaccine, Girl Child Africa, and other organizations involved in this effort succeeded in persuading the federal Ministry of Women Affairs to declare GBV a national emergency, which obliged the government to commit additional resources to curbing the menace. CSO advocacy also encouraged fulfillment of the federal Ministry of Health's project to establish one functional primary health-care facility in each ward. CSOs in Niger-Delta continued to call for a stop to pollution by oil companies.

At the state level, CSACEFA urged the Lagos State government to close down schools because of the pandemic. CSOs also led advocacy campaigns that resulted in the appointment of more women to government positions in Zamfara State and the provision of public toilets in Anambra State to eradicate open defecation. Other achievements included the initiation of a high-level bilateral discussion between CSOs and the Jigawa State government on the 2021 budget and the inclusion of CSOs in the Kwara State social audit scheme, which allows contracts to be awarded to contractors only after clearance from CSOs.

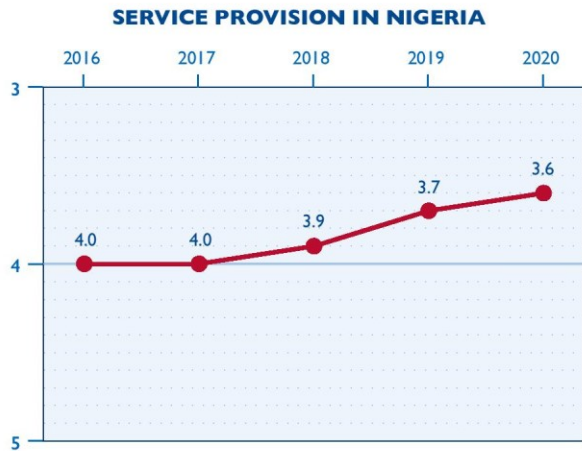
CSOs continued to achieve important lobbying successes at the federal and state levels in 2020. Action Group on Free Civic Space, a loose coalition of CSOs, lobbied against the Control of Infectious Disease Bill 2020, which they perceived as infringing on basic rights in proposing universal compulsory vaccination without informed consent. CSOs' strong opposition to the bill led to its withdrawal. Advocacy efforts by Partners West Africa Nigeria and other CSOs resulted in the enactment of the Nigeria Police Force (Establishment) Act 2020, which seeks to make the police force more effective, transparent, and accountable, and the completion and signing into law of the 2021 national budget in 2020. On the state level, lobbying successes included the introduction of a bill on the welfare of the elderly and social protection in Enugu State and a bill on a youth development commission in Nasarawa State. CSOs also lobbied successfully for the adoption of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act in Benue, Delta, Ebonyi and Nasarawa states.

CSOs have always been apprehensive about government efforts to reform legislation affecting the sector, even though CSOs themselves have yet to initiate positive reforms. Although the CSO sector was relieved when the Senate, in response to CSO advocacy, withdrew the CSO Regulatory Commission Bill 2019 in March 2020, many CSOs view CAMA 2020 as containing provisions that are just as restrictive as those that the sector rejected in the withdrawn bill. Many CSOs strongly criticized sections of Part F of the newly enacted CAMA 2020, believing that they allow the government to arbitrarily control and dissolve CSOs that it deems hostile to its agenda.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.6

Service provision improved slightly in 2020 as the pandemic forced many CSOs to focus on meeting health-related and humanitarian needs.

Nigerian CSOs typically provide a wide range of services in education, health, environment, humanitarian relief, economic development, and governance. After the pandemic emerged in Nigeria, many CSOs re-focused to



provide pandemic-related services. For example, the Women Environmental Program (WEP) began producing face masks and hand-washing materials, and CSACEFA, Center of Gender Economics, Center for Democratic Studies, Mambayya House, and many other CSOs distributed supplies and food to indigent people and sensitized the public about the need to protect themselves from the virus. With funding from the Cuppy Foundation, Save the Children supplied personal protective equipment and infection-prevention and -control materials worth NGN 50 million (approximately \$135,000) to the Lagos State government and Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The Agents for Citizen-Driven Transformation Program funded fifty-eight CSOs in Kano, Lagos, Sokoto, and Abuja to carry out campaigns against the spread of the virus. Many CSOs assumed that

because of the pandemic, communities would automatically welcome their services and materials to fight the virus. But this assumption was not always correct. In Enugu State, for example, a community rejected face masks and hand sanitizers offered by the Parent-Child Intervention Center, demanding food instead.

CSOs continued to provide services that reflect the needs of their constituents and communities in 2020. In the northeast, CSOs distributed materials and food items to internally displaced persons in camps. The Community Emergency Response Initiative received funding from the Nigeria Governors' Forum to construct public toilets in several states. In Katsina State, the Cuppy Foundation trained 295 people on feeding infants and young children.

Although international organizations and large local CSOs usually conduct assessments to determine community needs and monitor their interventions to determine how well they met those needs, few organizations were able to conduct needs assessments in 2020 because of the pandemic. State-level and rural CSOs do not normally conduct assessments. In November, the Borno State government launched a twenty-five-year Development Plan meant to ensure, among other things, that CSOs' activities correspond to community needs. CSOs are required to align their activities and programs with the plan.

CSOs continued to provide services to communities beyond their members in 2020. Most organizations deliver services in a non-discriminatory manner. Professional organizations such as the Nigeria Medical Association were actively involved in widespread COVID-19 sensitization efforts. WEP provided training on face mask and hand sanitizer production to CBOs in Benue, Zamfara, Nasarawa, and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, which went on to benefit more than 100,000 people.

CSOs are legally allowed to earn income from the provision of goods and services, but few organizations could do so in 2020 because of the lockdown. A large portion of CSO services is donor funded and provided to beneficiaries at no cost. CSO services are mostly driven by community needs rather than market concerns. Some CSOs operate business units that charge fees for services. For example, in 2020, BudgIT continued to provide infographic services to media organizations such as *The Guardian* newspaper and other clients for a fee. WEP has a business unit that focuses on renewable energy.

The government at all levels in Nigeria continued to recognize the value that CSOs add to service provision and the monitoring of social services in 2020. The federal government engaged Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth, and Advancement Africa in COVID-19 palliative distribution, and during the #EndSARS protests in October, the government asked independent CSOs to help diffuse public tensions. Likewise, CSO representatives were appointed as members of the panels of inquiry that the government set up in many states to investigate allegations of police brutality.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.7

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector improved slightly in 2020. More information was shared within the sector thanks to increased use of online platforms and training opportunities were plentiful.

Services offered by resource centers and intermediary support organizations were mostly online at no cost to participants in 2020. For example, the Center for Democracy and Development facilitated information sharing among CSOs through online platforms. This growing reliance on the internet made it relatively easy for many urban-based organizations to attend trainings and share information. However, rural CSOs were often unable to benefit from such opportunities because of poor or non-existent internet services.

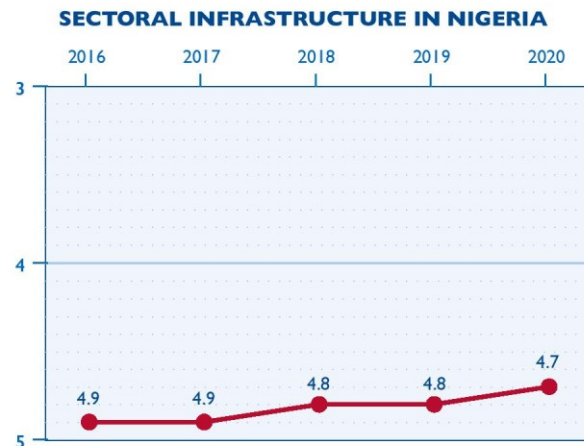
The regranting of funds increased in 2020 because of the inability of many large CSOs to access the communities in which they normally work. Instead, they relied on CBOs to distribute supplies and carry out sensitization activities. Large organizations such as WEP continued to re-grant donor funds to CBOs, and the TY Danjuma Foundation re-granted donor funds to organizations working in health care, education, and humanitarian relief. The Cuppy Foundation provided financial support from locally raised funds to a few international and local CSOs, including Save the Children, Angel for Life Foundation, and Kaffy Foundation.

Existing CSO coalitions continued to facilitate information sharing among their members in 2020. Major coalitions include the Nigeria Network of NGOs, Kano Civil Society Forum, and CSACEFA. A loose coalition of CSOs known as the Action Group on Free Civic Space was formed to oppose the Infectious Disease Bill 2020. CSO coalitions typically complement the work of their members and serve as valuable platforms for information sharing and accountability. Overall, cooperation within the sector improved slightly in 2020 as the use of online platforms increased.

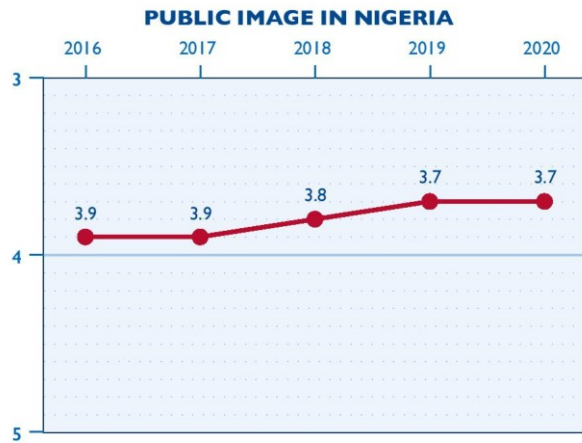
CSOs continued to enjoy many training opportunities in 2020. The Center for Leadership, Strategy, and Development, Center of Information Technology and Development, and several other resource centers provided online training on pandemic-related topics, such as strategic development during the pandemic and monitoring approaches in the COVID-19 era. The Center for Democratic Studies, with support from the MacArthur Foundation, organized workshops on budget tracking and monitoring and evaluation. In February, Integrity Organization, in collaboration with ActionAid Nigeria, organized a training program on engaging with the private sector. ActionAid Nigeria also organized training for members of the Child Rights Implementation Committee on network management and advocacy as well as capacity building for effective service delivery. Several other training workshops on various topics took place in 2020, largely online. Training materials are offered in English.

Collaboration between CSOs and other sectors improved slightly in 2020. The government at all levels as well as the private sector recognize the advantages of partnering with CSOs to achieve common objectives. In 2020, they often relied on CSOs' expertise and community reach to conduct sensitization activities and distribute pandemic-relief supplies. For example, the Center for Gender Economics worked with the central Ministry of Women Affairs to push for the inclusion of women in the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19.

CSOs also collaborated extensively with the media in 2020. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) cooperated with media across the country to raise awareness about COVID-19, and Yiaga Africa worked with media in Edo and Ondo states to disseminate accurate information before, during, and after their elections. Civil Society Scaling-Up Nutrition in Nigeria facilitated partnerships between health-focused CSOs and media organizations in Lagos for advocacy to help end malnutrition. CSACEFA and various media partnered to raise awareness in Edo and Ondo states about the need for girls to have access to quality education.



PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.7



CSOs' public image did not change in 2020. They continued to enjoy a positive public image and received considerable media attention, mainly in private outlets but also in government-owned media. For example, WEP attractive positive coverage of its gender and climate-change project. *Daily Trust* newspaper, SolaceBase.com, DailyNews24, and *Stallion Times* reported on the launch event of the 2019 CSO Sustainability Index report on Nigeria. CSO practitioners continued to be featured as analysts and commentators on television and radio programs. Online news outlets provided positive coverage of CSO activities, especially their awareness-raising on COVID-19 and the #EndSARS protests. For example, In July, *Solace Base* reported on CSOs' engagement in the pandemic response in Kano State, and in October, *Premium Times* covered the #EndSARS

protests, including CSOs' call on the government to stop attacking the protesters. Negative stories in government-controlled media focused on the CSO activists behind the #EndSARS protests. In most cases, private media cover CSO activities at no cost, while government-controlled media, especially at the state level, demand fees to cover CSOs' activities.

As a result of CSOs' effective advocacy and service provision, the public has generally positive perceptions of the sector. Many people consider CSOs as effective intermediaries with the government. In Enugu State, the people as well as the government have a high regard for CSOs. Local CSOs in Borno State continue to enjoy tremendous acceptance among the people, although international CSOs are still viewed with suspicion.

The government at all levels as well as the business sector regard CSOs as a source of expertise. Although the relationship between international CSOs and the government of Borno State is not always cordial, the state government considers CSOs as important partners. For example, the government consulted with development partners while drafting its twenty-five-year development plan. The military in the troubled northeast area is still suspicious of international CSOs. The federal government often has negative views of CSOs that are critical of its policies and actions. For example, in 2020, the federal government criticized Transparency International for the country's low ranking in its annual corruption index.

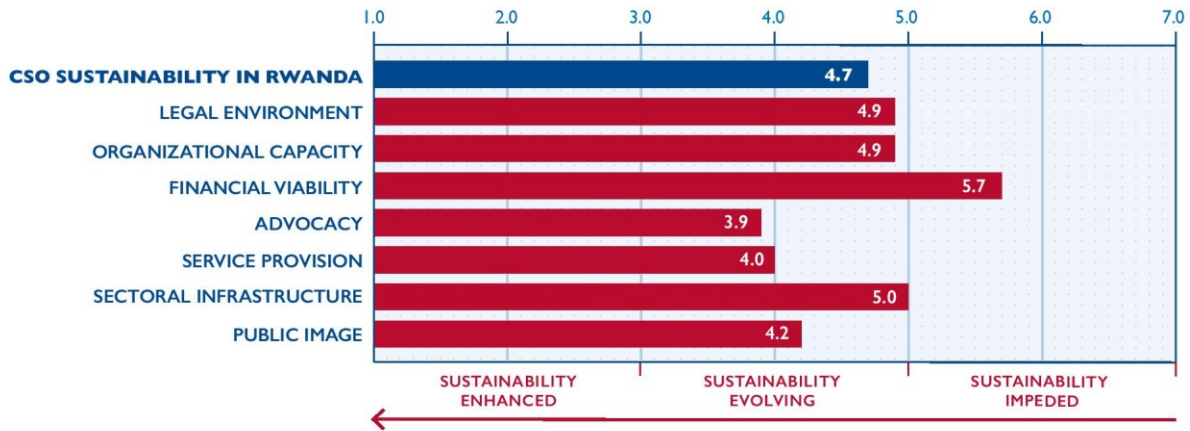
CSOs continued to create awareness of their activities and advocate through various media in 2020. For examples, in Jigawa State, the Civil Society Forum and media worked together to raise public awareness of CSO activities. ASUU engaged the media extensively to create awareness about its decision to call a strike in 2020.

CSOs did not develop or adopt a sector-wide code of ethics in 2020. However, coalitions continued to push their members to operate in a transparent manner. Large CSOs publish their annual reports on their websites, but this is not a common practice among most CSOs.

RWANDA

Capital: Kigali
Population: 12,943,132
GDP per capita (PPP): \$2,227
Human Development Index: Low (0.543)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (21/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.7



Following the discovery of the country's first case of the COVID-19 virus on March 14, the government acted swiftly to control its spread. One week later, a full lockdown was in effect, which included a national curfew, restrictions on non-essential movement and public and private gatherings, and enforced social distancing and handwashing in public places. All businesses were closed except for essential services, and working from home was mandated. The lockdown was partially lifted on May 4, but some restrictions were left in place for the remainder of the year, including limits on movement and certain press freedoms, such as independent reporting by the media about the lockdown. Thanks to a well-coordinated health-care system, frequent public announcements about the status of known cases, and the redirection of government resources to combat the disease, Rwanda managed to control the spread of the virus. The economy partially reopened in late 2020. CSOs made important contributions to the pandemic response while voicing concerns to the government about instances of overreach in its enforcement of pandemic restrictions.

Several events took place in 2020 that could be interpreted as an intensification of efforts to deal with perceived enemies of Rwanda and persons accused of destabilizing the country. In January, seven members of the opposition coalition, the United Democratic Forces of Rwanda (FDU-Inkingi), were convicted of complicity in forming or joining irregular armed forces and other charges. They were sentenced to seven to ten years in prison. On February 17, Kizito Mihigo,

a well-known gospel singer, was found dead in his prison cell after being detained near the border with Burundi. The singer had been charged with attempting to cross the border illegally, membership in terrorist groups, and corruption. An official statement claimed that he had hanged himself, but authorities did not release any evidence and rejected calls for an independent investigation. International observers noted the singer had previously served prison time for conspiring against the government and other charges. In August, the internationally famous activist and humanitarian Paul Rusesabagina was tricked into boarding a private jet which he believed was bound for Burundi but flew instead to Kigali, where he was detained on terrorism charges. The Rwandan intelligence service was alleged to have monitored Rusesabagina's movements in Belgium and the United States. Rwandan authorities conceded that Rusesabagina was lured to Rwanda in a government operation but insisted that he boarded the aircraft voluntarily and was lawfully detained.

Other important developments in 2020 included the launch of an integrated system to simplify the registration of births and deaths at the local level. In May, President Kagame pardoned fifty young women convicted of abortion, although those who had aided in the illegal procedures had to serve their full sentences. In December, following widespread dissatisfaction with the *ubudehe* system for determining households' eligibility for social programs, the

government announced a revision of the system. Leading up to the announcement, CSOs took part with citizens, government institutions, and media in consultations about the ubudehe system.

Rwanda entered a recession in 2020 as the gross domestic product dropped by 3.4 percent. Unemployment soared as the pandemic undermined all major sectors, including education, travel, and hospitality. In April, the government responded to the economic challenges by establishing an economic recovery fund. In November, the World Bank launched a six-year, \$1.2 billion program to aid Rwanda's recovery and serve its national development goals. In Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index, Rwanda ranked forty-ninth out of 180 countries, making it the fourth least corrupt nation in Africa. Rwanda maintained its rank of second in Africa in the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 report.

The overall sustainability of civil society in Rwanda did not change in 2020, although improvements were recorded in several dimensions. Advocacy was slightly stronger as CSOs responded to the needs of constituents challenged by the pandemic. Service provision also improved as CSOs contributed to the pandemic response. Better coordination among CSOs and newly available support structures enhanced the sectoral infrastructure slightly. CSOs' public image was burnished by their highly visible delivery of pandemic-related services in local communities. There was no change in CSOs' legal environment, organizational capacity, or financial viability.

In 2020, a total of 1,881 domestic CSOs, 771 faith-based organizations, 189 international CSOs, and 11 political organizations had legal status in Rwanda. During the year, 323 domestic CSOs applied for registration, of which 285 operational certificates were issued, and 14 international CSOs applied for registration, all of which were approved.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.9



The legal environment for Rwandan CSOs did not change in 2020.

Law No. 04/2012 governing national non-governmental organizations (the NGO Law) and Law No. 05/2012 governing international CSOs were still in place in 2020. To register, a domestic CSO submits an application to the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), the main oversight agency for CSOs, along with its authenticated statute, the minutes of the general assembly meeting at which the organization was formed, an action plan for the year, and other documents. International CSOs must submit detailed information about their implementation schedules, cost estimates, and the local partners that will continue their activities once their work is completed.

Extended delays in the processing of registrations were common in 2020, in part because of the pandemic. In addition, RGB continued to impose mandatory requirements for registration that are not specified in the law, such as letters from line ministries and letters of collaboration from local authorities in all locations in which an organization intends to operate. Obtaining the letters from local leaders can be difficult, since they sometimes fear that their approval of an organization will have negative repercussions if the organization ever runs afoul of the national government.

A new law and policy to govern CSOs, which had been expected to be approved in 2019, remained in draft form in 2020 after going through several iterations. The reasons for the delay were unknown. RGB continued to engage with CSOs in discussions about the proposed law. CSOs expressed concern that the new law would reverse key provisions of the current law—for example, by limiting CSOs' freedom to operate and omitting guarantees of CSOs' right to advocate, protect, and promote human rights and express opinions about government policies. RGB maintained that the progressive legal framework remains in the draft law and will be upheld.

No specific state harassment of registered CSOs is known to have occurred in 2020. However, at least ten journalists covering the pandemic locally for independent or online media were arrested and detained in 2020 for

violating lockdown directives prohibiting non-essential movement. Many CSOs continued to engage in self-censorship in response to a perceived threat of harassment.

The tax environment for CSOs did not change in 2020. CSOs are subject to all taxes imposed by the Rwanda Revenue Authority and rarely qualify for tax exemptions. For example, CSOs must pay value-added tax (VAT) on purchased goods and are exempted only if they partner with international organizations that are exempted from VAT through agreements with the government. Although CSOs initially feared that a complex new tax law introduced in 2018 would be disadvantageous to the sector, by 2020, their understanding of the law had improved, and they no longer saw it as a threat. Some organizations even came to regard the new law as a means of ensuring transparency and accountability, since CSOs that are able to comply with it can confidently indicate that they are fully compliant with the rules and regulations of the Rwanda Revenue Authority and report their finances through official channels such as audits. A few CSOs were unable to meet their tax obligations in 2020 because of funding shortfalls and occasional misunderstandings about reporting requirements.

Under Article 4 of the NGO Law, CSOs may conduct income-generating activities if they abide by the laws that govern registration and commercial activities and the profits from such activities are used to realize organizational objectives. While CSOs may bid on government contracts, they often lack the capacity to do so.

Few lawyers specialize in providing legal services to CSOs. Organizations may procure services from private legal practitioners, but the cost is usually unaffordable. Some CSOs employ lawyers as senior managers or technical staff, but their expertise is usually in fields such as public policy and human rights, and they do not offer general legal advice to other CSOs.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.9¹

The organizational capacity of CSOs did not change in 2020.

CSOs demonstrated resiliency in the face of the global pandemic. Lockdown restrictions forced organizations to seek new ways to operate and revealed how much they still had to learn about conducting their work online. While many organizations were able to quickly acquire the technical skills and systems that they needed to work effectively, some CSOs found it difficult to adapt to the changing environment, especially if they contended with funding decreases during the year.

Most CSOs in Rwanda have limited funding for community outreach. They do not usually involve their beneficiaries and target groups in planning and interventions or solicit their feedback on project achievements. During the pandemic in 2020, CSOs had to adjust the way that they interacted with their constituents, since face-to-face meetings and training were not feasible. For example, extension workers switched from large groups in central areas to home visits, which reduced the number of constituents that they were able to reach. Many CSOs relied on social media to communicate with their target audiences. Girl Guides Rwanda, for example, launched online campaigns to promote menstrual hygiene and kitchen gardens, and Never Again Rwanda hosted a series of webinars about peacebuilding and human rights issues related to the pandemic.

CSOs are expected to align their programming with district budgets and development plans. These documents are based on the National Strategy for Transformation 2017–24, which is overseen by the Joint Action Development Forum, a multi-stakeholder platform that promotes the full participation of citizens in decentralized, participatory governance and improved service provision. The requirement for close coordination with district governments and



¹ The score for Organizational Capacity was recalibrated in 2018 to better reflect the situation on the ground and align it with other scores in the region. The score did not reflect a change in organizational capacity, which in 2018 remained largely the same as in 2017.

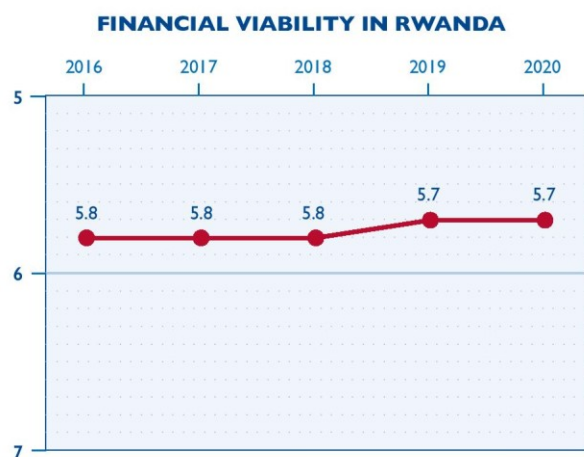
oversight sometimes affects CSOs' ability to respond to unique or evolving community needs. In 2020, CSOs' planned activities were further impeded by the pandemic. More agile organizations were able to adapt their interventions to the pandemic by switching quickly from the regular training and services described in their annual and quarterly workplans to the provision of essential food and supplies to communities under lockdown. These organizations were careful to accommodate restrictions on travel and face-to-face gatherings. Less established CSOs were often unable to make changes in their programs and instead reduced their activities and constituency outreach. Some advocacy CSOs shifted their focus to advocacy on behalf of constituents affected by the disease and lockdown conditions.

CSOs' management structures were unchanged in 2020, as most organizational development and capacity-building activities were put on hold because of the pandemic. Boards often took the lead in pandemic-related planning and restructuring.

CSOs continued to lack sufficient human resources in 2020. Decreases in donor funding and CSOs' inability to develop new initiatives to generate revenue during the pandemic resulted in salary cuts and staff layoffs at many organizations. With the exception of larger, more established organizations, most CSOs continued to lack sufficient funding to maintain highly qualified professional staff. In a vicious circle, the loss of staff prevented CSOs from accumulating the resources that they needed to hire longer-term staff and build staff capacity. Many training opportunities for staff planned by development partners and CSOs were suspended or canceled in 2020 because of the pandemic.

During the pandemic, CSOs embraced online platforms to maintain their operations. CSOs with access to the internet moved their meetings, events, or campaigns online, using platforms such as Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, and Skype to engage with international partners, donors, and government officials. A few larger CSOs were able to provide computer training and equipment to employees as their operations moved online. CSOs without access to the internet, which are mostly at the local level, usually resorted to phone calls and decentralized decision making and were less likely to maintain normal levels of communication and coordination. Many organizations communicated with beneficiaries through messaging apps on mobile telephones.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.7



CSOs' financial viability did not change in 2020. Although many organizations were undermined by the pandemic, some were able to ensure their financial health by obtaining funding for pandemic-related services and did not experience the dire financial straits predicted in the first quarter of 2020.

CSOs in Rwanda continued to rely heavily on international donors in 2020. The funding landscape changed rapidly as donors paused programs, redirected resources, or made new funding available to help with the pandemic response. Local CSOs perceived that donors directed the greater portion of this funding to international rather than local CSOs. This was particularly true of activities involving the distribution of materials or cash transfers, which international

organizations could perform without going through local organizations. Most development partners and international CSOs have pledged to work more often with local CSOs and umbrella groups, and USAID is attempting to strengthen the ability of local CSOs to seek funding directly from its programs. But mechanisms for this shift remain vague, and in 2020, Rwandan CSOs found it nearly impossible to access new sources of funding or develop new initiatives to generate revenue. In a rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the operations of members of the Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSP), a collective of eleven umbrella CSOs with a combined membership of about 1,445 organizations, some organizations expressed growing anxiety about future financing, while others acknowledged the urgent need to localize their funding and overcome their reliance on international partners.

The government does not allocate funding directly to CSOs. The ongoing Capacity Strengthening program funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and implemented by RGB awarded grants of up to RWF 25,000,000 (approximately \$25,000) to thirty-six CSOs in 2020. The funded projects focused on areas such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), child protection, environmental protection, youth empowerment, and agricultural extension services. Organizations receiving grants were provided with training to support their use of the funds. In 2020, USAID, the European Union (EU), and other donors maintained or increased their funding commitments to Rwanda’s National Strategy for Transformation, which implements projects in part through international and local CSOs.

Domestic sources of funding remained minimal in 2020. Rwanda does not have in-country philanthropic organizations. The private sector is small and does not offer significant support to CSOs. Although CSOs may conduct income-generating activities, they have not explored this opportunity, mainly because they lack funding to develop the skills needed to pursue such initiatives.

Financial management processes remained relatively weak in 2020. Except for some established organizations, local CSOs continued to struggle with retaining qualified staff to manage large grants and adopting compliance procedures that pass due-diligence requests from donor agencies.

ADVOCACY: 3.9²

CSO advocacy was slightly stronger in 2020 as the sector proved highly responsive to the needs of constituents challenged by COVID-19. CSOs also participated more actively in government sectoral commissions and steering committees, often by remote means. These developments suggest that Rwandan CSOs have gained greater competency and confidence in conducting advocacy and their efforts are achieving better results.

CSOs actively voiced concerns to the government about instances of overreach in its enforcement of pandemic restrictions. A particular concern was the curtailment of essential services and the effect on day laborers and women of restrictions on freedom of movement, especially during the lockdown early in the year. RCSP and other CSOs brought these issues to the attention of the government, which acknowledged some of their concerns in public statements and forums addressing its response to the pandemic.

CSOs reported more collaboration in 2020 with government agencies, particularly sectoral commissions and steering committees. CSOs also engaged directly with the government on public spending and the tax regime. For example, in collaboration with the Collective of Leagues and Associations for the Defense of Human Rights in Rwanda (CLADHO), RCSP analyzed the 2020–21 budget framework and worked with other CSOs and district authorities to engage citizens in consultations about the budget cycle. CLADHO’s presentation of its budget review to the parliament emphasized the sectors needing increased budgetary support and requested that some programs be re-prioritized.

CSOs finally achieved success in 2020 with their long-term push to revise the ubudehe system for determining households’ eligibility for social programs. Led by RCSP, CSOs had developed a position paper in 2019 that reflected the views of local populations as well as research by Never Again Rwanda and Transparency International Rwanda. In 2020, CSOs took part in a national civil society hearing on the issue organized by the Ministry of Local Government. CSOs were also members of the steering committee convened by the government to review the



² The score for Advocacy was recalibrated in 2018 to better reflect the situation on the ground and align it with other scores in the region. The 2018 score also reflected a slight improvement in advocacy over 2017.

ubudehe categories and the national technical team responsible for monitoring the review process. In December, after incorporating some of CSOs' recommendations, the government introduced new ubudehe categories.

In September 2020, thirty-seven CSOs, including the Rwanda Women's Network, Network of Women Workers for Rural Development, Save Generations Organization, and Solidarity for the Blossoming of Widows and Orphans Aiming at Work and Self-Promotion, put forward a paper regarding the pandemic response. The paper was based in part on an assessment commissioned by Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe on the impact of the pandemic on women and youth in informal and cross-border trade. The paper requested the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and other government bodies to expand their recovery plan to help severely affected populations and ensure that it included gendered responses. The government promised to revise the plan to ensure that it better met the needs of groups at risk.

In partnership with the National Council for People with Disabilities, the Rwanda Education for All Coalition conducted research on the low school enrollment rates of children and people living with disabilities. Using findings from the research, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Local Government adopted initiatives to address barriers to education in 2020, although their implementation was slowed by the pandemic. This effort suggests that Rwandan CSOs are learning to employ evidence-based approaches to improve the impact of their advocacy.

In 2020, CSOs such as the Association of Professional Environmental Practitioners developed a paper for the Ministry of Environment about Rwanda's implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate-change mitigation. Organizations such as the Legal Aid Forum contributed to Rwanda's report to the UN Human Rights Council ahead of its Universal Periodic Review in 2021. RCSP submitted a paper about the effect of reductions in public and low-cost transportation on citizens and independent businesses in Kigali to the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority, City of Kigali, and other stakeholders. The Legal Aid Forum, Haguruka, and other organizations contributed significantly to the formulation of a matrimonial regime law and tax procedure law.

With funding from UNDP and RGB, the University of Kigali conducted research on the role of CSOs in legislative processes. This research responded to findings from RGB's 2018 Rwanda Governance Scorecard, which showed that CSO participation in policy formulation was low. The research report offered recommendations for enhancing civil society's participation in the policy process.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.0



Service provision by Rwandan CSOs improved slightly in 2020 as the sector made important contributions to the pandemic response.

CSOs provided critical services that met the needs of diverse communities and target groups. Faith Victory Association, African Evangelist Enterprise (AEE), Duhamic Adri, National Union of Disability Organizations in Rwanda, and other organizations installed hygiene and sanitation facilities at highly trafficked areas, distributed face masks to vulnerable people, bolstered adherence to preventive measures, provided food and non-food items to groups with special needs, and contributed to the development of online courses for children. The funders of these activities included USAID, EU, and the Embassy of the Netherlands. The Rwanda Network of People

Living with HIV (RRP+) provided financial support to sixty cooperatives to mitigate the impact of the virus on people living with HIV/AIDS with funding from the Rwanda Biomedical Center and Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. AEE provided seed capital to small businesses to ensure that they were still viable after the lockdown. Amahoro Human Respect provided emergency support to key populations threatened by the pandemic. CSOs also provided food and household items to genocide survivors whose livelihoods were critically affected by the pandemic.

CSOs also helped ensure that the needs of children and teenagers were met during the lockdown. YWCA distributed sanitary pads and, via mobile phones, raised awareness about COVID-19 prevention, sexual and reproductive rights, and SGBV as part of its Safe Spaces program for girls under quarantine. CLADHO sought to rescue children from child labor, which increased significantly during the pandemic, and succeeded in returning many working children to school. CLADHO and its partners also ensured that children from vulnerable families received support so that they could participate in online learning during the pandemic.

CSOs also continued to provide their regular services in education, health care, and nutrition, sexual and reproductive health, legal aid, and water, sanitation, and hygiene. Many organizations adapted their services in these areas to the pandemic. Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe, for example, modified workshops on SGBV to include COVID-19 prevention measures, and RRP+ reached people living with HIV by setting up a call-in hotline. Other CSOs had to reduce in-person services in areas such as nutrition, legal support, and training.

Rwandan CSOs did not engage in cost-recovery efforts in 2020, mainly because donor funding comes with stringent accountability conditions that prevent such efforts. In addition, some CSOs do not understand the concept of cost recovery, which makes it difficult for them to negotiate cost-recovery arrangements with their funders. The public generally resists paying fees, since it views CSOs as charitable organizations that provide services for free.

The RGB's annual report to the parliament for 2019–20 and its action plan for 2020–21 included details about CSOs' contribution to Rwanda's development agenda. In November 2020, high-level government officials, including RGB representatives, attended the launch of the Civil Society Contribution Report, which was developed by RCSP and the Network of International NGOs (NINGO) to showcase civil society's contribution to the government's National Strategy for Transformation.

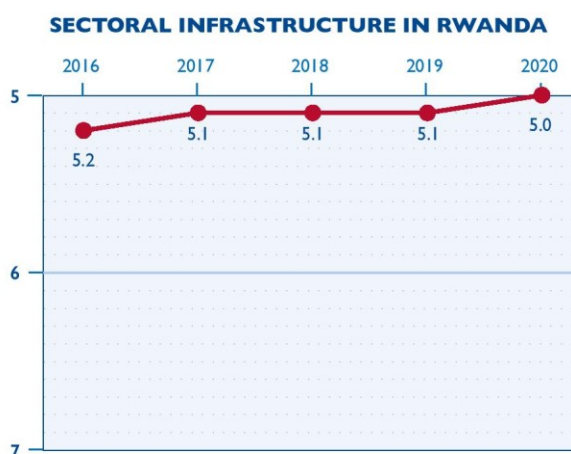
SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.0

The infrastructure supporting Rwandan CSOs improved slightly in 2020 as organizations increasingly coordinated their activities. In addition, more support was available to members of Rwanda's eleven umbrella organizations. Despite these advances, the overall sectoral infrastructure remained weak and offered little systematic support and few functioning resource institutions.

The few resource centers for CSOs in Rwanda include a youth center hosted by the Youth Association of Human Rights Promotion and Development and a library and center for human rights and strategic litigation operated by the Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development. Because of the pandemic, CSOs were largely unable to obtain services through established resource centers in 2020.

There are no domestic grant-making institutions in Rwanda.

Coordination among CSOs improved in 2020 as members of the eleven umbrella organizations met regularly to share information and develop their ability to influence change. In contrast to 2019, when RCSP acknowledged that the umbrella organizations were not working effectively, in 2020, the umbrella organizations provided capacity building to their members in areas such as monitoring and evaluation, evidence development, leadership, and change management with funding from UNDP. The umbrella groups also developed guidelines for the thematic working groups convened by RCSP in 2019 and completed a monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework to improve members' reporting and data collection. RGB cooperated with RCSP to provide management training for CSOs' audit and conflict-resolution committees. Rwandan CSOs made a few attempts to collaborate on the pandemic response but for the most part followed the lead of donors and members of NINGO. For example,



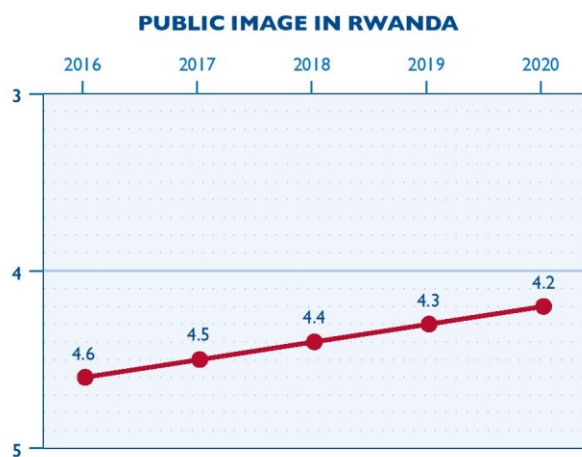
members of the SDG [Sustainable Development Goals] 5 Forum worked together on SGBV and made a joint statement about the impact of COVID-19 on women.

RCSP completed a CSO capacity mapping in 2020 to provide development partners and other stakeholders with information about Rwandan CSOs. The mapping allows RCSP to promote organizations working in specific sub-sectors as local implementing partners. In addition, Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe and its members conducted research on the role, contributions, and challenges of Rwandan civil society to inform the development of strategies to help CSOs work together and better support themselves.

International CSOs and development partners such as UNDP through the RGB offered capacity building and training in 2020. Training topics included project management, reporting principles and practices, resource mobilization, and proposal writing. Because of pandemic restrictions, and especially during the lockdown in the first part of the year, some training was either postponed or shifted online. Additional training in information and communications technology and the use of online platforms helped CSOs adapt to the pandemic situation.

CSOs had active and productive partnerships with the government in 2020. For example, the Rwanda NGO Forum, an umbrella group of organizations focused on HIV/AIDS, partnered with the Rwanda Biomedical Center and Ministry of Health to conduct voluntary HIV testing of youth and women and distribute condoms and lubricants to peer educators of key populations. CSOs and the media co-facilitated dialogues about citizen's needs, which provided feedback directly to decision and policy makers and served as alternatives to citizen consultative mechanisms. No significant partnerships between CSOs and businesses were established in 2020. CSOs still lack the ability to engage meaningfully with the private sector, which is a risk given that the private sector plays an increasingly important role in the national development agenda.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.2



The public image of CSOs was more positive in 2020, as organizations were highly visible delivering pandemic-related services in local communities.

CSOs continued to increase their engagement with media houses in 2020. Media requests for CSOs' participation in public discussions and on expert panels increased significantly, and television stations such as TV Flash and talk shows such as *The Square* and *The Question* featured CSO leaders discussing a wide range of topics. While CSOs' support to communities is often mentioned in news articles, the coverage tends to highlight the government's commitment or the funding provided by donors or international organizations and understate the contribution of Rwandan CSOs.

The government values the specific technical expertise that CSOs bring to steering and advisory committees. In 2020, the government continued to view CSOs as relevant contributors to the country's development, especially insofar as they offered services at the community level.

While public perceptions of CSOs improved in 2020 with growing awareness of their contribution to combating COVID-19, there is still a widespread belief that solutions offered by the private sector are the best way for Rwanda to achieve the National Strategy for Transformation and its goal of sustained growth. The private sector continues to engage with CSOs in only a limited way, such as by offering small grants to fulfill corporate social responsibility obligations.

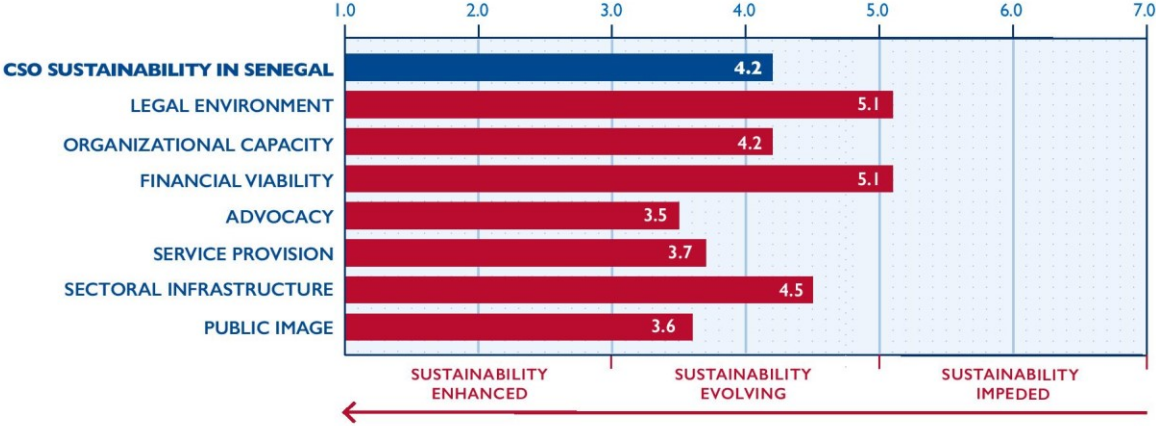
Outside of a few larger organizations, CSOs continued to lack the capacity to manage public relations campaigns in 2020. Because of the cancellation of in-person activities, CSOs relied on television, radio, and print media to reach their audiences and increasingly made use of social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter. CSOs used these platforms to articulate their contributions to the national development agenda and receive feedback on ways to improve the quality of their programs.

Self-regulation by CSOs remained limited in 2020. RCSP and the sector’s umbrella organizations sought to further self-regulation by developing standardized operating procedures and a monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework. RCSP and NINGO’s 2020 CSO Contribution Report, which outlines CSOs’ contribution to the National Strategy for Transformation, was received as a major step forward in transparency and accountability as it encouraged individual organizations to account for the ways in which they align their activities with the government’s development agenda. Many CSOs produced annual reports to showcase their work and validate their activities in the communities that they serve.

SENEGAL

Capital: Dakar
Population: 16,082,442
GDP per capita (PPP): \$3,395
Human Development Index: Low (0.512)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (71/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.2



On March 23, 2020, approximately twenty days after the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Senegal, the Senegalese government issued Decree No. 2020-830 declaring a state of emergency. As part of its pandemic response, the government closed schools and markets, introduced a night-time curfew, made the wearing of face masks mandatory, and restricted interregional travel. The government also implemented quick testing and quarantine protocols. International observers credited this energetic response and consistent public messaging about the virus with effectively mitigating the disease. However, after three months, demonstrations broke out in many cities against the pandemic measures, which forced authorities to relax and eventually repeal them.

The government also created the Response and Solidarity Fund against the Effects of COVID-19 (Force COVID-19) to help strengthen the health-care system and provide financial support to households, the Senegalese diaspora, and companies and their employees. Backed by public resources and contributions from national and international donors, the fund had an initial endowment of XOF 1 trillion (\$1.7 billion), representing about 7 percent of the national gross domestic product. CSOs served on the committee overseeing the fund, and in a meeting with CSOs, the president stressed the importance of harnessing their expertise to plan and implement the national pandemic response. The president also seemed to expect CSOs to help mobilize resources for Force COVID-19. However, CSOs and social enterprises did not benefit from the fund or receive other government funding for the many pandemic-related services that they provided in 2020. Some advocacy organizations felt that the government’s pandemic measures were too restrictive and prevented them from exercising their watchdog role.

Departmental and municipal elections that were originally scheduled for June 2019 and then postponed to December 1, 2020, were postponed again until March 2021. The delay was meant to give the Political Commission of the National Dialogue Steering Committee under the Ministry of Interior time to oversee an audit of the electoral roll and evaluate the election process. CSOs were represented on the commission by two CSO coalitions, the Collective of CSOs for Elections (COSCE) and the Platform of Civil Society Actors for Transparency in Elections (PACTE). These coalitions played a major role in achieving consensus on such issues as the election of local officials by direct universal suffrage and the abolition of sponsorships for local elections.

After a period of sustained growth averaging 6 percent over the last six years, the pandemic inflicted a major blow on the Senegalese economy. The gross domestic product was estimated by the African Development Bank to have contracted by 0.7 percent in 2020 as the virus disrupted vital sectors such as catering, fishing, trade, handicrafts, education, and transportation. More than one-third of the population lives below the poverty line, and 75 percent of families suffer from chronic poverty, according to the United Nations (UN) World Food Program.

CSO sustainability in Senegal did not change in 2020. The legal environment was slightly weaker as civic space was constrained by pandemic-related restrictions and CSO activists and leaders were subject to increased harassment. CSOs' organizational capacity deteriorated slightly because of the sector's lack of preparation to deal with the pandemic. Their financial viability was moderately undermined by changing levels of external funding and minimal domestic sources of funding. CSOs' sectoral infrastructure deteriorated slightly because of weak support from resource centers and intermediary support organizations. CSO advocacy, service provision, and public image did not change.

The Ministry of Interior has not made data about the number of CSOs available for several years. Registered CSOs are estimated to include more than 10,000 associations and 589 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Many unregistered organizations are also active.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.1



The legal environment for CSOs deteriorated slightly in 2020 as civic space was constrained by pandemic-related restrictions, while harassment of CSO leaders and activists increased.

Associations are governed by Article 8 of the 2001 constitution, which guarantees fundamental freedoms, and Article 12, which guarantees the right to freely form associations, companies, and other groups. In addition, the Code of Civil and Commercial Obligations specifies criteria for associations to obtain legal status and corporate purpose, and Decree 96-103 defines associations as private nonprofit organizations whose purpose is to support Senegal's development. Associations must obtain legal personality to operate, be eligible for funding from the government and

international partners, and open bank accounts. The registration process is usually bureaucratic and slow, since the interministerial advisory commission that approves applications rarely meets. In 2020, the approval process was unusually protracted because of the pandemic.

After two years of operation, associations may apply for NGO status, which confers eligibility for tax and customs waivers under Decree 2015-145. NGOs must submit annual reports for evaluation by interministerial commissions, which also approve CSOs' spending plans, including their sources of financial support, which must be traceable. In 2020, the interministerial commissions, which met virtually because of pandemic restrictions, approved fourteen requests for NGO status and thirty-seven spending plans. Foreign organizations that needed to renew their headquarters agreements experienced difficulties in 2020 because the commission overseeing the agreements under the Ministry of Interior has not met to review pending applications since 2018.

The space for civil society shrank rapidly in 2020 as CSO leaders, whistleblowers, and human rights defenders were increasingly threatened and prosecuted. Sporadic human rights violations were reported, as when security and defense forces used excessive force to enforce the curfew in localities such as Touba, Mbacké, and Dakar in March. In response to multiple testimonies from victims and video recordings posted on social networks and the media, police authorities issued a statement acknowledging "excessive interventions in [their] ranks." Several activists from the movements Ñoo Lank (We Refuse), Fed Up (Y'en a marre), Front for a Popular and Pan-African Anti-Imperialist Revolution (Front pour une révolution anti-impérialiste populaire et panafricaine, FRAPP–France dégage), Aar Li NuBokk (Preserve Our Common Good), and other groups were arrested for engaging in activities such as distributing flyers and protesting the lack of transparency in the award of contracts for exploiting oil and gas reserves. For example, in March 2020, a member of both Ñoo Lank and FRAPP–France dégage was detained for three months for taking part in a demonstration against rising electricity prices. In December 2020, two activists from Ñoo Lank were taken into custody and brought before the criminal court for "participating in a banned demonstration and failing to obey an officer" while trying to notify the prefecture of Dakar of their intention to hold a sit-in against an agreement on fisheries between Senegal and the European Union (EU). They

were freed after four days. Demonstrations were systematically banned on the grounds of “real threats of public disorder,” “incitement to violence through irreverent language,” and “risk of infiltration by ill-intentioned individuals.”

CSOs continued to be required to file yearly tax returns and pay corporate taxes as well as taxes on behalf of their employees. NGOs are entitled to exemptions from taxes and customs fees on supplies and equipment used for activities included in their spending plans approved by the government. The process for obtaining these exemptions is slow. International CSOs may sign agreements with the government to obtain tax advantages. CSOs that sign paid consulting service contracts with the government must pay taxes on this income. In 2020, CSOs were often subjected to formal notices of tax adjustments or violations of rules related to their financing.

CSOs may bid on government contracts and may earn income by selling goods and services and operating social enterprises, provided the profits are used to support their missions.

Legal professionals in Dakar and smaller cities help with CSOs’ legal needs. Human rights CSOs, including the African Meeting for the Defense of Human Rights (Rencontre africaine pour la défense des droits de l’homme, RADDHO), Amnesty International, and Association of Senegalese Jurists (Association des juristes sénégalaises, AJS) often have legal experts on their staff, who, usually on a pro bono basis, assist CSOs that cannot to pay for legal services or otherwise lack access to private-sector professionals.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.2

The organizational capacity of Senegalese CSOs deteriorated slightly in 2020 as the sector proved unprepared to deal technically or organizationally with the sudden changes that the pandemic caused in their operational environment.

The pandemic forced CSOs to change course quickly to meet new needs while dealing with travel restrictions and health issues. Their ability to reorient their planning and redeploy funding individually or in partnerships varied considerably. For example, GRET–Senegal and its partners Enda Graf Sahel and Fodde suspended field-based vocational training planned under the Qualemploi project and, after consulting with their funder, the European Union (EU), were able to develop a contingency plan to promote preventative measures. The consortium supported the Chamber of Trades by supplying hygienic products such as soap and bleach and installing hand-washing stations to use when training young people. Some local and community-based organizations (CBOs) such as Ndeyjirim, Alphadev, and Youth and Development (Jeunesse et développement, JED), along with national CSOs such as Democracy, Human Rights, and Development (ONG démocratie, droits humains, développement, ONG 3D), Union for Solidarity and Mutual Aid (Union pour la solidarité et l’entraide, USE), African Network for Integrated Development (Réseau africain pour le développement intégré, RADI), and Enda Santé, were also able to adjust their activities in consultation with their technical and financial partners and target groups.

But many CSOs, particularly international organizations, had to abruptly halt their interventions, leaving communities without critical services in areas such as health care, education, water, sanitation, and human rights. Some international CSOs reduced their staff after restrictions were introduced on travel and in-person meetings. For example, the Center for International Studies and Cooperation (Centre d’étude et de coopération internationale, CECI) suspended implementation of its Women’s Voice and Leadership program, funded by the Canadian government, which had planned to bring together twenty organizations and five networks to defend the rights of women and girls.

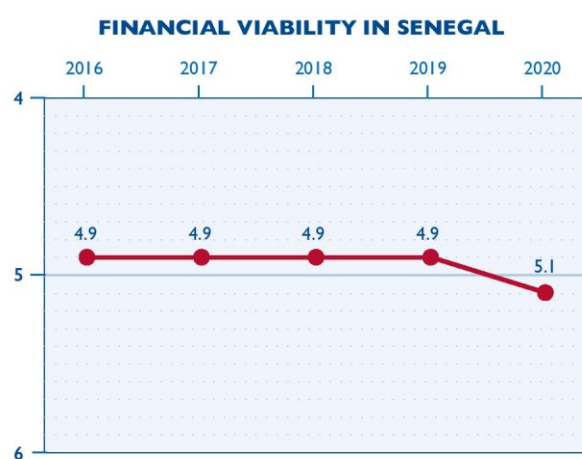
For some organizations and networks, the pandemic offered an opportunity to reinvent organizational and community strategies for the post-pandemic period. For example, the Platform of European NGOs in Senegal (Plateforme des ONG européennes au Sénégal, PFONGUE) set up inter-CSO stakeholder working groups



comprised of national and international organizations, which conducted analyses and offered concrete proposals for social inclusion, the territorialization of public policies, and sustainable development. This consultative process provided an opportunity to bring together CSOs, technical and financial partners, national and local institutions, the private sector, and other development stakeholders in discussions about ways to strengthen CSOs' resilience and the country's economic and social recovery in the post-pandemic period.

CSOs' governance and internal management was disrupted as most organizations were poorly prepared to work remotely during the pandemic. Although administrative managers working in offices were usually able to adapt quickly to remote work, operational management and field and community workers found the transition difficult or even impossible because of the nature of their work. Many CSOs were unable to afford the costs of additional equipment so that their staff could work from home, which increased the capacity gaps between international organizations, national CSOs, and CBOs.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.1



CSOs' financial viability deteriorated moderately in 2020 as their dependence on changing levels of foreign funding coupled with minimal domestic sources of funding increased their financial vulnerability.

The majority of funds come from international donors, including USAID, the EU, and the French Agency for Development. Several other bilateral organizations, including the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and Japan International Cooperation Agency, and multilateral institutions such as the UN, African Development Bank, and World Bank have smaller civil society funding programs that target specific sectors or local infrastructure projects. While precise data on declines in funding due to the pandemic are difficult to obtain, most CSOs felt that funding levels were unstable

and unpredictable in 2020. For example, some donors suspended their funding programs when the foreign staff of international CSOs departed, while other donors redirected funds from their usual programs to the pandemic response. USAID, for instance, asked its implementing partners to re-channel funds intended for activities under the Sunu Election and Governance for Local Development programs to pandemic awareness-raising campaigns and the distribution of masks and hand sanitizer.

Senegalese CSOs often compete against each other rather than work together to respond to calls for proposals. Many local CSOs are dependent on a single donor.

Financial support from central and local governments remains limited to non-existent, especially for NGOs, for which there are no legal provisions regarding government funding. In 2020, Force COVID-19 did not extend subsidies or recovery plans to CSOs or social enterprises. Some CSOs act as partners with the government through service contracts under programs in education, health care, water, sanitation, and governance funded by bilateral and multilateral donors. For example, Enda Santé works with the Ministry of Health and Action on the SEN/031 Health and Social Protection program co-financed by Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency. With funding from the EU's European Development Fund, the Ministry of Finance provides financing to CSOs to support the implementation of projects approved under the Support for Civil Society Citizens' Initiatives (PAISC) program.

Private-sector financial support for CSOs is almost nonexistent. Private businesses work directly with communities through their social responsibility programs or foundations.

CSOs that generate income from product sales and other activities saw significant drops in income in 2020, which led to operational instability and lack of payment to employees forced to stay home. The revenues of women's cooperatives working in local grain processing and supported by the COVID-19 crisis response program of the Network of Local Actors and Authorities for the Social and Solidarity Economy (Réseau des acteurs et collectivités

territoriales pour l'économie sociale et solidaire, RACTES) also decreased by 55 to 90 percent between March and July 2020.

ADVOCACY: 3.5

CSO advocacy did not change in 2020.

The year started off positively with the president's launch on January 30 of Senegal's report on the African Peer Review Mechanism, a self-assessment process that allows African states to promote and strengthen high standards of governance. Organizations such as the Senegalese Council of Women (Conseil sénégalais des femmes, COSEF), Council of Development Support NGOs (Conseil des organisations non gouvernementales d'appui au développement, CONGAD), and National Council of Youth of Senegal (Conseil national de la jeunesse du Sénégal, CNJS) participated in the National Governance Commission, which was chaired by the Platform of Non-State Actors of Senegal (Plateforme des acteurs non étatiques du Sénégal, PFAAnE). CONGAD,

Civil Forum, Federation of Senegalese Women's Associations (Fédération des associations de femmes sénégalaises, FAFS), and National Network of Rural Women in Sénégal (Réseau national des femmes rurales au Sénégal, RNFRS) served on the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council, which allowed them to contribute to the formation of public policies. The Handicap Forum Educ organization, Senegalese Human Rights League (Ligue sénégalaise des droits humains, LSDH), and COSEF were named to the supervisory committee of Force COVID-19 and helped monitor implementation of the Economic and Social Recovery Plan.

Civil society also played a major role in facilitating a dialogue on electoral issues with the majority party and opposition groups. As members of the Political Commission of the National Dialogue Steering Committee, which was charged with promoting all actors' acceptance of a peaceful electoral process, COSCE and PACTE contributed to an audit of the electoral roll with the support of USAID. On the local level, CSOs advocated for transparency and accountability by all local authorities following the example of the partnership between Civil Forum and the Association of Mayors of Senegal regarding citizen certification.

But despite a long tradition of contributing to public policy, only a few large national and international organizations and networks advocated effectively in 2020. The majority of CSOs, particularly smaller women's and youth organizations, lacked the capacity to articulate constructive critiques of public policies. In 2020, restrictions introduced under the state of emergency, combined with CSOs' inability to adapt to online tools such as remote work platforms, prevented many organizations from exercising their right to inform, monitor, and evaluate public policies, according to a report on the management of COVID-19 and the protection of human rights in Senegal by RADDHO. CSOs were also hampered by the absence of a law on access to information, which would facilitate access to government data, especially regarding public budgeting, financial management, and other economic issues. Finally, certain state structures continued to be deaf to CSOs' recommendations, and consultative frameworks set up at the local and sectoral levels were often nonfunctioning.

Nevertheless, CSOs worked closely with local communities to advocate for their needs during the pandemic. For example, after it became clear that local authorities were unable to meet the urgent need for sanitary and food products during the curfew, CSOs successfully pushed the government to adopt Ordinance I6, which allows for the derogation of usual departmental, municipal, and city council operations to facilitate the execution of pandemic-related public orders. Within this context, RACTES and PFAAnE collaborated with the City of Dakar to develop a legal framework to facilitate access to public funds by social and solidarity economic organizations, including cooperatives and women's groups, with the support of KOICA and the Global Social Economy Forum. Various civil society coalitions and platforms played a mediating role when tensions arose over pandemic curfews and confinement. For example, the Platform of Women for Peace in Casamance (Plateforme des femmes pour la paix en Casamance, PFPC) and the Unitary Framework of Islam (Cadre unitaire de l'Islam au Sénégal, CUIS), a

ADVOCACY IN SENEGAL



group of scientific committees of Muslim brotherhoods, introduced initiatives to pacify public space and ease political tensions.

CSOs were also active on gender issues, such as the empowerment of women and recognition of women's rights in public policies, which are articulated in the strategy on equality and gender equity in the Senegalese development program. The Association of Senegalese Jurists, in collaboration with the Heinrich Böll Foundation–Dakar, publicized the steep rise in gender-based violence during the pandemic.

No progress was made in reforming the legal framework governing the sector in 2020. In 2019, the Ministry of Interior had begun to work with CSOs to revise Decree No. 2015-145 at CSOs' urging. CONGAD, the Association of International NGOs (Association des ONG internationales au Sénégal, ONGIS), and other organizations working on the issue reached agreement on the most important items, such as the frequency of submission of reports by NGOs. The proposed revisions were expected to strengthen civil society's role in development and improve its ability to hold the government to account. However, the reform of Decree No. 2015-145 did not progress in 2020. Also in limbo was a proposed framework agreement between NGOs and the government, which, among other things, would change NGOs' relationship with the Ministry of Interior from one of mentoring to a partnership and establish joint mechanisms for consultation and accountability that include NGOs, the territorial administration, decentralized state services, and local communities.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.7



CSO service delivery did not change in 2020.

CSOs normally offer services in a broad range of areas, including education, literacy, and youth employability. After the government called on CSOs to implement a community-based strategy to help stop transmission of the virus, some local CSOs were able to quickly stop their usual activities to support the pandemic response. Most organizations were able to redirect funding to short- and medium-term efforts, such as distributing hygienic supplies, food, and awareness-raising materials. Some CSOs implemented new initiatives or worked with other local CSOs to promote their involvement in the pandemic response. For example, under the banner *Kou Nekkag Bossam* (To Each His Own Mask), Alphadev helped out-of-school youth in apprenticeships and craft

workshops make masks and distribute them free of charge in communes, markets, fishing piers, and bus stations. PFAnE helped sports and cultural CBOs in the central, southern, and western districts of Dakar promote hand washing and other preventative measures at markets and garages, provide protective materials, and produce broadcast spots and sketches to raise awareness about discrimination against COVID-19 patients and former patients. As part of this effort, which took place under USAID's Sunu Election program, some organizations also disseminated awareness-raising visual materials produced by the Ministry of Health.

Organizations such as World Vision helped people directly by providing them with material and financial donations. A group of CSOs provided XOF 55 million (about \$95,000) for the Kaffrine medical region and donated XOF 8 million (approximately \$14,000) to the regional COVID-19 committee, which paid for the distribution of 893 bottles of hand sanitizer, 1,575 pairs of gloves, 483 soap packages, bleach, tarps, informational posters, and other awareness-raising materials. RACTES worked in partnership with the City of Dakar to support women's organizations so that they could produce sanitary kits and raise awareness in women's workplaces and schools. The health-care organizations Senegalese Organization for Familial Wellbeing (Association sénégalaise pour le bien-être familial, ASBEF), Enda Santé, Alima, Therapeutic Solidarity and Health Initiatives (Solidarité thérapeutique et initiatives pour la santé, SOLTHIS), and the Spanish organization Doctors of the World also provided pandemic-related services.

The protection of street children and talibés, or young boys who leave their families to study the Qur'an, was a top priority during the pandemic. Ndeyi Jirim protected talibés from COVID-19 by taking care of them for twenty

days, so that they would not have to search for food. The Agir Ensemble coalition, which includes Save the Children, ChildFund, Plan Sénégal, SOS Village d'Enfants, World Vision, Educo, AJS, Alliance for Solidarity, National Coalition of Associations and NGOs for Children (Coalition nationale des associations et ONG en faveur de l'enfant, CONAFE), and the Spanish organization Alianza por la Solidaridad, were able to quickly set up the *AarXaleyi* (Let's Protect Children) campaign to protect children against health risks and violence. These measures were often accompanied by awareness-raising activities on radio and posters. Many CSOs used KoBo Toolbox to plan and monitor activities in the pandemic context.

CSOs generally provide goods and services without regard to race, gender, ethnic group, sexual orientation, or other factors. Membership associations often seek to provide goods and services to people other than their own members. Although some organizations try to cover their operating costs by charging for services, such efforts are challenging for Senegalese CSOs.

The government generally recognizes CSOs' contributions in service provision. Government ministers often attend CSOs' events. For example, the secretary of state for the promotion of human rights and good governance worked alongside CSOs on the national joint committee for the Open Governance Partnership, which promotes public-sector transparency. The country's president spoke with civil society representatives such as PFAnE and 3D about fighting the pandemic together, which resulted in CSOs' involvement in efforts to reduce the spread of the virus, promote preventative measures, and take part in the Force COVID-19 monitoring committee.

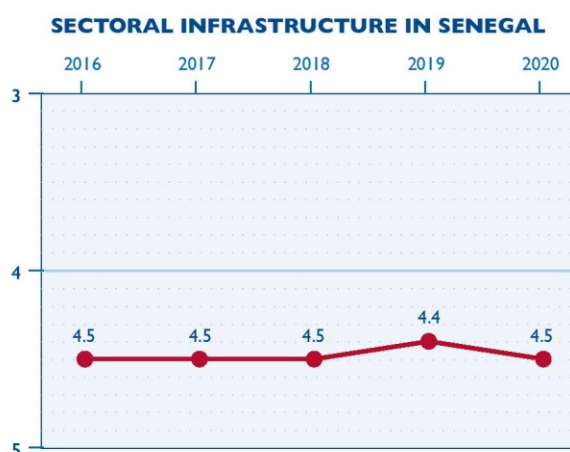
SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.5

The infrastructure supporting CSOs deteriorated slightly in 2020 because of the weak support offered by resource centers and other sources of infrastructural support.

The financial and technical support offered by resource centers decreased in 2020 because of pandemic restrictions. Many activities were canceled or reduced. For example, WEIGO cancelled 90 percent of planned activities and nearly 60 percent of its financial support to CSOs under its Dakar Focal City program, which provides technical and financial support to organizations working in trash recovery, artisanal workshops, and the informal sector.

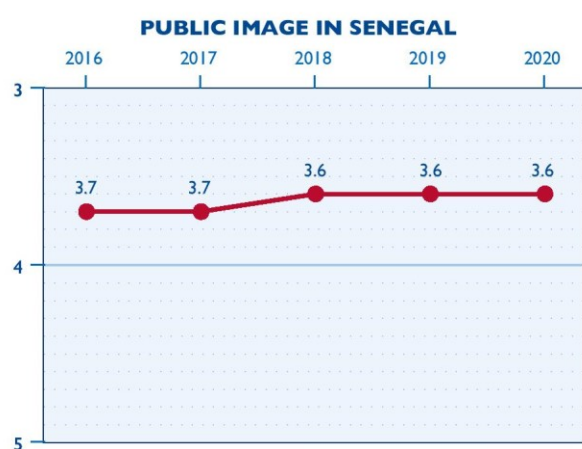
Existing networks and platforms, such as PFAnE, CONGAD, and other thematic networks, normally offer their members information and training and coordinate their activities. But in 2020, they had to cancel or cut back on such activities because of the pandemic. For example, when local elections were delayed because of the pandemic, PFAnE had to cancel all CSO support activities, including training and education. At the same time, several new platforms emerged to offer pandemic-related services. For example, CSO members of the main umbrella organizations set up the Senegalese NGO Umbrella Organizations' Partnership Framework (CAPFONG), which aims to pool strategies and resources to support the state and HIV/AIDS populations affected by COVID-19. CAPFONG strengthened coordination among its member CSOs so that they could participate effectively in the pandemic response while ensuring their own sustainability. CAPFONG also developed an action plan with recommendations for post-COVID-19 Senegal, emphasizing that priorities are likely to change and new forms of organizations and new content in their community interventions are likely to emerge.

Support entities such as WEIGO, CECI, Quebec Entrepreneurs' School, and PFONGUE adapted to the pandemic mainly by introducing remote work arrangements and webinars. Many international CSOs' capacity-building and training activities for local CSOs moved to videoconference platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet. For example, CECI stopped its in-person activities and used Zoom to conduct training for women's CSOs and CSO networks.



The COVID-19 pandemic helped break down boundaries between sectors as multi-stakeholder projects expanded. National and international CSOs partnered with local CSOs to promote their involvement in the government's pandemic response and emergency funding mechanisms. For example, PFONGUE, through its Jokkale project, facilitated the efforts of working groups of international and domestic CSOs to conduct a collective analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in Senegal. The consultative process offered assessments to government, private-sector, and financial and technical partners on the impact of the pandemic on rural development and food security, essential services and urban and regional planning, employability and economic development, and social sectors, particularly vulnerable populations. The EU continued to build the capacity of networks and platforms to contribute to governance in such sectors as natural resource management, sustainable agricultural development, youth employment, and transparency and accountability in the framework of its Civil Society Support Program. The private sector cooperates with CSOs mostly through PFAnE, which is a cooperative framework for the private sector and civil society, including unions.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.6



The public image of CSOs did not change in 2020.

CSOs' activities benefited from good coverage and satisfactory treatment by the private media outlets in 2020. For example, all of the press conferences, press releases, marches, and demonstrations sponsored by advocacy organizations such as Ñoo Lank, FRAPP-France, Aar Li NuBokk, Fed Up, 3D, PFAnE, and RADDHO were covered by traditional and social media, whose coverage was generally objective. CSOs' activities are still poorly covered or not covered at all by public media, especially national television and radio.

The public generally has a positive opinion of CSOs. Beneficiaries often commend CSOs for their work in improving community living conditions and advocating for the social and economic well-being of vulnerable groups.

The public also appreciates the work of CSOs in defending their rights. Although in the early stage of the pandemic CSOs were not very visible as they reoriented their activities and negotiated with donors to reallocate funds, they were eventually seen as playing a significant role in the pandemic response and augmenting the central government's strategy to stop the spread of COVID-19.

The government generally has a favorable opinion of CSOs. Civil society's positive involvement in implementing the government's community COVID-19 prevention strategy strengthened this perception. For example, on multiple occasions the minister of health invited all CSO to be involved in fighting the pandemic at the national, regional, and departmental levels.

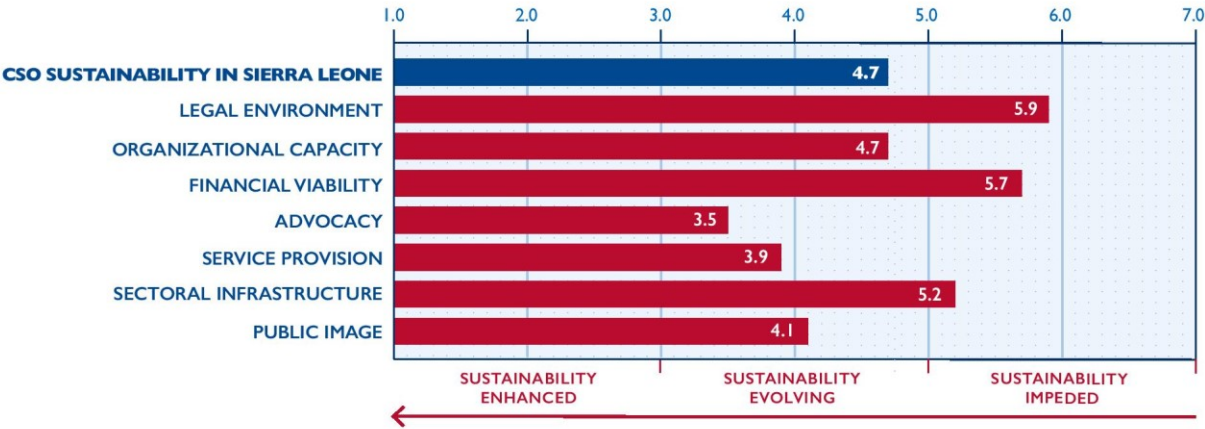
Given pandemic restrictions, CSOs had to find other ways to spread their messages in 2020. Many organizations relied on videoconferencing, telecommuting, social networks, and the distribution of brochures. CSOs such as PFAnE, COSCE, and 3D conducted a media campaign through diverse traditional, social, and community media with support from USAID. Under the program, CSOs produced and broadcast shows on preventing the virus and fighting discrimination. Some organizations were helped in this effort by their strong relationships with community leaders, neighborhood representatives, market managers, and transportation collective managers, who helped spread the message about COVID-19 prevention measures. Public feedback allowed CSOs to make improvements in their communications strategies about COVID-19 and successfully promote community acceptance of restrictions aimed at preventing the spread of the virus.

Senegalese CSOs still lack a self-regulatory mechanism. A draft CSO charter initiated by national CSOs in 2018 is still in the idea stage and thus has yet to help promote the sector's credibility and sustainability. CSOs' narrative and financial reports are mostly intended for financial partners, and publications about their work for public consumption are few.

SIERRA LEONE

Capital: Freetown
Population: 6,807,277
GDP per capita (PPP): \$1,718
Human Development Index: Low (0.452)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (65/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.7



On March 31, 2020, Sierra Leone announced its first case of COVID-19. The government declared a state of public health emergency, imposed mandatory quarantine measures for passengers arriving from abroad, and set up a country-wide rapid response system based on lessons learned during the Ebola epidemic. These measures effectively slowed the progress of the disease, but the fight was not without challenges. For example, quarantine facilities were unkempt and lacked food, and health-care workers were not regularly paid.

Political and social tensions were exacerbated by the health emergency. CSOs monitoring the situation recorded incidents of abuse by security personnel of people who violated lockdown restrictions. A riot at the Pademba Road Correctional facility in May left eleven people dead and scores injured. Several people were killed or wounded, and a police station was set on fire during a riot at Tombo, a fishing village in the Western Rural District, protesting limits on the number of boats allowed to fish during the pandemic. In July in Makeni, Northern Province, protests over the relocation of a generator owned by the national electricity agency escalated into violence, with youths vandalizing property and security forces killing more than five people. On social media, frequent hate messages incited unrest. Several journalists and CSO activists were arrested after demanding accountability from government officials.

The Commission of Inquiry investigating the activities of the previous administration completed its work and submitted a report of its findings to the president in 2020. Among the commission’s key recommendations was that any wealth wrongfully accumulated by former government officials, including the former president, be confiscated and the involved individuals be banned from public office. The report caused a huge stir. Tensions were further inflamed when the Anti-Corruption Commission invited the former president to respond to charges stemming from the commission’s report. At the end of the year, the investigation was still underway.

Sierra Leone’s economy was badly hit in 2020 by hikes in the prices of basic commodities. A cash shortage in December added further strains. The same month, however, Sierra Leone successfully passed the U.S. Millennium Challenge Cooperation (MCC) scorecard, including the indicator on controlling corruption. This milestone established the country’s eligibility to sign a MCC compact and tap into the multi-million-dollar grant program to develop sectors dragging on economic growth.

Overall CSO sustainability was stable in 2020. Advocacy improved moderately as CSOs achieved successes in several campaigns related to the pandemic and human rights. CSOs’ public image was boosted slightly by positive media coverage of their involvement in the pandemic response, governance, and development. At the same time, the legal environment was moderately weakened by the government’s implementation of the new Development Cooperation Framework (DCF) and use of the state of public health emergency to impose restrictions on CSOs.

The sector's lack of resilience to withstand the dual pressures of the DCF and the pandemic caused organizational capacity to deteriorate slightly. CSOs' financial viability, service provision, and sectoral infrastructure did not change.

Available data on registered CSOs remained inconsistent and fragmented in 2020. The Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MOPED) reported 305 registered domestic and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), while the Sierra Leone Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (SLANGO) reported 249 registered domestic and international NGOs, a separate legal category. The Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) lists all entities registered with it as companies limited by guarantee and does not disaggregate data on CSOs. The Ministry of Social Welfare, other ministries, and local councils also register CSOs but do not release data on their numbers. An unknown number of unregistered organizations operate freely but do not have legal status and may not interact formally with other entities.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.9



In continuation of a four-year decline, the legal environment for CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020 with the implementation of the DCF and restrictions imposed under the state of public health emergency.

The laws governing CSO registration are unfavorable and contradictory. Most CSOs register with the CAC, since its requirements are fairly simple. Some CSOs register through a more cumbersome process with MOPED, because it gives them NGO status, which establishes eligibility for tax waivers. To receive tax benefits, NGOs must also register with SLANGO, the umbrella organization overseeing the activities of local and international organizations. CSOs must also register with all government agencies with which they will work and local councils in each of their geographic areas of

operations. Under the DCF, all CSOs must re-register annually and sign service-level agreements with line ministries.

CSOs registered under the CAC are required by law to update their information when necessary and file annual activity reports, but few bother to do so. This and other compliance shortfalls can be problematic for CSOs, since donors normally check with the CAC about the status of organizations that have applied for funds. In addition, the CAC's information about CSOs is often incomplete.

The DCF was introduced in 2019 to replace the NGO Policy and is widely seen as more draconian. Its implementation in 2020 presented CSOs with a number of challenges. For one thing, registration requirements for startups grew more cumbersome. New organizations must have four paid employees, which is difficult when they have no projects, and they must also have readily identifiable offices, which poses risks for human rights defenders by making them more easily targeted. The DCF requires CSOs to align their work with government priorities, even if those priorities fail to address local concerns. This requirement positions CSOs to serve as implementing partners for the government, although they often have their own programmatic goals and obtain their own funds from external donors. The DCF also limits CSOs to working in no more than two sectors, which many CSO leaders believe is meant to hinder their operations.

The imposition of a state of public health emergency in March 2020 created new opportunities for the government to limit civic freedoms. Some CSOs were unable to accomplish planned activities because of limitations on movement, which were reported to be enforced arbitrarily. For example, Rainbow Initiative was unable to travel to Bo, Kenema, and Kailahun districts to provide psycho-social support to victims of sexual violence and gender-based violence (GBV). The Budget Advocacy Network (BAN) was also denied permission to travel, with the result that it did little work on local budgeting processes during the year.

Government intimidation of CSOs was common in 2020. After the Institute for Governance Reform (IGR) and Center for Accountability and Rule of Law (CARL) released the results of two public polls showing that the parliament was seen as one of the most corrupt institutions in Sierra Leone, members of parliament pressured them to withdraw the reports and issue apologies. For the first time ever, CSOs working on accountability and governance were given a stern warning in an open press conference in the parliament. Other instances of intimidation included threats against four human rights defenders and journalists, who had to leave the country to protect their safety; the assault of a journalist in Kenema District, who was investigating military excesses during the lockdown; and an attack on another journalist in Freetown, who was harassed and arrested when he reported on alleged financial misdeeds by the chief minister. Part 5 of the draconian Public Order Act (POA) of 1965, which criminalized free speech and limited freedom of expression, was also used to clamp down on dissent, as when a prominent activist was arrested after criticizing the government for the rising price of fuel, and other activists were detained after joining students of Limkokwing University in protesting the government’s failure to honor their scholarships. Domestic and international communities welcomed the repeal of Part 5 of POA in July. The Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) applauded the repeal, pointing out that it allowed Sierra Leone to join “the enviable community of progressive nations where free and responsible speech is guaranteed and protected by law.”

NGOs may apply for tax waivers on import duties, which are awarded at the discretion of government agencies and do not go to organizations that are critical of the government. Otherwise, CSOs do not receive tax exemptions.

CSOs may compete for government funding, but the bulk of organizations do not do so since they wish to maintain their credibility in holding the government to account. CSOs are allowed to fundraise locally, but few have the skills and influence to do so. CSOs may accept foreign funding.

CSOs have access to legal services from distinguished human rights organizations and activists. However, these services are generally available only in the western part of the country near Freetown. AdvocAid continued to provide assistance to CSOs in conflict with the law in 2020. Several prominent activists also provided legal assistance to colleagues and CSOs, mostly on a pro bono basis.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.7

CSOs’ organizational capacity deteriorated slightly in 2020, as organizations began to cease operating because they were unable to withstand challenges imposed by the DCF and the pandemic. The DCF imposed new restrictions on CSOs, such as the need to align their work with government priorities and work in no more than two sectors. Four members of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in Sierra Leone closed because they could not meet the strenuous operational demands of the DCF, including yearly renewal of their registration with line ministries and local councils and submission of their programs to the line ministries. The gap between strong and struggling organizations widened as CSOs had to rely on their own resources to survive and had little access to institutional and project support. Established organizations were able to switch to performing pandemic-related outreach and sensitization activities, and CSOs working on accountability mobilized to ensure that pandemic funds were used appropriately. However, organizations whose work did not fit into the pandemic context were at a disadvantage. Restrictions on movement also constricted CSOs’ operations, as many organizations were unable to acquire passes to move across district lines.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN SIERRA LEONE



CSOs’ main strength in 2020 continued to be their ability to build networks and constituencies. CSOs work closely with local communities and understand their sometimes unique priorities. Moreover, donors often demand evidence of beneficiaries’ participation in projects, because it adds credibility to CSOs’ work. In 2020, for example,

WANEP developed relationships with constituents ranging from women and youth to riders of motorbikes and tricycles (a common form of transportation in Sierra Leone), who were able to help with an early-warning and peace-building initiative in communities around the country. But there were signs in 2020 that the DCF's requirement that organizations align their work with government priorities was beginning to affect CSOs' relationships with constituencies. CSOs sometimes found it difficult to find the right balance between consulting with their communities in developing projects and aligning their activities with the government's agenda, especially in the case of advocacy interventions.

Other than a few established organizations, such as BAN, Focus1000, and the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Network (WASH-Net)—Sierra Leone, most CSOs do not have defined missions and strategic plans. In 2020, National Election Watch (NEW) received a grant from the European Union (EU) to mobilize its membership, strengthen its internal capacity, and develop a strategic plan in anticipation of elections in 2022. But the pandemic disrupted whatever plans most CSOs had and prompted organizations to adjust their activities and sometimes work well beyond their mission areas. For example, the advocacy organizations Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), Network Movement for Justice and Development, and 50/50 Group distributed food and hygienic materials and raised awareness about the measures to avert the spread of the virus. Most donors were flexible and allowed CSOs to revise existing projects to take on pandemic-related activities.

Newer CSOs usually lack defined management structures and instead are led by a single individual who doubles as founder and executive officer. Many such organizations began to fold in 2020, since they lacked the structures, capacity, and funding to survive in the unfavorable context of the pandemic. For example, several WASH-Net members closed down in 2020. CARL and Rainbow Initiative are among the few CSOs with functioning internal structures, including board members with term limits who contribute expertise and energy to their organizations. But observers of the CSO sector estimate that in more than half of organizations with boards, individuals are elected to the boards who have no idea about their organizations' specific areas of work and even expect to receive benefits.

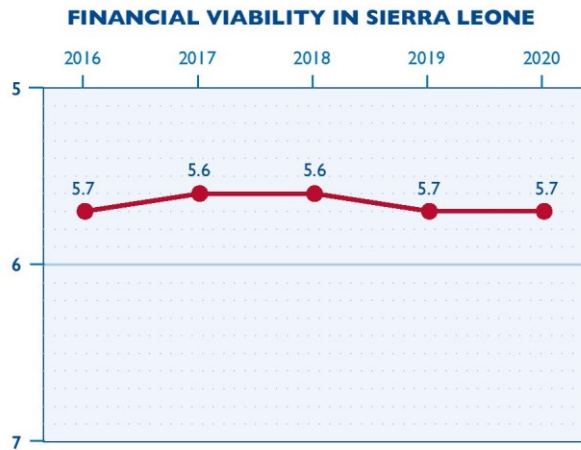
Human resources are inadequate at many CSOs. Professional expertise is limited in the CSO sector, since most organizations cannot afford to remunerate trained professionals. CSOs tend to hire inexperienced graduates who are looking for exposure and experience. In 2020, many organizations had redundant staff members because of their lack of funding. WANEP laid off some staff because it could not pay their salaries, but several employees volunteered to support WANEP's work and were paid monthly stipends. CGG also let some employees and volunteers go because it could not afford to keep them.

As a result of pandemic-related restrictions, CSOs were forced to adapt to the new norm of working virtually, mostly through social media. CSOs with sufficient capacity continued to meet and cooperate with partners and funders online. But the majority of CSOs were unable to do this because they lacked the resources to purchase needed equipment, and their employees were often unskilled at using programs such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom. For example, NEW's staff tried to work virtually from home during the lockdown but found it difficult because they were unfamiliar with the main social media platforms. NEW eventually bought laptops for its district and regional coordinators and provided them with training so that its operations could continue. All CSOs working online lacked guarantees that their virtual work was secure. Hackers sometimes accessed CSOs' systems and demanded ransom, as notably happened to WASH-Net in 2020.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.7

CSOs' financial viability was relatively stable in 2020.

CSOs continued to depend on support from international donors, some of whom cut their funding levels significantly in 2020. For example, the United Kingdom (UK), which was one of Sierra Leone's foremost bilateral donors, announced a significant cut in its international aid budget in 2020, causing major concern among CSOs. Among projects funded in 2020, the EU supported a consortium of local and international CSOs led by the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development under its Boosting Agricultural and Food Security program. The EU also launched a new EUR 800,000 (approximately \$900,000) program on electoral reform and preparedness. The UK funded a consortium of CSOs assisting women with legal problems. Many donors, including the United Nations (UN) Development Programme, Open Society Initiative of West Africa (OSIWA), and World Bank, funded projects that were exclusively focused on the pandemic, while other partners, such as the UN Democracy Fund,



modified existing projects to incorporate CSOs into the pandemic response. Donors rarely fund individual CSOs but instead prefer to fund consortia led by international partners and offering diversified experience and expertise. This approach is disadvantageous for local CSOs, since they mainly serve as implementing partners for international CSOs and have little control over the funds.

CSOs do not have the capacity to map funding sources, and many organizations are unable to design projects that are marketable to donors. Only a few CSOs with long track records and recognized credibility and expertise have diversified funding sources. Rainbow Initiative, for example, receives funding from more than ten donors for its services to victims of sexual violence and GBV.

The government does not usually provide grants or contracts to CSOs other than organizations that it regards as serving its interests, which often overlap with the interests of the party in power. Funding from foreign donors such as the EU and World Bank is often channeled through government agencies for programs that align with government priorities in areas such as education, health care, and youth employment. In 2020, IGR obtained a government contract to conduct a public expenditure tracking survey, but few other CSOs received government funding. The government did not provide funding to CSOs for pandemic-related activities in 2020.

A few enterprising CSOs in Sierra Leone raise funds from local sources, but they found this work difficult in 2020 because of the pandemic. For example, the Sick Pikin project and Breast Cancer Foundation, which usually organize annual fundraising events such as marathons and street donations, could not do so in 2020 because of restrictions on travel and face-to-face meetings. CSOs increasingly target wealthy financiers and influential citizens for support, but these efforts are mostly one-off and unsustainable. Some CSOs earn income from members' contributions or the sale of products through Facebook or WhatsApp, but income from such sources is minimal. CSOs are not engaged in social enterprises. Importantly, CSOs themselves do not understand the concept of nonprofit organizations and can perceive organizations that engage in business ventures as for-profit entities.

Financial management continued to be a difficult area for most CSOs in 2020. Most organizations adhere to basic standards of financial management, including keeping records of financial transactions and submitting financial reports to funders. But CSOs found it more difficult to retain financial professionals in 2020 during gaps between funded projects. Donors do not usually cover administrative costs such as annual audits, although they require audits for continuing partnerships.

ADVOCACY: 3.5

The bulk of registered CSOs in Sierra Leone engage in advocacy, and their work improved moderately in 2020 as they expanded into pandemic-related efforts and achieved critical victories in human rights and civic participation. One of CSOs' most important advocacy successes during the year was the lifting of a ban on pregnant girls' enrollment in school thanks to a five-year campaign by Purposeful and other girl-focused organizations. The outcome was viewed as a victory for human rights activists.

CSOs sought to ensure that quality assurance and accountability mechanisms were part of the government's pandemic response. A growing desire for accountability in the use of pandemic-related resources coalesced into a nationwide effort involving a number of



CSOs and citizens' groups. Various organizations issued reports, perception surveys, and press releases and mounted real-time campaigns to ensure that resources were properly administered. For example, on May 20, 2020, thirteen CSOs, including BAN, CARL, CGG, and WASH-Net, issued a press statement criticizing the proposed regulation of the Corona Virus Disease Emergency Fund under Constitutional Instrument No. 10 of 2020. The draft law suspended all accountability mechanisms governing the management of public resources in the pandemic response. CSOs condemned the move by government to suspend accountability and auditing regulations and successfully lobbied the parliament to annul the instrument.

With social media use at its peak during the pandemic, fake news and hate speech proliferated quickly. Initiatives for Media Development (IMDEV) and other organizations developed the Sierra Leone Fact Checker Tool to verify and disseminate accurate information. The tool was useful in fighting disinformation about the virus and reducing political tensions causing insecurity. SLAJ also tackled fake news about the pandemic with regular media programs and videos featuring prominent personalities denouncing misinformation. CGG mounted a No To Hate Speech campaign, which called on the public to tone down inflammatory and violent language.

In another significant achievement, the government launched the first-ever Government-CSO Dialogue Series on October 30, 2020. The meetings are intended to address advocacy concerns raised by civil society in a bid to strengthen the country's democratic values. The first dialogue was officially launched by the president and focused on the pandemic response, particularly gender inclusivity, accountability mechanisms, and ways to strengthen the health-care system. The vice president is responsible for ensuring continuation of the dialogue series and follow up.

CSOs and the government cooperated on a number of policy initiatives in 2020, including a policy to decentralize governance to the local level. CGG and other partners worked closely with the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs on passage of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, which was enacted by the president in December 2020. Thanks to effective lobbying by the National Advocacy Coalition on Extractives and other CSOs, the government agreed to review the Mines and Minerals Act. After the government suspended the Public Financial Management Act and National Public Procurement Act, claiming that they hindered a swift response to the pandemic, BAN, CARL, and other organizations criticized the move, calling it a ploy to evade accountability and encourage corruption. The suspension of these two laws was subsequently revoked.

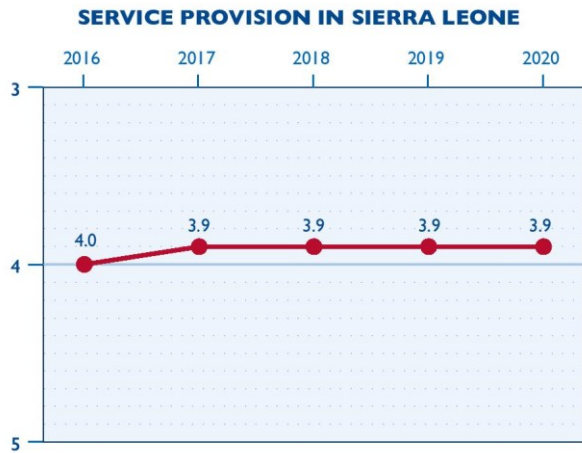
In 2020, the parliament passed a code of marketing for breast milk championed by Focus 1000. The Asmaa James Foundation and Purposeful continued their Black Tuesday movement to bring attention to the prevalence of rape during the pandemic and, with LAWYERS and other organizations, successfully lobbied the president to amend the Sexual Offenses Act to provide stronger protections against sexual violence. CSOs such as Green Scenery persuaded the government to drop its controversial legal case against the Malen Land Owners Association, which had confronted the Socfin Agricultural Company about environmental hazards and rights violations.

The Society for Democratic Initiative, Amnesty International, and other organizations worked with the Ministry of Development and the Office of the Chief Minister in 2020 to review the DCF so that it can provide a more open atmosphere for CSOs' operations. CGG and other CSOs also engaged with the CAC and ministries of planning and local government to harmonize registration requirements.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.9

Service provision was stable in 2020. CSOs engaged actively in the fight against COVID-19 by conducting community sensitization and awareness raising activities and distributing food and hygienic materials. For example, the National Covid-19 Response Center engaged CSOs at the district and national levels to distribute hand-washing supplies and food items in the communities in which they operate. Some organizations incorporated COVID-19 response component into their existing projects. ActionAid Sierra Leone, CGG, and the Center for the Coordination of Youth Activities, for example, focused on the delivery of gender-responsive services under the Improved Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery project funded by the EU. Human rights defenders documented the effect of pandemic restriction on citizens' basic human rights. Many CSOs engaged in efforts to fight the pandemic using their own resources, with little or no direct support.

Most communities implicitly trust the work of CSOs, as is evident in their demands for CSOs to make informed contributions to government policies and programs. In 2020, CSOs were among the earliest responders to the pandemic, in some instances tweaking existing projects to incorporate pandemic-related activities such as the



installation of hand-washing facilities in public spaces. Acting on key lessons from the Ebola epidemic, when more than 14,000 teenage girls became pregnant, according to the UN Population Fund, organizations such as Rainbow Initiative and Purposeful redoubled their efforts to protect girls from sexual violence and teenage pregnancy during the pandemic.

A few CSOs, such as NEW, CARL, Institute for Governance Reform, and Campaign for Human Rights and Development International, regularly publish reports, press releases, newsletters, and policy briefs and distribute them via email and social media, including WhatsApp and Facebook. CSOs generally work pro bono, especially in rural communities, and do not seek to recover the costs of the services that they provide.

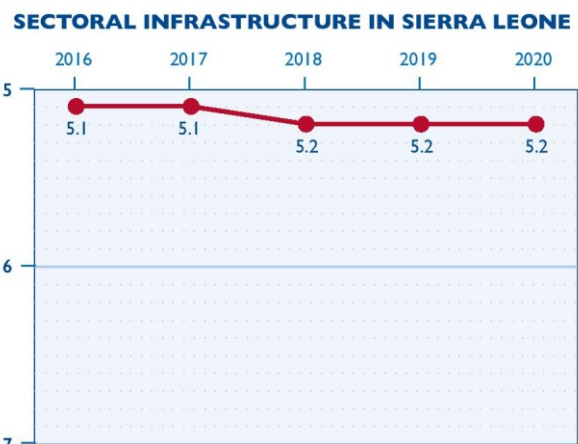
The government recognizes the contributions of CSOs to the country’s development and values their expertise. For example, CGG laid the foundation for Sierra Leone to pass the MCC scorecard, and SLAJ contributed to the annulment of the law criminalizing libel.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.2

The infrastructure supporting Sierra Leone’s CSO sector did not change in 2020.

CSO resource centers are limited to non-existent. Some individual organizations have written materials on specific areas of interventions in their offices that other CSOs can use. In 2020, because of the pandemic, CSOs mostly resorted to using free materials that they found online.

Several international CSOs, including Save the Children, Catholic Relief Services, Christian Aid, and Trócaire, receive donor funds to redistribute as grants to local CSOs. In 2020, funding of this sort was retargeted to fight COVID-19. OSIWA’s office in Sierra Leone, which used to engage in grantmaking only in Sierra Leone, has been expanded into a regional office serving Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea.



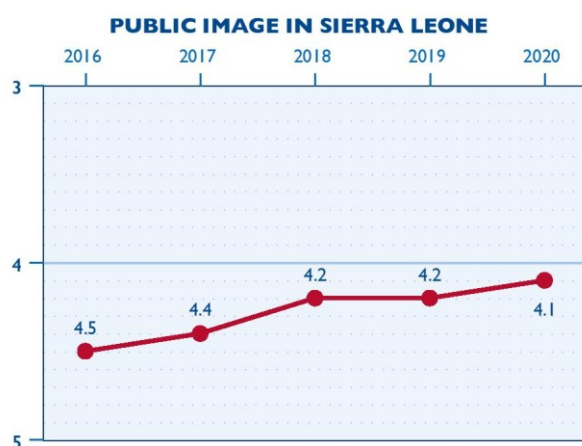
CSO consortia and networks continued to engage with their members in 2020. Most network training and meetings went virtual, although their members were not always technologically savvy, especially in using applications for virtual meetings. NEW trained its members on online technologies and distributed laptops and internet equipment to district and regional coordinators. BAN offered its partners in the Public Financial Management consortium virtual training on financial management and budget tracking. Rainbow Initiative conducted online training on the care of the victims of rape and GBV for members of its community of practice. WASH-Net, Health Alert, and BAN collaborated to train their network members on accountability in public health care. No single organization serves as the public mouthpiece for CSOs. SLANGOs’ role has not changed under the DCF, and CSOs do not view it as representing the sector.

Otherwise, training and technical support were limited in 2020. As most training went online, it became inaccessible to the majority of CSOs. Some CSO leaders took part in training on the open platform Coursera, which was hosted by the government’s Directorate of Innovation and Technology. With funding from the EU and Trócaire, local partners organized an online workshop on lessons learned locally in developing humanitarian responses to disasters such as the pandemic. Despite these opportunities, many CSOs did not benefit from

targeted training in 2020. In particular, women's groups felt marginalized, prompting the Women's Forum to call for more capacity building for its sub-sector.

CSOs' partnerships with the government and businesses in 2020 focused mostly on combating the COVID-19 pandemic. Both the government and the private sector relied on CSOs and their structures to reach out to citizens and communities. CSOs and the media view themselves as partners and have a close relationship. For example, print and electronic media, including AYV Television, Radio Democracy 98.1, and Awoko newspaper, invite CSOs to take part in public discussions about national issues, where they can confirm their support to their communities.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.1



CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020 as the media highlighted their contribution to the country's governance, development, and pandemic response. As a result of the coverage, the public increasingly demanded CSOs' involvement in issues of national security and human rights.

The relationship between CSOs and print, broadcast, and online media continued to be mutually beneficial in 2020. For example, the successful campaign by the Asmaa James Foundation and Purposeful to strengthen the Sexual Offences Act was positively covered by a range of news outlets, including Radio Democracy, AYV Television, and forums on Facebook and WhatsApp. At the same time, some media outlets that have been bought by influential citizens and politicians are critical of

CSOs and believe that they do not work in their interests. As social media use soared during the year, it was sometime misused to attack CSO activists.

The public generally sees CSOs as being on its side and trusts the sector to provide impartial, non-partisan views, support constructive policy reforms, and hold the government to account. Although partisan supporters seek to influence public opinion, the public distinguishes easily between well-meaning CSOs and those used by individuals or political parties to further sectarian interests. In 2020, there was widespread public approval of CSOs' work to prevent the government from suspending accounting and auditing regulations in its spending on the pandemic. The public also demanded that CSOs take part in pandemic-focused social mobilization and awareness raising and pushed for CSOs to be included in government decision making at both the district and national levels.

The government's view of CSO is mixed. The authorities can be easily offended when CSOs demand accountability or ask questions about national issues, and some government officials continued to perceive CSOs as a form of opposition in 2020. For example, members of parliament were upset after IGR and CARL released their perception survey reports showing that the parliament was seen as one of the most corrupt institutions in the country. They called CSOs unpleasant characters and summoned them to hearings to pressure them to back down. At the same time, public institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission praised the reports as justifying their efforts to improve the country's governance and development.

Business views of CSOs remained mixed in 2020. In some quarters, the private sector acknowledges the contributions of CSOs working on issues that others avoid, such as the Native Consortium and Research Center's effort to ensure stability in fuel prices and pressure mobile telephone companies to lower their tariffs. Businesses can be critical of CSOs focused on workers' welfare, price increases, and service delivery, since such work potentially threatens their bottom lines.

CSOs engaged with both traditional and online media to promote their activities and hone their public image in 2020. CSOs made greater use of social media than ever before and hosted live discussions and webinars on critical issues. For example, NEW used an online platform to broadcast the launch of its new EU-funded internal capacity-building project, and CGG hosted webinars on governance and peace. CSOs also publicized their activities in other

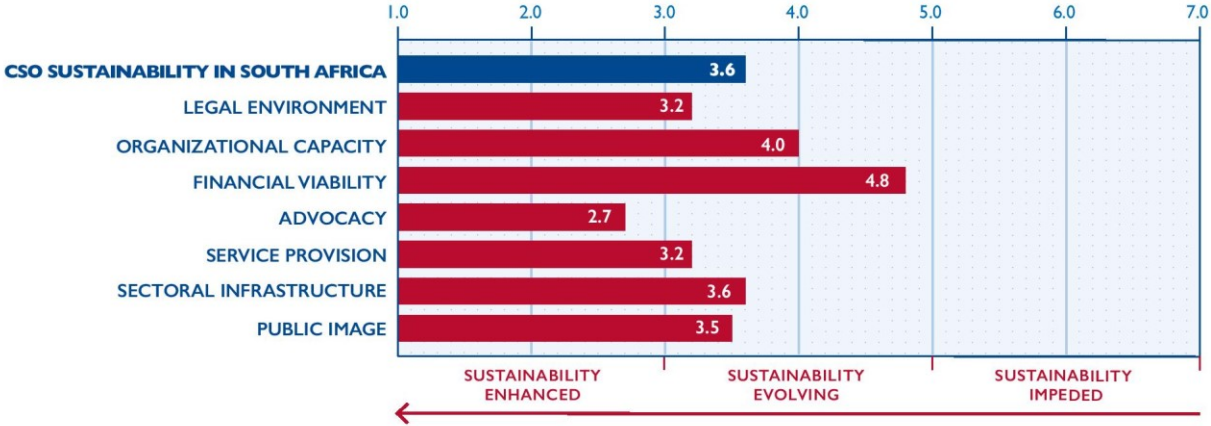
innovative ways. For example, most of the hand-washing stations distributed by CSOs were branded with their logos and key messages. Most CSOs post real-time information about their activities on Facebook, but many do not update their websites regularly, which limits international access to accurate information about their organizations.

The majority of CSOs in Sierra Leone do not produce or publish annual reports. A few organizations and coalitions, such as NEW and the National Civil Society Forum, have codes of conduct, each of which are signed by several hundred members.

SOUTH AFRICA

Capital: Cape Town, Pretoria, and Bloemfontein
Population: 56,978,635
GDP per capita (PPP): \$12,482
Human Development Index: High (0.709)
Freedom in the World: Free (79/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 3.6



On March 15, 2020, after the first cases of the COVID-19 virus were reported in South Africa, the government declared a state of national disaster and, twelve days later, instituted a hard lockdown. Non-essential travel was curtailed, schools were closed, gatherings were restricted, and social distancing and hygienic measure were promoted to prevent the spread of the disease. The government also deployed more than 28,000 community health workers to conduct door-to-door visits in high-risk communities, according to the Department of Health. Both the public and private health-care systems delivered urgently needed services but were stretched to their limits, especially after private hospitals opened beds to patients without private medical insurance. A number of businesses assisted by manufacturing ventilators or donating personal protective equipment (PPE). Access to education was a major concern as South African school children lost 40 percent of classroom days during the lockdown, the 2020 Trialogue Business Handbook reported. With only 10 percent of households having access to fixed broadband internet providers, according to Project Isizwe, few pupils could learn online at home. Efforts to offset this digital gap included television and radio educational channels and e-school platforms supported by telecommunications companies.

The pandemic was a significant setback for the country's economic and social development. The World Bank estimates that the South African economy contracted by 7 percent in 2020 and that an additional 2 million people were pushed under the poverty line. During the second half of the year, 2.2 million jobs were lost, resulting in an unemployment rate of 43.1 percent. The economic impact of the pandemic is expected to be worse than that of the financial crisis of 2008–09. The lockdown had an especially devastating effect on households sustained by the informal sector, as well as the tourism and hospitality industries.

The pandemic also drastically increased food insecurity. The National Income Dynamics Study–Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey reported that the number of South African households without money for food increased from 21 percent in 2018 to 47 percent in April 2020. Contributing to the problem was the temporary closure of the National School Nutrition Program, which normally feeds 9 million children.

Faced with South Africa's growing economic insecurity, the government increased social security payments and other support to citizens in 2020. In April, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the appropriation of ZAR 500 billion (approximately \$28.8 billion) to assist with tax relief, wage support, and funding for small businesses and the cultural and creative industries. Additional allocations were made to child support recipients, pensioners, and the Social Relief Distress Grant program.

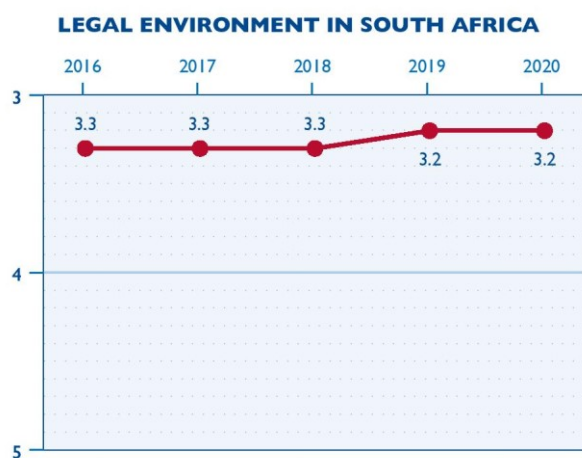
However, the government's pandemic response was criticized for overlooking the needs of refugees, asylum seekers, sex workers, and people with disabilities and for excluding the CSO sector. Fortunately, the pandemic

resulted in an extraordinary outpouring of public support for vulnerable populations, and many CSOs became involved in distributing food to families in need.

Although the overall sustainability of CSOs in South Africa was unchanged in 2020, several dimensions recorded change. Advocacy improved slightly as CSOs adapted to the pandemic environment to achieve several significant goals. The sectoral infrastructure was slightly stronger as local grantmaking increased and the new Solidarity Fund helped CSOs with pandemic-specific interventions. The sector's public image was boosted slightly by positive media coverage of CSOs' pandemic-related contributions. At the same time, CSOs' organizational capacity declined moderately because of staffing losses during the pandemic, and CSOs' financial viability deteriorated slightly because of the reorganization of international and government funding streams. CSOs' legal environment and service provision were unchanged.

South Africa continues to have a large and vibrant civil society. As of October 2020, nearly 230,000 CSOs were registered with the Nonprofit Organizations (NPO) Directorate in the Department of Social Development (DSD), up from 221,000 organizations in October 2019. As of March 2021, nearly 25,700 public benefit organizations (PBOs) were listed on the South African Revenue Service (SARS) website, representing an increase of just over 1,500 organizations since March 2020. The sector employs almost 1 million people, according to the 2020 Trialogue Business Handbook.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 3.2



The legal environment for CSOs in South Africa did not change in 2020. The 1997 NPO Act provides a stable legal framework for the sector. Most CSOs register as voluntary associations under the NPO Act or as nonprofit companies under the Companies Act. CSOs may register either online or at DSD offices at no cost. Registration usually takes about two months. In a somewhat more complex process, CSOs may also register as nonprofit trusts with the master of the Supreme Court under the Trust Property Control Act. The NPO Act requires registered organizations to submit audited financial reports to the NPO Directorate annually.

CSOs in South Africa normally operate freely, but they faced several restrictions under the pandemic lockdown

in 2020. Despite a 2018 Constitutional Court ruling affirming citizens' right to protest, the government imposed a ban on political gatherings that remained in effect throughout the year. Nevertheless, during the lockdown, an average of two protests took place daily to urge government action on issues such as lockdown regulations, gender-based violence (GBV), and poor service delivery. The policing of the protests was inconsistent, with police either remaining on the sidelines to observe activities or arresting protesters and using water cannons on peaceful demonstrations. In addition, early in the initial hard lockdown, DSD requested CSOs to work through its offices to distribute food parcels and other assistance. Many CSOs saw this as an effort to exert control, and the Democratic Alliance and 1000 Women Trust took DSD to court to ensure that soup kitchens and other interventions could continue to provide food services. The case was decided in the CSOs' favor in June 2020, thus allowing them to re-assume control of the distribution process. Finally, restrictions on movement prevented many CSO from operating if they did not deliver essential services. The South African National Defence Force was deployed to ensure that South Africans adhered to lockdown restrictions, including curfews and limits on travel. In March 2020, newly published regulations criminalized the production and dissemination of misinformation about COVID-19. Civil society cautioned that overly broad or unclear restrictive laws should not limit freedom of expression and other rights and proposed rewording the new regulations to prevent their abuse.

There was no follow up to DSD's draft amendments to reform the NPO Act in 2020. The proposed amendments would, among other things, simplify the registration process for CSOs, make registration with DSD compulsory to reduce the possibility of financing of terrorist activities, and introduce a regulatory body to oversee the sector.

Although CSOs may register with SARS for refunds of value-added tax paid on goods and services, many CSOs report that they struggle to get the refunds. CSOs registered as PBOs receive preferential tax treatment and are allowed to accept tax-deductible donations if the donations are used for specified public benefit activities. PBOs must submit annual financial reports to SARS to maintain their tax-exempt status. Individuals donating to PBOs may apply for tax deductions on a percentage of their donations.

CSOs are allowed to accept funds from foreign donors except for entities and persons identified in the United National Security Council resolutions as engaged in money laundering and terrorist activities. CSO may engage in income-generating activities as long as they are in line with their main operating objectives.

CSO have access to a range of legal services. The Legal Resources Center (LRC) remains a major source of help to CSOs seeking to comply with legal and administrative requirements, although in recent years the center has shifted its focus to the educational and land sectors. Several corporate law firms provide free legal services to CSOs. Lawyers Against Abuse, the DG Murray Trust, National Organization of Democratic Lawyers, South African Society for Labor Law, ProBono.org.za, and TrustLaw offer CSOs legal support and information about registration and compliance. CSOs sometimes report that pro bono legal services are unreliable or slow.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.0

The organizational capacity of CSOs declined moderately in 2020, as the pandemic forced organizations to decrease their activities and reduce staff.

CSOs typically have strong relationships with their constituencies. During the lockdown in 2020, CSOs were able to maintain and build these relationships provided they had access to the internet. The Networking HIV and AIDS Community of Southern Africa (NACOSA), for example, moved a number of its training programs and conferences online. The Cape of Good Hope Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals used email to solicit donations from past supporters, and the Seriti Institute increased the frequency of its newsletters and replaced its annual conference with a virtual event. An advisory board known as the Community Constituency COVID-19 Front was formed to enhance networking among CSOs, provide information, and promote collaborative efforts to better address community needs.

A Trialogue survey on the COVID-19 response showed that approximately 38 percent of CSOs had to adjust their interventions to accommodate the pandemic in 2020. For example, Afrika Tikkun normally works on youth empowerment but refocused its work to include awareness-raising about the pandemic in the communities in which it operates. About 25 percent of respondents reported a decrease in the overall volume of their activities. Larger organizations, such as the Open Society Foundation for South Africa, held strategic planning sessions to plan their path forward in the changed circumstances.

All CSO board members serve on a voluntary basis. Some CSOs report that their board members are willing to serve but lack experience with CSOs and do not contribute consistently to organizational oversight. Many organizations find that identifying board members who have expertise in relevant areas and are not related to other board members is a difficult task.

Staffing has been a major concern at many CSOs for several years and, in 2020, was compounded by the pandemic. A July 2020 survey by Nation Builder showed that 61 percent of CSOs decreased their staff in 2020, mainly because of reduced funding. On the other hand, 25 percent of organizations increased their staff in response to a rise in demand for their services. Staff training was also a challenge, especially as most donors restrict the amount of funding that can be used for this purpose. Many businesses supply employee volunteers to CSOs, especially on Mandela Day on July 18. CSOs sometimes report that these external volunteers impede their service delivery, especially in areas demanding confidentiality, such as GBV and HIV counselling and testing. Although 77 percent of

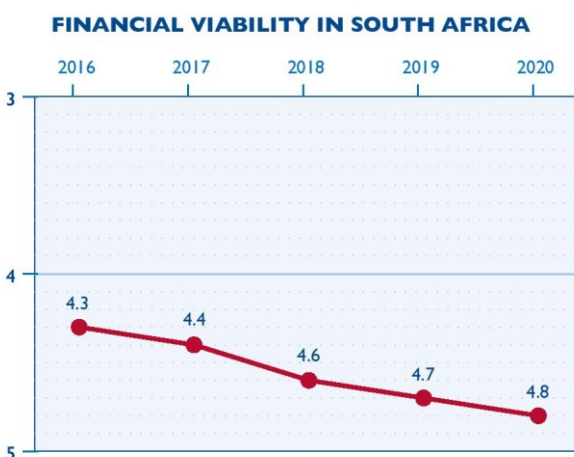
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN SOUTH AFRICA



companies have employee volunteer programs, only 18 percent of CSOs have budgets and plans to manage volunteers at their organizations, according to the 2020 Trialogue Business Handbook.

The pandemic highlighted the technological inequality between well- and under-resourced CSOs. Larger organizations could adapt easily to lockdown restrictions, as staff usually had access to technology and data from home. Smaller CSOs tend to lack technological infrastructure and thus found it difficult to move their operations online. In addition, many CSO employees are still unskilled at using software data storage facilities and performing other computer-based tasks. Afrobarometer reports that all employees in peri-urban and rural areas struggled more than employees in urban areas to work from home. Many CSOs reported that the lockdown and working from home had a negative effect on the mental health of staff, who often lack sufficient psychosocial support.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 4.8



CSOs' financial viability declined for the fourth year in a row in 2020, largely because of the redirection of funding and South Africa's general decline in prosperity.

According to the 2020 Trialogue Business in Society Handbook, nearly 72 percent of CSOs reported a decrease in income in 2020, in contrast to 33 percent in 2019. One-third of CSOs had no cash reserves, and 34 percent had less than six months' operating costs in reserve. While no official statistics are available, up to 25 percent of CSOs are estimated to have closed in 2020 or to be planning to close in early 2021. One of the biggest CSOs, World Vision SA, had to close its one of its offices, located in Greytown, when its funding from World Vision Canada was cancelled.

Foreign funding for CSOs decreased in 2020, continuing a trend of previous years. For example, the overall budget of UK Aid for South Africa decreased from GBP 13.7 million (approximately \$17.8 million) in 2019–20 to GBP 12.4 million (approximately \$15.4 million) in 2020–21. USAID funding for South Africa decreased from \$392 million in 2019 to \$263 million in 2020. Some foreign funding was allocated for the pandemic response. The Charities Aid Foundation Southern Africa established an emergency fund for CSOs struggling to survive under the lockdown and provided emergency funding to small CSOs delivering food to vulnerable groups, with funding from the Oppenheimer Generations Foundation. Partners such as Anova Health Institute, BroadReach Corporation, and Right to Care received \$535 million for HIV/AIDS response from the United States, including for the distribution of PPE and to ensure the continuation of treatment during the pandemic.

Businesses increased their corporate social investment (CSI) in CSOs by 4.9 percent to ZAR 10.7 billion (approximately \$616 million) in 2020, with the mining and resources sector contributing the largest amount, according to the 2020 Trialogue Business Handbook. As in 2019, approximately 50 percent of CSI support went to education and 15 percent to social and community development. Corporate giving to CSOs working in health care increased, mainly so that they could respond to the pandemic. Corporate entities also made a number of non-cash contributions to CSOs. For example, businesses reported that up to 16 percent of their CSI expenditures were in the form of volunteer time, services, and products. However, some CSOs reported that certain donated goods, such as expired food, could not be used.

While government spending on social and community development increased because of the pandemic, overall government funding for CSOs decreased in 2020. More than 60 percent of CSOs reported that they received no government funding during the year. The 40 percent of organizations receiving government funding mainly obtained support to cover staff salaries from the Unemployment Insurance Fund COVID-19 Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Scheme. While there were widespread reports of such funding not being applied to its stated purpose, this was not a charge commonly leveled against CSOs. It was a major surprise when the CSO sector was not mentioned in the government's bailout of the corporate sector during the pandemic. However, the

National Lotteries Commission agreed to make an additional ZAR 150 billion (approximately \$8.6 billion) available to CSOs.

Individuals contribute regularly to CSOs, and 14 percent of the sector's total funding in 2020 was from private individuals, according to the 2020 Trialogue Business Handbook. CSOs reported that after an increase in individual support at the start of lockdown, giving declined as the lockdown continued and donor fatigue set in.

South African CSOs are innovative in diversifying their funding sources, and almost half of CSOs engage in some type of income-generating activity. Many CSOs adjusted their approach to income generation in 2020 as funding from outside donors decreased. For example, the Community Chest created a virtual charity event in which people could walk, run, or swim to raise money. The Cape of Good Hope SPCA increased its annual income with innovative fundraising initiatives such as a virtual marathon and the manufacture of unique face masks. Crowdfunding is also taking off in South Africa. For example, the BackaBuddy crowdfunding platform hosted 500 more fundraising campaigns in April 2020 than in April 2019. Quicket, a ticket-selling platform for the entertainment industry, created a low-cost fundraising platform for CSOs with various payment options. Smaller organizations lacking access to the internet were largely unable to engage in fundraising activities in 2020.

All registered NPOs must submit annual audited financial reports to the NPO Directorate. About 80,000 organizations are not compliant with this requirement, according to the 2020 Trialogue Business Handbook. The South African Institute for Business Accountants and the South African Institute for Tax Professionals worked with DSD to help CSOs file financial reports and tax returns so that they were financially compliant in 2020. Other CSOs are not required to conduct annual audits, but many organizations do so to meet funding requirements. External financial audits are very expensive for smaller CSOs.

ADVOCACY: 2.7

CSO advocacy improved for the third year in a row in 2020. The pandemic lockdown and emergency response created a unique advocacy environment for CSOs, and they served as the voice of the people in many situations. For example, when DSD withheld monthly Social Relief of Distress grants from asylum seekers, the Scalabrini Center in Cape Town brought the matter to the High Court in Pretoria, which declared DSD's withholding unconstitutional. After the Department of Basic Education stopped providing meals at schools because of the lockdown, Equal Education, Equal Education Law Center, Section 27, and two school governing bodies went to court to force the government to provide meals to children covered by the National School Nutrition Program. Although the High Court ruled in their favor in July, by the end of the year, many eligible children had yet to receive meals. In April 2020, after DSD gazetted new regulations for food distribution during the lockdown that drastically limited CSOs' ability to distribute food, the Democratic Alliance and the 1000 Women Trust successfully sued DSD to ensure that soup kitchens and similar interventions could keep operating.

The Interim GBV and Femicide Steering Committee, established in 2019 and co-chaired by representatives of the president and civil society, produced a national strategic plan to strengthen the response to GBV and femicide in 2020. Civil society played a key role in developing the plan. In addition, after the president proposed amending three laws—the Criminal Law, Criminal and Related Matters Act, and Domestic Violence Act—to strengthen the rights of women and children, Sonke Gender Justice submitted written comments to the amendments in cooperation with other CSOs.

Environmental advocacy increased in South Africa in 2020. The Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance successfully sued ArcelorMittal South Africa to obtain the release of information about the effect of its activities on the environment. GroundWork and the Center for Environmental Rights relied on the North Gauteng High Court to force the minister of mineral resources and energy and the National Energy Regulator to provide information

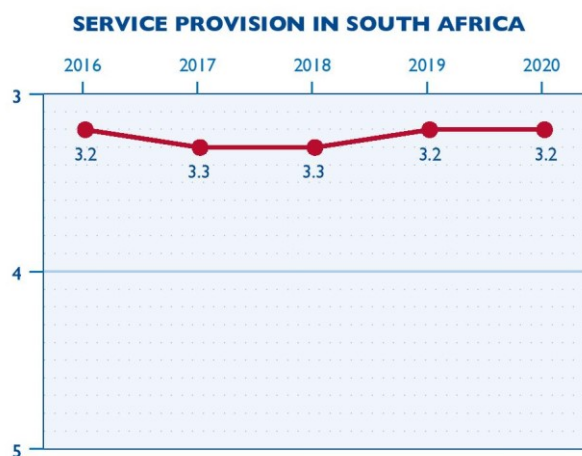


related to the Integrated Resource Plan for Electricity of 2019. The international Black Lives Matter movement also had a strong presence in South Africa, especially since many people were abused by soldiers and police during the pandemic. CSOs expressed considerable outrage after a young man was killed by law enforcement officers for violating lockdown regulations. On June 9, 2020, many South Africans attended Black Lives Matter protests in the country's main cities.

Policy makers request and accept inputs from CSOs on pending legislation. For example, Scalabrini Center and other CSOs commented on the draft South African Citizenship Act, which will allow children born in South Africa to parents who are not citizens or permanent residents to apply for South African citizenship when they are eighteen years old. Organizations such as Gift of the Givers, FoodForward South Africa, and the Red Cross Society made recommendations to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on future engagement with the CSO sector and food provision to the vulnerable.

CSOs made little effort to reform the legal framework governing their work in 2020. No activity was reported on recognizing the role of social enterprises, which was the focus of a draft green paper on the social economy developed with CSOs' input in 2019.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.2



CSO service provision was stable in 2020. The CSO sector played a major role in pandemic-related service delivery, including raising awareness, ensuring food security, and distributing PPE, soap, and sanitizers. The Center of Social Research at the University of Cape Town reported that most food parcels and other support for the vulnerable during the lockdown were supplied by CSOs, including FoodForward SA, Afrika Tikun, Islamic Relief, and the Lunchbox Fund. FoodForward SA reached more than 400,000 people with funding, services, and goods from corporate funders such as Standard Bank, Old Mutual, Engen, and some retailers. Afrika Awake worked with the Angel Network and Gift of the Givers to provide hand sanitizer to the homeless. Imbumba Foundation created two campaigns, Soap4Hope and Each I Feed I, in partnership with Old

Mutual, Nelson Mandela Foundation, and Kolisi Foundation.

In 2020, CSOs continued to provide services in education, health care, social welfare, GBV, early childhood development, emergency support, and other areas in which the government does not provide services or government services are inadequate. Seventy-two percent of CSOs reported to Nation Builder that the demand for their services increased in 2020. Afrika Tikun, which usually focuses on youth empowerment, employed nurses to conduct COVID-19 tests, promote the use of face masks, and assist with food distribution. A number of organizations such as Boost Africa Foundation and Umgibe used their community kitchens and food gardens to assist with food relief. Community action networks were established to respond to the pandemic with feeding schemes, sewing groups, and childcare services on the local level. However, some CSOs struggled to deliver their day-to-day services in 2020. For example, some GBV-related services were allowed, but the lockdown prevented many victims of sexual assault from accessing these services within the critical seventy-two-hour timeframe. In accordance with lockdown regulations, CSOs had to register as emergency service providers before they could deliver their services in person. Several organizations shifted to virtual platforms to provide services such as psycho-social support. Some services in non-emergency areas such as art, culture, and sport were not delivered until early July or at all in 2020.

During the year, many organizations responded to pandemic-related community needs. For example, the Zero2Five Trust, which provides nutritional and educational support to children, opened new early childhood development centers in the Eastern Cape in early 2020 in cooperation with Impande SA. When its centers closed temporarily during the lockdown in March, Zero2Five provided a month's supply of fortified porridge per child to

vulnerable households. Zero2Five also provided households with soap and food parcels and worked with local primary school facilities to ensure that its response was in line with government priorities. Another intervention focused on community needs was the CoCare voucher created by the DG Murray Trust, Grow Great, and other CSOs, which allowed vulnerable households to purchase food at spaza shops (informal convenience stores) and other local businesses. Monitoring and evaluation capacity is increasing in the CSO sector, and 73 percent of CSO report that they measure not only activity outputs but also longer-term outcomes, according to the 2020 Trialogue Business Handbook. This is an increase from 60 percent of CSOs that reported measuring outcomes in 2018.

Although externally funded CSOs generally struggle to charge for their services, some manage to do so. For example, Lesedi la Batho established the Ratanang Day Care Center to enable teenage mothers to return to school. The center charges a small fee to create a sense of responsibility among mothers while ensuring its own sustainability. However, the ability of many CSOs to recover costs for their services declined in 2020 as household incomes declined. For example, a report on early childhood development centers, many of which are run by CSOs, found that caregivers and parents were either unwilling or unable to pay for their services during the lockdown, and many centers operated at a fraction of normal capacity after they resumed operations in July. As a result, many centers could not pay staff salaries or overhead, and between 20,000 and 30,000 centers faced closure by the end of the year.

The government recognized the value of CSOs' work during the pandemic. For example, DSD invited CSOs to recommend future responses to the pandemic and thanked CSOs for their work. The government also recognized the efforts of environmental CSOs by admitting that an integrated approach is needed to reduce rhinoceros poaching in South Africa. As a result, CSOs and their work were included in the National Integrated Strategy to Combat Wildlife Trafficking in 2020. The National Development Plan 2030 recognizes CSOs not just as stakeholders, but as development partners. The president mentioned the joint efforts of the government and CSOs in areas such as GBV and corruption in his state-of-the-nation address in February 2020.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 3.6

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector was slightly stronger in 2020 as local grantmaking increased and the new Solidarity Fund helped CSOs with pandemic-specific interventions.

The number of resource centers providing services to CSOs increased in 2020. As the pandemic forced CSOs to join the digital economy and remote working became the norm, some organizations partnered with technology companies to make their platforms available to CSOs. Youth Empowerment Services, a business-led NPO funded by the private sector, partnered with Microsoft to ensure that community hubs had access to cloud services. The resource center Inyathelo: The South African Institute for Advancement in Cape Town provided advisory services, training, and other support in areas such as financial management and fundraising.

Several local grantmaking organizations, which raise funds from both local and international sources, increased their activities in response to the pandemic in 2020. For example, Ilifa Labantwana, the implementing partner for the Early Childhood Development Funders Consortium, raised funds for early childhood development centers struggling to keep open during the lockdown. The Mergon Early Childhood Development Foundation created a gap fund to help CSOs in financial crisis. The Joint Gender Fund of the Hlanganisa Institute for Development created a funding mechanism for the GBV sector. A new nonprofit organization, the Solidarity Fund, was established just after the start of the lockdown with contributions from corporations, individuals, and other groups. While its focus was originally on health, the fund expanded its programs to offer ZAR 2.76 billion (approximately \$160 million) in support to individual CSOs. By the end of the year, 5 percent of CSOs responding to the Business Trialogue

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA



survey had received funding from the Solidarity Fund for pandemic-specific interventions and related areas, such as GBV.

Although the CSO sector in South Africa is fragmented, the pandemic forced CSOs to work together in 2020. For example, the C19 People's Coalition was formed by 250 CSOs with the aim of keeping the government responsible for its activities during the pandemic. This was the largest coalition formed in South Africa since 1983. NACOSA, one of the largest networks of CSOs in South Africa, continued to coordinate 1,800 organizations working on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and GBV. NACOSA changed its training to an online format in 2020, which allowed CSOs to take part despite the lockdown. The Southern African Non-Governmental Organizations Network continued to provide networking and training, especially in computers and internet usage.

CSOs enjoyed a number of other training opportunities in 2020, despite reduced funding and regulations on social distancing. The Hlanganisa Institute for Social Development in Southern Africa and the Ubuntu Community Chest Durban provided mentorship, training, and guidance to ensure that grantees can implement projects in a transparent manner and are compliant with donor reporting requirements. The Community Chest Western Cape trained CSOs on grantmaking, project management, and governance, with courses adjusted to account for changes in organizations' operations during the pandemic. The independent Zenex Foundation, in conjunction with the National Association of Social Change Entities in Education, helped build the monitoring and evaluations skills of CSOs working in education. A few funders, such as Adoptionscentrum Sweden, continued to support organizational development as part of a four-year program to address GBV in schools. Lesedi la Batho in Mabopane, Pretoria, improved its human resource management, monitoring and evaluation, and general management capacities with funding from this program.

The private sector was also involved in training and mentoring CSO staff. For example, the Social Enterprise Academy and Distell, an alcohol beverage company, created a capacity-development program to build the leadership, fundraising, and monitoring abilities of grantees of the Distell CSI program. Investec helped create the Coaches Who Care initiative to provide CSOs with virtual capacity building in executive management.

Collaboration between CSOs and the private sector increased in 2020, mainly because of the pandemic. For example, Investec partnered with the Kutlwano Maths, Sciences, and Technology Center to create a virtual classroom for math education during lockdown. The Telkom Foundation funded the Mzali App in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education to improve the educational outcomes of children during the lockdown.

CSOs have good relationships with the media. For instance, GroundUp is a project of the Community Media Trust that acts as a news agency publishing social justice and human rights news, particularly on housing, health care, sanitation, education, immigration, policing, labor, and social security. GroundUp works closely with CSOs to report on news that matters to vulnerable communities and is underreported by mainstream media.

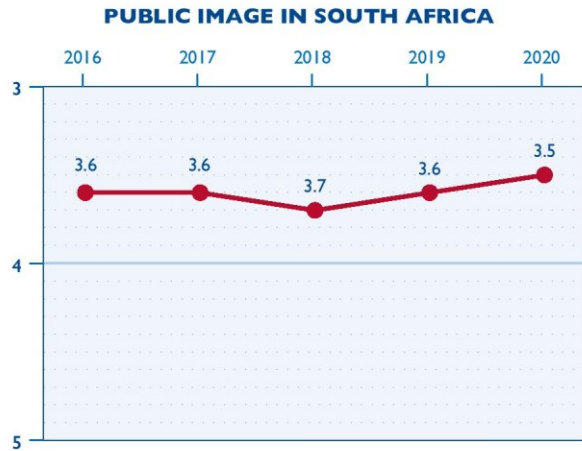
A large number of CSOs partner with government departments to implement their interventions. MIET Africa, for examples, focuses on improving basic education in sub-Saharan Africa and implements projects in cooperation with the Department of Basic Education. JET Education Services and the University of the Witwatersrand, a public university, created an online training course to help new teachers in 2020.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.5

CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020. The media reported positively on CSOs' work during the pandemic, especially their assistance to vulnerable populations. CSOs' financial difficulties were also covered, and some media urged businesses and individuals to support CSOs' work. DST, a private broadcaster, dedicated airtime and social media channels to CSOs working on GBV.

CSOs reported an improvement in their working relationship with government officials at the start of the pandemic. But the relationship grew strained as the pandemic continued, such as when many CSOs successfully resisted DSD's request that they work through its offices to distribute food parcels and other assistance.

Public perceptions of CSOs are positive. The 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer indicated that public trust in the CSO sector remained stable at 60 percent in 2020. CSOs are most appreciated for their contributions to early childhood development, agriculture, and especially health care. CSOs are also recognized for holding public institutions accountable. Brand South Africa, a government-funded agency focused on marketing South Africa,



highlighted the work of several organizations, including Gift of the Givers and Imbumba Foundation, because of high trust in their services.

CSOs increasingly use social media such as Facebook and Twitter to promote their work, engage with stakeholders, and share information about their projects. They take into account the various settings for their work, such as rural or urban communities, and adjust their public relations efforts accordingly. For instance, organizations with poor internet access often do not have websites but maintain Facebook pages. CSOs often hire interns to help with public relations and promotion.

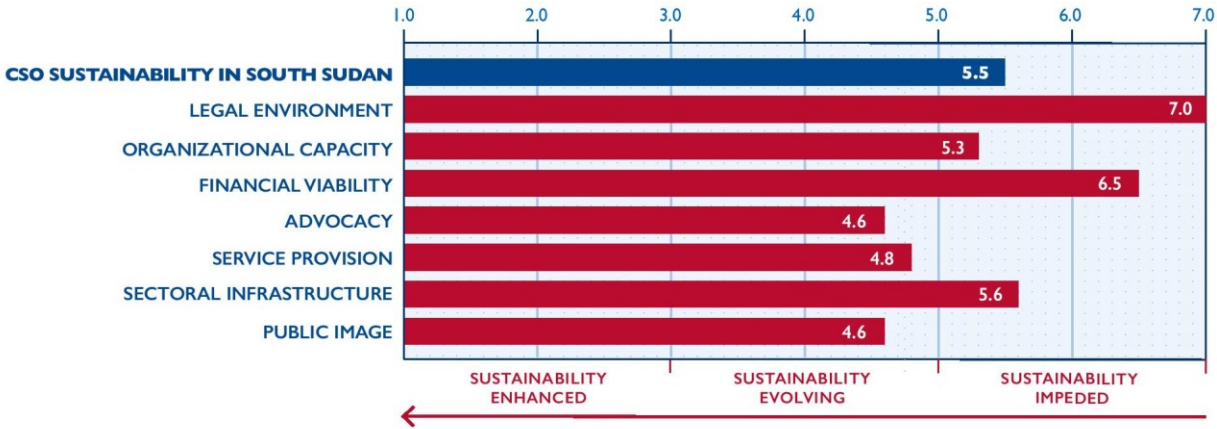
In 1997, the South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO) developed a code of conduct for CSOs to regulate their self-governance and ethical roles and

responsibilities. However, SANGOCO is no longer functional, and the extent to which CSOs continue to use the SANGOCO code is unknown. More recently, a group of CSOs created the Independent Code of Governance and Values for NPOs, which serves as a major source of ethical guidance. CSOs often publish their annual reports on their websites, if they maintain one, and organizations registered with DSD must submit their reports to DSD to maintain their registration.

SOUTH SUDAN

Capital: Juba
Population: 10,984,074
GDP per capita (PPP): \$1,600
Human Development Index: Low (0.433)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (2/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.5



After years of civil war, a revitalized transitional government of national unity took shape in South Sudan in 2020. On February 21, the leader of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM–IO), Riek Machar, was sworn in as first vice president along with four other vice presidents, national and deputy ministers, and state governors. The formation of the transitional unity government fulfilled a key provision of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), signed by Machar and President Salva Kiir in 2018. In the course of 2020, national and state governments were partially formed, and the requirement championed by CSOs for 35 percent representation of women and youth was partially met. The number of states was reduced from thirty-two to South Sudan’s original ten states, fulfilling a key demand of R-ARCSS. Other important commitments by the new government—including constituting a legislature, establishing a hybrid court, adopting a new constitution, and establishing agreed security and political arrangements—were not realized.

Progress in reforming South Sudan’s security sector continued in 2020. The Sudan People’s Liberation Army was renamed South Sudan Peoples’ Defense Forces, and a portion of the 83,000 unified forces were cantoned, trained, and mobilized. This state of relative calm gave citizens hope that the country was exchanging lawlessness for peace and stability. But although the most virulent conflicts stopped, the terms of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and Rome Peace Agreement, signed in January 2020 by the government and holdout National Salvation Front (NAS), were repeatedly broken. The NAS accused government forces of attacking its bases, killing civilians, looting its properties, and raping women and girls. Communal violence and clashes between government forces and local armed groups also escalated. The pandemic prevented progress on many peace-building measures as meetings between concerned parties ground to a halt.

The authorities introduced a preemptive partial lockdown against the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, which included a halt on flights from countries reporting cases of the virus, the closure of schools and universities, a ban on large-scale public events, and a nighttime curfew. After COVID-19 was first reported in South Sudan on April 5, 2020, the government appointed a national task force to manage the pandemic. But the virus spread quickly, eventually reaching the country’s six United Nations (UN) camps for displaced people. Because of the insecurity, most of the country’s health facilities were closed, and essential humanitarian aid and medical assistance could not be delivered. After the onset of the pandemic, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) reported a spike in reports of gender-based violence (GBV) and noted that government forces, including the National Security Service (NSS), resorted to physical violence against those perceived as having broken curfew rules. The UNHRC called on the transitional government to ensure that governance structures at the national and subnational levels were

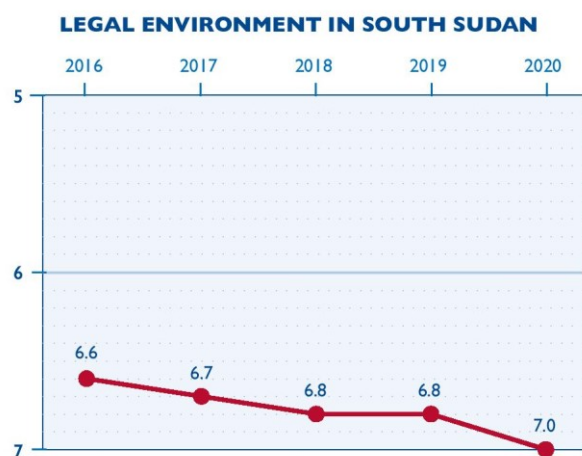
functional and able to respond robustly to the pandemic while protecting vulnerable populations and fundamental freedoms. The lockdown was lifted in June after reports of new cases of the virus dropped.

The pandemic, coupled with massive flooding and a sharp decline in the price of oil, the country's main export, devastated South Sudan's already fragile economy in 2020. In November, for the first time, the International Monetary Fund granted South Sudan a \$52 million emergency disbursement under the Rapid Credit Facility to help its economy weather the shock of the pandemic. However, state expenditures on health, education, water and sanitation, and rural development remained limited, and at 82 percent, poverty levels were extremely high, according to the World Bank. The UN estimated that of South Sudan's 11 million people, 7.5 million required humanitarian assistance, 1.5 million people were internally displaced, and more than 6 million lived on the brink of famine in 2020.

The overall sustainability of South Sudan's CSO sector declined slightly in 2020. The legal environment deteriorated moderately, reaching the poorest possible score for this dimension, as the government severely impeded CSOs' work and arbitrarily arrested and detained CSO activists. CSOs' financial viability weakened moderately as the pandemic caused the majority of local CSOs to lose funding. Funding cuts also caused the volume of services to decline, leading to a slight deterioration in the service provision dimension. CSOs' organizational capacity, advocacy, sectoral infrastructure, and public image were unchanged.

The exact number of CSOs operating in South Sudan is unknown. The CSO regulatory body, the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, keeps track of the number of organizations operating legally in the country but does not publish the information. The South Sudan NGO Forum, an umbrella group of domestic and international CSOs, reported in 2019 that its membership included 261 South Sudanese and 116 international CSOs, for a total of 377 organizations.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 7.0



The legal environment for South Sudan's CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020, reaching the poorest possible score for this dimension as the government severely impeded CSOs' work and arbitrarily arrested and detained CSO activists.

The main laws governing CSOs are the South Sudan Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Act 2016 and Relief and Rehabilitation Act 2016. All CSOs must register annually with the Ministry of Justice to maintain legal status and with the RRC to obtain operating licenses. The registration process remained bureaucratic in 2020, with some organizations finding it easy to register or renew their licenses and others finding these tasks difficult because of accusations of inappropriate advocacy on politically sensitive issues. CSOs often had

to register twice, since some states require CSOs to register locally even if they have already registered at the national level or to renew their operating licenses with state RRC offices. Women Training and Promotion (WOTAP) in Wau, for example, was required to register at both national and state RRC offices in 2020. The pandemic lockdown and other restrictions further complicated registration processes. The Organization for Children Harmony (TOCH) faced delays in renewing its operating license because its staff was not able to meet the registrar during the partial lockdown and online renewal was not possible. TOCH had to suspend its field activities for a month while its operating license awaited renewal at the national level.

The pandemic posed other challenges to CSOs' legal environment in 2020. CSOs ran into red tape when trying to obtain approvals for workshops or training, especially in the field. In addition, any CSO employee intending to work in the field was required to undergo testing for COVID-19 before traveling. But obtaining test result was an ordeal, as they were often unavailable, even after a month, or were misplaced and eventually declared lost. Because of these challenges, CSOs were often forced to cancel activities, which was frustrating both for them and for their donors, which sometimes terminated projects as a result.

Civic space deteriorated in 2020. The NSS and local SSRRC offices sometimes impeded the work of CSOs. For example, local SSRRC directors interfered with the distribution of humanitarian aid, and NSS officials prevented humanitarian activities from being performed unless they received allowances. Government officials sometimes appropriated food intended for vulnerable beneficiaries. CSOs' field work was also disrupted by the efforts of some state governments to prevent their participation in public consultations about the number of states. For example, in January 2020, the executive director of the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) was denied access to a consultative meeting on the topic at Freedom Hall in Juba and was threatened with death if he supported the return to ten states. A fear of being targeted by violence kept CSOs from engaging in peaceful demonstrations in large numbers.

Several activists and journalists were arbitrarily arrested and detained in 2020 under the Security Act 2014, which had a chilling effect on CSOs' operations. In January, the Torit State NSS arrested a journalist for publicizing U.S. sanctions against the former first vice president because of his involvement in violations of human rights. On May 29, a CSO activist representing the Strategic Defense and Security Review Board of the Revitalized Peace Agreement was arbitrarily arrested by the NSS and detained in the infamous Blue House, the NSS headquarters in Juba, and denied access to his family and lawyer. On July 17, the executive director of the Organization for Non-Violence and Development (ONAD) was arrested after the organization conducted the Where is the Money? campaign on billboards and in newspapers and other media to hold officials accountable for government funding from oil production, non-oil revenues, taxes, loans, and foreign donations to South Sudan's pandemic response. CEPO, Foundation for Democracy and Accountable Governance (FODAG), OK Africa Foundation, and other organizations advocated vigorously for his release, which happened in June. His trial did not take place in 2020.

CSOs are exempted from duties on imports of electronic equipment, including radio equipment, and construction materials that directly or indirectly benefit the government or communities. All CSO employees pay personal income tax. In October 2020, some state governments demanded that CSO staff working in their states pay personal income tax even if they paid tax at the national level. A few organizations, such as Norwegian People's Aid and Smile Again Africa Development Organization (SAADO), complied with this requirement. Frequent changes in the administration of personal income tax accounts by state authorities contributed to mistrust between CSOs and state governments. State tax officials who were fired often took account information with them when they departed, complicating CSOs' efforts to make remittances and consequently delaying their activities.

CSOs' access to legal services shrank in 2020. For example, the ONAD executive director was denied access to a lawyer after his arrest. Several lawyers offer legal counsel to CSOs, but their services are expensive.

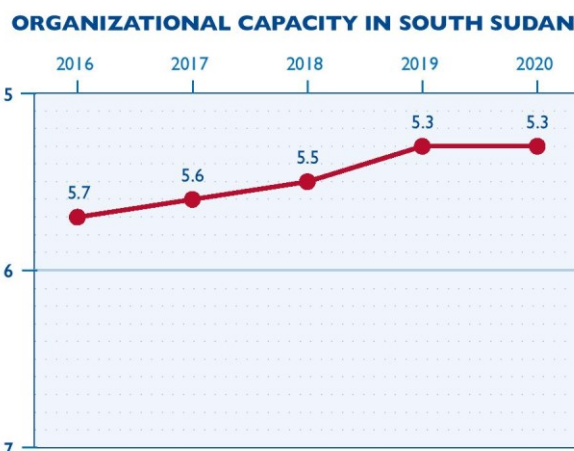
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.3

CSOs' organizational capacity did not change in 2020.

Improvements in the security situation allowed CSOs to develop closer relationships with their constituencies in 2020. For example, CEPO was able to consult about the country's return to ten states with constituencies in Yei, Juba, Terekeka, Rumbek, Yambio, and Wau. CSOs also organized workshops and trainings around the country to inform their constituencies about the pandemic and prevention measures. ONO Aid and CEPO, for example, worked with local task forces and Africa Life Aid (ALA) and conducted talk-shows, door-to-door and leaflet campaigns, workshops, and other events to raise awareness about the virus.

Most CSOs have vision, mission, and value statements and strategic plans and work hard to achieve them.

Cordaid and CEPO have been partners in a strategic-planning process based on a theory of change and focused on the years 2015–2020. Although CEPO was planning to diversify its programs in 2020, it was unable to establish



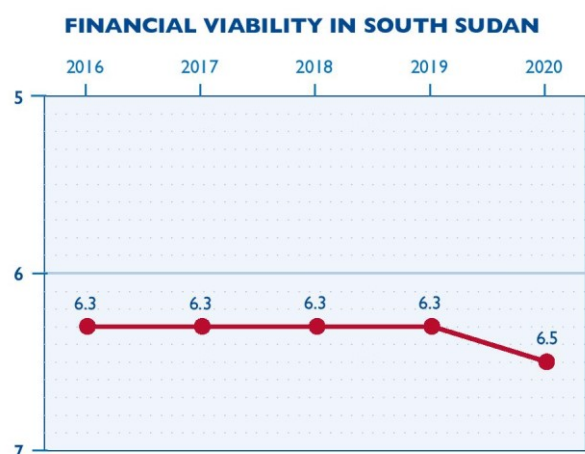
coordination offices in Abyei, Boma, and Malakal because of insecurity. However, CEPO managed to recruit volunteers in these areas to send monthly reports about local events to CEPO's headquarters in Juba.

CSOs usually conduct general assembly meetings to renew the mandates of their boards of directors or elect new board members. CSOs are supposed to conduct general assembly meetings but few organizations do. CSOs often have policies covering areas such as human resources, financial management, and procurement, but their implementation is usually at the discretion of the top management. TOCH is among few organizations whose leaders implement their policies effectively to ensure transparency and accountability.

CSO staffing has improved gradually in recent years, although the pandemic undermined this trend. CSOs such as ALA shifted to pandemic-awareness programs to remain operational and protect staff jobs while contributing to the fight against COVID-19. Some organizations continued to pay their employees, although often with delays, while others were able to continue to pay incentives, allowances, and overtime. Some organizations had to lay off staff as donors withheld funding because of the lockdown. For example, CEPO was forced to downsize from sixty-seven to forty-two employees, and FODAG, ONAD, and the South Sudan Democratic Engagement Monitoring Observation Program (SSUDEMOP) took similar steps. Local CSOs perceived the appointment of foreigners to positions with domestic and international organizations as a challenge, since they view South Sudanese who have lived abroad as often offering relevant skills and expertise. Corruption, bribery, kickbacks, nepotism, and tribalism were reported by CSOs to increase as their staff struggled to secure new employment or obtain grants during the pandemic.

The pandemic induced some CSOs to improve or maintain their technical capacity while others experienced a deterioration. Most CSOs at the national level, such as TOCH, FODAG, and OK Africa Foundation, have access to the internet, although connectivity can be a problem, along with good office space with computers, printers, scanners, and other equipment. Smaller CSOs at the grassroots level grapple with power disruptions and inadequate equipment because of their lack of funding. In 2020, many employees worked from home because of the pandemic. For example, SAADO and the Young Women's Christian Association provided their staff with computers, modems, and data subscriptions to avoid overcrowding in offices. Some CSOs introduced rotational systems in which three to five employees worked in offices for a week at a time to prevent the spread of the virus.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.5



CSOs' financial viability weakened moderately in 2020 as the pandemic caused the majority of local CSOs to lose funding.

The vast majority of CSOs in South Sudan depend solely on donor funding. The main donors in 2020 were the United States, European Commission, Germany, Canada, and Sweden. Donors fund projects in areas such as governance, security-sector reform, peace building, livelihoods, gender, human rights, and above all humanitarian assistance. According to the Financial Tracking Services of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, South Sudan received \$1.4 billion in donor funding in 2020, about the same amount as in 2019. While most of this funding went to UN agencies, about \$120 million, or 9 percent, was earmarked for

CSOs. Of this amount, about \$1.75 million went for pandemic relief. The main CSOs receiving funding were Catholic Relief Services, Norwegian Refugee Council, World Vision International, and International Medical Corps.

Most donor funding for local CSOs is directed to organizations based in Juba City and state capitals. With minimal funding reaching CSOs on the county, *payam*, or village level, these smaller organizations typically sustain themselves on just one or two projects. In 2020, many donors shifted funding from advocacy programs to health and humanitarian services or canceled projects altogether because of the pandemic. International organizations often resorted to implementing activities directly. As a result, more than two-thirds of local CSOs lost funding and other support, and more than one-quarter of organizations lost 50 percent or more of their funding, according to

a survey of nineteen domestic organizations conducted by Impact Cap Initiative. The trend hit local CSOs, especially small grassroots organizations, particularly hard.

The government does not support CSOs unless they are government-owned or -controlled. For example, the government provides funding, capacity building, promotion, representation, and recommendations for grants to the South Sudan Civil Society Alliance (SSCSA), which supports the government's decisions.

Some CSOs generate income by selling art and beads, operating village savings and loans associations, or collecting contributions from staff, members, or other organizations. Benevolent individuals and members of the diaspora sometimes provide cash and in-kind contributions to support emergency projects that require responses more quickly than donors are able to fund, such as meetings between armed groups in conflict. CSOs also raise funds through social gatherings and special events attended by celebrities, ambassadors, government dignitaries, and other high-level guests. CSOs that own land or buildings sometimes rent them out for steady income. For example, in 2020, TOCH established a guest house in Tonj that is used by UN staff and a training hall that other CSOs rent for workshops and training.

Many CSOs have sound financial policies and management systems. Corruption, when it exists, is often the result of individual malpractice. Most organizations seek to upgrade the knowledge and skills of their financial management staff on an annual basis. For example, in 2020, the South Sudan Youth for Peace and Development Organization (SSYPADO), Christian Agency for Peace and Development (CAPAD), and ONAD offered training to staff on topics such as logistics and procurement. At year end, CSOs are usually audited by both internal and external auditors to ensure proper accountability.

ADVOCACY: 4.6

CSO advocacy did not change in 2020.

A major CSO advocacy initiative during the year concerned the return to South Sudan's original ten states, a key demand of R-ARCSS. CSOs such as Responsive Governance, South Sudanese Network for Democracy and Elections (SSUNDE), SSUDEMOP, CEPO, ONAD, and FODAG pressured concerned parties to adhere to the terms of the agreement. CSOs believed that ten states would reduce the incidence of border conflicts and enable more transparent and efficient administration. They were joined in their position by the Troika (Norway, United States, and United Kingdom), African Union, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission. After numerous meetings in Addis Ababa and Juba, President Kiir issued a republican order on February 15, 2020, to reestablish ten states along with three new administrative areas.



CSOs also supported the establishment of a new government that was lean but able to deliver services effectively to people in the grassroots. As the transitional period approached, CSOs weighed in on the formation of the national and state governments and the appointment of high-ranking government officials. The South Sudan Civil Society Network, which is composed of ONAD, FODAG, SSUNDE, OK Africa Foundation, Responsive Governance, and other organizations, lobbied political parties and the parliament to make sure that youth, women, and people with disabilities were represented in the government. CSOs such as Women's Bloc of South Sudan, CEPO, and SSUDEMOP conducted a campaign through the media, in meetings with political parties, and in position papers submitted to state and national governments to push for 35 percent representation of women and youth. Their goal was partly realized in that nine of the thirty-five ministers appointed in the transitional government of national unity were women, and a woman was appointed deputy minister of agriculture and food security. Youth were appointed to seven or 3 percent of positions in the transitional government. On the state level, women were appointed to the governorship of Western Bhar el Ghazal State and the deputy governorships of Eastern

Equatoria, Central Equatoria, and Warrap states. Youth have greater representation on the state than the national level.

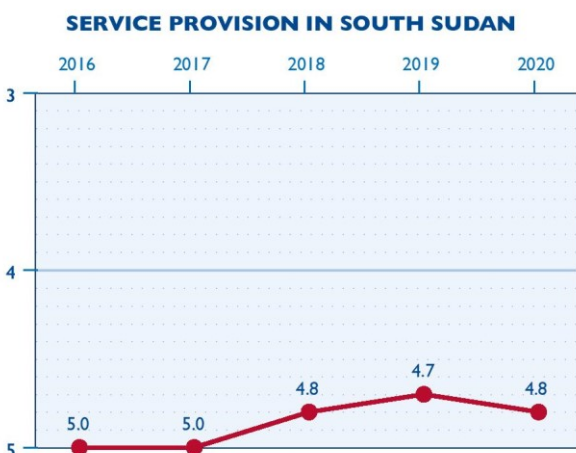
OK Africa Foundation and SSUEMOP represented civil society on the National Constitution Review Commission, which worked on drafting a permanent constitution in 2020. CSOs' aim was to ensure that a system of federalism was adopted for South Sudan. The OK Africa Foundation and SSUEMOP also conducted workshops with public institutions to obtain their views about the new constitution, but this effort was limited by funding shortfalls.

CSOs actively promoted the rule of law and respect for human rights in 2020. The Advocates for Human Rights and Democracy (TAHURID) conducted civic engagement activities to sensitize South Sudanese to their constitutional and civil rights and condemn human rights violations. CEPO and the Union of Journalists of South Sudan (UJOSS) condemned the arbitrary detention in January of a journalist who had published a story about U.S. sanctions against a former first vice president alleged to have had a hand in the deaths of two activists. The journalist was held for a few days and released. CSOs also lobbied the NSS and SSRRC to release other journalists and activists detained during the year and, with Amnesty International, demanded a dignified burial for the leader of an opposition group who was killed by the government. On May 28, South Sudanese women marched in Juba against the rape of an eight-year-old girl, demanding justice and an end to "rape culture" in South Sudan.

CSOs continued to push for security-sector reform as a major objective in 2020. FODAG and CEPO conducted several press conferences and issued strong statements demanding the speedy reform of the country's security sector. For example, in September 2020, CEPO issued a press release urging the parties to agree to speed up the establishment of security-sector arrangements.

On the local level, WOTAP conducted a consultative meeting with chiefs, women, and youth leaders of Ngo-Halima in Wau County to explain the Local Government Act 2009 and the role of local communities in resource management. TAHURID advocated for implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and with CEPO conducted workshops to sensitize the government, CSOs, and women's and youth networks about CEDAW's importance.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.8



CSOs' service provision declined slightly in 2020 as funding cuts caused the volume of services to decline.

South Sudanese CSOs continued to deliver a broad range of good and services in areas such as health care, shelter, education, nutrition, agriculture, peace building, civilian protection, and environmental conservation. CSOs' services most often respond to urgent humanitarian needs. For example, SSYPADO, SAADO, and other CSOs helped populations displaced by a flood in Joglei. With support from the Food and Agricultural Organization, WOTAP implemented a project to build livelihoods in Wau. DanChurchAid funded the Smart Community Coalition's provision of digital financial services to South Sudanese refugees near the country's borders with Kenya and Uganda. However, cuts in

funding forced some CSOs to cut back on their humanitarian services and the number of beneficiaries served in 2020. The survey Impact Cap Initiative in 2020 that showed that many CSO projects were nearly halted because of pandemic restrictions, especially limits on movement.

In 2020, CSOs were deeply involved in conflict mediation and peace building on the community level, which is an urgent need in South Sudan. For example, TOCH organized reconciliation dialogues between cattle keepers in Warrap and farmers in Western Bhar el Ghazal, which resulted in resolutions to protect crops, hold perpetrators of communal conflict to account, and provide psycho-social support to victims of the conflicts. ONAD offered training on non-violence and peace to stakeholders in Central Equatoria, Western Equatoria, Lakes, and Western

Bhar el Ghazal states and trained teachers in Juba on GBV and human rights. CEPO conducted a series of dialogues between civilians and the army in Yei to improve their relationship. Civilians in the area testified that since the dialogues, soldiers showed more respect and made better efforts to protect them. CEPO also supported a youth music center in Wau that aims to protect the youth from criminal activities and help them become responsible and respectful leaders in Western Bhar el Ghazal State.

CSOs were actively involved in the fight against the pandemic in 2020. CSOs conducted public education campaigns, often through radio talk shows and large signage posted on the streets. A group of young people known as Anataban (“I’m Tired”) used drawings, pictures, comedy, and drama to convey messages about halting the spread of the virus and used walls owned by businesses for murals with public health messages. #DefyHateNow sensitized the public to hate speeches and disinformation about COVID-19 on radio talk shows.

South Sudanese CSOs work in partnership with international agencies to meet the needs of local communities. CSOs typically carry out surveys and interviews, media campaigns, community meetings, and workshops to assess the needs of communities and then share the results with their donors, which decide which needs to address.

CSOs often provide goods and services that benefit the public interest. South Sudanese CSOs are considered experts on national and local issues and are often consulted by international organizations, government institutions, local authorities, and other groups.

National, state, and local government authorities value and publicly recognize the services offered by CSOs. For example, the governors of Western Bhar el Ghazal and Warrap states, including their chiefs, expressed appreciation for the work of CEPO and TOCH in helping reconcile herding and farming communities in their states.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.6

The sectoral infrastructure for CSOs in South Sudan did not change in 2020.

Democracy International (DI) and local user committees continued to operate resource centers in Juba, Wau, Rumbek, Aweil, Torit, and Yambio. These centers provide CSOs and other users with access to power, the internet, meeting facilities, libraries, and training. At the Civic Engagement Center in Wau, Woman Training and Promotion Association ran small-scale activities with support from DI under the Systems to Uphold the Credibility and Constitutionality of Elections in South Sudan program, which is funded by USAID. However, declines in funding and the ban on in-person gatherings forced the center to cut back its planned capacity-building activities in areas such as economic resilience, livelihoods, and development. TOCH established a psycho-social support training center in Kwajok in 2020, which was used by CSOs and the government for activities such as psycho-social support trainings and awareness raising. With support from the UN mission in South Sudan, CEPO trained boda-boda riders to serve as peace ambassadors and fundraise for activities for youth at the center.

There are few local grant-making entities in South Sudan. In 2020, the Civil Society Facility (CSF), a multi-donor fund established by the governments of Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands, was one of the few local organizations that awarded grants. CSF funded projects in areas such as advocacy, livelihoods, and humanitarian interventions.

CSO collaboration was mixed in 2020. CSOs based in Juba worked together through various networks and alliances, such as SSCSA, Civil Society Network, and Women’s Monthly Forum. These groups and their members often compete for grants together and protect each other against political threats. In a notable instance of solidarity in 2020, CSOs condemned the government’s repression of freedom of expression in arresting the executive director of ONAD and demanded his release. CSOs’ common position on the number of states was also

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN SOUTH SUDAN

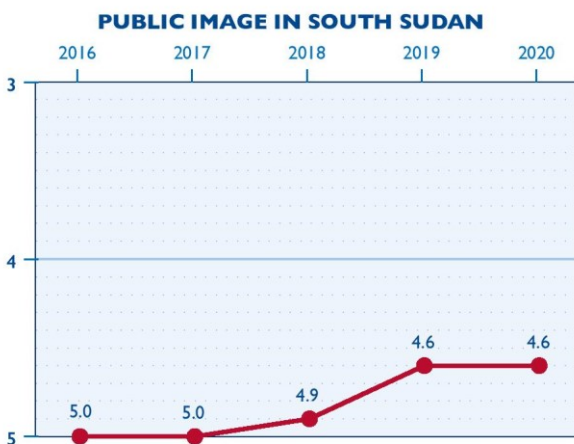


an important achievement. Members of the Civil Society Network used their own resources to meet to formulate a united position under the leadership of SSCSA.

Training was reduced in 2020 because of social-distancing requirements and shifts in funding. International CSOs usually offer capacity building to their local partners, and Oxfam and Cordaid continued to offer training on strategic planning, human resource management, resource mobilization, financial management, and other areas through their national partners such as CEPO, ONAD, and the Gender Empowerment for South Sudan Organization. But most international organizations shifted their focus from capacity building to humanitarian assistance in 2020 because of the high demand. This shift caused hardship for South Sudan's many local experts, who are recognized in their fields and often deliver technical services and consultancies at both the national and local levels. In 2020, many of these experts were without work and turned to other jobs, such as driving boda bodas. In June 2020, World Vision, with support from CSF, implemented the Western Equatoria Civil Society Capacity Building project to strengthen local CSOs, including the Arise Socio-Cultural Foundation, Union for Struggle against HIV/AIDS and Poverty, Hope Agency for Relief and Development, and Action for Peace and Development.

In intersectoral partnerships in 2020, TOCH collaborated with the Warrap State Ministry of Health to respond to the pandemic in Kwajok with support from the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development and Trócaire. Representatives of MRDA, CEPO, and the local pandemic task force appeared on talk shows on the radio station in Mundri to increase awareness about COVID-19.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.6



CSOs' public image was unchanged in 2020. CSOs are liked and supported by a broad range of communities, including grassroots and faith-based groups, businesses, government institutions, and institutions of higher learning, all of which embrace the ideas and programs of CSOs in South Sudan.

CSOs' media coverage improves every year and is a real strength of the sector. CSOs' activities are covered by both domestic and international media. Vocal organizations such as SAADO, OK Africa Foundation, SSUDEMOP, Responsive Governance, ONAD, TOCH, and CEPO are heard daily on radio and television stations, including Miraya FM, Eye Radio, Voice of America, and SAMA FM. The representatives of these organizations often take part in discussions and talk

shows about hot governance issues and use these occasions to advocate for the civil and political rights of South Sudanese citizens. When the journalist in Torit was arrested and the executive director of ONAD was detained, CSOs immediately issued statements protesting these events on Eye Radio, Miraya-FM, Voice of America, and other radio stations. The South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation, a government-controlled media outlet, occasionally covers CSOs' collaborations with the government but does not publicize CSOs' comments that are critical of the government. However, the government evidently listens to CSOs' constructive criticism when it is covered by other media. In 2020, after CSOs argued publicly that physicians rather than politicians should be appointed to the national task force on the pandemic, the government dissolved the task force and formed a new group dominated by medical professionals.

The public views CSOs as the eyes of the blind and the voice of the voiceless. Much of the public understands the role of CSOs and expresses appreciation for their lobbying and advocacy work and participation in radio talk shows, roundtable discussions, and public debates. Communities often rely on CSOs to make decisions on their behalf or help formulate positions on important issues. In 2020, public praise for CSOs' role to the return to ten states was widespread. WOTAP and TOCH were thanked by farmers in Kwajok and Wau after receiving seeds for their small-scale farming, and CEPO and TOCH were recognized for organizing reconciliation dialogues

between cattle keepers in Warrap and farmers in Western Bhar el Ghazal. At the same time, some people perceive CSOs as too critical of the government.

The government has mixed views of CSOs, depending on whether it sees them as working for or against its interests. For example, the government positively views CSOs' condemnation of the opposition's failure to comply with peace agreements but sees CSOs' condemnation of its own activities as the work of western spies. The government understands that CSOs play a fundamental, indispensably neutral role in South Sudan's nation-building process and relies on the sector for sensitive, constructive advice.

The private-sector's view of CSO is positive since CSOs speak for it as well when they complain about high taxes. In addition, CSOs have advocated for fair treatment of traders and businesspeople.

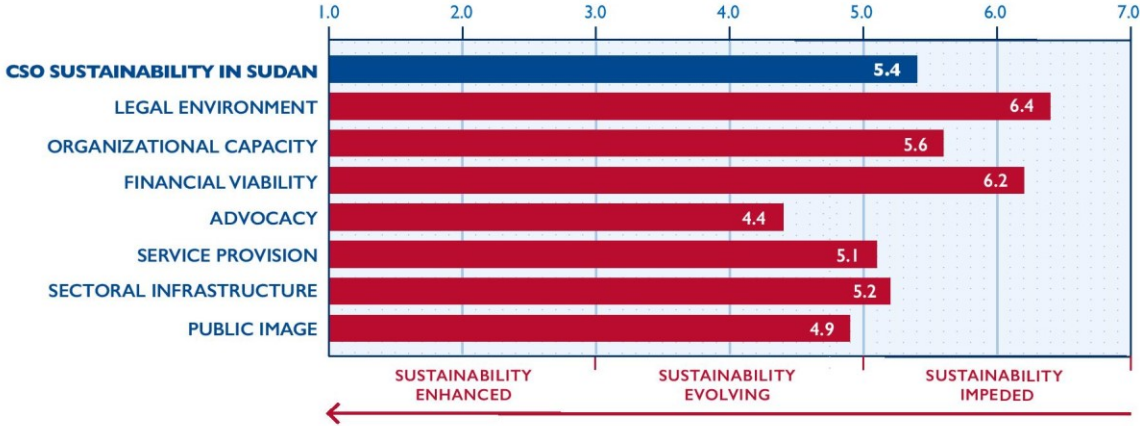
CSOs promote their public image by encouraging media coverage of their activities by a broad range of radio stations. CSOs cooperate closely with journalists and conduct trainings to build journalists' capacity. In November 2020, the South Sudan Female Journalists Network, Union of Journalists of South Sudan, and other CSOs and local media houses organized a two-day observance of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists with support from the British Embassy and NPA. Participants in the event included high-level government representatives, including the deputy minister for information, telecommunications, and postal services. Many online meetings took place between CSOs, donors, and key government officials in 2020. During the pandemic, CSOs found Facebook and WhatsApp groups to be accessible and effective methods of communicating among themselves.

CSOs issue narrative and financial reports, either yearly or occasionally, both to fulfill legal and moral duties and to meet donors' demands. Many CSOs have written standards of conduct for their employees.

SUDAN

Capital: Khartoum
Population: 46,751,152
GDP per capita (PPP): \$3,958
Human Development Index: Low (0.510)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (17/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.4



The year 2020 represented the first year of the civilian government in Sudan following the April 2019 revolution that ended Omar al-Bashir’s thirty-year authoritarian rule. With support from the international community, the government headed by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok embarked on a reform agenda with three main goals: internal peace based on justice, regional equity, and inclusion; legal and institutional reform, especially to curb corruption and promote human rights; and a stabilized economy, with conditions for sustained and inclusive growth, development, and poverty reduction.

A major development was the U.S. government’s decision to lift Sudan’s status as a state sponsor of terrorism in 2020. The delisting in December was a first step toward overcoming the country’s isolation and is expected to recharge the economy by removing a significant barrier to foreign investment and international banking. It also paves the way for debt relief under the joint Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Other progress during the year included the October signing in Juba of a peace agreement between the government and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front, representing the five main rebel groups in Darfur, Southern Kordofan, and Blue Nile. A few CSO networks and delegates participated as observers in the negotiations leading up to the signing of the agreement. Two other rebel factions boycotted the talks and were not part of the peace agreement. The failure to reach a comprehensive peace agreement coupled with the ongoing humanitarian needs and drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur continued to pose a threat to the transitional period.

The international COVID-19 pandemic arrived in Sudan in March 2020, and 1,537 cases of the virus had been reported by June. In April, the government declared a health emergency, closed schools and markets, and restricted domestic and international travel. The pandemic response was complicated by nationwide flooding caused by heavy rainfall, which prompted the government to declare a three-month state of emergency in September. Additional states of emergency were announced after outbreaks of tribal and ethnic violence in Darfur and eastern Sudan. Conflict in the Ethiopian border region of Tigray triggered a flood of refugees crossing the border, mostly on foot, into the eastern states of Sudan. CSOs played an important role in providing humanitarian and emergency relief and other services in response to these and other crises.

The Sudanese economy continued to deteriorate in 2020. The African Development Bank estimated that real gross domestic product (GDP) shrank by 8.4 percent. By the end of 2020, the value of the Sudanese pound had plummeted to an exchange rate of more than SDG 250 to the U.S. dollar in the parallel market, compared to the official rate of SDG 55. The Central Bank of Sudan introduced a policy requiring donors, international entities

including the United Nations (UN), and national CSOs receiving grants in foreign currencies to exchange their foreign funds at the official rate, which significantly reduced the value of their project funding.

CSO sustainability improved in 2020 as civic space continued to expand after the April 2019 revolution. The legal environment was slightly more enabling as stringent laws and regulations governing the sector were less strictly enforced and new reforms were initiated. Advocacy showed moderate improvement, driven by the increased willingness of local and central governments to engage with CSOs and the tangible impact of several advocacy campaigns. Service provision improved slightly as CSOs responded effectively to multiple needs, including the pandemic and a large influx of refugees into the eastern region. The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector was slightly stronger thanks to growing intersectoral partnerships and the formation of new CSO coalitions. CSOs' public image was slightly more positive because of state and private media's unprecedented coverage of their activities. CSOs' financial viability deteriorated slightly with new foreign currency regulations and the authorities' selective application of the law governing CSOs' revenue generation. CSOs' organizational capacity was unchanged.

The CSO sector in Sudan is made up of informal and traditional forms of organizations as well as more formal CSOs. The sector includes faith-based organizations, clubs and cultural associations, training centers, and the modern type of CSOs and humanitarian organizations known locally as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Statistics on the size of the sector are largely unavailable, but the sector was observed to grow both in terms of numbers and diversity in 2020. The number of registered NGOs is estimated to be upwards of 6,000. The National Council of Training reported a total of 725 registered non-governmental private training centers, which are also part of the CSO sector, in 2020.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 6.4



The stringent laws and regulations governing CSOs changed little as Sudan continued its transition from dictatorship to democracy in 2020. However, their implementation eased and new reforms were initiated, making the legal environment slightly more favorable for CSOs' work.

CSOs register under various laws depending on their purpose and activities. NGOs register under the Sudan Voluntary and Humanitarian Works Act (SVHWA) of 2006, which is the main law governing civil society in the country. Training centers register under the Sudan National Training Law of 2010. The registration process for NGOs registered under the SVHWA continues to put unjustifiable constraints on organizations' ability to register. For example, it requires them to submit lists of

their members (with individual signatures), and they must convene or hold their incorporation or establishment meetings after their paperwork is approved in the presence of the registrar.

Several international organizations, including the International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), and Saferworld, registered offices in Sudan in 2020. The government shut down a number of Islamist groups and CSOs affiliated with the previous regime and confiscated their assets. For example, in April 2020, the Committee for Dismantling the June 30th Regime and Removing Empowerment issued a decision dissolving the Islamic Dawa Organization, confiscating its assets, and revoking the law under which it was registered. In December, the commissioner for Khartoum State of the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), the main oversight body for CSOs, announced that forty-five organizations would be deregistered on the grounds that they were linked to the former regime or were found to be in violation of the law and HAC regulations. Among these organizations were the Cheshire Home for Children with Special Needs and Husn Al Khatima.

The government took initial steps to reform the legal and institutional environment for CSOs registered under the SVHWA in 2020. In February 2020, the head of HAC formed a committee mandated with developing a roadmap for reforming HAC and revising or replacing the SVHWA. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, the committee organized a two-day consultation with civil society in March to discuss needed

reforms. Workshop participants recommended that the government adopt a new set of regulations to improve the operating environment for CSOs and develop and implement a plan complete with timelines, specific milestones, and the roles of key actors to replace the SVHWA. By the close of 2020, no tangible progress had been made on realizing these recommendations.

The requirement that CSOs registered under the SVHWA must obtain the government's approval before receiving funding was not enforced in 2020. However, CSOs were hit hard by a new regulation issued by the Central Bank of Sudan in January that restricted their access to foreign currency accounts held with local banks. The new regulation instructs local banks to allow CSO clients to access only 50 percent of incoming deposits to their foreign currency accounts. The remaining 50 percent must be sold at the official exchange rate to the Central Bank of Sudan, with the Sudanese pounds deposited to the CSOs' local currency accounts. In addition, payments from CSOs' foreign currency accounts may be made only for strictly defined purposes. The Central Bank of Sudan required all international donors and agencies to exchange their foreign currencies at the official rate, which considerably diminished their ability to fund CSOs.

Harassment of CSOs declined significantly in 2020. Other than in areas such as registration and foreign currency accounts, the government did not enforce the onerous rules and procedures governing CSOs that were still in place. Only CSOs that were deemed to be affiliated with the former regime were targeted for closure.

The SVHWA stipulates that CSOs may not earn profits, which the authorities interpret as meaning that CSOs registered under the SVHWA may not realize income from the sale of services or products. In previous years, the government had turned a blind eye to several CSOs that provided services for fees and then invested the funds in other income-generating activities. However, in 2020, these CSOs were closed, and their assets were confiscated on the grounds that they violated the law by generating revenues from their services. Among the closed organizations was the Islamic Bir Organization, which had considerable assets, including blood-transfusion centers that serviced impoverished patients suffering from kidney failure. Under the Sudan National Training Law of 2010, training centers may generate income from fees.

CSOs are also restricted from engaging in fundraising activities or otherwise generating revenue from sources other than grants or donations. This rule is arbitrarily enforced. In 2020, several CSOs were able to hold fundraising events without licenses, while others were prevented from doing so by the authorities.

Tax exemptions, such as exemptions from value-added tax and duties on imported products, are legally available only to organizations registered under the SVHWA. These benefits are granted on a case-by-case basis by the Ministry of Finance on the recommendation of HAC, and they continued to be granted in 2020.

Local legal capacity is limited, with only a handful of lawyers in the capital city of Khartoum familiar with CSO-related laws and able to take cases on behalf of CSOs. CSOs that were shut down in 2020 did not turn to legal channels to refute or appeal their closures, probably because of the lack of legal resources.

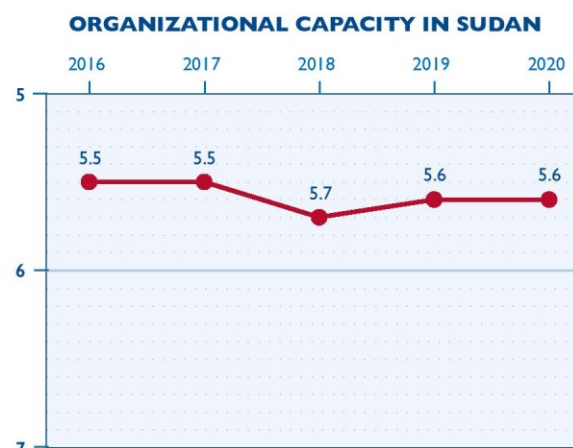
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.6

The organizational capacity of the CSO sector in Sudan was unchanged in 2020. There continued to be a lack of structures and processes to improve the quality of CSOs' operations. UN agencies reported a shortage of CSOs qualified to work as implementing partners on service delivery. A majority of CSOs applying to the UN system failed to meet due diligence requirements, such as having written policies to prevent fraud and conflict of interest, showing accountability to beneficiary populations, and adhering to financial management procedures for procurement, financial reporting, and audits. In addition, donors are generally reluctant to support CSOs' internal development in non-programmatic areas. Nevertheless, Sudanese CSOs improved their capacity in several key areas, such as engagement with constituencies, strategic planning, and the use of technology.

During the April 2019 revolution, more organic, indigenous platforms for engaging with constituencies emerged at the grassroots and local levels and played a decisive role in organizing civil disobedience. These informal social movements continued to strengthen their relationships with constituencies in 2020 and have supplanted popular committees affiliated with the former regime. For example, so-called neighborhood resistance committees throughout the country are comprised largely of youth who have shouldered the responsibility of ensuring that the day-to-day needs of their neighborhoods are met, especially in areas in which government services have been disrupted, such as garbage collection, or goods such as bread, cooking gas, and fuel are in short supply. National

NGOs were also able to engage more frequently and openly with their constituencies in 2020 by meeting in public spaces, conducting workshops, and to some extent conversing on social media. However, these interactions were severely hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2020, CSOs attached increasing significance to strategic and innovative planning approaches, especially given the fluid conditions of the transitional period. CSOs and some of their coalitions and networks began to adopt future-thinking and foresight technologies to facilitate their collective planning efforts. In November, for example, with support from USAID, more than twenty-four CSOs from across Sudan were trained on Future Search, a large-group, multi-stakeholder planning approach. Many CSOs continued to engage in strategic planning only to fulfill donor requirements and seldom linked their plans to the design and implementation of their projects.



CSOs are generally governed by general assemblies, which, according to the law, should have no fewer than thirty members. The general assemblies elect executive committees to oversee management, establish policies, and endorse annual financial and performance reports. The executive committees have internal by-laws governing their operations but generally lack structured performance assessment mechanisms.

CSO staffing and the retention of qualified staff by Sudanese CSOs continued to falter in 2020. This weakness has resulted largely from the influx of international organizations since 2019, which has increased competition for the limited pool of qualified and experienced national staff. Several Sudanese CSOs reported that they lost national staff to international CSOs offering much more lucrative compensation packages and career development opportunities. Largely because of the deteriorating economic situation, a majority of Sudanese CSOs had difficulty meeting the expectations and needs of staff. For example, unlike international organizations, Sudanese CSOs were unable to provide vehicles for staff use or underwrite the cost of their transportation to the office.

Access to and use of technology advanced in 2020 as CSOs increasingly turned to digital technologies to circumvent restrictions imposed by the lockdown. CSOs encouraged their staff to work from home and turned to platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Skype, and Zoom to facilitate communications. However, these alternative ways of working were mostly available to CSOs in the capital or states with more developed communication infrastructures, such as Port Sudan, Nyala, and Al-Fashir. In contrast to international organizations, only a few Sudanese CSOs have generators to use when the power goes out.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.2

The financial viability of the CSO sector deteriorated slightly in 2020 because of the deteriorating economy, unfavorable banking and foreign currency regulations, and the authorities' selective application of the law governing CSOs' revenue generation.

Funding for the majority of national CSOs comes mostly from in-country foreign donor institutions. These include multilateral donors such as the European Union (EU) and UN agencies, and bi-lateral donors such as USAID, UKAID, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and other smaller foreign embassy missions. And although the overall in-country funding pool for the CSO sector increased slightly thanks to the interest and willingness of some countries to support Sudan's democratic transformation, the influx of many international CSOs into the country reduced Sudanese CSOs' ability to capture these resources. Humanitarian and emergency relief continued to be the main area funded, with nearly \$1 billion pledged in 2020, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). With the outbreak of the pandemic, donors and international organizations temporarily shifted their resources to support a coordinated, multi-sectoral response to the threat. Organizations outside of Khartoum are poorly resourced and rely heavily on funding received for their work as implementing partners for larger organizations operating from Khartoum.



The new foreign currency regulation imposed by the Central Bank of Sudan in 2020 significantly reduced the value of funding that CSOs receive in foreign currency as well as their access to foreign currencies deposited in their accounts held with local banks. The requirement that CSOs exchange their foreign currency funds at the official rate rather than the black market rate significantly reduced their spending ability, as by the end of 2020 the two rates differed by a staggering 400 percent, according to the Sudan Civic Space Monitor.

Government funding for CSOs is negligible. Local philanthropy in Sudan is largely traditional and non-institutionalized, with wealthy individuals preferring to contribute directly to specific communities rather than through CSOs. Their giving usually targets orphanages,

mosques, and *khalwas*, or schools that teach the Qur'an and Islamic theology.

The private sector's highly visible support to CSOs in 2019 discontinued in 2020. Only a handful of corporate grantmaking and philanthropic institutions operate in Sudan. They are mostly attached to family-owned businesses, such as the Hagggar Foundation, Cofftea, and DAL Group, or telecoms networks, such as Zain and MTN.

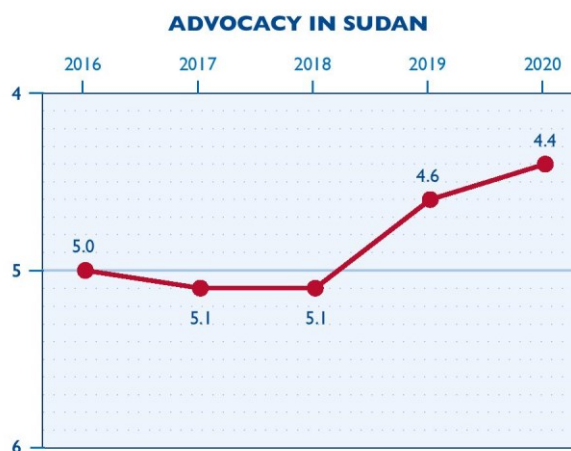
Because of the authorities' selective application of the law governing CSOs' revenue generation, Sudanese CSOs make little effort to generate revenue through the sale of products and services. The sector recognizes that it needs to develop business models and cost-recovery mechanisms to ensure sustainability independent of donor funding. The need for such tools has also been cited in several project evaluations conducted by UN agencies over the years. But efforts have yet to be made to develop them. Legal restrictions also limit CSOs' ability to engage in fundraising activities. Several organizations, including the International Voluntary Women's Group (IVWG), held fundraising events during the year, but the income that they realized barely covered the cost of the events.

The financial management systems of domestic CSOs remains rudimentary and can best be described as basic bookkeeping rather than actual financial management.

ADVOCACY: 4.4

CSO advocacy showed moderate improvement in 2020, driven by the increased willingness of local and central government officials to engage with the sector and the tangible impact of several CSO advocacy and lobbying campaigns. These positive changes were due in part to the appointment of individuals with civil society backgrounds to ministerial positions and other key posts in the new civilian government. In addition, Sudanese CSOs were recognized internationally for their role in the April 2019 revolution.

CSO advocacy in 2020 focused mostly on political participation, gender and women's issues, and peace and transitional justice. CSOs' improved access to government decision-making processes was evident in March 2020, when a CSO-led campaign under the banner *La Maqhura Wa La Manhoura* ("Neither Oppressed Nor Scolded") led to the formation of a committee under the Ministry of Justice tasked with amending the personal status law, which covers familial issues such as marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance and has several articles that CSOs view as violating human rights. The committee reviewed the law but did not issue recommendations in 2020. CSOs also discussed media policy during a two-day event organized by the Sudanese Development Initiative (SUDIA) in collaboration with Canal France International and the Sudan Ministry of Information in January 2020. The conference put forward several

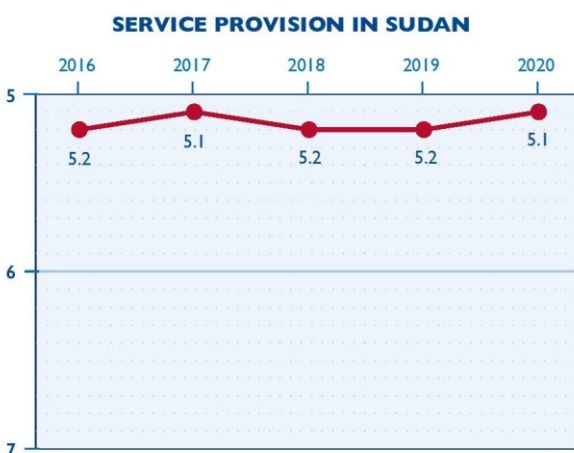


recommendations for reforming the media sector during the transitional period, which awaited action at the end of the year. The UNESCO Sudan office also made contributions to media policy and legal reforms in cooperation with CSOs and the government in 2020.

Multiple advocacy efforts focused on key political milestones of the transition, such as peace, justice, economic reform, elections, and the drafting of a new constitution. In the area of peace, CSOs requested to participate as observers in the Juba peace talks that took place between the government and a faction of the armed groups and were allowed to do so. The Framework for Peace Mechanism, an informal advocacy platform that promotes cooperation between Sudanese and international entities and CSOs, supported efforts aimed at a “Sudanese-led, comprehensive, integrated and non-violent democratic transition.” Several prominent CSOs, including the Sudan Sustainable Development Goals Platform (SSDGP) and Eyes, a platform for young women’s empowerment, led a series of strategic-planning exercises to address concerns related to the transitional period, which led to the submission of recommendations to the Office of the Prime Minister. The new civilian government included individuals with civil society or activist backgrounds, who were much more receptive to informal lobbying by CSOs than officials under the previous regime. For example, the new ministers of trade and labor and social development were individuals with civil society backgrounds.

The Federal Ministry of Development and Social Affairs embraced CSOs’ push to reform the institutional and legal frameworks governing the CSO sector in 2020. The ministry formed a committee comprised of government and civil society representatives to oversee the reform process. By the end of 2020, the committee had developed a set of regulations intended to replace the 2013 regulations governing national and international CSOs registered under the SVHWA. However, no tangible steps were taken to implement the draft regulations.

SERVICE PROVISION: 5.1



The range and quantity of good and services offered by CSOs increased slightly in 2020, largely as a result of the opening up of civic space. There was a growing sense among CSOs of ownership of the transitional period and the need to contribute to it proactively. This sense of responsibility was evident as CSOs responded simultaneously to multiple disasters, including the influx of refugees to the eastern region, flash floods in the Nile basin, and, first and foremost, the COVID-19 pandemic. CSOs’ response to these crises mainly involved monitoring needs and delivering assistance and was coordinated by HAC and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Funding for the crisis response was predominantly sourced from international agencies/bodies, such as the World Food Program, UNHCR, and Red Crescent Society.

The improved operating environment for CSOs increased both the range and quantity of their goods and services in 2020. CSOs operating in the humanitarian sector benefitted the most from the improved operating space, as they were able to embark on collaborative partnerships with the government in new areas such as the design and implementation of social safety nets. CSOs actively provided services in areas such as the rule of law, culture (poetry, cinema, and art), agricultural productivity, and, above all, humanitarian and emergency relief. Their role was particularly visible during the floods in summer of 2020, when they provided tents and shelter and distributed food. In local neighborhoods, the resistance committees that played a lead role in ousting the former regime shouldered the responsibility of ensuring the provision of basic goods and services, which otherwise tend to be centralized in regional hubs and the capital. The UN Development Programme worked with national CSO partners such as Young Dream Organization, Al Solh Khair, and the Gender and Peace Center on programs to provide communities in conflict-affected areas of Darfur, Blue Nile, and South Kordofan with goods such as tractors and improved seeds to boost agricultural productivity and improve livelihoods.

In general, CSOs' goods and services were responsive both to the needs of local communities as well as the country's larger democratic transition. Needs assessments and consultations with local communities are integral parts of CSOs' interventions. CSOs also use resources such as perception surveys, informal consultations, validation workshops, and full-fledged country-wide assessments such as the annual humanitarian needs report issued by OCHA. However, in 2020, the pandemic hindered or temporarily disrupted the delivery of goods and services to communities in need, as resources and attention were shifted to curbing the spread of the virus.

CSOs' goods and services are made available to all segments of the population irrespective of race, gender, or sexuality. Sudanese CSOs make little effort to recover costs, given the legal restrictions on revenue generation.

Government officials repeatedly recognized and applauded CSOs' responsiveness to the needs caused by man-made and natural disasters in 2020. This was evident during weekly meetings convened by the governor of Khartoum State, which brought together multiple state agencies to coordinate and monitor the flood response effort. Civil society representatives sat in on those meetings.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.2

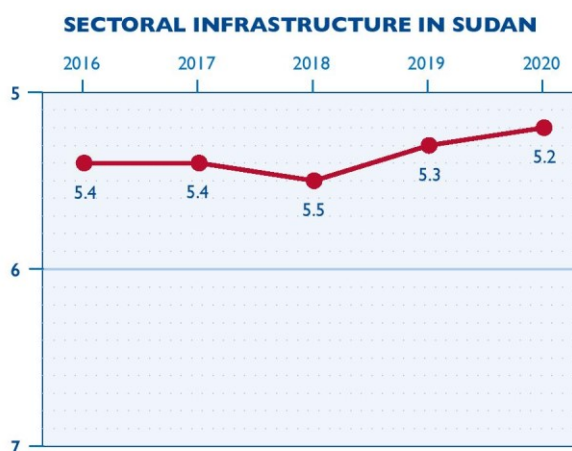
The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector showed slight improvement in 2020 as the need to curb the spread of COVID-19 catalyzed intersectoral partnerships between CSOs and the government, private sector, and media. The openness of the transitional government to cooperating with the sector also created space for the formation of new CSO coalitions.

CSO resource centers are limited in number and are mostly attached to universities such as Khartoum University and Ahfad Women's University. A few resource centers are hosted by international organizations such as the British Council. Several intermediary support organizations (ISOs) operate in Sudan, a large number of which are registered as training centers or providers under the Sudan National Training Law of 2010 and thus may earn income from fees. The centers play an important role in providing training opportunities and building CSO capacities in various fields. The government also offers contracts to train civil servants serving in different ministries, and several ISOs derive income from fees for these services. For example, the Impact Hub and Red R Sudan support themselves by providing a range of paid training services to the humanitarian community. CSOs' access to resource centers and ISO services was impeded throughout 2020 by shutdowns and other restrictions imposed by the government as part of the pandemic response. For example, the Regional Center for the Development of Civil Society and the Development Studies Center at Khartoum University were closed for more than three months because of the pandemic.

The number of local philanthropic institutions has not changed. The Haggar Foundation and corporate social responsibility units of telecommunications companies and other private-sector firms provided some grants to national CSOs, which were mostly geared towards the provision of basic services in underserved communities.

CSO coalitions and joint activities were on the rise in 2020, spurred by the opening of civic space with the end of the previous regime. Coalitions mushroomed especially at the central and national levels, where they were advocacy oriented and worked on issues such as the pursuit of justice for people massacred during a sit-in in April 2019 or fairer wages for particular professions. Darfur hosted several new coalitions, including the Darfur Women's Forum, a public forum bringing together CSOs and activists to advocate on behalf of women. In White Nile State, the Sudan Civil Forces Alliance gathered civil society groups from around the country to improve their coordination in helping shape the transition in Sudan.

Training opportunities in 2020 came in many forms. Various programs and projects implemented by UN agencies offered capacity building and training. These opportunities mostly targeted community structures and beneficiaries

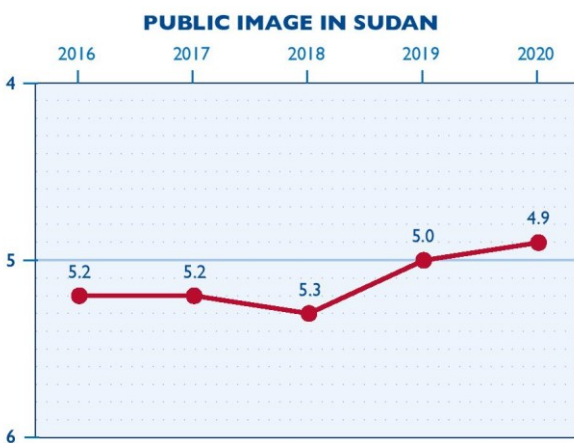


in areas such as conflict resolution, natural resource management, the management of community-based organizations, and vocational training.

With the opening of civic space in 2020, CSOs partnered more often with the private sector, government, and the media to address pressing issues such as the pandemic, education, and the media. For example, in January, SUDIA worked with Canal France International under the auspices of the Sudan Ministry of Information to convene a two-day conference on the role of the media in the transitional period and beyond. The event brought together media stakeholders from all sectors to discuss needs and priorities during the transition. The pandemic similarly spurred increased cooperation between the government and CSOs. This was particularly evident in regions outside of Khartoum, where the government relied heavily on CSOs to raise awareness about the virus and help curb its spread. For the first time ever, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development created the position of civil society partnerships officer to oversee the development of relationships with the CSO sector.

A number of private-sector groups provided funding for small-scale projects in water, health, sanitation, education, and capacity building to international and domestic CSOs. For example, the Haggar Group supported nutrition centers in East Sudan in partnership with Talawit, a local CSO, and the Coldair Engineering Company produced jerricans for the water, sanitation, and hygiene programs of the UN Children's Emergency Fund.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.9



CSOs' public image continued to improve in 2020, following the trajectory launched by the sector's leadership of the April revolution in 2019. The achievement of Sudanese CSOs was recognized internationally in 2020 by the National Endowment for Democracy, which awarded its annual Democracy Award to the Regional Center for Development and Training, Nuba Women for Education and Development Association, and Darfur Bar Association.

CSOs and the issues they work on received unprecedented coverage by state and private broadcasters during the year. For example, CSOs' response to the pandemic and flash floods in the Nile Basin benefited from highly visible media coverage. Programs such as the *Dialogue Around Nation Building*

and *Masarat*, which air frequently on Sudanese national television, allowed CSOs to present their viewpoints on rebuilding the Sudanese state. CSOs produced their own television programs on the Gedaref and Red Sea state television channels. *Nafag*, for example, was a weekly program that shed light on the issues facing civil society. CSOs were heavily covered on both private and state-owned radio, which has a larger number of broadcasters than television.

Public understanding of the concept and role of CSOs is focused on their charitable and humanitarian work, including their provision of basic services on behalf of the government. CSOs' involvement in other domains, such as human rights, governance, and advocacy, is less well understood and appreciated. The public's narrow understanding of the role of CSOs led to mixed perceptions of the sector in 2020. A large portion of the public continued to have a positive view of CSOs, based on their leadership during the April 2019 revolution and their involvement in the response to crises in 2020. At the same time, the public had an increasingly negative opinion of CSOs and CSO actors that assumed more direct political roles or accepted positions in the transitional government. A large majority of the public believed that the politicization of CSOs' work undermines their legitimacy and puts them on a collision course with political parties.

In contrast, government and business perceptions of this wider role for CSOs were generally positive in 2020. This was especially true regarding CSOs' involvement in civic engagement and civic education, the peace agreements, and countering fake news about the pandemic.

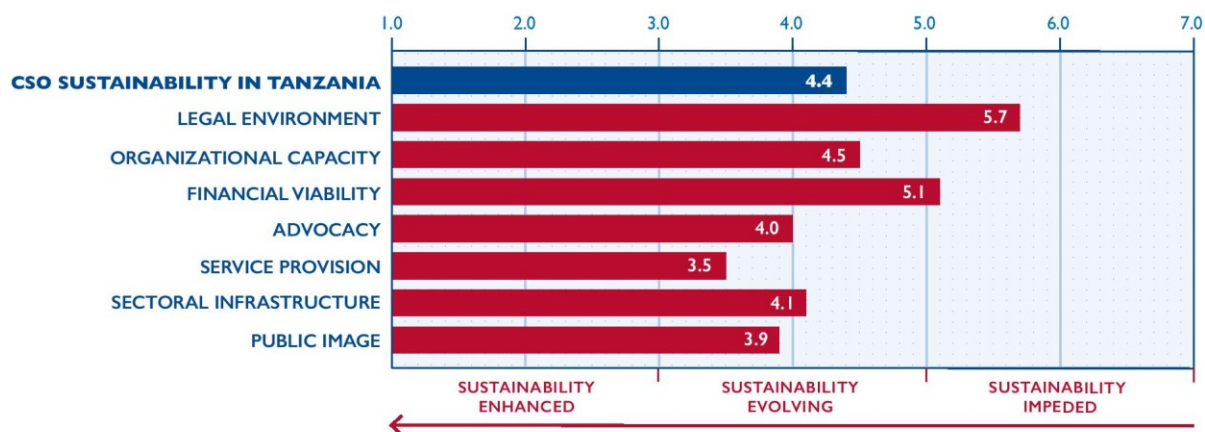
The CSO sector continued in 2020 to coast on its reputation forged in the 2019 April revolution and made little investment in maintaining and promoting a positive image. Relations with journalists improved considerably with broader cooperation on strategic and policy-oriented activities, such as the media forum organized by SUDIA and Canal France International in January 2020. With the growth of online news platforms, CSO events and activities increasingly benefitted from coverage by journalists and bloggers.

Self-regulation and efforts to promote greater transparency and visibility to the public have remained elusive to Sudanese CSOs. In 2020, only one formal event organized by SUDIA was reported to have taken place in Khartoum to explore the idea of a code of conduct and other forms of self-regulation by CSOs.

TANZANIA

Capital: Dodoma
Population: 62,092,761
GDP per capita (PPP): \$2,660
Human Development Index: Low (0.529)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (34/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.4



Elections and COVID-19 dominated public discourse in Tanzania in 2020. General elections for the president of the United Republic of Tanzania and the National Assembly took place in mainland Tanzania and the semi-autonomous region of Zanzibar on October 28, with early voting in Zanzibar on October 27. Prior to and during the elections, the government impeded legitimate political and civic activities. In an unprecedented move, the National Electoral Commission suspended key opposition candidates from campaigning and denied experienced CSOs accreditation to conduct voter education and election observation. Telephone networks were shut down for eleven days, and WhatsApp and other encrypted messaging services were blocked before and immediately after polling. Scores of people were arrested, and a handful of people were killed while protesting the conduct of the elections in Zanzibar. Several diplomatic missions and regional institutions urged the government to adhere to its international commitments to protect human rights and democracy. The ruling party was declared the winner in electoral landslides in both Zanzibar and the mainland.

After the first case of COVID-19 in Tanzania was reported on March 16, the government's response was swift and in line with the protocols of the World Health Organization. Schools and academic institutions were closed, and masks and social distancing were required. CSOs helped distribute hygienic supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE), while media and information campaigns raised public awareness about the disease. The authorities also promoted traditional medicine and inexpensive natural remedies as cures for the virus, while the president downplayed the threat of the pandemic and sought to calm the population by invoking the power of prayer. The government stopped reporting new cases of the virus in April and suspended virus testing in May. In June, the government declared the pandemic over and did not share data about COVID-19 in Tanzania for the remainder of the year. Academic institutions and schools reopened gradually, and the government issued guidelines to avoid infections.

The government continued its crackdown on advocacy CSOs in 2020 by threatening to deregister organizations such as the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) and Legal and Human Rights Center (LHRC). The government also froze THRDC's bank accounts, which forced the organization to stop operations in September. Freedoms of association and assembly shrank as both opposition political parties indoor and outdoor gatherings were banned, apart from those of the ruling party.

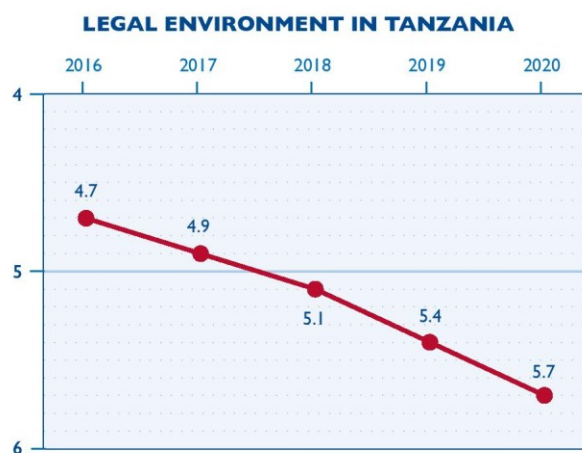
Tanzania achieved middle-income status in early July 2020, a success that was attributed to the government's emphasis on industrialization, infrastructure development, and curtailment of the embezzlement of public funds. According to the African Development Bank, the pandemic slowed the country's growth from 6.8 percent in 2019

to 2.1 percent in 2020. In October, Zanzibar launched a new development plan, Vision 2050, which aims to improve the overall standard of living and achieve zero absolute poverty in Zanzibar by 2050.

CSOs' overall sustainability regressed slightly in 2020. CSOs' legal environment worsened significantly as the government introduced unfavorable changes in the laws governing CSOs and increased harassment of human rights and media organizations. CSOs' organizational capacity deteriorated slightly as they faced difficulties retaining staff and were required to pay taxes on volunteers. CSOs' financial viability was weakened moderately by their inability to access funding, including for pandemic relief. Advocacy diminished with CSOs' lack of accreditation to observe the elections and reduced funding for advocacy activities. CSOs' public image dropped slightly, mainly because of draconian media laws. CSOs' service provision and sectoral infrastructure did not change.

The exact number of CSOs in Tanzania was difficult to determine in 2020, given the variety of legal forms and the re-registrations required after the government's CSO verification exercise in 2017–18. The Registrar of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children, which has primary oversight responsibility for NGOs, reported approximately 9,000 registered organizations in 2018. Zanzibar had 2,440 NGOs in 2020.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.7



CSOs' legal environment regressed significantly in 2020 as the government implemented oppressive laws governing CSOs and increased harassment of human rights and media organizations.

Before 2019, CSOs could register as societies, trusts, companies limited by guarantee, or NGOs under various laws and with different government bodies. The Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No.3) Act 2019 required organizations previously registered under the Companies Act, Trusteeship Act, or Societies Act and operating as NGOs, including most advocacy organizations, to register under the NGO Act. In 2020, this requirement was zealously applied, and most organizations to operate reregistered as NGOs. Under the new law, NGOs must submit donor contracts along

with annual reports and audited financial accounts to the NGO Registrar and reapply for registration every ten years. In 2020, to make registration easier, the government introduced online registration and issued guidelines and sample constitutions for NGOs in mainland Tanzania. The simplified process is expected to reduce registration expenses, such as costs for travel to and from the capital city and the duplication of documents. CSOs continued to pay registration fees, which vary according to the type of organization but are generally considered fair.

CSOs in Zanzibar register with the Business Property Registration Agency in the Ministry of Trade and Investment under the Societies Act No. 6 1995. They are overseen by the Special Department in the President's Office of Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG). In 2020, the NGO Registrar in Zanzibar opened a sub-office in Pemba to improve registration and other services for NGOs. Online registration of NGOs was introduced in Zanzibar in 2018.

New threats to deregister organizations were issued in both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar in 2020. The NGO Registrar on the mainland issued warnings of deregistration to THRDC, LHRC, and Participatory Ecological Land Use Management–Tanzania, because they had coordinated loose CSO coalitions. The Ministry of Home Affairs threatened to deregister Chama cha Wafugaji Tanzania for failing to hold scheduled elections of officers. The government also threatened to deregister savings and credit cooperative societies and other cooperatives that it considered financial institutions rather than CSOs. The Zanzibar NGO Registrar deregistered the AIDS Initiative, Youth Empowerment and Development Organization (AYEDO) for conducting programs contrary to its mission. In December 2020, the Vodacom Tanzania Foundation, which had been registered as a company but was deregistered under the 2019 amendment, challenged its deregistration in court.

The Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations 2020 repealed and replaced the 2018 regulations and are considerably stricter. They require bloggers, radio and television webcasters, and other online media to register and criminalize the publication of public-interest information uncorroborated by government, including information about demonstrations, outbreaks of deadly diseases such as COVID-19, and foreign-sourced content. Together with the Electronic and Postal Communication Act 2010 and Media Services Act 2016, the new law was used to penalize a number of media outlets in 2020. For example, in June, the license of *Tanzania Daima* newspaper was cancelled, and Kwanza Online TV and Kwanza TV were suspended for eleven months for re-posting a U.S. Embassy health alert on COVID-19, which the government deemed misleading and disruptive. The owners of Njombe TV, Milele TV, Habari Digital TV, and Njombe Yetu TV were arrested for operating unregistered and unlicensed television stations. In August, the Content Committee of the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Agency placed nine media houses under observation following their reporting on opposition election campaigns. In March 2020, the East African Court of Justice ruled in favor of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), THRDC, and LHRC that several sections of the Media Services Act of 2016 contradict the East African Treaty by encroaching on the freedom of expression.

Several changes to the law shrank the space for civil society in 2020. The Written Laws Miscellaneous Amendments (No. 3) Act 2020 prevents organizations that previously undertook public interest litigation from doing so, thereby potentially impacting advocacy by court interventions. Several local organizations have challenged this amendment in the national courts and at the East African Court of Justice. Amendments to the Political Parties Act limit CSOs' ability to undertake civic education. The Advocates Act 2020 was amended to exclude all lawyers and advocates in public service from membership in the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS), in what was widely interpreted as an effort to weaken the organization.

The NGO Registrar in Zanzibar held regional consultations with CSOs in Unguja and Pemba over a proposed NGO law in 2020. The new Zanzibar Civil Society Think Tank commissioned several expert reviews of the proposed law, which observed that the bill was modeled on Tanzania mainland's NGO Act No. 24 of 2002 and vests government entities with wide authorities. For example, appointees to the proposed NGO Council would be selected by the government rather than elected by NGOs, and the council would have more government than civil society representatives. The bill was still under consideration at the end of the year.

CSOs engaged in service provision encountered minimal state interference in 2020, but the situation was different for advocacy and human rights organizations. In June, employees of THRDC were arrested, its coordinator was detained by the police for questioning, and its accounts were frozen based on allegations that the organization had failed to submit donor contracts to the government, as required. THRDC was forced to suspend its operations in August pending further investigation. The former president of TLS was disbarred in September 2020 following her submissions in court critiquing the unconstitutional appointment of the attorney general. The National Electoral Commission denied experienced CSOs accreditation to conduct voter education and election observation while granting accreditation to inexperienced and poorly resourced organizations. Non-accredited organizations were not allowed to work jointly with accredited CSOs on election-related projects.

CSOs must pay numerous taxes, including value-added, import, and property taxes. The tax regime regards CSOs as professional business entities rather than voluntary civic movements and requires them to pay employment taxes and social contributions for all staff, including volunteers. The Finance (Public Revenue Management) Act No.12/2020 of Zanzibar provides for tax exemptions on assistance projects funded by foreign governments and multilateral agencies. But red tape and the lack of consistent procedures has denied many CSOs the possibility of obtaining these exemptions, and only three organizations reported obtaining them in 2020. In Zanzibar, Section 5 of the Diaspora Act No.4 of 2020 outlines areas of investment for the diaspora and the channeling of diaspora philanthropy and services. After CSOs in Zanzibar appealed to the minister for local government to grant NGOs tax-exempt status in 2020 on the grounds that their projects provide public services, the minister promised to work on the issue.

CSOs may raise funds from national and international donors, conduct fundraising campaigns, and charge fees for their products and services. CSOs may compete for private-sector and government contracts but rarely do so because of their lack of capacity or awareness. The Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children issued guidelines in April 2020 that provide that funding for NGOs must be included in the government's bilateral agreements with donors, therefore preventing CSOs from receiving funding from donors that do not have government agreements. Under the Finance Act of 2019, funding from corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs, private foundations, and local CSOs is centralized with local government

authorities, which then contribute 10 percent of the funding to poverty reduction and entrepreneurial initiatives. The Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act No. 14/2020 in Zanzibar compels local government authorities to allocate funds to women, the disabled, and youth, thereby making the funds accessible to CSOs.

The office of the registrars for NGOs, societies, and trusts provide CSOs with legal advice on registration and compliance issues. Some CSOs, such as THRDC, LHRC, and Zanzibar Legal Services Center (ZLSC), have professional legal experts on their staff that provide advice to other organizations. The Foundation for Civil Society (FCS) launched a rapid-response clinic in 2020 to help CSOs with operational and compliance challenges. FCS also trained trainers to work with CSOs in the regions to ensure their compliance with the 2019 amendments to the NGO Act.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.5

CSOs' organizational capacity deteriorated slightly in 2020 as some organizations were unable to move to virtual platforms for their work and staff retention became a more serious challenge.

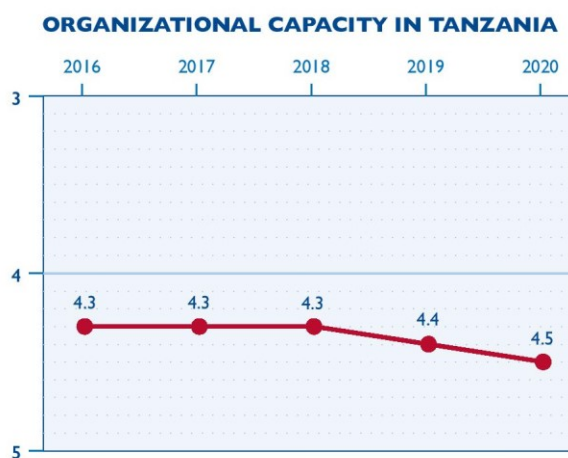
Most CSOs encourage their constituents to participate in their activities to enhance inclusivity, build a sense of ownership among beneficiaries, and ensure the sustainability of programs. Many organizations were forced to adapt, scale down, or cancel engagements with constituencies in 2020 because of COVID-19 prevention measures, such as social distancing, which remained in force throughout the year. For example, in its campaign to encourage voting by removing barriers to acquisition of the Zanzibar identification card, Ushiriki Tanzania changed its approach to stakeholder consultations and limited sessions to five people. Other organizations reported that they increasingly used Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, and KoBo Toolbox for data collection.

Most CSOs abide by their visions and missions. Well-established CSOs usually have strategic and operational plans to guide their interventions, while district and small CSOs tend to be guided solely by their constitutions. In 2020, the pandemic forced several organizations, including FCS, to postpone plans to conduct strategic planning.

CSOs must have governance structures in place at the time of registration. Most CSOs hold annual general meetings and quarterly board and executive committee meetings, in which they share plans and program and financial reports with members. National CSOs usually have independent boards of directors, while newer and smaller organizations have executive boards whose duties overlap those of management. CSO board members usually have diverse expertise in and outside of the sector and serve on their boards for limited terms. In a lengthy controversy involving the board of ZLSC, board members went to court in 2020 to challenge a unilateral decision by the board chair to appoint new board members. The case was still unresolved at the end of the year. Some CSOs held virtual board meetings in 2020 because of the pandemic.

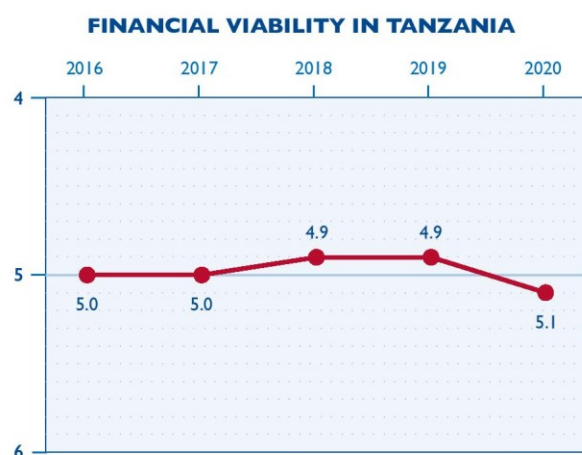
Staff retention was challenging during the pandemic, especially among middle-sized and community-based organizations. Some organizations had to reduce their paid and volunteer staff. For example, the Zanzibar Association of the Deaf cut the number of sign-language interpreters and office attendants it engaged because of pandemic restrictions and funding challenges. The situation was different at other organizations, such as Saidia Jamii Kuishi (SAJAKU), was able to hire three new employees according to preexisting plans. Most organizations were unable to implement plans to develop staff skills through training and mentorships. CSOs continued to outsource computer, legal, and accounting services, usually on a part-time basis because of financial constraints. The number of volunteers working for CSOs has been dropping in recent years and intensified in 2020 because of poverty, CSOs' lack of funding, and the legal requirement that CSOs pay taxes for volunteers.

Internet access is fairly stable throughout the country. The pandemic and the government's introduction of online services for CSOs encouraged digitalization in 2020, especially by national, youth-led, and well-established CSOs.



The move to virtual communications led some organizations to invest in internet connectivity, online platforms, and training, so that they could remain active and stay in contact with their communities and partners. Some CSOs frequently used apps such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, and KoBo Toolbox. However, for many organizations, especially at the district and community levels, the cost of moving online was prohibitive as well as risky because of restrictive cybercrime and media laws. The operations of organizations without the resources to make the switch often declined. CSOs have limited cybersecurity capabilities and practices.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.1



CSOs' financial viability declined moderately in 2020 as their ability to access funding, including for pandemic relief, was complicated by the government's public denial of the disease. The lack of official data about the number of cases and mortality prevented organizations from using such information when applying for funding for services. Save the Children, for example, was unable to access additional funding to support its COVID-19 response effort in part because of the lack of data to support its application. In addition, CSOs experienced the full impact of the Finance Act of 2019, which constricts the ability of CSOs to fundraise locally from CSR programs and foundations.

International development assistance declined in 2020 as foreign governments cut allocated funds. For example, after the government of the United Kingdom announced a reduction of GBP 2.9 billion (approximately \$2.35 billion) in its annual global aid budget for 2020–21, the Accountability in Tanzania Phase Two (AcT2), which builds the capacity of advocacy CSOs to hold the government accountable, shrank by approximately 60 percent, reducing funding for twenty-four domestic and international CSOs. Oxfam International also scaled down its programs in Tanzania in 2020 and is projected to close fully in September 2021.

Election-related funding for CSOs was sparse in 2020. The Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), through the Legal Service Facility (LSF), awarded funding to several organizations to provide civic education and monitor the 2020 elections. USAID, via the International Republic Institute and International Federation for Electoral Systems, also supported civic and voter education by CSOs such as the Center for Youth Dialogue, Pemba Island Relief Organization (PIRO), and Tanzania Youth Vision Association. Jumuiya ya Watu Wenye Ulemavu Zanzibar (JUWAUZA) was able to deploy a few national observers in Zanzibar with funding from the National Democratic Institute (NDI). A number of experienced CSOs, including Tanzania Civil Society Consortium on Election Observation (TACCEO), Tanzania Gender Networking Program, and Tanzania Women Lawyer's Association, were unable to obtain any funding for election-related activities because of their lack of accreditation.

In Zanzibar, LSF signed a memorandum of understanding with the Zanzibar Legal Aid Department in the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs to serve as a channel for funds for legal aid activities. This arrangement is expected to reduce the funding available to CSOs, since the government will determine priorities for the funds' use.

Most CSOs, especially at the district and regional levels, continued to receive support from local grant making organizations in 2020. FCS, LSF, Media Fund Tanzania, and Women Fund Tanzania are among the most prominent local grant makers. They are funded by various sources, including bilateral donors, foundations, and the diaspora. Their funding for CSOs is usually for less than one year and does not include institution building. In 2020, FCS awarded about \$500,000 for pandemic-related activities in addition to its regular grants.

Funding from business and philanthropic entities is difficult to access under the Finance Act 2019, since the funds flow through local authorities, who then control their distribution. In 2020, the Panje Project partnered with Chumbe Island Coral Park, a private nature reserve in Zanzibar, to work on marine conservation and water safety.

CSOs generally have inadequate skills to fundraise or create sustainable funding sources. Some organizations generate income by collecting membership fees, selling products, or engaging in similar activities. In 2020, Tusonge Community Development Organization in Moshi, Zanzibar National Association of the Blind, Tanzania Media Women’s Association (TAMWA), and Zanzibar Association of the Disabled purchased and rented out facilities as a complimentary fundraising strategy. COVID-19 protocols on social distancing undermined many CSOs’ strategies to generate income. For instance, More Africa, based in Paje, invested heavily in customizing a property to serve as a guest house for children with severe disabilities, but it was unable to earn income from the venture because the pandemic occurred just as the renovations were completed.

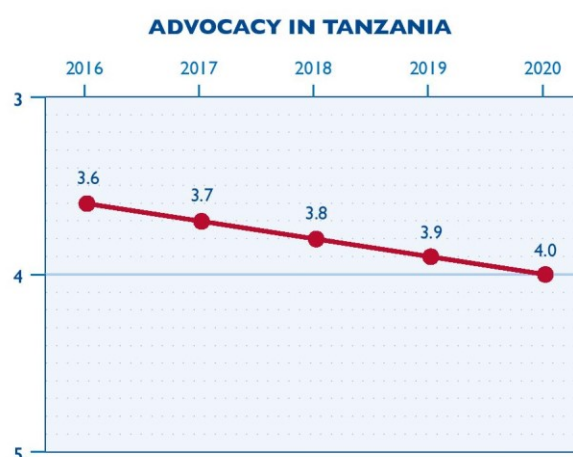
Financial reporting and transparency are a requirement of the law. NGOs must submit and publish donor contracts and expenditures. The cost of independent financial audits is prohibitive for the majority of organizations. Most NGOs rely on donor-funded audit services, which often do not include full-fledged program or financial audits.

ADVOCACY: 4.0

CSOs’ advocacy diminished slightly in 2020 as they were unable to engage fully in the elections and formation of pandemic-related policies. In addition, reductions in funding for the Act2 program reduced the advocacy capacity of twenty-four national and international organizations, including HakiElimu. Finally, because it was an election year, advocacy declined as elected officials focused on winding up their terms and seeking reelection and were therefore unavailable to CSOs.

CSOs’ engagement in policy and legislative processes is generally ad hoc and uncoordinated, both because of their lack of resources and the government’s tendency to introduce legal reforms under certificates of urgency. For example, the Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No.3) Act of 2020 was passed under a certificate of urgency with limited CSO involvement. Generally, CSOs are not consulted during the initial drafting of laws even if the causes were first advanced by CSOs. CSOs have advocated for universal rights for the elderly, for example, but were uninvolved in the initial drafting of Zanzibar’s Law on Elderly Affairs signed by Zanzibar’s president in November 2020. The CSO Civil Society Directors’ Forum presented to the deputy minister of health, community development, gender, elderly, and children with a position paper on the pandemic recommending that vulnerable communities be included in the national pandemic strategy. The effort turned out to be of little value once the government began to deny the existence of the disease. CSOs took part in government-led community processes at the local level in 2020. Twaweza coordinated the participation of at least ninety-five CSOs in the development of the Regional and Local Government Strengthening program to ensure the effective implementation of the government decentralization policy under PO-RALG. SAJAKU worked with local governments in Mtwara to follow up on expenditures on water projects in the district. Community Development Initiative Support (CODISO) was appointed a member of the Rusumo Power Project Reconciliation Committee, and Mtwara NGO Network was appointed a member of Mtwara Constituent Development Fund Committee. Numerous business associations of boda-boda riders, petty traders, and food vendors engaged with local governments to address harassment and breaches of their rights by the authorities.

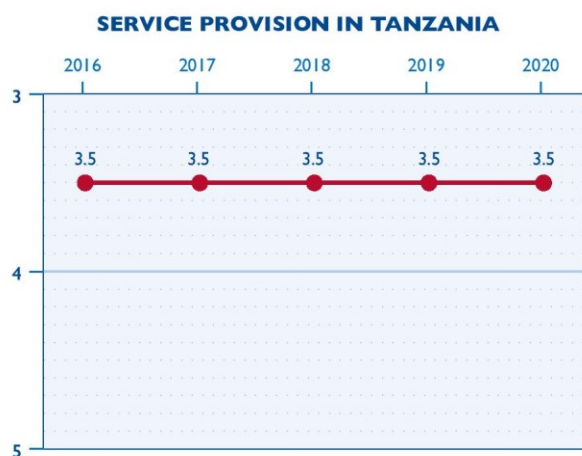
CSOs’ participation in the electoral process in 2020 was undercut after the National Electoral Commission accredited only 256 CSOs in mainland Tanzania and seven CSOs in Zanzibar to provide voter education and ninety-seven national and seventeen international organizations to monitor the elections. For example, although it had confirmed funding from various development partners, including DANIDA through FCS, TACCEO was unable to organize election observation after it was denied accreditation on the grounds that it is an unregistered coalition. The Center for Youth Dialogue, in cooperation with ZLSC, JUWAUZA, and PIRO, advocated unsuccessfully for wider public access to Zanzibar identification cards so more young people could vote in the elections.



Gender-oriented organizations, including TAMWA Zanzibar and the Tusonge Community Development Organization, enjoyed some success in their advocacy for women’s political leadership. Partly as a result of their work, fifty-five women ran for interparty nominations, of which eight women were nominated. CSOs also helped improve the political participation of people with disabilities. For example, Shivyawata, the federation of associations of people with disabilities in Tanzania, issued voter education materials and videos for the blind. The Zanzibar Association of the Disabled worked with the Zanzibar Electoral Commission to make the voting process user friendly and conducted a media campaign urging disabled people to vote. A growing number of activist movements organized campaigns digitally in 2020. For example, in response to a campaign by Change Tanzania One, a digital platform, people wore white to protest violence and intimidation. Tanzania Kwanza led an online campaign to demand accountability and adherence to the constitution rather than political parties and individuals.

TCSOs raised objections to the proposed NGO law in Zanzibar during the CSO Annual Forum in December. The minister of trade and investment welcomed dialogue on the topic and invited the sector to send in recommendations. On the mainland, several organizations made submissions to the parliament on the Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No.3) Act, 2020, which was nevertheless passed under a certificate of urgency. CSOs also focused on issues of legal compliance. For example, FCS operated a clinic and trained trainers to help CSOs comply with the 2019 amendments to the NGO Act. In an example of soft advocacy, FCS organized a joint consultative session in September 2020 with CSO representatives and officials from the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children, NGO Registrar, PO-RALG, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Tanzania Revenue Authority to discuss challenges to CSOs’ operations.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.5



CSO service provision was unchanged in 2020.

CSOs provided services in areas ranging from health care and access to water to legal assistance and furnishings to improve the learning environment for children.

ActionAid Tanzania supported victims of floods in Kilwa by providing food supplies to 880 households. A number of CSOs engaged in the pandemic response by distributing supplies and raising awareness through leaflets, radio, television, and loudspeaker announcements. For example, Kivulini in Mwanza distributed PPE and sanitizer and established hand-washing points in local communities. Childbirth Survival International provided food and other livelihood necessities to vulnerable families in Mazizini Ward in Dar es Salaam. In Zanzibar, Tanzania Youth Vision

Association, Pemba Youth Coalition, Jumuiya ya Vijana na Elimu Kaskazini A’, and Pemba Youth Voice Organization campaigned on social media to raise awareness of COVID-19. Some CSO service-providing programs were suspended or restructured because of restrictions on the size of in-person gatherings or CSOs’ reluctance to implement programs that could be construed as having a political agenda during the election year.

CSOs offer their goods and services to all members of the community without discrimination. CSOs’ engagements are guided by needs assessments, research, and information received from ongoing programs. Some organizations have well-established systems to monitor program outcomes and conduct evaluations to ascertain impact and inform future interventions.

Some CSOs charge small fees for their products and services, but they generally have no established strategies for recovering costs, and their efforts to do so are inconsistent and ineffective. TAMWA partnered with Milele Zanzibar Foundation in 2019 to establish a soap-manufacturing industry in Bambi, which employs local women as a move to alleviate poverty and help prevent gender-based violence (GBV), but the factory had yet to recover the costs of installation in 2020.

CSOs’ contributions did not go unnoticed in 2020. The prime minister acknowledged CSOs’ voluntary contribution of TZS 79 million (approximately \$35,000) to the National Relief Fund for the COVID-19 emergency.

The deputy minister for constitutional and legal affairs expressed appreciation for the work of eighty-nine CSOs, led by Save the Children, LHRC, and THRDC, in preparing civil society’s Universal Periodic Review Report. The NGO Registrar in Zanzibar commended local CSOs for their community work and efforts to fight GBV.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.1

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector was unchanged in 2020. Information about available services for CSOs is limited by the lack of coordination and a centralized information system. Some CSOs use physical and online libraries hosted by research organizations, such as REPOA and the Economic Social Research Foundation. LHRC and THRDC host research centers for CSOs, and local grant makers such as FCS and LSF offer technical support services. In October 2020, FCS launched a one-stop center in Dodoma where CSOs can easily obtain information about the sector. FCS launched a similar initiative in Zanzibar in partnership with the Zanzibar Institute for Research and Public Policy.

Local grantmaking organizations include FCS, LSF, Tanzania Media Fund, and Women Fund Tanzania are funded by international donors, such as DANIDA and the EU. In 2020, some local grantmaking organizations decreased their funding after the United Kingdom reduced its global aid budget.

CSOs networks and coalitions effectively provide their members with opportunities for training and information sharing as well as safe spaces to plan joint programs. The Forum for Rural Producers in Tanzania and Mifugo Forum organized the South Annual Agricultural Policy conference in 2020 to advocate for greater stakeholder engagement in agricultural and livestock industries. The Integrated Capacity and Community Advancement Organization (ICCAO–Tanzania) and ten other organizations formed an ad hoc coalition to campaign for girls’ education. In 2020, many networks expanded their use of online platforms to link and empower their members. While beneficial for many members, this development tended to marginalize organizations located in areas where internet penetration or access to stable connections was poor.

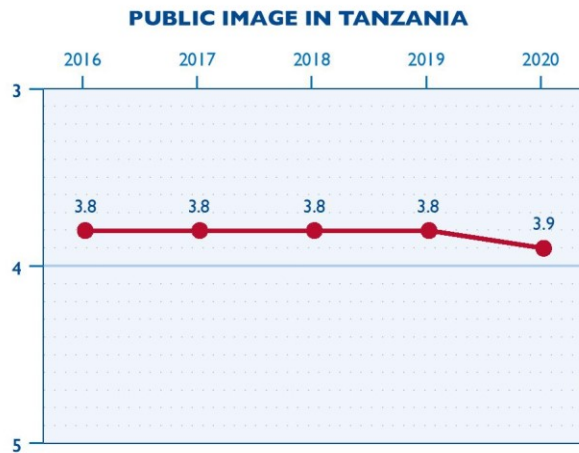
Capacity-building initiatives were varied in 2020. The Tusonge Community Development Organization provided training on human rights to twenty-eight CSOs in Arusha and Kilimanjaro. NDI trained ten CSOs in Zanzibar on cybersecurity, and Pact and Freedom House engaged in significant capacity development with funding from USAID. Haki Rasilimali partnered with MS-Training Center for Democracy and Cooperation to pilot a program to train CSOs on community-led advocacy in mining, oil, and gas resources, the program is expected to roll out in 2021. Among the networks and peer groups offering training, the National CSO Network on Climate Change trained its members on climate change and current global developments. Many training opportunities took place on digital platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams because of restrictions on in-person gatherings.

CSOs’ inter sectoral partnerships fared well in 2021. The Tusonge Community Development Organization entered into an agreement with Uchumi Commercial Bank to provide financial education and soft loans to its beneficiaries. Zainab Bottlers and Oversee Ltd supported the Zanzibar Social Workers Association during a commemoration of International Women’s Day. LSF signed a memorandum of understanding with the Zanzibar Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs to strengthen public services promoting access to justice. During the election period, CODISO worked with the Kwizera community radio station on public awareness, and ICCAO–Tanzania partnered with the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation and Mtanzania Digital on youth civic empowerment and engagement in the election. LSF and the Community Radio Network of Tanzania partnered to help LSF grantees provide legal education to their communities via thirty-one community radio stations.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN TANZANIA



PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.9



CSOs' public image deteriorated slightly in 2020 because of the country's political polarization and the media's fear of reprisal under laws and regulations that make it an offense to publicize information that is contrary to public interest or can lead to social insecurity, including, potentially, information about CSOs' advocacy work. The media tended to practice self-censorship, and their reporting was generally timid. Stories about CSOs in public media focused on service provision and programs conducted in partnership with government, such as commemorations of international days and campaigns to end violence against women and children. The government's directives on NGOs were also covered, especially those that cast CSOs in a negative light.

Public perceptions of CSOs conducting community-centered service projects are largely positive. For example, the Milele Zanzibar Foundation was highly visible in 2020 as it contributed to the construction of roads and schools. CSOs engaged in public-interest advocacy can be perceived negatively. For example, CSO advocacy on contentious issues such as sexual and reproductive health for women and girls is viewed suspiciously because of prevailing customs, tradition, and religious influence.

Local government authorities consider CSOs important community resources and were open to engage with them and share information in 2020. The central government perceives service-providing CSOs as contributing to the country's development and views advocacy and community-empowerment programs as a waste of resources. Private-sector perceptions of CSOs are generally favorable, as seen in their joint participation in events of common interest, such as International Women's Day.

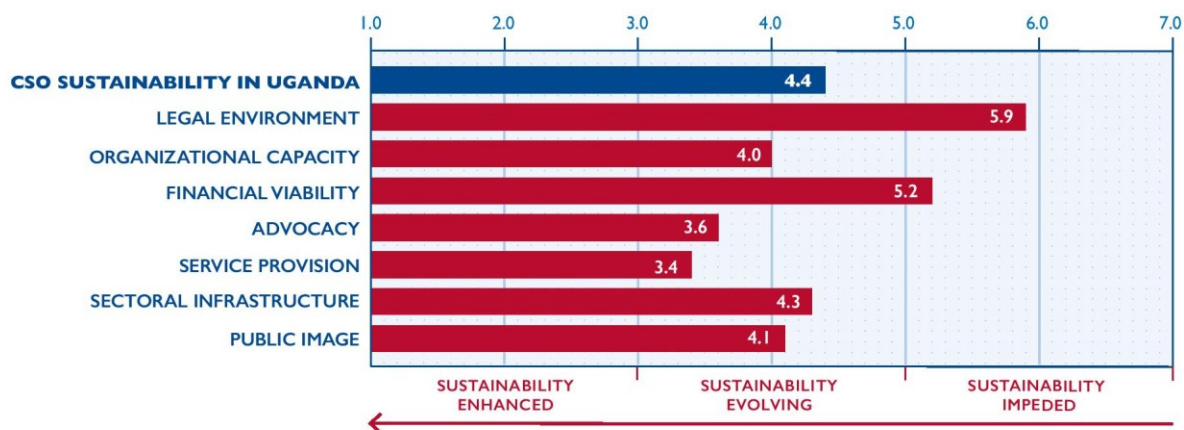
As media coverage of CSOs waned in 2020, CSOs salvaged their visibility by expanding their presence on social media, online information and news platforms, and online television stations, such as Haki TV and Watetezi TV. To improve their reputation with the government in 2020, CSOs conducted courtesy calls on public officials and invited them to officiate at their programs. CSOs sought to raise their public image by engaging in community activities, such as providing humanitarian support to prisons and hospitals and pads to schoolgirls.

National CSOs publish details of their work and annual reports on their websites and social media accounts. Larger and more established CSOs, such as LHRC, Twaweza, and Women in Law and Development in Africa, have codes of ethics embedded in their human resource manuals. MCT and TAMWA offer codes of conduct for journalists.

UGANDA

Capital: Kampala
Population: 44,712,143
GDP per capita (PPP): \$2,187
Human Development Index: Low (0.544)
Freedom in the World: Not Free (34/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.4



The year 2020 put seismic pressures on Uganda’s civil society sector. On March 18, before the COVID-19 virus was detected in the country, the government announced a thirty-two-day lockdown (which was later extended to sixty days). Private and commuter transport was grounded, all businesses were closed save for markets and shops selling essential commodities, and an indefinite curfew prohibiting movement after nine o’clock at night was established. Except for organizations working in service delivery or with staff within walking distance of their beneficiaries, CSOs were grounded during the lockdown, and their functions and services continued only if they could be performed online. The government’s enforcement of the pandemic directives led to several cases of human rights abuse. Videos and photographs of local defense units, or paramilitary groups that provide community policing services, as they battered and detained people for flouting the restrictions were uploaded by citizens onto social media, creating a climate of fear that undermined CSOs’ work.

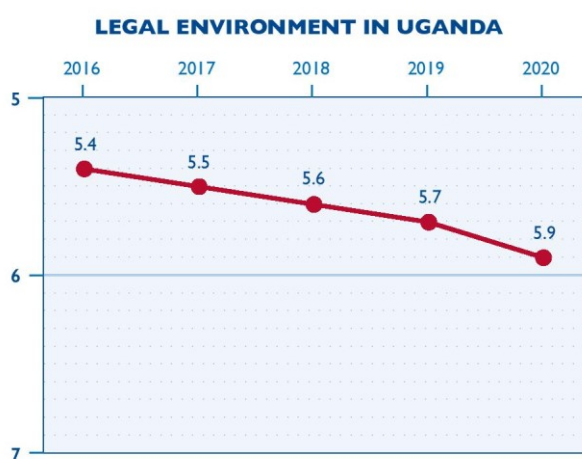
As the country prepared for national elections in 2021, Uganda’s already reduced civic space came under intense attack. Political tensions were stoked by the rise of rapper-turned-politician Robert Kyagulanyi (also known as Bobi Wine), who rapidly became popular among Ugandan youth, the largest voting bloc, who were disenchanted with the thirty-four-year rule of President Yoweri Museveni. Kyagulanyi’s National Unity Party and People Power movement used social media and international press to mobilize resistance to Museveni, whom they called an existential threat to the political order. The state responded with selectively applied legal measures and iron-fist brutality. Journalists were assaulted and detained; the bank accounts of leading advocacy CSOs such as the Uganda National NGO Forum were frozen; CSO leaders were arrested on trumped-up charges; and regressive legislation that would block access to social media was proposed. Since the Electoral Commission lacked the legal authority to enforce equitable access to media, both government and private media effectively excluded several opposition candidates. On several occasions, when popular candidates such as Kyagulanyi attracted large groups of people despite the bans on public gatherings, violent clashes with security services broke out and dozens of people were killed.

The COVID-19 crisis seriously undermined Uganda’s economy. According to the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Planning, projected revenue shortfalls and additional expenditures in 2019–20 and 2020–21 left the government with a \$190 million funding gap. Real growth in the gross domestic product grew at 2.9 percent, compared to 7.5 percent growth in 2019, the World Bank reported. Poverty was declining in Uganda before the pandemic, but an additional 780,000 Ugandans were pushed into poverty in 2020 as unemployment increased and household incomes declined, according to the minister of finance.

The overall sustainability of the Ugandan CSO sector was unchanged in 2020. The legal environment deteriorated moderately as the government clamped down on civic space by selectively applying laws and threatening closures and deregistration. At the same time, CSOs' organizational capacity improved slightly as CSOs adapted effectively to constraints imposed by the pandemic. Advocacy also improved slightly as organizations sought to protect human rights during the pandemic. CSOs' contribution to the pandemic response strengthened their service provision slightly. The sectoral infrastructure was slightly improved by new local grantmaking initiatives and CSOs' more intentional efforts to collaborate. CSOs' financial viability and public image were unchanged.

According to the National Bureau for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), about 13,000 organizations were registered in Uganda's CSO database at the end of 2020, down from 14,000 in 2019. The reduction was due to the government's effort in 2020 to verify that all CSOs in the database inherited from the NGO Board, which was replaced by the National Bureau for NGOs in 2016, had valid contact information as proof of their existence.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.9



The legal environment governing the CSO sector deteriorated moderately in 2020 as the government selectively applied laws and threatened closures and deregistration in an effort to clamp down on civic space.

All CSOs are governed by the NGO Act of 2016 and NGO Regulations of 2017. Registration procedures did not change in 2020 and continued to be burdensome and expensive. CSOs register as NGOs under the NGO Act, as companies limited by guarantee under the Companies Act, or as trusts under the Trustees Incorporation Act. After signing memoranda of understanding with local authorities in the geographic areas in which they intend to operate and obtaining letters of recommendation from their line ministries, organizations then apply to the NGO Bureau for certificates of registration. CSO must

also obtain operating permits, which are normally renewed annually, although depending on their ability to pay the prescribed annual fees, and at the NGO Bureau's discretion, organizations may renew the permits for up to five years. Community-based organizations (CBOs) go through a similar process that culminates in registration with district NGO committees, which act as NGO Bureau representatives. Smaller groups such as professional or village associations register with local government authorities. Fees are incurred at every step of the registration process and are often determined arbitrarily. The NGO Bureau may revoke operating permits at its discretion.

According to the NGO Bureau, only 2,234 of the roughly 13,000 CSOs in its database in 2020 had valid certificates of registration and operating permits. When the NGO Bureau conducted a three-month exercise in 2019 to verify the legal status of operating organizations, many CSOs viewed the exercise as lacking a legal basis and were reluctant to comply, especially since the process was cumbersome and expensive. But several national and regional CSO networks encouraged CSOs to validate their registration status in 2020, and, thanks to efforts led by the Uganda National NGO Forum and Human Rights Center Uganda, the NGO Bureau's threat to close all CSOs that had not validated their status was postponed. However, most CSOs continued to work under threat of closure for non-compliance in 2020, although the state usually invokes this rule only in the case of CSOs whose work runs counter to its political interests, such as those that engaged in advocacy and governance work. Among the organizations known to be indefinitely suspended in 2020 were the Bryan White Foundation and Give Directly. Other CSOs were reported to be quietly deregistered, but these accounts could not be corroborated.

All CSOs must file annual reports and returns with the NGO Bureau and Uganda Registration Services Bureau. They must also register and file annual financial returns with the Financial Intelligence Authority (FIA). Regulation 45(1) of the Anti-Money Laundering Regulations of 2015 requires every accountable person to report its level of compliance to the FIA at the end of each calendar year in a process that can be long and tedious.

In 2020, the government selectively applied laws and pandemic directives to target CSOs it deemed supportive of the opposition. Several cases were reported of state reprisal against CSOs engaged in advocacy on the elections,

democracy, and accountability. For example, in anticipation of the general elections in January 2021, a renowned human rights lawyer was arrested on trumped-up charges of money laundering and released on bail only after significant pressure from CSOs and development partners. Several CSO members of the Election Observation coalition were denied accreditation by the Electoral Commission, and in November, the bank accounts of key members of the coalition, including the Uganda National NGO Forum and Uganda Women's Network, were frozen. National Election Watch Uganda (NEW-U), a coalition of sixty-four domestic CSOs planning to observe the elections, was arbitrarily declared illegal and suspended via a public statement issued by the NGO Bureau on October 29. NEW-U had operated under a legal loophole in which coalitions are not expressly required to register. NEW-U members decided to work independently to carry out election observation activities and pool their information until the police stopped them days before voting in January 2021.

Of major significance was a ruling by the Constitutional Court on March 26, 2020, that repealed sections of the Public Order Management Act (POMA). The law is notorious for serving as a favorite tool of security agents seeking to harass CSOs. Section 8 of POMA, which gave the inspector general of police sweeping powers to stop public gatherings and was often used to block opposition rallies and CSO events, was among the repealed sections. The ruling reversed one of the most invasive claw-backs of civic rights and freedoms in Uganda's legal system. The attorney general has appealed this ruling at the Supreme Court.

On September 7, the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) issued a public notice requiring all persons broadcasting audio-visual content through digital channels or web services to register with it if the broadcasts were generated in Uganda. Although the UCC was ostensibly fulfilling its mandate to regulate the data communication infrastructure as provided under the Uganda Communications Act (2013), CSOs regarded the move as an effort to restrict their use of social media. The public, mobilized in part by CSOs, signed several online petitions protesting the requirement and successfully generated enough pressure to force the UCC to back down from implementing it.

The taxation of CSOs did not change in 2020. CSOs continued to pay value-added, pay-as-you-earn, withholding, and local service taxes, as well as a tax on all financial transactions made through mobile phones. Under the Non-Governmental Organizations Regulations, 2017, many CSOs were stripped of existing tax exemptions and had to re-apply for them in a process that remained unclear and complicated. Very few organizations were granted exemptions in 2020. The new regulations favor CSOs engaged in service delivery, in that CSOs are required to demonstrate the way in which they contribute to the country's development when applying for tax exemptions.

Under the NGO Act, CSOs may operate businesses, with any proceeds taxed under the rules for private businesses. Few organizations take advantage of this opportunity, mainly because of the widespread belief that nonprofit organizations are prohibited from operating businesses. However, some civic actors who find the space for CSOs too restrictive have registered as social enterprises, which enables them to generate income that can be used to fund their missions. According to a 2020 study by the Siemens Stiftung on social enterprises in Africa, approximately 27,400 social enterprises, or nearly twice the number of CSOs in the national database, exist in Uganda.

CSOs are free to mobilize resources from foreign sources. However, the compliance burden, including the maximum five-year duration of operating permits and the need for memoranda of understanding with local authorities and line ministries, can limit CSOs' ability to negotiate long-term partnerships with potential donors. The FIA requires Ugandan banks to enforce a wide range of verification measures regarding funds coming into CSOs' accounts from external sources, and many CSOs reported blocked funds and frozen bank accounts in 2020.

CSOs are free to participate in calls for bids on projects in which the government is the lead implementer.

CSOs had access to adequate legal resources in 2020, despite the intensification of the state's efforts to close civic space. For example, CSOs such as Chapter Four Uganda helped register provincial organizations that lacked the legal capacity to go through the validation process on their own. In general, few CSOs took advantage of available legal services, mainly because they were not aware of them.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.0

CSOs' organizational capacity improved slightly in 2020 as they adapted effectively to the constraints imposed by pandemic-related restrictions.

The sector displayed remarkable resilience in finding innovative ways to support and strengthen their relationships with constituents in 2020, especially at the sub-national level. Many CBOs and regional CSOs ranked their performances during the crisis as better than in preceding years. For example, First African Bicycle Information Organization organized its constituents into clusters of twenty members and distributed bicycles to each cluster to use in purchasing domestic goods and visiting health-care centers during the lockdown. At the regional level, CSOs such as the Public Affairs Center (PAC) and Lira NGO Forum

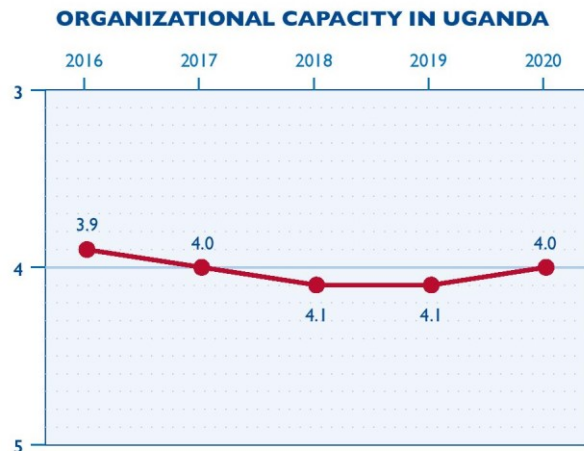
offered their vehicles to regional taskforces distributing food and disseminating information about the standard operating procedures for COVID-19 prevention. In northern Uganda, Human Communications Resources used its network of podcasters to track reports of the virus in refugee camps and produced podcasts informing community members about the threats posed by the virus.

Most Ugandan CSOs have good relationships with their constituents. The majority of organizations consult with stakeholders before writing funding proposals and hold annual stakeholder meetings to enhance their accountability to beneficiaries. The lockdown and post-lockdown curfews and restrictions on movement and assembly made it difficult for CSOs to carry out these and other routine tasks requiring direct contact with beneficiaries. But not all organizations were adversely affected. CSOs in the service sector were incorporated into the pandemic response, especially at the regional level. For example, they contributed to relief and contact-tracing efforts by lending their vehicles and human resources to support the work of regional taskforces and raised awareness about available services and human rights issues intensified by the crisis.

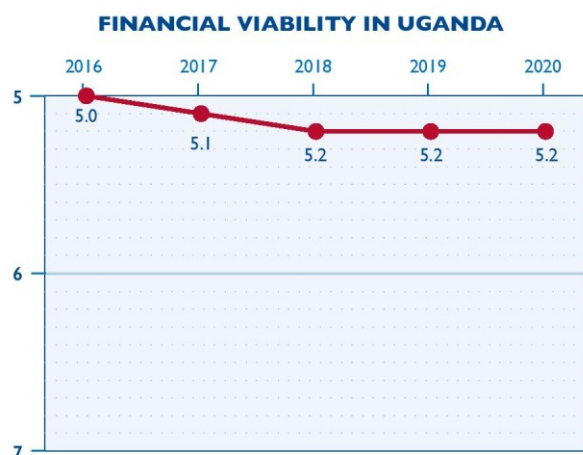
Most CSOs have mission statements, objectives, and strategic plans and seek to follow them. However, the need for funding, coupled with the narrow and shifting range of donors' interests, sometimes forces CSOs to implement activities unrelated to their missions. CSOs usually have functioning management structures. For example, professional associations such as the Uganda Law Society, savings and credit cooperatives, and other membership-based organizations regularly conduct annual general assemblies to gather feedback from members or elect new leaders. Exceptionally strong management was evident in 2020 at the Uganda National NGO Forum, a leading umbrella organization, whose general assembly appointed a new board, which in turn selected a successor to replace the departing executive director, thus fulfilling its policy of fixed tenures for the leadership position.

Donors' shift in recent years from supporting institutional development to almost exclusively funding programs has diminished the sector's capacity to attract and retain qualified personnel. Some CSOs at the national level still have full-time professional staff. But other CSOs have adapted well to the decline in funding for human resources. Rather than hire full-time staff, for example, most organizations now offer temporary contracts. CSOs bridge gaps in personnel for accounting, project management, and other specialized functions by using digital resources. At the local level, CSOs' ability to retain professional staff is low, and most organizations have only one qualified staff member, usually the founder or executive director, and otherwise rely on under-skilled volunteer labor.

Many CSOs responded proactively to pandemic conditions by turning to remote working arrangements in 2020. Despite Uganda's low internet penetration and high data costs, stringently enforced restrictions on movement during the lockdown and post-lockdown period caused many organizations to rely on the internet to meet and maintain contact with beneficiaries. Popular tools included virtual meeting apps as well as WhatsApp and social media platforms. CSOs lacking technical capacity were trained by regional CSOs, such as the Defenders Protection Initiative (DPI), which provided free cyber-security training.



FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.2



CSOs' financial viability was unchanged in 2020.

The majority of CSOs in Uganda still rely on foreign sources of funding. In 2020, donor funding baskets prioritized responses to the pandemic over human rights and advocacy work, and some funders froze spending on regular programming.

Access to multiple and diverse sources of funding remained a challenge for all types of CSOs in 2020. Domestic sources of funding are still scarce, although evidence suggests that the private sector should become a more viable source of CSO funding in the future. For example, in a three-month period in 2020, the private sector donated \$7.5 million to the National COVID-19 Relief Fund, according to CivSource Africa. However, even when corporations dedicate a portion of their

budgets to corporate social responsibility programs, no detailed legal framework regulates how much, how often, and to whom corporations must give. They usually channel funding to public relations efforts such as charity runs and raffle competitions or donate their products directly to beneficiaries, thereby bypassing CSOs in an effort to avoid clashing with the state.

In recent years, some effort has been made to create local funds for CSOs. CivSource Africa has emerged as a local grantmaking organization and is spearheading an effort to regularly document local giving. This effort is useful both for encouraging Ugandans to give through formal structures, such as organized funds and grantmaking institutions, and for helping CSOs identify potential private-sector partners. In 2020, a group of CSOs worked together to create the Ujasiri Fund, which collects periodic contributions from member CSOs, which are re-granted to organizations and initiatives requiring critical support. Although still starting up and undersubscribed, the fund is developing a membership along with awareness of the need for local funding alternatives. At the national level, the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) led a fundraising drive soliciting contributions to the National COVID-19 Relief Fund in 2020 and collected about \$2,800. The Dolphin Fund has developed a crowdsourcing, GoFundMe-type service that allows anyone to raise money for or donate to specific causes.

There is no direct funding from government to CSOs. However, in service delivery sectors such as health, agriculture, and refugee support, CSOs work closely with government. For example, local governments sometimes outsource implementation of program activities to local CSOs. Development partners sometimes channel funding for government programs through CSOs. Irish Aid, for example, provided support to the Human Rights Center Uganda (HRCU) along with the National NGO Bureau to conduct regional reflection meetings on the implementation of Uganda's new regulatory framework for CSOs.

Although CSOs may legally sell goods and services to finance their operations, such activities have yet to serve as a viable source of revenue. The public believes that CSO services ought to be free, and most CSO beneficiaries have limited capacity to pay for the true costs of the products and services that they receive. Some CSOs offering services such as pads for poor teenage girls and youth skill training and employment are starting to generate income through business activities and social enterprises in tourism, transport, trade, and agriculture.

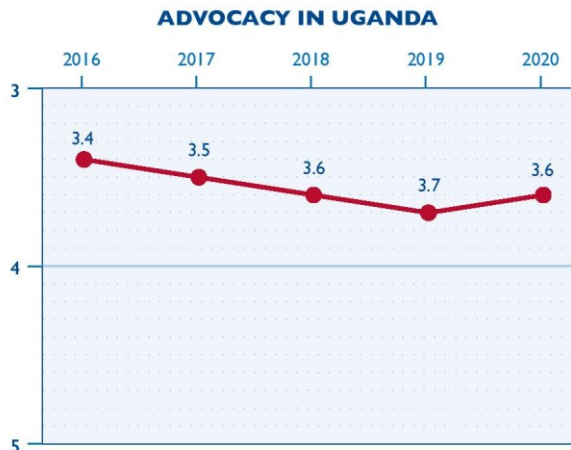
ADVOCACY: 3.6

Advocacy improved slightly in 2020 as CSOs effectively pursued human rights issues in the context of the pandemic.

Advocacy CSOs dealing with non-sensitive issues such as child protection, women's empowerment, jobs training for youth, and reproductive health have productive ties with the central government and are often involved in its decision-making processes. For example, since 2019, the Civil Society Budget Group (CSBAG) has had a strong standing partnership with the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development and regularly rallies both

government officials and citizens to be more involved in the budget process. CSBAG has succeeded in opening up access to information on budget proceedings, thereby allowing citizens to contribute meaningfully to the decision-making process.

As 2020 was a pre-election year, the narrative that advocacy CSOs were conspiring with opposition politicians and undefined “foreign elements” to overthrow the government prompted many members of parliaments to avoid contact with such CSOs. Even more important, their preoccupation with campaigns made it difficult for CSOs to gain access to lawmakers. Government officials snubbed the Strengthening Citizens’ Engagement in Elections (SCENE) national stakeholder dialogue organized by UNNGOF, a major advocacy organization.



CSOs demonstrated remarkable resilience in responding to the government’s aggressive enforcement of COVID-19 restrictions in 2020, which raised human rights issues related to freedoms of expression and assembly. Human rights organizations such as the Coalition of Human Rights Defenders took the lead in urging the government to ease the restrictions. Through video and photographic documentation, written formal complaints, and online petitions, CSOs pressured the government into withdrawing local defense units for retraining because of their abuse of human rights, including beatings, detentions, and killings. The president also issued public orders to deter the security units from treating citizens brutally. CSOs also advocated for police and local security forces to attend to the spike in domestic violence precipitated by the lockdown, with the result that the police established a hotline. During the year, HRCU provided the Uganda Police Force, Uganda Human Rights Commission, and judiciary with advisory and training support to reduce harassment of human rights defenders.

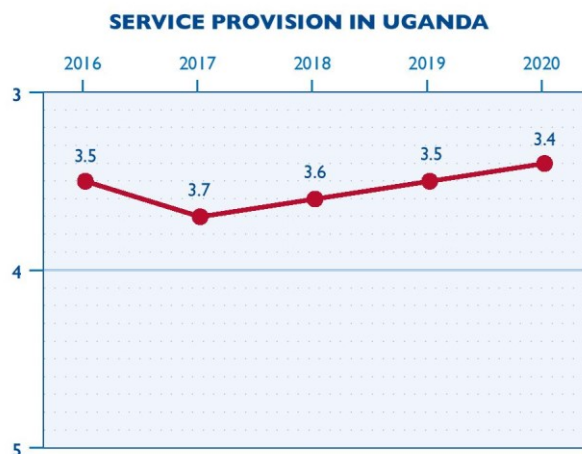
CSOs initiated legal action to defend civic space in 2020. For example, the Uganda National NGO Forum and Uganda Women’s Network sued the attorney general and FIA for closing their accounts. The Center for Constitutional Governance (CCG) and Innovations for Democratic Engagement and Actions sought High Court review of the NGO Bureau’s decision to suspend NEW-U. CSOs’ joint action on a challenge of this magnitude resulted in a stronger collective voice on legal issues affecting the sector.

CSOs also made several efforts to promote a more favorable legal and regulatory framework for the sector. Chapter Four Uganda and several other organizations helped increase awareness of the registration process and enhance the legal capacity of smaller CSOs. Working with HRCU and the Uganda National NGO Forum, the NGO Bureau attempted to bridge the deepening divide between the government and the CSO sector by continuing to carry out regional reflective meetings to discuss the NGO regulatory framework and organized quarterly dialogues with the minister of internal affairs.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.4

Service provision improved slightly in 2020 as CSOs continued to provide regular services while making a stellar contribution to the pandemic response.

CSOs in Uganda provide diverse services ranging from health care, education, and justice to vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities and underprivileged populations to awareness raising about social inclusion, civic participation, and government accountability. CSOs continued to provide most of their regular services, despite pandemic restrictions in 2020. CSOs also contributed to the pandemic response by engaging in community mobilization and sensitization, food distribution, and psychosocial support; producing studies on the social and economic impact of the pandemic, along with campaigns to raise awareness about spikes in domestic violence, mental illness, and teenage pregnancies; and offering cash relief to micro- and small enterprises negatively affected by the pandemic. Mercy Corps helped health authorities deliver services in Karamoja region. Many CSOs in the health-care sector disseminated information about pandemic protocols with support from USAID. Even advocacy



organizations such as Public Affairs Center and Lira NGO Forum supported local governments with vehicles and personnel.

CSO services became more responsive to community needs in 2020. They were able to react more quickly than the government to the pandemic and offer innovative, community-based solutions. For instance, CSOs delivered internet-based educational services to students in communities with more limited access to technology and helped them access classes and reading materials through community centers, home visits, and loaned tablet computers. CSOs also ensured that basic social services such as health care, education, and agricultural extension programs continued to be delivered during the lockdown. CSOs' support was

critical because of the centralization of the pandemic response and the severe revenue losses suffered by many local governments during the pandemic.

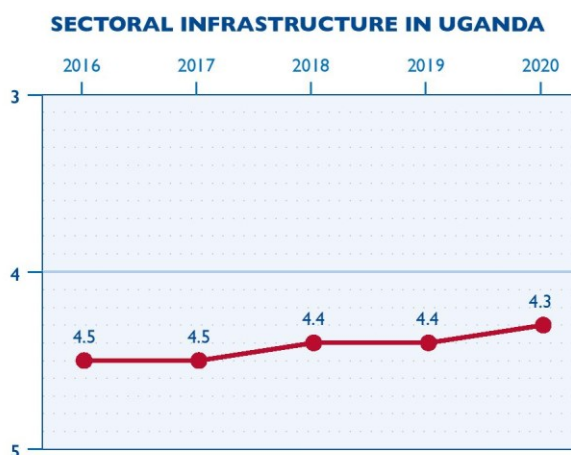
CSOs' capacity to generate revenue from services remained low in 2020. Organizations in areas such as education, agriculture, and health care typically charge cost-sharing fees, but most CSOs regard service provision as a not-for-profit activity. In any case, the majority of CSOs' clientele has limited capacity to pay for the services that they receive.

Local government leaders appreciate their close working relationships with CSOs and often make their appreciation known in comments to local audiences and media. The president praised CSOs' donation of funds to the National COVID-19 Relief Fund through the Uganda Women's Network in one of his televised national situational updates in 2020. Otherwise, the central government was largely suspicious of CSOs' activities in 2020. The contrast of CSOs' relationships with local and national governments is commonly known throughout the country.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.3

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector showed slight improvement in 2020 as several recent local grantmaking initiatives strengthened their services and CSOs were more intentional about pooling their efforts.

Uganda's CSOs are served by a number of resource centers, including facilities that offer support specific to certain programming areas, such as civic education and social research, and regional hubs that provide technical assistance in a wide range of areas. Restrictions on movement during the lockdown rendered resource centers difficult to access, especially since most of them are located in urban areas, where sensitivity to the COVID-19 virus was high. Intermediary support organizations such as DPI provided training on the use and security of digital tools.

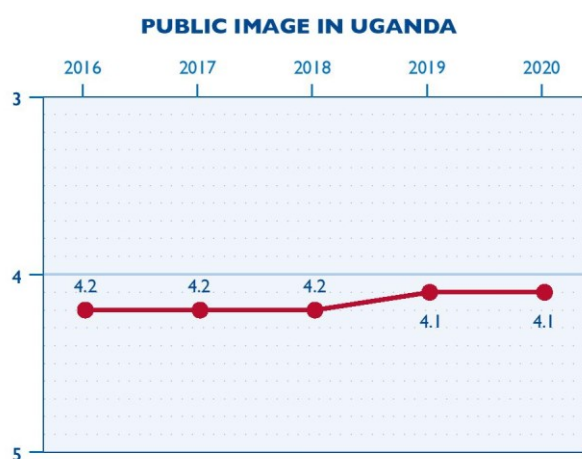


Local grantmaking efforts were considerably stronger in 2020. In particular, CivSource Africa now operates two major funds: the Zishaye Grassroots Fund, which supports grassroots initiatives in natural resource rights, emergency response, research and documentation, and leadership development, and the Kuonyesha Fund, which promotes diversity in the arts. The Dolphin Fund has developed a crowdsourcing, GoFundMe-type service that allows anyone to raise money for or donate to specific causes. In 2020, a new fund, the Ujasiri Fund, was launched to collect contributions from member CSOs and regrant them to organizations and initiatives requiring critical support.

CSOs have become more intentional about pooling their efforts since donors began to shift their support from institution-strengthening to programming, a trend that has had the unintended effect of enhancing intrasectoral collaboration. For example, CSOs increasingly rely on each other to fill gaps in their technical, human resource, and other capacities. Such cooperation was evident when NEW-U was able to pool the resources of its member CSOs to monitor the elections in 2020. The efforts of NEW-U members to overturn the arbitrary suspension of the coalition was in fact one of the biggest collective actions ever undertaken by CSOs, with more than sixty organizations involved. The power of collaboration among CSOs was also evident in the sector’s response to the pandemic. CSOs held weekly meetings to formulate the sector’s approach to the crisis and submitted a report on civil society’s contributions to the pandemic response to the prime minister’s Inter-Ministerial Technical Taskforce on COVID-19. Akina Mama, Unwanted Witness, Center of Policy Analysis, Uganda Women’s Network, and other organizations provided training to CSO leaders on using digital tools such as Zoom if physical meetings were not possible.

CSOs in service-delivery sectors continue to work closely with the government in 2020. In particular, CSOs working in the health-care sector often supported local governments suffering from severe revenue losses by providing them with services and equipment along with services directly to citizens. CSOs continued to cooperate with the media through periodic formal partnerships, which help CSOs disseminate information and amplify their advocacy work. While CSOs have also started to pursue partnerships with businesses, they are still largely nascent.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.1



The CSO sector’s public image was stable in 2020.

Although the UCC attempted to silence political dissent in 2020 by requiring online broadcasters to obtain authorization and licenses for operation, CSO leaders continued to appear on popular talk shows on all major radio and television stations at the national and regional levels. Most media soliciting on CSOs participation were privately owned, and private media also adopted internal editorial policies to produce balanced stories about CSOs’ work. CSOs also contributed opinion pieces and articles to newspapers.

Public opinion of CSOs’ work was divided in 2020. After the ruling party alleged that CSOs were colluding with opposition leader Robert Kyagulanyi to bring war and homosexuality to Uganda, communities in rural areas,

where the ruling party’s base is strong and most CSO activity takes place, showed a new level of suspicion of CSOs. Some CSOs were able to push back against these allegations by engaging directly with their beneficiaries. But CSOs generally lacked a cross-sectoral strategy to conduct public perception surveys and defend the sector against attack. Otherwise, most of the public appreciated CSOs’ help in providing essential social services during the health crisis.

The government’s attitude towards CSOs was also mixed in 2020. Although the president publicly praised CSOs’ donations to the National COVID-19 Relief Fund, he accused CSOs of conspiring with undefined “foreign elements” to overthrow the state, prompting security agents to increase their harassment of advocacy CSOs and human rights defenders. The government’s worsening attitude towards advocacy CSOs was also suggested by the absence of government representatives at the Strengthening Citizens’ Engagement in Elections (SCENE) dialogue organized by UNNGOF. For CSOs in service delivery, government relations remained positive at both the central and local level, especially insofar as CSOs supported government relief efforts during the pandemic.

Despite the government’s negative attacks, CSOs continued to have good working relationships with the private sector in 2020. CSOs are a major source of income from goods and services, and private-sector perceptions of CSOs are particularly positive at the regional level. However, the central government’s anti-CSO rhetoric over the last five years has reduced the appetite of medium- and large-scale enterprises to work with CSOs. An indicator of

their lack of enthusiasm was businesses' failure to provide financial support to CSOs in 2020, in contrast to their contribution of \$7.5 million to the government's pandemic relief effort in a three-month period.

In 2020, CSO leaders sought to counter the government's narrative that the sector is a seedbed of foreign agents working against Ugandan interests. Organizations such as CCG established Civic Space TV, an online platform for promoting freedom of speech and expression in relation to civil society activities. Working together with Oxfam, several organizations also used mainstream media and social media spaces to spread messages about the role and importance of NGOs to Uganda's development. CSOs organized several press conferences to demystify their work and respond to infractions of civic space by the government.

The Quality Assurance Mechanism (QuAM) self-regulatory model for CSOs continued to be used in 2020 to provide minimal benchmarks for governance and accountability. However, adoption of the QuAM model remains low, despite efforts to revive it. Several large CSOs publish their annual reports on their websites, while others present them to their general assemblies. Many organizations do not produce annual reports.

ZAMBIA

Capital: Lusaka
Population: 19,077,816
GDP per capita (PPP): \$3,470
Human Development Index: Medium (0.584)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (52/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.6



Zambia remained generally stable but politically divided in 2020. Relations between political parties, the state, CSOs, and the media were highly polarized, and democratic and civic space shrank amid failures of governmental accountability. For example, in February, suspected supporters of the Patriotic Front (PF), the ruling party, beat up participants in a public meeting hosted by the Law Association of Zambia. The meeting was about Bill 10, a proposed constitutional amendment that would increase the powers of the president. In March, the acting chief registrar barred a prominent constitutional lawyer from appearing in court after he criticized Bill 10 and the Constitutional Court's failure to allow a petition challenging the bill.

Tensions continued in April, when the Independent Broadcasting Authority cancelled the license of the private television station Prime Television "in the interests of public safety, security, peace, welfare, or good order" after the station covered stories about COVID-19 and Bill 10. Other cases of intimidation and failed accountability included the arrest of a fifteen-year-old boy charged with defaming the president on social media, the arrests of two journalists, and the swift acquittal of the minister of health of charges of corruption in connection to public funds earmarked for the pandemic response. In December, police opened fire and killed a state prosecutor and a party supporter during a demonstration in support of the head of the opposition United Party for National Development after he was summoned to police headquarters.

The COVID-19 pandemic arrived in Zambia in March 2020. The government closed all but one international airport, set up screening mechanisms, introduced requirements for physical distancing and masks, and halted non-essential activities. In April, the government issued a statutory instrument banning public gatherings of more than five unrelated persons. While this directive was not specifically directed at CSOs or opposition parties, its implementation impeded their work. The limitation was later removed. In December, the government issued interim clinical guidance for managing patients with COVID-19. Many people, including CSOs, welcomed this move but raised concerns about the lack of vigorous public awareness and the government's failure to ensure that necessary supplies and equipment were available. Surveys by Ipsos in April and the University of Gothenburg and Southern African Institute for Policy and Research in July showed a sharp decline in public trust in the government's handling of the pandemic, with the mismanagement of pandemic funds the number one concern.

General elections scheduled for August 2021 were also at the top of the public agenda in 2020. Public concerns about the elections included the prevention of violence, impartial issuance of national registration cards, a fair and thorough voter registration process, public access to timely and accurate information, and the independence of the Electoral Commission of Zambia.

Zambia's economic situation was precarious in 2020. The pandemic pushed an economy already weakened by double-digit inflation, a heavy burden of debt servicing, declines in agricultural output, and falling global demand for copper and other exports into a contraction of 1.2 percent by year end, according to World Bank estimates. In November, Zambia became the first African country to default on its debts during the pandemic. More than 60 percent of the population lives below the poverty level, with poorer communities concentrated in rural areas. Despite its economic challenges, the government continued to implement and, in some cases, expand social protection programs in 2020.

CSOs' overall sustainability was stable in 2020. CSOs' organizational capacity was moderately weakened by their inability to engage in effective planning and difficulties retaining qualified staff. CSOs' financial viability was undermined slightly as donors reduced, re-allocated, or withheld funding in response to the pandemic. Service provision worsened moderately as the pandemic hampered the ability of most CSOs to deliver services. On the other hand, CSO advocacy was slightly stronger in 2020 as organizations effectively sought changes on Bill 10, the management of pandemic funds, and other issues of public concern. CSOs' public image was also moderately stronger thanks to positive media coverage of their demands for political and financial accountability and more transparent management of the pandemic. CSOs' legal environment and sectoral infrastructure were unchanged.

As of December 2019, the latest date for which information is available, 4,154 organizations were registered with the Registrar of Societies and 418 organizations were registered with the Patents and Companies Registration Agency. An additional 1,228 organization were registered under the NGO Act.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.9



The legal environment for Zambian CSOs was largely unchanged in 2020.

CSOs continued to register with the Registrar of Societies under the Societies Act or, less often, with the Patents and Companies Registration Agency under the Companies Act. Mostly because of a lack of information, some CSOs registered under the 2009 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Act, which was slated to be repealed and replaced by a new law in 2020. CSOs must register before beginning operations and must file and publicize annual returns. Most CSOs find registration and the filing of annual returns to be fairly straightforward. However, smaller and newer organizations and those located in rural areas find it difficult to fulfill these obligations, as they are lengthy,

highly centralized, and, given the need for travel to provincial centers, expensive. All CSOs are overseen by the NGO Board, which consists of government, private-sector, civil society, church, and disability-sector representatives, all of whom are appointed by the government. No CSO was reported dissolved in 2020.

The Ministry of Justice drafted a bill to repeal and replace the NGO Act in 2020. Some stakeholders expressed concerns that the proposed law would, like the existing act, encourage the arbitrary exercise of governmental authority and stifle civil society. For example, Section 7 of the law was amended to empower the NGO Board to monitor CSOs' financial transactions for money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The draft bill appeared to be stalled at the end of the year.

The Constitution Amendment Bill 10, a controversial attempt by the ruling party to amend the constitution, failed in October 2020 to garner the needed two-thirds majority in the parliament to pass its second reading. Opposition parties and CSOs were largely against Bill 10, as it proposed to increase the powers of the presidency and weaken horizontal accountability between the legislative, judicial, and executive branches. In 2020, the government began enactment of the Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Bill, which threatens to curtail freedom of expression by allowing the authorities to monitor and intercept communications and impose penalties of two years to life in prison for offenses ranging from hate speech to the possession of pornography. An effort to revise the Public Order Act of 1955 to safeguard the right of freedom of assembly and association and regulate the conduct

of public gatherings to preserve public order was begun in 2019 but made little headway in 2020. The Access to Information Bill remained with the Ministry of Justice in 2020 and also made little progress.

Civic space continued to shrink in 2020. The authorities selectively applied the existing Public Order Act and other laws to restrict activities such as protests, petitions, and demonstrations, unless they were viewed as aligned with the government's interests. For instance, a group of musicians and artists was denied permission to demonstrate against the mismanagement of public funds. In response, the group met in an unknown place and streamed a live event on social media. In November 2020, police publicly manhandled and embarrassed two women related to a vocal opponent of the ruling party. The incident alarmed the public and raised questions about the ability of the police to protect citizens and treat them with dignity. Pandemic-related restrictions limiting the number of people able to gather in person, the spaces they could use, and the allowable times for public events were considered severe. Law enforcement agencies were viewed as selectively applying pandemic restrictions, as when they allowed pro-government groupings to meet.

CSOs continued to be eligible for exemptions on excise duties, value-added tax, and income tax on the recommendation of the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services and at the discretion of the minister of finance. Although international CSOs regularly receive exemptions, domestic CSOs do not as many remain unaware of and therefore fail to apply for such incentives.

CSOs may undertake fundraising activities and accept foreign funding. Under a proposed revision of the NGO Act, CSOs will have to disclose their sources of funding when they provide audited reports with their annual returns to the Registrar of NGOs. CSOs may engage in profit-making activities provided they register as businesses. Social enterprises are allowed but uncommon.

Private lawyers are available in Zambia, but their fees are beyond what most CSOs can afford. The Human Rights Commission and a few private foundations such as the Chapter One Foundation have lawyers on staff who are familiar with the legal framework for CSOs and offer subsidized legal assistance. However, since they based in Lusaka and other large cities, CSOs in remote parts of the country have trouble accessing their services.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.6

The CSO sector's organizational capacity deteriorated moderately in 2020, as many organizations were unable to engage in effective planning activities, and CSOs working in governance had difficulty retaining qualified staff and undertaking outreach activities.

Donors recognized CSOs' need for greater organizational support during the pandemic and issued calls for proposals to encourage resilience strategies, such as working in networks and coalitions, investing in social and electronic forms of advocacy and lobbying, and creating solidarity platforms. The Churches Health Association of Zambia (CHAZ), Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC), Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia (FAWEZA), Tansitha, and other organizations working in areas such as water, education, and health care received increased funding for organizational support from Hivos, Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), and other donors. Community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), and informal, interest-based groupings such as marketers' and traders' groups also received "relief" resources to help them cope with the severe shocks of the pandemic. CSOs working on political and economic governance, on the other hand, were less likely to receive organizational support and tended to face severe funding shortfalls. Their organizational capacity suffered as they were unable to retain qualified staff, pay taxes, or undertake outreach activities. This trend was particularly worrisome given the important role that these CSOs are playing in the period leading up to the 2021 election.



CSOs sought to adjust their means of engaging with their communities within the confines of pandemic restrictions in 2020. Rather than meeting in person, most organizations resorted to interacting with their constituents virtually. If internet services were unavailable or unaffordable, donors did not provide additional funding, or activities were simply unsuited to online formats, CSOs often cancelled their planned activities. For example, because of the pandemic, the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) was sometimes unable to monitor public service delivery in its targeted areas, and Jesuit Center for Theological Reflection (JCTR) cancelled community meetings and outreach activities. Other organizations that cancelled events involving face-to-face interactions included the Southern African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (SACCORD) and Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP). Most FBOs, guided by the position of the Catholic Church in Zambia, cancelled community and outreach activities. For instance, community-based support action groups under the Catholic Church were disbanded to avoid spreading the virus.

Most CSO maintained their established missions, values, objectives, plans, and organograms in 2021 but were unable to implement them fully. With already precarious financial situations worsened by pandemic-related funding uncertainties, some organizations were unable to implement planned activities or engage in effective planning activities. For instance, because of unexpected resource shortfalls, Caritas-Zambia postponed its plan to mainstream gender concerns into its core programs, and CSPR had to postpone a scheduled strategic planning process. Many organizations sought to plan around constraints posed by the crisis, but they were often hampered by a lack of information or knowledge about the virus itself. A few specialized CSOs, such as the Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Council (NGOCC) and its affiliate members, took advantage of new funding opportunities to expand into areas such as climate change, water, the environment, and alternative energy.

Internal events such as meetings of general assemblies, boards, and advisory committees became less common, since most CSOs did not have the resources to convene them. Some larger organizations, such as CSPR, held board meetings virtually in 2020. But other organizations operated without adequate oversight and guidance or failed to make critical decisions because decision makers could not convene. Many CSOs, including larger organizations such as FODEP, Women for Change (WfC), and Zambia Council for Social Development (ZCSD), continued to lack funding to hire qualified persons on a long-term basis. Organizations adopted different strategies to address this gap, such as engaging volunteers, as in the case of JCTR and Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL), or merging employee responsibilities and positions, as in the case of ZANEC, CSPR, and Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS). Specialized jobs such as program management, communications, and public relations were often combined with other positions.

Most CSO offices have adequate equipment and furnishings. Matching their organizational capacities to their physical assets remained a challenge for many CSOs in 2020. For instance, FODEP and the Anti-Voter Apathy Project (AVAP) have good computer systems but are unable to afford to hire qualified computer maintenance personnel, so their equipment is not used to full capacity. Some CSOs pooled resources to ensure that they used available resources efficiently in 2020. For instance, CUTS and CSPR shared office and conference spaces as a means of cutting down on expenses. Other organizations had their staff work staggered hours to avoid the risk of infection, or they cut back on staff to reduce operational expenses.

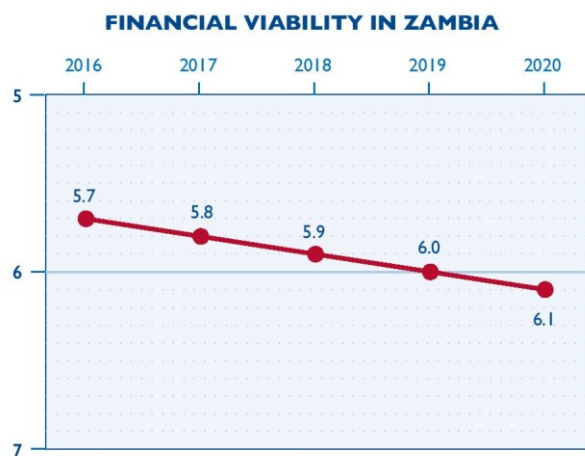
Despite underdeveloped internet services in Zambia, CSOs' use of social and alternative media increased notably in 2020. With the enactment of the new bill on cyber security and cybercrimes, along with radio and television programs that aimed to sensitize the public about the new law, CSOs are increasingly aware of these issues. CSOs working on legal or political issues and engaging with national stakeholders appear to be more aware of potential threats than local organizations or CSOs located in outlying areas.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.1

Financial viability is Zambian CSOs' principal challenge, and it worsened slightly in 2020 as many organizations lost funding because of the pandemic.

CSOs continued to depend overwhelmingly on funding from international donors, including the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN) Development Programme, UN International Children's Emergency Fund, International Labor Organization, German Agency for International Cooperation, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and OSISA. The pandemic brought funding opportunities as well as threats, and some organizations were boosted financially by funding that donors made available for pandemic-related projects or

relief. For example, Norwegian Church Aid asked its partners in Zambia to develop additional proposals to address the pandemic, which allowed organizations such as CSPR to implement new COVID-specific projects alongside their regular projects. The Firelight Foundation put its support for early childhood development programs in Western Province on hold temporarily and asked its partners instead to submit new proposals to address COVID-19 in their local communities.



Most CSO activities, including program proposals and preparations, were heavily influenced by donors' priorities and assumptions about the crisis. For instance, there was considerable donor interest in the relationship between the pandemic and gender-based violence (GBV) as well as access to reproductive health services and the needs of vulnerable populations, especially school-aged girls. OSISA and Oxfam required their partners to integrate analyses of the impact of the pandemic into their regular work on areas such as debt crisis, fair and just trade, illicit flows, and tax justice and incorporate this theme into new proposals. Although 2020 was the year preceding the general elections, relatively little funding was available for election-related activities, and few voter-education activities took place, although some organizations undertook preparatory work for activities

to begin in 2021. Several donors as well as the government were strongly focused on issues of climate change, water, the environment, and alternative energy, and a few CSOs received funding for activities in these areas.

The majority of CSOs rely on short-term or activity-based funding, with only a few organizations, such as ZANEC and NGOCC, able to secure long-term or institutional support. Many mainstream national CSOs, including Society for Women and AIDS in Zambia (SWAAZ), FODEP, Caritas Zambia, and JCTR, remained financially weak and spent much of the year preparing funding proposals.

Locally sourced funding is rare, and CSOs rarely seek government contracts. Government funding for CSOs in 2020 was provided mainly for relief services to cushion the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable populations. Businesses such as Trade Kings, Barclays Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, Big Tree Investment, and the Hindu Association of Zambia, international CSOs such as ActionAid Zambia and WaterAid Zambia, and wealthy individuals provided most of the funds for this purpose by donating to the government's COVID-19 relief fund. The funds were then distributed through local development or political party structures and were made available mostly to "politically relevant" interest groups, such as marketers, informal traders' associations, and youth groups. CBOs located in areas experiencing disasters such as floods or droughts received financial and in-kind support from the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit, which, for example, donated re-usable face masks to educational institutions, including community schools.

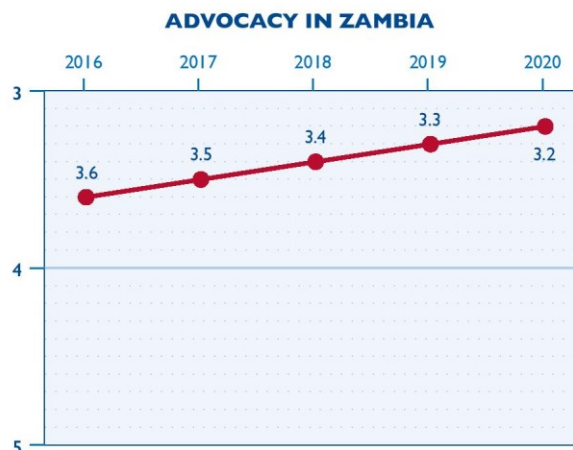
Most CSOs conduct annual audits, since they are now a key requirement of donors such as OSISA, Hivos, and ActionAid Zambia. However, the number of CSOs conducting audits may be falling since organizations increasingly lack the funds to pay for this service in the absence of project support.

ADVOCACY: 3.2

CSO advocacy was slightly stronger in 2020 as organizations effectively sought changes on Bill 10, the management of pandemic funds, and other issues of public concern.

Some CSOs continued to cooperate with the government on policy and development issues. For instance, ZNWL worked closely with the Ministry of Gender to enhance gender equality and gender balance in leadership and decision making. CSPR worked with the Ministry of National Development Planning on evaluating the seventh National Development Program and with the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services on monitoring social protection programs.

CSOs developed effective advocacy strategies on both the national and local levels to cope with the changing political and financial landscape in 2020. For example, CSOs redoubled their efforts to ensure political and public accountability after revelations emerged that public resources were mismanaged. CSOs also raised concerns about the use of pandemic funding and the escalating cost of living. Organizations such as the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ), Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG), and Chapter One Foundation actively opposed the enactment of Bill 10 and used strategies ranging from litigation to public awareness raising to analytical reports. Their efforts contributed to the bill's failure to pass through the parliament.



Zambian CSOs find that conducting advocacy through coalitions and networks is an effective strategy, and some CSOs pooled resources for their advocacy work in 2020. For example, NGOCC and its affiliates used basket funding to roll out a multifaceted empowerment program for community-based groups focused on gender, and NGOCC and ZNWL led the implementation of a coordinated strategy on the upcoming elections. The Copper for Development Campaign, a project jointly implemented by CSPR, Fighting Inequality Alliance, and Civil Society Poverty Observatory Group with funding from Oxfam, worked on issues related to debt, trade, and taxation. A group of seven organizations created the CSO Debt Alliance in 2020 to advocate for a people-centered debt-management system in Zambia. Other advocacy activities focused on access to quality health care, water, sanitation, and housing services. For example, after CSOs demanded action in response to a report that the Ministry of Health was distributing expired drugs, the medications were withdrawn from public facilities.

Although advocacy is centralized in Lusaka, several district and provincial advocacy initiatives were successful in 2020, including initiatives of Care for Nature and the Extractive Industries Transparency Alliance in outlying provinces. Notable efforts on public and social accountability were launched by district based CSOs in Choma and Monze. Given their decline in convening power after pandemic-related restrictions were imposed, most CSOs resorted to using radio and social media to campaign and mobilize communities. CSOs also used virtual platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom to conduct advocacy-focused conferences and workshops.

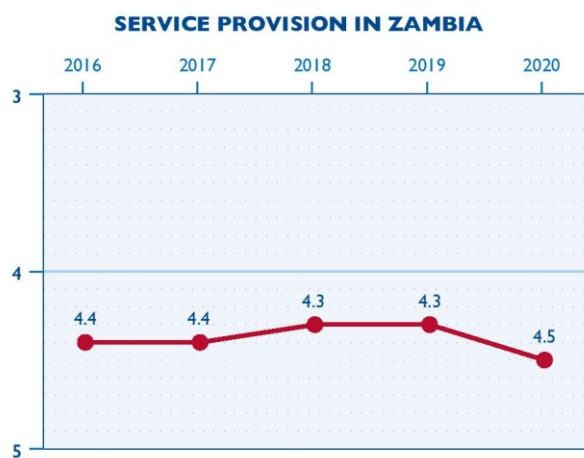
In the first quarter of 2020, the Technical Working Group, a multi-stakeholder structure whose members include CSOs, conducted a series of consultative meetings to collect the views of other stakeholders about the draft bill to repeal and replace the NGO Act. The Zambia Law Development Commission then incorporated these views into the proposed bill, which was finalized and adopted by the Technical Working Group by mid-2020. In July, at a stakeholders' meeting organized by the Zambia Law Development Commission to review the bill and validate its content, CSOs realized that the government had inserted new clauses not previously agreed to by CSOs, including a section on money laundering and terrorism financing. CSOs therefore rejected the draft bill. Despite their dissatisfaction, the government proceeded to present the bill before the National Assembly, although it was later withdrawn under pressure from CSOs.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.5

CSO service provision was moderately weaker in 2020. While their provision of pandemic-related services was robust, and they continued to provide services in traditional areas such as education and health care, many CSOs were unable to deliver services because of pandemic-related restrictions on travel and face-to-face meetings.

Zambian CSOs typically respond effectively to the needs of their communities. In 2020, many CSOs adjusted their programs to focus on urgent priorities related to the pandemic. For example, the Islamic Fellowship of Zambia and Association of Bus Drivers in Zambia provided sanitizer and handwashing facilities, and the Marketers Association of Zambia helped clean public spaces such as markets. Many CSOs distributed masks and sanitizer, and FBOs and CBOs in particular raised public awareness about the pandemic. However, social distancing requirements and resource constraints prevented many organizations from their usual practice of collecting primary data and

undertaking other forms of research before beginning their projects. CSOs' capacity to measure their impact on beneficiaries beyond their members was also weakened as the pandemic made it difficult for them to assess the value of their programs. Even large CSOs, such as ZNWL, NGOCC, and JCTR, did not undertake externally managed evaluations of their programs in 2020 but instead only conducted internal reviews of their work.



CSOs in Zambia have always provided services to clients beyond their membership. This practice was more pronounced in 2020 as most CSOs responding to the COVID-19 pandemic could not restrict their services to members.

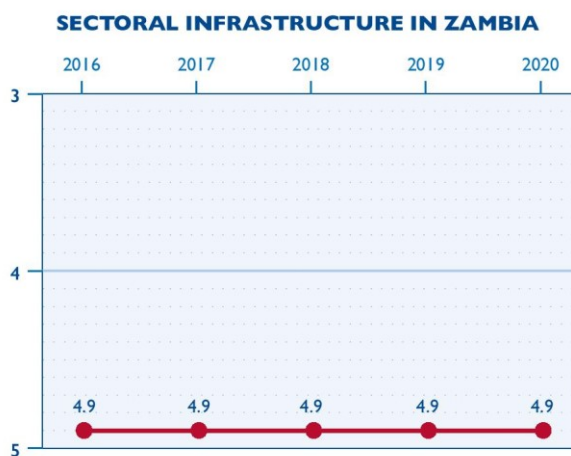
CSOs in Zambia provide services on charitable basis and do not seek to recover their costs. A few CSOs have established social enterprises to supplement their incomes. For example, the Young Women's Christian Association and Caritas operate lodges to raise funds for their charitable programs.

The government recognizes the role played by CSOs, especially FBOs and CBOs, in providing supplies and health care to diverse communities. This awareness was evident in its various public media statements as well as

official reports such as the National Development Plan Annual Progress Report. Government officials, including political appointees, often participated in CSOs' events related to service provision.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.9

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector in Zambia was largely unchanged in 2020. No new resource center is known to have been established. Resource rooms, documentation centers, and access to information and the internet continued to be available at the offices of NGOCC, CSPR, JCTR, and ZNWL. Media and communications resources, including *Africa Confidential* and the newsletter of the Zambia Governance Foundation (ZGF), were more available than in previous years as the virtual sharing of information increased. In addition, private-sector and social enterprise-led initiatives, such as Bongo Hive and the Asikana Network, continued to offer resources that CSOs could tap into as they adjusted to online platforms.



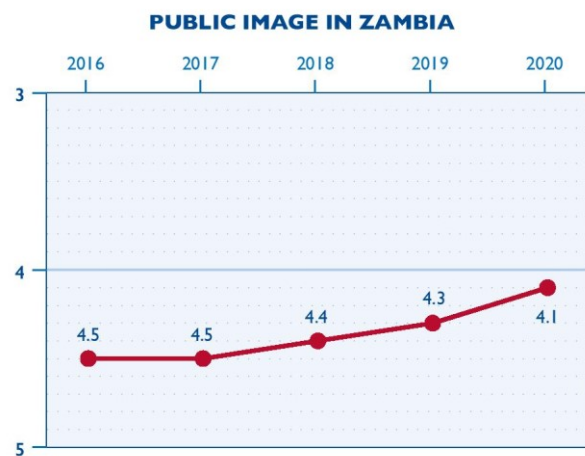
International CSOs such as ActionAid, World Vision, Oxfam, Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung, Hivos, and Norwegian Church Aid continued to fund locally identified projects in 2020. Local organizations such as CHAZ, WaterAid Zambia, and NGOCC also sub-granted foreign funds. Areas of interest included gender, climate change, policy formulation, the environment, water and sanitation, justice, and the construction of community facilities such as water points, classroom blocks, and sanitation infrastructure.

Zambian CSOs continued to work through networks and coalitions to implement activities in 2020 and in particular relied on such groupings to share limited resources. OSISA and Oxfam provided funding to two new alliances formed in 2020, the CSO Debt Alliance, which promotes accountable, transparent, and participatory national debt management, and the Copper for Development Campaign, which aims to ensure that revenues from copper mining benefit the country, especially local communities.

Zambian CSOs continued to partner with the government and businesses in 2020. For example, the Prison Care and Counseling Association partnered with Zambia Correctional Services to provide counselling to inmates in correctional facilities, and ZNWL cooperated with the Ministry of Gender to train women in leadership roles.

However, such forms of collaboration have decreased since the early 2000s, when there was a strong push to create institutionalized coalitions, and CSOs were encouraged to form networks aligned with their line ministries; many of these platforms are no longer active. A few business groups worked closely with advocacy organizations on policy issues, such as national development planning and budgeting.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.1



The public image of CSOs was moderately stronger in 2020. Media coverage was generally positive and focused on CSOs' demands for political and financial accountability and effective management of the pandemic. In particular, CSOs' position on Bill 10 enhanced their reputation, as the media tended to portray CSOs as representatives of core public interests during trying times.

Based on opinions expressed on radio and in newspapers, the public seemed to view CSOs positively in 2020, even when they were criticized by the government. CSOs engaged in advocacy were often perceived as the voice of the people, especially in urban areas. Service-providing organizations were viewed approvingly as promoting positive change for vulnerable

and poor populations.

CSOs' image among government officials was largely politicized and polarized in 2020. Government officials tended to approve of service-providing CSOs, whose activities encouraged the perception that the government was fulfilling its promise to provide tangible goods and services. But the government was often intolerant of advocacy CSOs engaged on the wrong side of political issues. For instance, the authorities cooperated with CSOs that supported Bill 10 but were uncooperative or even antagonistic towards organizations expressing opposition to the bill. The president publicly referred to his critics as *utupuba*, or silly people.

Most private sector actors have positive perceptions of CSOs involved in service delivery, and various professional associations have spoken highly of CSOs involved in looking after the vulnerable.

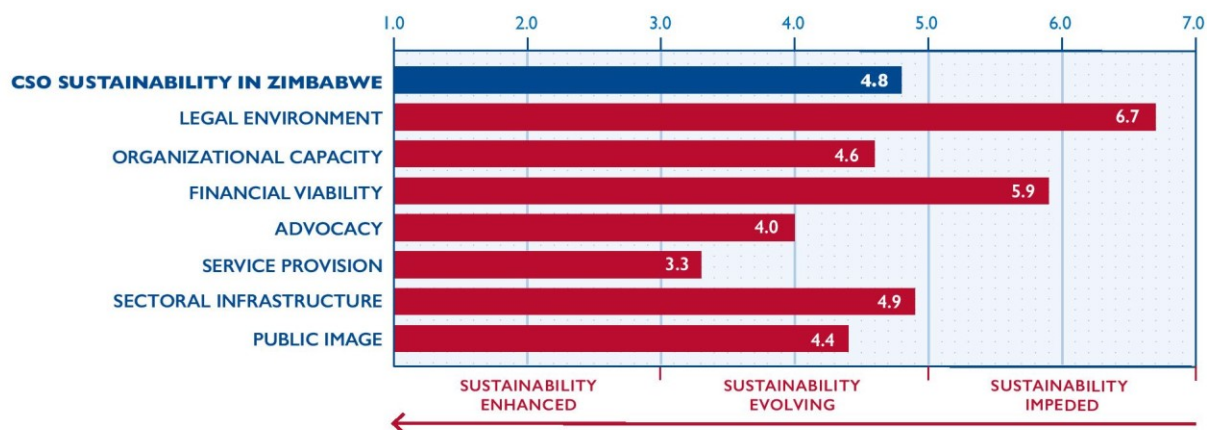
Amid the challenging conditions of 2020, Zambian CSOs relied heavily on radio, print, and television to promote their activities. CSOs also increasingly publicize their activities through social media platforms and electronic technologies. CSPR, for example, livestreamed its events on Facebook.

CSOs normally produce both annual program and financial reports, including audits. However, few CSOs share these reports with the public.

ZIMBABWE

Capital: Harare
Population: 14,829,988
GDP per capita (PPP): \$2,836
Human Development Index: Medium (0.571)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (28/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.8



On March 17, 2020, before any cases of COVID-19 were reported in Zimbabwe, the country's president, Emmerson Mnangagwa, declared a twenty-one-day state of disaster. After the first case of the virus was reported several days later, the government introduced strict prohibitions on public gatherings and non-essential travel. A nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 30. The lockdown brought businesses to a standstill and was particularly damaging to the informal sector, which supports almost 90 percent of the population. At the same time, the pandemic encouraged the use of digital media as the "new normal." Despite exorbitant prices for data and internet access, nearly all CSOs relied on internet platforms to conduct their business.

During the lockdown, the government continued its efforts to amend the 2013 constitution. According to opponents of the proposed changes, which include many CSOs, the amendments would dilute judicial and prosecutorial independence, curtail parliamentary oversight, and consolidate power in the hands of the president. The government unilaterally gazetted nearly 270 statutory instruments aligned with the new constitution in 2020.

The government's aggressive crackdown on civil society continued both before and during the pandemic in 2020. The government used statutory instruments and restrictions associated with the state of national emergency to curtail freedoms of assembly and association. Between March and July 2020, at least 105,000 people were arrested for violating lockdown restrictions, and by mid-2021, the Zimbabwe Republic Police confirmed that they had arrested more than 800,000 people since the beginning of the pandemic. At least sixty activists were arrested for violating pandemic restrictions in the course of 2020. In July, after publishing allegations of corruption in a \$60 million tender for the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE), a prominent freelance journalist and member of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)-Zimbabwe was arrested on spurious charges of publishing false statements prejudicial to the state. A prominent lawyer from Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) and a human rights defender were arrested after they also denounced corruption in the PPE tender. Two activists from the WeLead Trust, a youth leadership development organization, were arrested in June for protesting the unfavorable constitutional amendments, and the director of WeLead was arrested after alleging gross corruption and human rights violations by the state. Both the president and the ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), issued threats targeting CSOs. Enforced limits on travel and in-person meetings also curtailed CSOs' operations, particularly their interactions with constituencies.

The pandemic and an ongoing drought led to a 10 percent contraction in Zimbabwe's real gross domestic product in 2020, according to the African Development Bank. Inflation averaged 623 percent and reached as high as 838 percent in July. The World Bank reported that economic disruptions caused by the pandemic added 1.3 million people to the ranks of the extreme poor, who totaled almost 49 percent of the population in 2020. Urban

households, including vendors and people with disabilities, were drastically affected by the pandemic. At least 1 million people were assisted through a food and stipend program supported by the World Food Program (WFP) and World Vision.

Overall CSO sustainability was unchanged in 2020. The legal environment deteriorated slightly as the government proposed new laws to restrict civic space and used pandemic restrictions to crack down on civil society. CSOs' organizational capacity deteriorated slightly as activity levels decreased because of the pandemic. CSOs' financial viability regressed slightly as donors reduced their funding or shifted their focus because of the pandemic, and service provision was also slightly weaker as CSOs lost funding for their regular services. CSO advocacy improved slightly as many groups pushed a full and varied agenda despite the pandemic. CSOs' public image was also slightly stronger as they effectively used social media to counter the government's negative narratives. [The sectoral infrastructure was unchanged.

According to the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations, the official coordinating body for CSOs, 993 private voluntary organizations (PVOs) were registered in Zimbabwe in 2016, the most recent year for which statistics are available. Estimates at that time suggest that there were also more than 5,000 trusts and common-law organizations known as *universitas*.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 6.7



CSOs' legal environment deteriorated slightly in 2020 as the government proposed new laws and used pandemic restrictions to crack down on civil society.

Most CSOs continue to register as trusts with the Registrar of Deeds Office in a process that is fairly simple but costly. In 2020, the registrar impeded registration by delaying applications and charging exorbitant fees. Some organizations form as *universitas*, which operate on the constitutionally recognized common-law principle that an organization exists once it has a constitution. Several larger organizations, such as the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum and Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, operate as *universitas*. CSOs may also register with the Ministry of Social Welfare as PVOs, which usually provide humanitarian aid and have an easier time

entering with local authorities into memoranda of understanding, which are often required by donors. Registration under the PVO Act continued to be problematic in 2020 because of stringent requirements, high fees, and excessively long waits for registration to be completed. The government sometimes requires organizations applying to register as PVOs to disclose details about their board members or seeks to influence their selection. For instance, the Institute for Young Women and Development (IYWD) was told to remove a certain human rights lawyer from its board or risk losing its PVO status. IYWD ended up registering as a trust instead.

The government proposed and implemented new laws in 2020 that threatened to further stifle the legal environment for civil society and silence CSOs. The Patriotic Bill would criminalize criticism of Zimbabwe and its leadership and allow the government to monitor citizens' communications with foreign governments. Reports in August 2020 quoted the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Justice, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs as saying that the bill would criminalize and severely punish meetings or correspondence by private citizens with foreign officials and nationals in order to inflict harm on the country. The Cabinet debated the principles of the bill but not the bill itself in 2020.

The Cyber Security and Data Protection Bill (known as the Cyber Bill) also contains provisions that could be interpreted as prohibiting criticism of public officials. The Cyber Bill was published in the official gazette in May 2020 and was pending in the parliament for the remainder of the year. In October, during his state of the nation address, the president indicated that the government was considering amending the PVO Act to make it mandatory for CSOs to divulge their funding sources and undergo government audits.

The new Public Health (COVID-19 Prevention, Containment and Treatment) (National Lockdown) Order of 2020 contains a provision that exposes to prosecution any person who publishes or communicates false news about public officials involved with enforcing or implementing the national lockdown. The Freedom of Information Act, which replaced the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act and was approved by the president in July 2020, guarantees Zimbabwe citizens' access to information from public bodies. MISA Zimbabwe and others expressed concerns that, among other things, the new law failed to respond to concerns raised by citizens during public hearings on the draft law before it was passed by the parliament. In particular, the act stipulates that denials of information requests must be appealed through the Zimbabwe Media Commission, whose constitutional mandate is regulation of media, rather than the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission or a competent court of law.

The Maintenance of Peace and Order Act, which went into effect in November 2019, requires the names, addresses, and other contact details of individuals involved in organizing public gatherings and demonstrations to be provided to the authorities, thereby threatening their security and privacy.

Zimbabwe's civil society experienced a continuing government crackdown in 2020 with a large number of reported abuses. Although Section 59 of the constitution guarantees the right to demonstrate, CSOs were not allowed to demonstrate in what some observers viewed as the weaponization of lockdown restrictions. For example, in July 2020, CSOs were prevented from organizing a protest against corruption, and the offices of one of the alleged organizers, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), were raided. When CSOs or social movements threatened to demonstrate during the lockdown, the government shut down internet access. In October, the president revealed that his administration wanted to "correct" CSOs that he accused of deviating from their mandates, particularly organizations that called for more sanctions because of Zimbabwe's repression of civil society and human rights. Although CSOs were able to avoid the physical harassment that occurred in 2019 by meeting virtually during the lockdown, some online meetings were infiltrated or hacked and then disrupted by ruling party activists. For example, during an online dialogue series convened by the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (CiZC) to discuss the 2017 coup, two members of the ruling party entered the meeting and crudely castigated CSOs as agents of regime change. Individuals allegedly working for ZANU–PF also disrupted an online meeting of the Zimbabwe Association of Community Radio Stations.

In 2020, the government made some efforts to block media and CSOs from working in certain communities. For example, members of the Young Journalists Association were ordered to stop attempting to cover a story in Gokwe in mid-2020. Local governments, especially those under the ambit of the ruling party, sometimes showed political bias in dealing with CSOs. The Platform for Community and Youth Development (PCYD), for example, was required to enter into a memorandum of understanding with a local government with which it had running disputes over land rights in the Chipinge area. When the Community Tolerance Reconciliation and Development Trust (COTRAD) raised human rights issues in Masvingo Province and Bikita District, chiefs aligned with ZANU–PF scrutinized its activities and instructed it to stop operations.

CSOs are taxed like any other entity and do not receive any exemptions. In 2020, the government insisted that CSOs that earn income in foreign currency should pay taxes based on regulated tax bands. CSO employees who earn their incomes in foreign currencies have pay-as-you-earn tax deducted in those currencies.

CSOs may engage in fundraising campaigns and receive foreign assistance. The government often demonizes CSOs that accept foreign funding as puppets of foreign governments and agents of illegal regime change, especially if they work in the democracy and governance sector. While CSOs may compete for government tenders, they are rarely successful unless they are sympathetic to the government.

Organizations such as ZLHR and the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum offered legal services to CSOs and arrested human rights defenders in 2020. Public-interest litigation was performed mainly by ZLHR, Abameli Lawyers Network, and the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum. Veritas, a legal archive, disseminates free information on legal matters.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.6

CSOs' organizational capacity deteriorated slightly in 2020 as activity levels throughout the sector decreased because of pandemic restrictions on travel and in-person meetings. For much of the year, it was difficult to know whether many organizations were active or dormant.

As part of their efforts to build constituencies and ensure community buy-in, CSOs continued to carry out problem analyses, mapping exercises, and stakeholder assessments whenever feasible in 2020. Relationships between CSOs and formal and informal social movements remained strong, and on several occasions, they combined efforts to tackle problems of concern to local communities. For example, in June, the Gwanda Residents Association (GRA), Masvingo United Residents and Ratepayers Association (MURRA), and Combined Harare Residents Association (CHRA) partnered with area residents to push local authorities to provide water consistently during the pandemic. The ban on in-person meetings forced CSOs to communicate largely through the internet, which was expensive and disrupted relationships with many constituents, especially in rural areas, where internet services are poor. For example, Heal Zimbabwe Trust was unable to engage rural groups in peace-building initiatives as planned because face-to-face work was prohibited and the internet infrastructure in targeted communities was too weak. Similarly, PCYD was unable to mobilize communities in Manicaland Province on land ownership issues because of pandemic restrictions on travel and meetings. But for some organizations, the use of digital media fostered better engagement with their constituencies. Organizations such as the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights, Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe, Vendors' Initiative for Social and Economic Transformation (VISET), and Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) used WhatsApp, Twitter, and Facebook extensively to communicate with their memberships and targeted communities.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN ZIMBABWE



CSOs generally adhere to their missions and engage in strategic planning. In 2020, CiZC carried out a valuable change management process with the support of Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). The process helped the coalition recalibrate its work, ensure leadership renewal, and prepare a new five-year strategic plan. But many CSOs' strategic plans suffered a heavy blow because of the pandemic. For example, organizations operating at the community level, such as Mutasa Youth Forum and COTRAD, could not follow their plans fully because of pandemic-related restrictions and donors' emphasis on mitigating the spread of COVID-19. The majority of CSOs had to adjust their activities to accommodate these changing circumstances.

CSOs' constitutions lay out the roles and responsibilities of the board and the secretariat, and their internal organograms generally show clearly defined hierarchies. Larger organizations have procedural manuals that identify the responsibilities of staff and help guide operations. Smaller community-based organizations are sometimes incubated by larger organizations while they get their internal systems into order. In 2020, boards met virtually in accordance with their constitutions and assisted with fundraising. Conflict of interest policies continued to be developed, and board members and staff were often encouraged to declare any known conflicts. Organizations such as the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, CiZC, and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (Zimrights), continued to strengthen their internal control policies to enhance transparency and accountability to their members.

CSOs' capacity to retain permanent staff and engage volunteers was markedly reduced in 2020 because of declines in funding. For example, after its budget was reduced, the Harare Wetlands Trust had to scale down its operations, including by letting staff go. Budget reductions induced some CSO employees to leave voluntarily in search of greater job security. For instance, VISET hired a consultant to train its staff and members on entrepreneurship in 2020. Many CSOs, including Zimrights, relied on volunteers to augment their staff. Residents' associations often engage community volunteers, and in 2020, the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) and Heal Zimbabwe Trust engaged community volunteers to serve as peace monitors.

Many CSOs managed to adapt to the pandemic by finding new ways to use digital platforms. For example, the Election Resource Center (ERC) and Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC) launched talk shows such as *Election Talk* and organized virtual business conferences to stay engaged with their constituencies. Well-funded CSOs, such as the Magamba Network, were able to acquire new equipment that enabled staff to use digital platforms or work from home. CSOs in remote and rural areas, such as the Buhera Residents Association and Wedza Residents Development Initiative Trust, were often unable to use the internet because of the high cost and lack of infrastructure. A few media organizations, including MISA and the Magamba Network, offered cybersecurity training to staff.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.9



CSOs' financial viability declined slightly in 2020 as donors reduced their funding or shifted their focus because of the pandemic.

The majority of Zimbabwean CSOs receive funds mainly from foreign donors. In 2020, the major partners continued to be USAID, NPA, Danish Church Aid, other foreign embassies, and multilateral funding institutions, such as United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WFP. Overall donor funding levels decreased in 2020 as the pandemic caused donors to suspend or cancel their grant programs. For example, NPA cut its funding by nearly one-third. Some donors shifted their focus to emerging issues such as the pandemic or climate change. HIVOS, which used to support democracy and governance projects, shifted its attention to women and

digital and internet rights. Among new funding in response to the pandemic, DanChurchAid supported short-term projects by organizations such as MURRA and UNICEF partnered with Goal Zimbabwe on pandemic-awareness initiatives in Mufakose, Harare.

Some CSOs received support from domestic private foundations in 2020. For example, in February, the Mukuvisi Conservation Trust received funding from Highlife Foundation for Wetlands Protection initiatives in Harare. Although not ample, such funding helped ensure that recipient CSOs could sustain their operations.

Unless they are aligned with the government, most CSOs do not seek government funding because of the poor relationship between the sectors. Government-aligned CSOs, such as the Grain Millers Association of Zimbabwe and ZNCC, receive government support through a process that includes few accountability mechanisms. Although the political environment discourages businesses from supporting CSOs, a few organizations benefitted from corporate support in 2020. For example, VISET partnered with Nyaradzo Funeral Services to distribute PPE and bins for waste collection in Harare.

CSOs generating income locally in 2020 included the Wadzana Community Development Trust, which raised funds by selling dried fruit and vegetables; the Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust, Zimrights, Women's Bureau, and Media Center, which rented out space for meetings, workshops, and press conferences; and the Southern Africa Political Economy Series (SAPES) Trust, which sold publications on political topics. The efforts of many CSOs to mobilize resources locally in 2020 were impeded by pandemic-related restrictions, such as the requirement for physical distancing.

The Citizens Initiative experimented with crowdfunding to help communities affected by Cyclone Idai in Chimanimani. Residents' associations, such as CHRA and MURRA, and media organizations, such as the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists and MISA, benefitted from membership subscriptions in 2020. Business organizations typically depend on subscriptions from their members to fund their operations. For example, ZNCC is funded by business entities, and ZCTU similarly derives its funding mainly from its affiliates, although as its social base transitions from the formal to the informal economy, funding levels have dropped.

Donor-supported CSOs in Zimbabwe usually have sound financial management systems that include rules for managing funds, including policies on petty cash, procurement, and anti-fraud measures. Organizations that lack solid financial management systems often appoint fiscal agents (usually more competent organizations) to manage their funding until their internal systems develop. As part of their contractual obligations with donors, CSOs often undertake audits at the end of projects and sometimes during project implementation. Compliance visits help donors and their local partners maintain communications on financial management issues.

ADVOCACY: 4.0

Advocacy by Zimbabwean CSOs improved slightly in 2020, as many groups pushed a full and varied agenda despite the pandemic.

CSOs continued to engage with government officials and other policy makers in 2020, adapting as needed to pandemic restrictions and the new normal of virtual interactions. In January 2020, Women's Academy for Leadership and Political Excellence (WALPE) hosted an in-person breakfast meeting with the minister of women's affairs to discuss gender-based violence. In March, WALPE met virtually with a member of parliament to discuss the constitutional requirement for a fifty-fifty gender balance in all government decision-making bodies. In October, ZCTU, Zimbabwe Teachers Association, and Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe met in person under strict pandemic-related regulations at the Tripartite Negotiations Forum, a collective bargaining platform for labor, but boycotted a follow-up meeting in December because of the government's perceived insincerity.

CSOs such as the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, CiZC, SAPES, and Research and Advocacy Unit continued to push for an all-inclusive national dialogue to end the long-standing dispute over the 2018 elections. Insisting that it was elected legitimately, the office of the president responded to a written proposal submitted to CiZC with a media statement saying that it would not entertain a dialogue outside of the process already proposed by the government.

CSOs engaged more often with local rather than central government officials in 2020, mainly because of better access. Residents' associations were at the forefront of working with local authorities to ensure the delivery of services such as water, health care, and electricity. For instance, MURRA met with the mayor of Masvingo in November 2020 to find a solution to ongoing water shortages.

CSOs also engaged with the government on legislative and constitutional issues in 2020. Heal Zimbabwe Trust successfully petitioned the High Court to issue an order to operationalize Section 210 of the constitution, which provides for parliament to receive and investigate public complaints about misconduct by the security forces. A coalition of residents' associations successfully campaigned for gazetting of the Provincial Councils Bill, which ensures that provincial councils can make policy decisions on provincial matters. Before pandemic-related restrictions were introduced, ZLHR, CHRA, GRA, Women in Leadership and Development, and other organizations mobilized their members to attend the 2020–21 budget hearings. After travel and assembly were restricted, public hearings on pensions and the Provident Fund Bill were held virtually, which limited citizens' participation. However, organizations such as the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development and ZNCC were able to participate and contribute to the discussions.

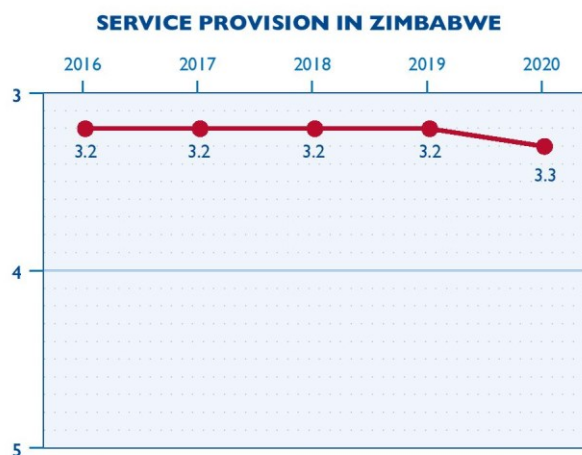
In the area of environmental protection, the Conservation Society of Monavale launched a court case in July 2020 to prevent the construction of residential buildings on the Monavale Vlei, an internationally recognized wetland. The society won the case. In September 2020, the Zimbabwe Environmental Lawyers Association (ZELA), Advocates for Earth, and other organizations took steps such as filing a court application and petitioning the government to stop a proposed coal-mining project in Hwange National Park. The Matabeleland Collective successfully pushed the government to give back the Zambezi Water Project to the people of Matabeleland, and



the project will now operate through a trust. ZELA, Advocacy for Earth, and the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum urged a Chinese company to abandon plans for a coal project in Hwange, citing its negative environmental effects and unnecessary population displacements. Despite these objections, the project was eventually approved.

CSOs continued to push for a more enabling legal environment for the sector in 2020, motivated by the president's announcement that he intended to ban all CSOs deemed unpatriotic through the new Patriotic Bill. Zimrights, Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, CiZC, and ZLHR launched a campaign to stop the proposed law, which was still under consideration at the end of the year.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.3



CSO service provision deteriorated slightly in 2020 as most partners shifted their attention to the pandemic and reduced their funding for other activities. For instance, CiZC lost funding in 2020 as a result of its partners' redefined priorities. The government's efforts to stifle civil society through pandemic restrictions and statutory instruments also limited CSOs' service provision. As CSOs sought to offer services consistent with their mandates in pandemic conditions and with lower levels of funding, they found it difficult to realize high-impact results.

CSOs continued to offer services in fields such as health care, environmental protection, governance and empowerment, water, energy, and education in 2020. Among new services, the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO

Forum started litigating on behalf of human rights defenders. Large international donors dominated areas such as relief and housing. While CSO services remained diversified, a large portion was directed to alleviating the effects of the pandemic and damage caused by Cyclone Idai in 2019. For example, the Community Working Group on Health conducted various awareness campaigns and distributed PPE in areas such as Muzarabani. The Community Water Alliance educated communities on safe practices at water points and partnered with international donors such as UNICEF and Oxfam to drill boreholes to ensure access to water during the pandemic. Most partners funding pandemic-relief activities focused on the distribution of PPE. The Citizens Initiative continued to provide emergency response and recovery services and ActionAid Zimbabwe built classroom blocks after Cyclone Idai left thousands homeless in Chimanimani in 2019. ZLHR and Heart of a Woman Trust donated food, PPE, and clothing to female prisoners.

CSOs usually rely on needs assessment tools to identify interventions that are appropriate to individual communities and use monitoring and evaluation tools to collect data on their impact. Among the providers of services meeting community needs in 2020, Heal Zimbabwe Trust conducted peace-building initiatives; Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights launched virus-awareness campaigns; Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association offered safe houses to victims of domestic violence during the pandemic; and WALPE focused on empowering women in the political field.

CSO services are generally offered without discrimination and often extend to beneficiaries beyond CSOs' members. For example, in 2020, the Community Water Alliance and CHRA worked with their members to ascertain needs in various communities and then intervened to correct inadequate water supplies and poor service provision, which benefitted all households in the area.

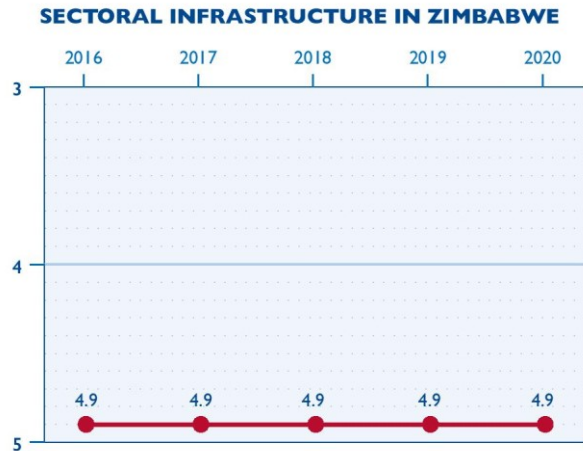
CSOs sometimes distribute or market their products to academia, government, businesses, and religious institutions. For example, ZLHR distributes its publication *The Legal Monitor* to other CSOs, while ZCTU sells its publication *The Worker*.

The government tends to recognize the contributions of international organizations, such as WFP, UNICEF, and Oxfam, which work mainly in relief and health care. The government usually refers to domestic CSOs in a negative way, especially if they focus on human rights, democracy, and governance issues.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.9

The sectoral infrastructure supporting Zimbabwe's CSOs was unchanged in 2020.

A number of resource centers provide services and training facilities, which were generally provided virtually or through social media platforms in 2020. For instance, the Media Center offered free internet access and workstations to freelance journalists, and ERC provided informational materials on the elections. The Magamba Network continued to host a co-creative hub featuring competitions for up-and-coming musicians, photographers, comedians, and other artists. The Zimbabwe Elections Support Network operated an information center on COVID-19, and the UNICEF Information Center provided information on its programs and other development activities. SAPES offered reading and research space to academicians.



CSOs continued to promote their interests in 2020 through coalitions and umbrella groups such as the Civil Society Heads of Coalitions and Networks, Zimbabwe Heads of Christian Denominations, and Zimbabwe Council of Churches. Groups such as the CiZC and WCoZ allowed organizations such as Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe to use their Zoom accounts for virtual meetings and provided data bundles for their advocacy work.

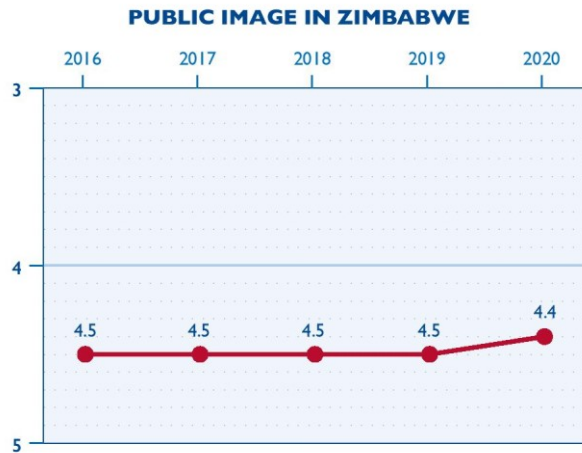
In 2020, CSOs had access to trainings from international donors and organizations such as NPA and Pact. Most of the trainings focused on management topics such as financial management and strategic planning. The Zimbabwe Institute offered training on mediation and negotiations. The vast majority of training in 2020 took place online, which increased its accessibility and effectiveness by giving a broader range of CSOs opportunities to gain new knowledge.

Partnerships between CSOs and the private sector in 2020 included a clean-up campaign by Sunningdale Residents Trust and Delta Beverages and efforts to preserve wetlands around Harare by Friends of the Environment and Nyaradzo Funeral Services. The Higher Life Foundation of Econet Wireless partnered with Mukuvisi Conservation Trust to protect wetlands. CSO-government cooperation included the nationwide peace-building exercise conducted by National Peace and Reconciliation Trust and the Ministry of Justice, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs. In mid-2020, the Matabeleland Collective partnered with the government and National Peace and Reconciliation Commission to craft a policy for the reburial of victims of the Gukurahundi massacre, whom the government killed between 1983 and 1986 on the pretext that they were dissidents. The reburials and associated meetings received ample media coverage as a result of cooperation between the Matabeleland Collective, Women of Zimbabwe Arise, and the media.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.4

CSOs' public image improved slightly in 2020 as they effectively used social media to counter the government's negative narratives.

The state-owned media was again at the forefront of attacks against CSOs in 2020. For example, the state-controlled newspaper the *Herald* ran a story on August 16 alleging that CSOs were being trained in insurgency to overthrow the "constitutionally elected government." At the same time, CSOs on good terms with the government were praised by state media. For instance, an anti-sanction drive by the Zimbabwe Citizens Forum received considerable positive coverage in the *Herald* and on ZTV. Private media, such as newzimbabwe.com, 263Chat, Sly Media, and Open Parly, offered vastly more positive views than the government of CSOs' activities. However, the *Daily News*, a highly regarded privately owned newspaper, began to report negatively about CSOs and the opposition after it changed its editorial position to support the state.



Given the contradictory coverage by the state and private media, public perceptions of CSOs were mixed. The public strongly supports CSOs that address community needs. However, the government's unrelenting efforts to cast some CSOs in a bad light by labelling them agents of regime change has soured citizens' views of the sector and sometimes makes it difficult for CSOs to engage with communities and other institutions.

The government remained skeptical of CSOs and accused them of pushing regime change in 2020. In October, during his state of the nation address, the president threatened CSOs that criticized his government and stated that the Patriotic Bill would be pushed through parliament so that CSOs that worked

with foreign governments and called for more sanctions on Zimbabwe could be banned. Businesses remained cautious about engaging with CSOs, as they can be accused of working with the opposition or the rebel movement and subjected to closure or other punishment.

During the pandemic, most organizations relied on WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and their websites to engage with their constituencies and provide counternarratives to the government's positions on many issues. For instance, Zimrights used its Facebook page to inform the public about the proposed constitutional amendments, and Veritas disseminated information on proposed new laws and the constitutional amendments via the internet.

CSOs made some effort to push for self-regulation in 2020. For example, the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe ensured that journalists who were found to have breached journalistic ethical standards were disciplined. Some CSOs publish annual reports and distribute them to their members, funding partners, and other stakeholders.

ANNEX A: CSO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX METHODOLOGY

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CSOSI IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

2020 CSO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

I. INTRODUCTION

USAID's Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (the Index or CSOSI) reports annually on the strength and overall viability of CSO sectors in Africa, Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, and Mexico. The CSO Sustainability Index is a tool developed by USAID to assess the strength and overall viability of CSO sectors in countries around the world. By analyzing seven dimensions that are critical to sectoral sustainability, the Index highlights both strengths and constraints in CSO development. The Index allows for comparisons both across countries and over time. Initially developed in 1997 for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, the CSOSI is a valued tool and methodology used by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments, donors, academics and others to better understand the sustainability of the civil society sector. USAID is continually striving to ensure the cross-national comparability of the Index scores, and to improve the reliability and validity of measurements, adequate standardization of units and definitions, local ownership of the Index, transparency of the process of Index compilation, and representative composition of panels delivering the scores.

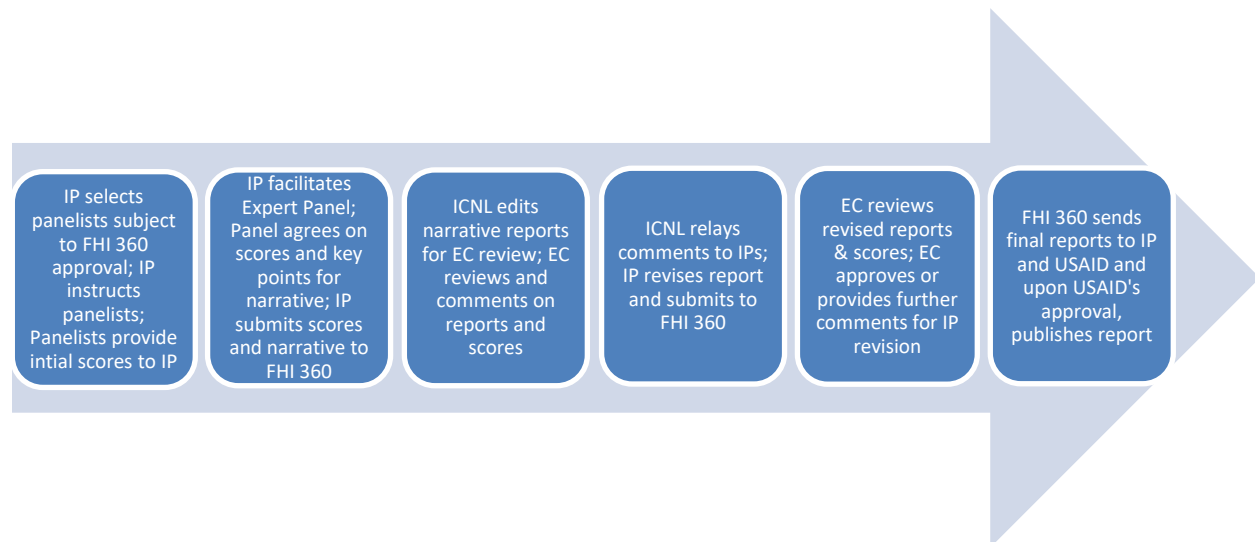
Beginning with the 2017 Index and for the following four years, FHI 360 and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) are managing the coordination and editing of the CSOSI. A senior staff member from both FHI 360 and ICNL will serve on the Editorial Committee as will one or more senior USAID/Washington officials. FHI 360 will provide small grants to local CSOs to implement the CSOSI methodology in country, while ICNL will be primarily responsible for editing the reports. Local Implementing Partners (IPs) play an essential role in developing the CSO SI and need a combination of research, convening, and advocacy skills for carrying out a high quality CSOSI.

Local Implementing Partners should please remember:

- Panels must include a diverse range of civil society representatives.
- Panelists should formulate initial scores for dimensions and justifications individually and in advance of the Panel Meeting.
- Discuss each indicator and dimension at the Panel Meeting and provide justification for the proposed score for each dimension.
- Compare the score for each dimension with last year's score to ensure that the direction of change reflects developments during the year being assessed.
- Note changes to any indicators and dimensions in the country report to justify proposed score changes.
- The Editorial Committee will request additional information if the scores are not supported by the report. If adequate information is not provided, the EC has the right to adjust the scores accordingly.

II. METHODOLOGY FOR THE IMPLEMENTER

The following steps should be followed by the IP to assemble the Expert Panel that will meet in person to discuss the status of civil society over the reporting year, determine scores, and prepare a country report for the 2020 Civil Society Organization (CSO) Sustainability Index.



I. Select Panel Experts. Carefully select a group of at least 8-10 civil society representatives to serve as panel experts. Panel members must include representatives of a diverse range of CSOs and other stakeholders, such as:

- CSO support centers, resource centers or intermediary support organizations (ISOs);
- CSOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), and faith-based organizations (FBOs) involved in a range of service delivery and/or advocacy activities;
- CSOs involved in local and national level government oversight/ watchdog/ advocacy activities;
- Academia with expertise related to civil society and CSO sustainability;
- CSO partners from government, business or media;
- Think tanks working in the area of civil society development;
- Member associations such as cooperatives, lawyers' associations and natural resources users' groups;
- Representatives of diverse geographic areas and population groups, e.g., minorities;
- International donors who support civil society and CSOs; and
- Other local partners.

It is important that the Panel members be able to assess a wide spectrum of CSO activities in various sectors ranging from democracy, human rights and governance reforms to the delivery of basic services to constituencies. CSOs represented on the panel must include both those whose work is heavily focused on advocacy and social service delivery. To the extent possible, panels should include representatives of both rural and urban parts of the country, as well as women's groups, minority populations, and other marginalized groups, as well as sub-sectors such as women's rights, community-based development, civic education, microfinance, environment, human rights, and youth. The Panel should to the extent possible include an equal representation of men and women. If two or more representatives of the same CSO participate in the Panel, they can only cast one vote. It is recommended that at least 70 percent of the Expert Panel be nationals of the country that is being rated.

In countries experiencing civil war, individuals should be brought from areas controlled by each of the regimes if possible. If not, individuals from the other regime's territory should at least be contacted, to incorporate their local perspective.

In some instances, it may be appropriate to select a larger group in order to better reflect the diversity and breadth of the civil society sector in the country. For countries where regional differences are significant, implementers should incorporate, to the greatest extent possible, differing regional perspectives. If financial

constraints do not allow for in-person regional representation, alternative, low cost options, including emailing scores/ comments, teleconferencing/Skype, may be used.

If there is a USAID Mission in the country, a USAID representative must be invited to attend the panel. USAID representatives that attend are welcome to provide some words of introduction to open the event, as it is funded by USAID, and they are welcome to observe and participate in the discussion. However, they will not have the ability to cast their vote in terms of scores.

Please submit to FHI 360 for approval the list of the Panel members who you plan to invite at least two weeks before the meeting is scheduled to occur using the form provided in Annex A. It is the responsibility of the IP to ensure that the panel composition, and the resulting score and narrative, are sufficiently representative of a cross-section of civil society and include the perspectives of various types of stakeholders from different sectors and different areas of the country.

2. Prepare the Panel meeting. Ensure that panel members understand the objectives of the Panel, including developing a consensus-based rating for each of the seven dimensions of civil society sustainability covered by the Index and articulating a justification or explanation for each rating consistent with the methodology described below. We encourage you to hold a brief orientation session for the panelists prior to the panel discussion. This is particularly important for new panelists but is also useful to update all panelists on methodology and process changes. Some partners choose to hold a formal training session with panel members, reviewing the methodology document and instructions. Other partners provide a more general discussion about the objectives of the exercise and process to the panelists.

Definition of CSO:

Civil society organizations are defined “broadly as any organizations, whether formal or informal, that are not part of the apparatus of government, that do not distribute profits to their directors or operators, that are self-governing, and in which participation is a matter of free choice. Both member-serving and public-serving organizations are included. Embraced within this definition, therefore, are private, not-for-profit health providers, schools, advocacy groups, social service agencies, anti-poverty groups, development agencies, professional associations, community-based organizations, unions, religious bodies, recreation organizations, cultural institutions, and many more.”

- Toward an Enabling Legal Environment for Civil Society, Statement of the 16th Annual Johns Hopkins International Fellows in Philanthropy Conference, Nairobi, Kenya. The International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law, Volume 8, Issue 1, November 2005.

The overall goal of the Index is to track and compare progress in the sector over time, increasing the ability of local entities to undertake self-assessment and analysis. To ensure a common understanding of what is being assessed, the convener shall provide a definition of civil society to the panel members. The CSOSI uses the enclosed definition to ensure the report addresses a broad swath of civil society.

In order to allow adequate time to prepare for the panel, distribute the instructions, rating description documents and a copy of the previous year’s country chapter to the members of the Expert Panel a minimum of three days before convening the Panel so that they may develop their initial scores for each dimension before meeting with the other panel members. It is critical to emphasize the importance of developing their scores and justifications before attending the panel. It is also important to remind panel members that the scores should reflect developments during the 2020 calendar year (January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020).

We also recommend you encourage panelists to think of concrete examples that illustrate trends, since this information will be crucial to justifying their proposed scores. In countries with closing civic space, the IP should take initiative to ensure that expert panel members do not self-censor themselves, including by taking whatever measures possible to build trust. The confidentiality of all members must be ensured and participants must be protected against retaliation; to this end, the IP can choose to enforce Chatham House Rules.

Lastly, it is highly recommended to compile and send to panelists data and information sources to guide them as they score. Recommendations of information sources are listed below under #4.

We are very interested in using the preparation of this year’s Index to track lessons learned for use in improving the monitoring process in upcoming years. We would appreciate implementers recording and submitting any observations they might have that will increase the usefulness of this important tool. In addition, we will solicit

feedback through regional debriefs, and will continue to maintain an online forum where IPs can share best practices, ask questions, and submit their comments or suggestions. These methods will be supplemented by brief satisfaction surveys that will be used to help evaluate the success of methodological and process innovations.

3. Convene a meeting of the CSO Expert Panel.

3.a. We do not require panelists to score individual indicators but only overall dimensions. For each dimension, allow each panel member to share his or her initial score and justification with the rest of the group. (Note: If two or more representatives of the same CSO participate in the Panel, only one vote can be cast on their behalf.) Although scoring will not take place at the indicator level, please be sure that panel members discuss each indicator within each dimension of the CSOSI and provide evidence-based, country-relevant examples of recent or historical conditions, policies, and events within each of the dimension narratives. Please take notes on the discussion of each indicator and dimension, detailing the justification for all dimension scores, in the template provided. These notes must be submitted to FHI 360 with the first draft of the narratives (they do not have to be translated to English if not originally written in English).

At the end of the discussion of each dimension, allow panel members to adjust their scores, if desired. Then, for each dimension, eliminate the highest score and the lowest score (if there are two or more of the highest or lowest scores, only eliminate one of them) and average the remaining scores together to come up with a single score for each dimension. Calculate the average or arithmetic mean¹⁶ of these scores for a preliminary score for the dimension. Please keep all scores on record, making sure that personal attribution cannot be made to individual panel members. Use a table similar to the one provided below to track panel members' scores without personal attribution.

Panel Member	Legal Environment	Organizational Capacity	Financial Viability	Advocacy	Service Provision	Sectoral Infrastructure	Public Image
1							
2							
3							

3.b. Once a score is determined for a dimension, please have panel members compare the proposed score with last year's score to ensure that the direction and magnitude of the change reflects developments during the year. For example, if an improved score is proposed, this should be based on concrete positive developments during the year that are noted in the report. On the other hand, if the situation worsened during the year, this should be reflected in a worse score (i.e., a higher number on the 1-7 scale).

Please note that for countries where a democratic revolution took place in the previous year, the panelists should be conscious to avoid scoring based on a post-revolution euphoria. The score-change framework should be closely followed to avoid panelists scoring based on anticipated changes, rather than the actual level of change thus far.

A change of 0.1 should generally be used to reflect modest changes in a dimension. Larger differences may be warranted if there are more significant changes in the sector. The evidence to support the scoring change must always be discussed by the panel and documented in the dimension narrative. See **CSOSI Codebook – Instructions for Expert Panel Members** for more details about this scoring scale.

In addition, for each dimension score, review the relevant description of that dimension in “CSOSI Codebook – Tiers and Scores: A Closer Look.” Discuss with the group whether the score for a country matches that rating description. For example, a score of 2.3 in organizational capacity would mean that the civil society sector is in the “Sustainability Enhanced” phase. Please read the “Sustainability Enhanced” section for Organizational Capacity in “Ratings: A Closer Look” to ensure that this accurately describes the civil society environment.

If the panel does not feel that the proposed score is accurate after these two reviews, please note this when submitting proposed scores in your narrative report, and the Editorial Committee will discuss whether one or more scores needs to be reset with a new baseline. Ultimately, each score should reflect consensus among group members.

¹⁶ Arithmetic mean is the sum of all scores divided by the total number of scores.

3.c. Discuss each of the seven dimensions of the Index and score them in a similar manner. Once all seven dimensions have been scored, average the final dimension scores together to get the overall CSO sustainability score. Please submit the table with the scores from the individual panelists together with the narrative report. Panelists should be designated numerically.

3.d. Please remind the group at this stage that reports will be reviewed by an Editorial Committee (EC) in Washington, D.C. The Editorial Committee will ensure that all scores are adequately supported and may ask for additional evidence to support a score. If adequate information is not provided, the EC may adjust the scores.

4. Prepare a draft country report. The report should focus on developments over the calendar year 2020 (January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020).

The draft report should begin with an overview statement and a brief discussion of the current state of sustainability of the civil society sector with regard to each dimension. In the overview statement, please include an estimated number of registered and active CSOs, as well as a description of the primary fields and geographic areas in which CSOs operate. Also include a brief overview of any key political, economic, or social developments in the country that impacted the CSO sector during the year. If this information is not provided, the editor will request it in subsequent rounds, which will require additional work from you.

The report should then include sections on each dimension. Each of these sections should begin with a summary of the reasons for any score changes during the year. For example, if a better score is proposed, the basis for this improvement should be clearly stated up front. These sections should include a discussion of both accomplishments and strengths in that dimension, as well as obstacles to sustainability and weaknesses that impact the operations of a broad range of CSOs. Each indicator within each dimension should be addressed in the report.

The report should be written based on the Panel members' discussion and input, as well as a review of other sources of information about the CSO sector including but not limited to analytical studies of the sector, statistical data, public opinion polls and other relevant third-party data. Some international sources of information and data that should be considered include the following:

- CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report - <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/state-of-civil-society-report-2019>
- CIVICUS Monitor -- <https://monitor.civicus.org/>
- World Giving Index - <https://www.cafonline.org/about-us/publications>
- Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) - <https://www.v-dem.net/en/analysis/CountryGraph/>
- Media Sustainability Index - <https://www.irex.org/projects/media-sustainability-index-msi>
- Nations in Transit - <https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/nations-transit#.VdugbqSF0hI>
- Freedom in the World - <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2019>
- Freedom of the Press - <https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-press>
- ITUC Global Rights Index: <https://www.ituc-csi.org/rights-index-2019>
- ITUC Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights: <https://survey.ituc-csi.org/?lang=en>
- U.S. Department of State Human Rights Report: <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/>
- ICNL Civic Freedom Monitor: <http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/>
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: <https://carnegieendowment.org/regions>
- Afro-Barometer: <http://www.afrobarometer.org/>

Please limit the draft reports to a maximum of **ten pages in English**. Please keep in mind that we rely on implementers to ensure that reports are an appropriate length and are well written.

While the individual country reports for the 2020 CSO Sustainability Index must be brief, implementers may write longer reports for their own use to more fully describe the substance of the panel meetings. Longer reports may include additional country context information or examples and could be used for a variety of purposes, including advocacy initiatives, research, informing project designs, etc.

Please include a list of the experts who served on the panel using the form provided. This will be for our reference only and will not be made public. Also, **please remember to provide the individual panelists' ratings for each dimension** (with the names replaced by numbers).

Submit the draft country reports with rankings via email to FHI 360 by the date indicated in your grant's Project Description.

5. Initial edits of the country report. Within a few weeks of receiving your draft report, FHI 360 and its partner, ICNL, will send you a revised version of your report that has been edited for grammar, style and content. As necessary, the editors will request additional information to ensure that the report is complete and/or to clarify statements in the report. Please request any clarification needed from the editor as soon as possible, then submit your revised report by the deadline indicated.

6. Editorial Committee review. In Washington, an Editorial Committee (EC) will review the scores and revised draft country reports. The EC consists of representatives from USAID, FHI 360, ICNL, and at least one regional expert well versed in the issues and dynamics affecting civil society in the region. A USAID representative chairs the EC. If the EC determines that the panel's scores are not adequately supported by the country report, particularly in comparison to the previous year's scores and the scores and reports of other countries in the region, **the EC may request that the scores be adjusted, thereby ensuring comparability over time and among countries, or request that additional information be provided to support the panel's scores.** Further description of the EC is included in the following section, "The Role of the Editorial Committee."

7. Additional report revision. After the EC meets, the editor will send a revised report that indicates the EC's recommended scores, and where further supporting evidence or clarification is required. Within the draft, boxes will be added where you will note whether you accept the revised scores or where you can provide further evidence to support the original proposed score.

The report should be revised and returned to the editor within the allotted timeframe. The project editor will continue to be in contact with you to discuss any outstanding questions and clarifications regarding the scoring and the report's content. Your organization will be responsible for responding to all outstanding comments from the EC, as communicated by the project editor, until the report is approved and accepted by USAID.

8. Dissemination and promotion of the final reports. After the reports are approved by USAID and final formatting is conducted, the country reports will be grouped into regional reports. Each Implementing Partner will be responsible for promoting both the final, published country report and the regional report. Your organization will conduct activities to promote the Index's use and its visibility. This may include organizing a local public event, panel discussion, or workshop and by making the report available electronically by web posting or creating a social network page for the country report and through the other methods described in your Use and Visibility Plan. Documentation that you have conducted these activities as described in that Plan must be submitted to FHI 360 before it will authorize the final payment.

III. THE ROLE OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

As an important step in the CSO Sustainability Index process, all country reports are reviewed and discussed by an Editorial Committee composed of regional and sector experts in Washington, DC, and an expert based in the region. This committee is chaired by a USAID Democracy Specialist and includes rotating members from USAID (past members have included experts from regional bureaus, the USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance’s Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DCHA/DRG), the USAID Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and the Environment’s Local Solutions Office, and USAID Democracy, Human Rights and Governance foreign service officers). The committee also includes civil society experts from FHI 360 and ICNL.

The Editorial Committee has three main roles. It reviews all reports and scores to ensure that narratives are adequate and compelling from the standpoint of supporting the proposed score and to determine if the proposed change in score is supported by the narrative. A compelling narrative demonstrates that a score results from evidence of systematic and widespread cases and is not based on one or two individual cases. For example, a country environment characterized by a growing number of CSOs with strong financial management systems that raise funds locally from diverse sources is a compelling justification for an elevated financial viability score. A country in which one or two large CSOs now have the ability to raise funds from diverse sources is not. The Editorial Committee also checks that scores for each dimension meet the criteria described in “Ratings: A Closer Look,” to ensure that scores and narratives accurately reflect the actual stage of CSO sector development. Finally, the Editorial Committee considers a country’s score in relation to the proposed scores in other countries, providing a regional perspective that ensures comparability of scores across all countries.

CSOs are encouraged to remind their panels from the outset that the Editorial Committee may ask for further clarification of scores and may modify scores, where appropriate. **While implementing partners will have the chance to dispute these modifications by providing more evidence for the scores the panel proposed, the USAID Chair of the EC will ultimately have the final say on all scores.** However, by asking panels to compare their scores with last year’s scores and “Ratings: A Closer Look” (which is essentially what the Editorial Committee does), it is hoped that there will be few differences between proposed scores and final scores. Ensuring that the narrative section for each dimension includes adequate explanations for all scores will also limit the need for the Editorial Committee to ask for further clarification.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CSOSI EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS

Introduction

USAID's Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (the Index or CSOSI) is a tool developed by USAID to assess overall viability of civil society organizations (CSOs) in a particular country. By analyzing seven dimensions that are critical to sectoral sustainability on an annual basis, the Index highlights both strengths and constraints in CSO development.

The Index allows for comparisons both across countries and over time. Initially developed in 1997 for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, the CSOSI is a valued tool and methodology used by CSOs, governments, donors, academics and others to better understand the opportunities, challenges and sustainability of the civil society sector in a particular country or region. In 2020 the CSOSI was implemented in 73 countries.

For the period of 2017-2022, FHI 360 and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) are managing the coordination and editing of the CSOSI. To develop the Index each year, FHI 360 provides small grants and technical support to local CSOs who serve as Implementing Partners (IPs) responsible for leading the in-country process to prepare the annual country report, using the CSOSI methodology. ICNL oversees the editing the country reports once they are drafted by IPs. A senior staff member from both FHI 360 and ICNL serves on an Editorial Committee that reviews all reports, as do one or more senior USAID/Washington officials.

The Expert Panel (EP) members for whom this Codebook is designed participate in in-country panel discussions on the seven dimensions of sustainability covered by the Index. The IP convenes these panel discussions annually to assess the situation of civil society in their countries and determine scores based on an objective analysis of the factual evidence.

The CSOSI management team is continually striving to ensure the cross-country and cross-year comparability of the Index's scores, as well as to improve the reliability and validity of measurements, standardization of definitions, local ownership of the Index, and transparency of the Index's methodology and processes.

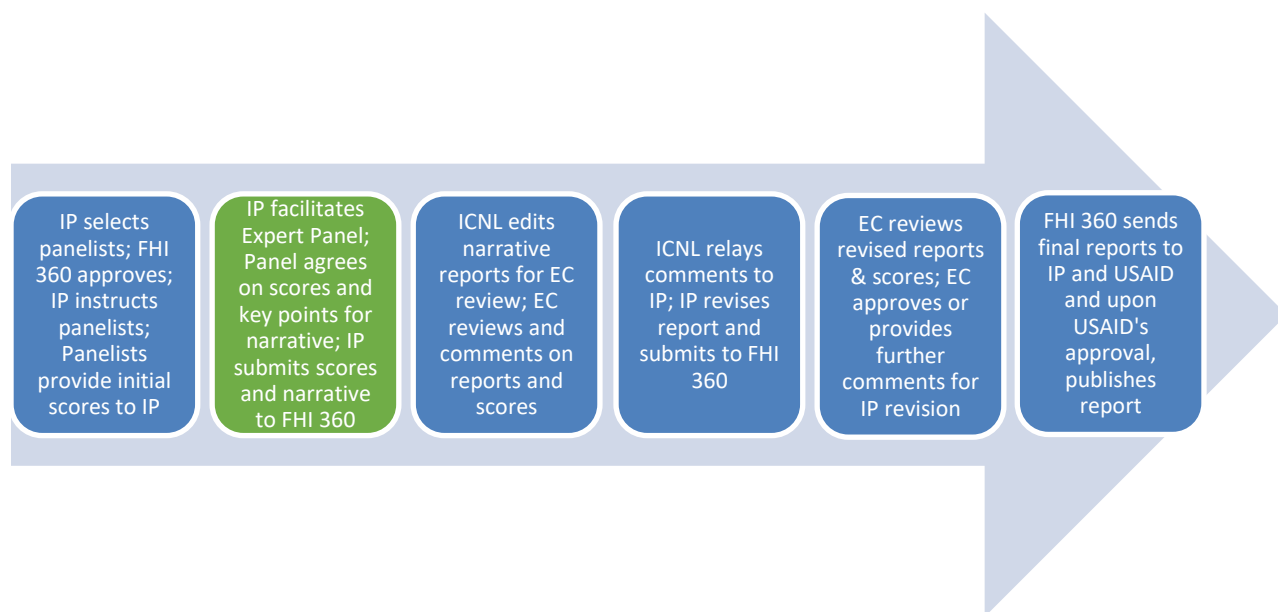
Therefore, FHI 360 has created this Codebook to inform and guide expert panel members through the scoring process. The Codebook provides definitions of the key concepts used to assess the overall strength and sustainability of the civil society sector in a given country, explains the scoring process, and standardizes the scale to be used when proposing score changes.

This document is the first part of the Codebook, providing an overview of the concepts and processes that guide the expert panel members' role in the CSOSI's methodology. The second part of the Codebook provides descriptions, or vignettes, of each score for each dimension, to standardize expert panel members' understanding of the scoring scale and to assist them in ensuring that scores are accurate.

CSOSI Methodology

The CSOSI measures the sustainability of each country's CSO sector based on the CSOSI's seven dimensions: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, sectoral infrastructure, and public image. Its seven-point scoring scale used not only by CSOSI, but also variety of well-known reviews such as Freedom House in its publications "Nations in Transit" and "Freedom in the World."

The IP in each country leads the process of organizing and convening a diverse and representative panel of CSO experts. EPs discuss the level of change during the year being assessed in each of the seven dimensions and determine proposed scores for each dimension. The IP then drafts narratives that document the rationale for each score. The scores are organized into three basic "tiers" representing the level of viability of the civil society sector: *Sustainability Impeded*, *Sustainability Evolving*, and *Sustainability Enhanced*. All scores and narratives are then reviewed by a Washington, D.C.-based Editorial Committee (EC) for consistency, completeness and methodological adherence, assisted by regional civil society experts. The graph below summarizes the approach and process.



Definition of Concepts

The overall goal of the Index is to track progress or regression in the CSO sector over time, increasing the ability of local entities to undertake self-assessment and analysis. To ensure a common understanding of what is being assessed, panel members need a shared understanding of the key concepts underlying their assessment.

Civil Society Organization

Civil society organizations are defined:

"...As any organizations, whether formal or informal, that are not part of the apparatus of government, that do not distribute profits to their directors or operators, that are self-governing, and in which participation is a matter of free choice. Both member-serving and public-serving organizations are included. Embraced within this definition, therefore, are private, not-for-profit health providers, schools, advocacy groups, social service agencies, anti-poverty groups, development agencies, professional associations, community-based organizations, unions, religious bodies, recreation organizations, cultural institutions, and many more."¹

¹ Toward an Enabling Legal Environment for Civil Society, Statement of the 16th Annual Johns Hopkins International Fellows in Philanthropy Conference, Nairobi, Kenya. *The International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law*, Volume 8, Issue 1, November 2005.

This definition of CSO includes informal, unregistered groups and movements, but to be included in the CSOSI, the movement must possess the structure and continuity to be distinguished from a single gathering of individuals and from personal or family relationships. In many countries political parties and private companies establish and support CSOs, but these entities are usually either public, for-profit, or not self-governing.

Civil Society Sector

The CSOSI defines the CSO sector to include all of the following: non-governmental organizations (focused on advocacy, oversight, or service provision), social movements, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations, trade and labor unions, women’s groups, youth groups, resource centers and intermediary support organizations, research institutes and think tanks, professional associations, cooperatives, and natural resource users’ groups, recreational organizations, cultural institutions, social enterprises, and informal movements, networks, and campaigns.

Throughout the report, please address differences between these different types of CSOs and note where trends and developments have affected specific types of CSOs.

Seven Dimensions of Sustainability

The CSOSI measures sustainability across seven dimensions by analyzing a series of indicators related to each dimension. (see **Scoring: Dimensions and Indicators, provided as Annex A, for the full list of questions to guide your analysis of each indicator**):

1- LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: The legal and regulatory environment governing the CSO sector and its implementation.

<i>Registration – Legal procedures to formalize the existence of a CSO</i>
<i>Operation – The enforcement of the laws and its effects on CSOs</i>
<i>State Harassment – Abuses committed against CSOs and their members by state institutions and groups acting on behalf of the state</i>
<i>Taxation – Tax policies that affect CSOs</i>
<i>Access to Resources – Legal opportunities for CSOs to mobilize financial resources</i>
<i>Local Legal Capacity – Availability and quality of legal expertise for CSOs</i>

2- ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: The internal capacity of the CSO sector to pursue its goals

<i>Constituency Building – Relationships with individuals or groups affected by or interested in issues on which CSOs work</i>
<i>Strategic Planning – Organizational goals and priorities for a set timeframe</i>
<i>Internal Management – Structures and processes to guide the work of CSOs</i>
<i>CSO Staffing – Quality and management of human resources</i>
<i>Technical Advancement – Access to and use of technology</i>

3- FINANCIAL VIABILITY: The CSO sector’s access to various sources of financial support

<i>Diversification – Access to multiple sources of funding</i>
<i>Local Support - Domestic sources of funding and resources</i>
<i>Foreign Support – Foreign sources of funding and resources</i>
<i>Fundraising – CSOs’ capacity to raise funds</i>
<i>Earned Income – Revenue generated from the sale of products and services</i>
<i>Financial Management Systems – Processes, procedures and tools to manage financial resources and operations.</i>

4- ADVOCACY: The CSO sector’s ability to influence public opinion and public policy

<i>Cooperation with Local and Central Government – Access to government decision-making processes</i>
<i>Policy Advocacy Initiatives – Initiatives to shape the public agenda, public opinion, or legislation</i>
<i>Lobbying Efforts – Engagement with lawmakers to directly influence the legislative process</i>
<i>Advocacy for CSO Law Reform – Initiatives to promote a more favorable legal and regulatory framework for the CSO sector</i>

5- SERVICE PROVISION: The CSO sector's ability to provide goods and services

<i>Range of Goods and Services – Variety of goods and services offered</i>
<i>Responsiveness to the Community – Extent to which goods and services address local needs</i>
<i>Clientele and beneficiaries – People, organizations and communities who utilize or benefit from CSOs' services and goods</i>
<i>Cost Recovery – Capacity to generate revenue through service provision</i>
<i>Government Recognition and Support – Government appreciation for CSO service provision</i>

6- SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: Support services available to the CSO sector

<i>Intermediary Support Organizations (ISOs) and CSO Resource Centers – Organizations and programs that provide CSOs with training and other support services</i>
<i>Local Grant Making Organizations – Local institutions, organizations or programs providing financial resources to CSOs</i>
<i>CSO Networks and Coalitions – Cooperation within the CSO sector</i>
<i>Training – Training opportunities available to CSOs</i>
<i>Intersectoral Partnerships – Collaboration between CSOs and other sectors</i>

7- PUBLIC IMAGE: Society's perception of the CSO sector

<i>Media Coverage – Presence of CSOs and their activities in the media (print, television, radio and online)</i>
<i>Public Perception of CSOs – Reputation among the larger population</i>
<i>Government/Business Perception of CSOs – Reputation with the government and business sector</i>
<i>Public Relations – Efforts to promote organizational image and activities</i>
<i>Self-Regulation – Actions taken to increase accountability and transparency</i>

How to Score

The CSO Sustainability Index uses a seven-point scale from 1 to 7. **Lower numbers indicate more robust levels of CSO sustainability.** These characteristics and levels are drawn from empirical observations of the sector's development in the country, rather than a causal theory of development. Given the complex nature of civil society sectors, many contradictory developments may be taking place simultaneously. The levels of sustainability are organized into three broad clusters:

- Sustainability Enhanced (1 to 3)* - the highest level of sustainability, corresponds to a score between 1.0 and 3.0;
- Sustainability Evolving² (3.1 to 5)* - corresponds to a score between 3.1 and 5.0;
- Sustainability Impeded (5.1 to 7)* – the lowest level of sustainability, corresponds to a score between 5.1 and 7.0.

Sustainability Enhanced	Sustainability Evolving	Sustainability Impeded
1.0 – 3.0	3.1 –5.0	5.1 –7.0

Scoring Process³

The primary role of the EP is to provide an assessment of the CSO environment based on the seven dimensions mentioned above. During the panel discussion, panel members are tasked with analyzing each dimension and any recent developments, identifying and discussing initial scores for each dimension, including their evidence for these

² The 'Sustainability Evolving' categorization does not assume a direct or forward trajectory. Dimension and Overall Sustainability scores that fall within this category may represent both improvements and regressions.

³NOTE: For countries in which the CSOSI is being implemented for the first time, the below scoring process does not apply. Instead, please refer to the document Scoring Process for Setting Country Baselines. For countries discussing baseline score recalibration, please use the Recalibration Guidance Sheet.

scores, and determining their final proposed scores for each dimension. The overall score for the country will be an average of these seven scores.

Each expert panel member is asked to follow the steps below:

Step 1: Please start by reviewing last year's report and other sources of information about sectoral developments from the last year of which you are aware related to each dimension and its indicators. Then, based on the evidence, rate each dimension on the scale from 1 to 7, with a score of 1 indicating a very advanced civil society sector with a high level of sustainability, and a score of 7 indicating a fragile, unsustainable sector with a low level of development. Fractional scores to one decimal place are encouraged. See "Scoring based on Level of Change" on page 6 below for guidance on how to determine proposed scores.

When rating each dimension, please remember to consider each indicator carefully and make note of any specific, country-relevant examples of recent or historical conditions, policies, or events that you used as a basis for determining this score.

Step 2: Review your proposed score for each dimension to ensure that it makes sense in comparison to last year's score and narrative. Please carefully consider the importance of any developments and weigh more heavily those changes that have had an impact at the sector level, especially in cases when there have been both positive and negative changes. In determining the level of change, including the incremental change over the past year, look at the evidence of change, the various factors over the year being assessed that led to those changes (events, policies, laws, etc.), the durability of the change and the extent to which the change impacts the sector as a whole.

Step 3: Once you have scores for each dimension, average these seven scores together to arrive at an overall CSO sustainability score and provide all these scores to the IP before you attend the expert panel discussion.

Step 4: Attend the EP discussion. Listen to other experts describe the justification for their scores. After discussing each indicator in a dimension, you will have the opportunity to revise your proposed score. Should the panel achieve consensus regarding the scores, the consensus scores will be the panel's final proposed scores. If consensus is not reached among the panelists, the IP will average the panelists' scores, removing one instance of the highest and lowest scores each, to arrive at the final scores that will be proposed to the EC.

It is very important that the discussion includes specific examples and information that can be used to justify the Expert Panelist's scores. Therefore, please come prepared to share specific evidence to support trends you have noted during the year. **If adequate supporting information is not provided, the EC has the right to adjust the scores accordingly, to ensure objectivity and methodological consistency in scoring.**

Important Note: In countries with disputed territories or areas (e.g., self-declared states, breakaway states, partially recognized states, declared people’s republics, proto-states, or territories annexed by another country’s government), panelists should score based only on the area under the national government’s control. However, these territories’ contexts should be discussed, to be referenced briefly in the introduction of the country report. In countries experiencing civil war (political and armed movements that administer parts of the country, regions governed by alternative ruling bodies), panelists should balance the situation in each of the territories when determining all scores, and discuss trends and developments under each regime.

In countries where a great deal of regional autonomy is recognized (e.g. Iraqi Kurdistan), expert panelists should take those areas into account when scoring and compiling examples, and IPs should ensure the situation in these areas are well-integrated into the scoring decisions and narrative report.

For countries with closing civic space, sufficient data and informational sources should be discussed to both acknowledge the changes in civic space and consider its impacts on dimensions. The panelists should respond to published sources and present their evidence to ensure balance between positive and negative developments affecting civil society in their country. To avoid self-censorship and ensure the confidentiality of and non-retaliation against any expert panel member, the IP could choose to enforce the *Chatham House Rule*. When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the *Chatham House Rule*, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

In countries where a democratic revolution took place in the previous year, the panelists should still closely follow the score-change framework when determining the new dimension-level scores to justify the changes, avoiding exaggerated score increases that may be due to a post-revolution feeling of euphoria. The proposed scores should always measure the actual changes thus far and not anticipated impacts in the near future.

Scoring Based on Level of Change

The level of change in a dimension from one year to the next is determined by assessing the impact of multiple factors including new policies and laws, changes in implementation of existing policies and laws, various organization-level achievements and setbacks, changes in funding levels and patterns, as well as contextual political, economic, and social developments. While individual examples may seem impactful on their own, ultimately a sector’s long-term sustainability only changes gradually over time as the implications of these positive or negative developments begin to be felt and their long-term effects take hold. Therefore, dimension-level score changes each year should not in normal circumstances exceed a 0.5-point change from the previous year⁴.

When determining what weight to give different trends and developments in how they affect the scores, consider the relative scope of the changes and the duration of their impacts. Those trends and developments that will have larger and longer-term impacts on the sector as a whole should be weighted more heavily compared to those that affect only limited parts of the sector and are more likely to change from year to year. For example, a demonstrated increased capability to mobilize domestic resources (e.g., through corporate philanthropy or crowdfunding) broadly witnessed throughout the sector, or a new mechanism for long-term funding of CSOs (e.g., through a basket fund or a tax designation mechanism) would signal a longer-term change in a sector’s financial viability than a one-year increase in donor funding to CSOs such as during a year of national elections or following an emergency.

In determining how the level of change in the dimension of sustainability should translate into a change in score, the following scale can be used to assist expert panel members’ decision making:

What was the overall impact of the change(s) on the dimension?

⁴ **Note:** This scale has been adjusted for the 2018 CSOSI to more accurately reflect the scale at which trends and developments should impact a score given the definitions of the scoring scale above.

Deterioration	<p>Cataclysmic deterioration: Trends and developments have had a completely transformative negative effect on at least one or two indicators in the dimension and significantly affected other dimensions as well.</p> <p>Example: Legal Environment – A law has banned all international CSOs and their affiliates from the country, as part of the government’s systematic crackdown on civil society organizations.</p>	0.5 or greater
	<p>Extreme deterioration: Trends and developments have had very important negative effects on at least one or two indicators in the dimension.</p> <p>Example: Organizational Capacity – Economic depression and instability have led donor basket funds to close abruptly, leaving many major CSOs without funding for their activities. Outreach efforts to constituencies have been halted due to funding shortages and many major CSOs have lost their well-qualified staff members.</p>	0.4
	<p>Significant deterioration: Trends and developments have had important negative effects on at least one or two indicators in the dimension.</p> <p>Example: Public Image – The government conducts a relentless media campaign to discredit the image of CSOs by calling them agents of foreign actors seeking to destabilize the country. At the same, the government intimidates media outlets and threatens them with retaliation should they partner with or cover CSO activities without prior approval by the government.</p>	0.3
	<p>Moderate deterioration: Trends and developments have had a somewhat negative impact in at least one or two indicators in the dimension.</p> <p>Example: Legal Environment – In an effort to increase public revenue, the government has decided to increase fees by 100% for some types of government services, including CSO registration renewal fees, which were already very high according to many CSOs. As a result, some CSOs, particularly community-based organizations (CBOs), had to delay or suspend their activities.</p>	0.2
	<p>Slight deterioration: Trends or developments have had a slightly negative impact on a at least one or two indicators in the dimension.</p> <p>Example: Legal Environment – The government has decided that CSOs should submit their financial statement and annual activity report to the registration agency every year. This may have a long-term positive effect but in the short-term it has increased bureaucratic hurdles and the possibility of harassment by overzealous government officials.</p>	0.1
No Change	The country has not encountered any significant trends or developments in the dimension or developments have been both positive and negative in equal measure.	0
	<p>Slight improvement: Trends or developments have had a slightly positive impact on at least one or two indicators in the dimension.</p> <p>Example: Legal Environment – To facilitate CSO registration, particularly for those in rural areas, the government has decided its registration agency will allow the agency to take applications locally and process registration directly at the district level. Now, CSOs in rural areas are not required to travel to the capital to apply. However, this measure is accompanied with a small increase in the registration fee.</p>	0.1

Improvement	<p>Moderate improvement: Trends and developments have had a somewhat positive impact in at least one or two indicators in the dimension.</p> <p>Example: Service Provision – To improve the effectiveness of public service delivery, the central government has decided that at least 10% of local government contracts for basic service delivery will be set aside for CSOs. The law is lacking in specificity, particularly around the application process, but it reinforces CSOs’ image as credible partners.</p>	0.2
	<p>Significant improvement: Trends and developments have had important positive effects on at least one or two indicators in the dimension.</p> <p>Example: Public Image – There has been a net increase of CSO partnerships with businesses. CSOs have also agreed to and published a general code of conduct for the sector, reinforcing a positive trend of greater transparency and accountability.</p>	0.3
	<p>Extreme improvement: Trends and developments have had very important positive effects on several indicators in the dimension.</p> <p>Example: Organizational Capacity – The government and international donors have launched a five-year multi-million-dollar basket funds to support CSO-led activities and to strengthen CSO capacity, with a special focus on skills training for CSO staff members, particularly those from CBOs.</p>	0.4
	<p>Transformative improvement: Trends and developments have had a completely transformative positive effect on at least one or two indicators in the dimension and will potentially affect other dimensions as well.</p> <p>Example: Legal Environment – A nonviolent revolution that toppled an authoritarian regime and installed a more democratic regime has produced sudden political and legal changes that will protect basic freedoms and human rights.</p>	0.5 or greater

Instructions for Baseline Recalibration

Background

To enhance its methodology, the Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (CSOSI) incorporated several activities into its annual process. These activities respond directly to the methodological issues identified through consultations conducted with stakeholders in 2018 and 2019.

One of these activities to strengthen the CSOSI methodology is to reset dimension-level scores which are not accurate, either because their baseline scores were inaccurate or because they have not moved significantly enough over time to reflect structural changes in the sector's sustainability. The goal of resetting these scores is to improve the cross-country comparability of scores and to increase the analytical usefulness of the CSOSI to its target audiences.

There are two scenarios in which a score can be recalibrated:

- Scenario 1
 - FHI 360 informs the Implementing Partner (IP) about the dimension score(s) that the Editorial Committee (EC) has flagged for needing recalibration
- Scenario 2:
 - A majority of expert panelists flag the score for recalibration at the panel discussion.

Scenario 1: EC recommended recalibration

Instructions

1. **Inform participating expert panel members about the scores flagged for recalibration –** When the IP sends the expert panelists the annual CSOSI package of relevant materials, it also communicates to them the purpose of baseline score recalibration and the dimension scores that have been selected by the EC, in consultation with regional experts, for recalibration.
2. **To determine the new score(s), use *Sustainability Categories and Scores – A Closer Look* and a comparison to other scores in the region –** Instead of using the scoring guidance whereby proposed scores are determined by analyzing the level of change from the previous year, the scores identified for recalibration are determined by analyzing where they should fall on the one-to-seven scoring scale, as well as a comparison with the other countries' CSOSI scores for that dimension in the same region. The expert panelists should review the vignettes and illustrative examples in *Sustainability Categories and Scores – A Closer Look* to familiarize themselves with how various levels of CSO sustainability should correspond to the CSOSI's scoring spectrum. Scores should be proposed to the tenth decimal point based on how well they match the descriptions of the various full-point scores listed in this codebook. To help narrow proposed scores to the tenth decimal point, experts can review other countries' scores listed for that dimension in the most recent CSOSI regional report.
3. **Discuss evidence for recalibrated scores, as well as trends and developments in the past year that led to improvements and deterioration in the dimension –** The narrative report should be drafted the same as in the other dimensions, reviewing the current situation and discussing what has changed over the previous year. A note will be included into the final report that clarifies that the new score for that dimension is based on a recalibration and should not be compared with the previous year's score to make assertions about improvement or deterioration.
4. **Prepare and submit a recalibration justification note to FHI 360 –** To justify a proposed baseline recalibration, or to disagree with the EC's recommendation to recalibrate a score, the IP should prepare a justification note to be sent to FHI 360. The note should summarize the panel members' decision to accept or reject a requested recalibration. It should also outline the evidence and examples provided by the panelists related to each and every dimension being recalibrated, justifying the new score specifically in relation to the vignettes in *Sustainability Categories and Scores – A Closer Look*.
5. **The Editorial Committee will decide to accept or reject the proposed score –** As with scoring decisions based on the level of change, the EC will make a final decision on the proposed baseline recalibration. If EC rejects the proposed new score, it will propose an alternative score for the dimension.

Scenario 2: Expert Panel (EP) recommended recalibration

Instructions

- 1. Inform participating expert panel members about the changes in methodology regarding recalibration** – When the IP sends the expert panelists the annual CSOSI package of relevant materials, it also communicates to them the purpose and the process of optional baseline score recalibration. If expert panel members believe that one or more dimension-level scores are significantly out of place, they should attend the panel discussion about a proposed score recalibration, bringing supporting evidence for the score(s) to be recalibrated.
- 2. To determine the new score(s), use *Sustainability Categories and Scores – A Closer Look* and a comparison to other scores in the region** – Instead of using the scoring guidance whereby proposed scores are determined by analyzing the level of change from the previous year, the scores identified for recalibration are determined by analyzing where they should fall on the one-to-seven scoring scale, as well as a comparison with the other countries' CSOSI scores for that dimension in the same region. Expert panelists that want to propose a recalibration should review the vignettes and illustrative examples in *Sustainability Categories and Scores – A Closer Look* for the relevant dimension(s), to familiarize themselves with how various levels of CSO sustainability should correspond to the CSOSI's scoring spectrum. Scores should be proposed to the tenth decimal point based on how well they match the descriptions of the various full-point scores listed in this codebook. To help narrow proposed scores to the tenth decimal point, experts can review other countries' scores listed for that dimension in the most recent CSOSI regional report.
- 3. Discuss evidence for recalibrated scores, as well as trends and developments in the past year that led to improvements and deterioration in the dimension** – If a majority of expert panelists want to recalibrate a score, the dimension(s) should be discussed in the context of what the recalibrated score should be. The narrative report should be drafted the same as in the other dimensions, reviewing the current situation and discussing what has changed over the previous year. A note will be included into the final report that clarifies that the new score for that dimension is based on a recalibration and should not be compared with the previous year's score to make assertions about improvement or deterioration.
- 4. Prepare and submit a recalibration justification note to FHI 360** – To justify a proposed baseline recalibration, the IP should prepare a justification note to be sent to FHI 360. The note should summarize the panel members' decision. It should also outline the evidence and examples provided by the panelists related to each and every dimension being recalibrated, justifying the new score specifically in relation to the vignettes in *Sustainability Categories and Scores – A Closer Look*.
- 5. The Editorial Committee will decide to accept or reject the proposed recalibration** – As with scoring decisions based on the level of change, the EC will make a final decision on the proposed baseline recalibration. If EC rejects the proposed new score, it will propose a score for the dimension(s).

Tips

If FHI 360 informs the IP that certain dimension scores have been identified for recalibration by the EC, the IP should communicate with the expert panelists which dimensions have been selected for baseline recalibration at least one week in advance of the panel discussion. This advance notification will give the panelists an opportunity to prepare evidence about the status quo in the country under this dimension to inform their selection of a new baseline score.

If the local EP decides to recalibrate the score unprompted by the EC, the IP should ensure that the panelists present evidence during the panel discussion to justify the change and to include in the recalibration justification note.

In either case, the IP should be prepared to respond to the EC's questions about the justifications for recalibrated scores.

Instructions for Electronic Questionnaire

Background

To enhance its methodology, the Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (CSOSI) has incorporated several activities into its annual process. These activities respond directly to the methodological issues identified through the feedback and consultation process conducted with project stakeholders in 2018 and 2019.

One of these activities to enhance the methodology's implementation is to disseminate an electronic questionnaire or e-questionnaire to a larger group of individuals. The questionnaire allows a larger, more diverse group of individuals to contribute their perspectives and insights on the CSOSI dimensions, strengthening the representativeness and inclusiveness of the process and data, enhancing Expert Panel (EP) deliberations, and providing Implementing Partners (IPs) more evidence to improve report quality. Dissemination of the questionnaire also helps to improve visibility of the IP and Index, and foster engagement with stakeholders who are the most likely to subsequently use the Index when completed.

Instructions

- **Identify approximately 50 participants to whom to send the questionnaire** – The IP selects individuals who will expand the scope and diversity of inputs into the process. The selected individuals should include representatives of or specialists in specific sub-sectors of civil society organizations (CSOs), such as labor unions, capacity building organizations, organizations representing marginalized and vulnerable groups, informal movements, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, intermediary support organizations, resource centers, and research institutes. Emphasis should be placed on selecting individuals who are in other localities of the country and those located in rural areas. The objective is for the IP to select a group of people who would add new perspectives on various aspects of the sector on which the in-person panelists might not have deep expertise, as well as individuals who have broad knowledge but would be unable or available to attend the in-person panel discussion. FHI 360 and the local USAID Mission may request additions to the list of questionnaire recipients from their own network of contacts.
- **Design your e-questionnaire** – Look at the mandatory and optional questions shared by FHI 360 to design an e-questionnaire that best responds to the needs of the civil society sector in your country. You can translate the e-questionnaire into the principal local language(s) of the country. The country-specific questionnaire should be brief and should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete.
- **Disseminate the electronic questionnaire to your selected additional participants** – The IPs can disseminate electronic questionnaire on the online platforms of their choice or consult with FHI 360 on setting up the e-questionnaire on SurveyMonkey, to be distributed to the IP's selected additional participants. The IP can use snowball sampling to disseminate the questionnaire to both increase the number of responses as well as to diversify them. To reach larger audiences, the IP can work with local CSO umbrella organizations to tap into their mailing lists, social media pages and other sector-specific online platforms to share the questionnaire link. The IP should ask the additional participants to complete the questionnaire within a period of two weeks or less.
- **Compile analysis of the questionnaire's results**– After the e-questionnaire deadline that the IP identified has expired, the IP compiles the quantitative and qualitative data received. In cases when FHI 360 supported the IPs to set up the e-questionnaire on SurveyMonkey's CSOSI account, FHI 360 collects the electronic questionnaire results and submits to the IP.
- **Incorporate the findings into the panel discussion** – Statistics and examples that are raised through the questionnaire responses should be presented to the in-person panel to serve as an additional data source for the scoring process and the discussion around the relevant indicators. When responses are not conclusive or do not align with the experts' opinions, the IP should still present them at the panel discussion for the panelists' consideration.
- **Write the conclusions reached into the narrative report** – While panels should analyze the questionnaire results and use them to inform their discussions, the e-questionnaire responses do not directly translate into scoring decisions. The data received from the electronic questionnaire should be incorporated into the narrative report in the same way that the expert panelists' insights are incorporated -- justifying scores, sharing without attribution to a particular individual or reference to the questionnaire. Instead, the inputs should simply be mentioned where relevant as evidence of what has changed positively

or negatively in ways that affected the sustainability of the CSO sector in the relevant year. Anecdotal evidence, specific examples, and references to events through open-ended questions may provide IPs necessary data to strengthen their narrative reports.

Tips

- When selecting additional participants, please keep the following points in mind:
 - Sending the e-questionnaire to people with whom you already have a working relationship may increase the response rate, so consider sharing it with organizations and individuals in other areas of the country with whom you have worked;
 - Sharing the e-questionnaire with donor agencies operating in your country and allowing them to propose individuals to receive the e-questionnaire can be a useful way of reaching new experts and perspectives outside of your own organization's network;
 - Sharing the e-questionnaire with civil society networks and allowing them to forward it to their member organizations' leaders, or other experts with whom they work, is a useful way of maximizing circulation outside of your network;
 - When sending out the e-questionnaire, it may be useful to commit to send participants a copy of last year's final country and regional reports, so they feel a sense of participation in the larger process of developing the CSOSI;
 - When preparing your distribution list, consider whether the situation in the country is such that individuals may try to manipulate the e-questionnaire results. If that is a possibility, consider steps to target distribution, establish specific time frames or other measures to address the concern.
- When disseminating an e-questionnaire, inform your audience about the survey deadline, and send a reminder few days before the last day.
- As a best practice, the IP can compile a written overview of the conclusions and evidence of the additional participants and send it to the EP members before the panel discussion, so they can review it. If a written overview is sent out before the panel discussion, the IP can ask the expert panelists at the discussion which findings stood out most to them, to spur discussion.
- When e-questionnaire findings are not conclusive, the IP should ask the expert panelists to analyze the results to better understand the data.
- Pay special attention to geography – if your country has breakaway regions, is experiencing civil war or has regions' that may be unrepresented or marginalized, make extra efforts to reach people in all the relevant areas.
- Convincing the participants that their inputs are confidential is key to obtaining a high participation rate and meaningful findings. Especially in countries where self-censorship might be an issue, be very clear that only your organization and FHI 360 will see their inputs, and no comments made will be personally attributed under any circumstances.
- The IPs can use any online platform of their choice to disseminate the electronic questionnaire. In the past, FHI 360 used SurveyMonkey while some other IPs reported using Google Forms.
- The IPs should take relevant measures to ensure data privacy.

ANNEX B: STATISTICAL DATA

2020 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA SCORES

Country	CSO Sustainability	Legal Environment	Organizational Capacity	Financial Viability	Advocacy	Service Provision	Sectoral Infrastructure	Public Image
Angola	5.5	6.0	5.6	6.3	4.9	5.1	5.7	5.0
Benin	4.3	4.8	4.6	5.4	3.8	4.1	4.2	3.2
Botswana	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.9	3.7	3.6	4.8	4.0
Burkina Faso	4.3	3.3	5.4	6.2	3.1	4.2	4.7	3.4
Burundi	5.8	6.8	6.1	6.5	5.5	5.0	5.9	4.9
Cameroon	5.1	5.0	5.2	6.0	4.6	4.6	5.3	4.9
Côte d'Ivoire	4.9	5.5	5.1	5.3	4.3	3.7	5.3	4.9
DRC	5.0	5.5	5.1	5.7	3.7	4.4	5.5	4.8
Ethiopia	5.2	5.5	5.3	6.2	5.2	4.6	5.3	4.3
Gabon	5.4	6.5	5.2	6.3	4.7	5.1	5.1	4.8
The Gambia	4.9	5.2	4.9	6.1	3.9	4.4	5.1	4.4
Ghana	4.2	3.8	4.2	6.2	3.2	3.5	4.7	3.9
Guinea	5.3	5.3	5.7	6.2	4.9	5.0	5.5	4.5
Kenya	3.9	4.5	3.9	4.9	2.9	3.4	3.6	4.2
Liberia	4.9	5.1	5.2	6.1	3.4	5.0	4.8	4.7
Madagascar	4.2	4.8	4.1	5.1	3.3	4.0	4.1	3.9
Malawi	5.1	5.5	5.5	6.5	4.1	4.3	5.4	4.7
Mali	4.2	4.2	4.4	5.6	3.4	3.6	4.3	4.0
Mozambique	4.8	5.2	5.2	5.3	4.2	4.1	5.0	4.5
Namibia	4.3	3.8	4.4	5.9	3.5	4.1	4.7	3.7
Niger	4.8	5.4	5.0	5.0	4.2	4.3	5.1	4.3
Nigeria	4.4	5.2	4.8	5.7	2.8	3.6	4.7	3.7
Rwanda	4.7	4.9	4.9	5.7	3.9	4.0	5.0	4.2
Senegal	4.2	5.1	4.2	5.1	3.5	3.7	4.5	3.6
Sierra Leone	4.7	5.9	4.7	5.7	3.5	3.9	5.2	4.1
South Africa	3.6	3.2	4.0	4.8	2.7	3.2	3.6	3.5
South Sudan	5.5	7.0	5.3	6.5	4.6	4.8	5.6	4.6
Sudan	5.4	6.4	5.6	6.2	4.4	5.1	5.2	4.9
Tanzania	4.4	5.7	4.5	5.1	4.0	3.5	4.1	3.9
Uganda	4.4	5.9	4.0	5.2	3.6	3.4	4.3	4.1
Zambia	4.6	4.9	4.6	6.1	3.2	4.5	4.9	4.1
Zimbabwe	4.8	6.7	4.6	5.9	4.0	3.3	4.9	4.4

To further explore CSOSI's historical data and past reports, please visit - www.csosi.org

COUNTRIES RANKED BY SCORE



Legal Environment

SUSTAINABILITY ENHANCED

SUSTAINABILITY EVOLVING	
South Africa	3.2
Burkina Faso	3.3
Ghana	3.8
Namibia	3.8
Botswana	4.0
Mali	4.2
Kenya	4.5
Benin	4.8
Madagascar	4.8
Rwanda	4.9
Zambia	4.9
Cameroon	5.0

SUSTAINABILITY IMPEDED	
Liberia	5.1
Senegal	5.1
The Gambia	5.2
Mozambique	5.2
Nigeria	5.2
Guinea	5.3
Niger	5.4
Côte d'Ivoire	5.5
DRC	5.5
Ethiopia	5.5
Malawi	5.5
Tanzania	5.7
Sierra Leone	5.9
Uganda	5.9
Angola	6.0
Sudan	6.4
Gabon	6.5
Zimbabwe	6.7
Burundi	6.8
South Sudan	7.0

Organizational Capacity

SUSTAINABILITY ENHANCED

SUSTAINABILITY EVOLVING	
Kenya	3.9
South Africa	4.0
Uganda	4.0
Madagascar	4.1
Botswana	4.2
Ghana	4.2
Senegal	4.2
Mali	4.4
Namibia	4.4
Tanzania	4.5
Benin	4.6
Zambia	4.6
Zimbabwe	4.6
Sierra Leone	4.7
Nigeria	4.8
The Gambia	4.9
Rwanda	4.9
Niger	5.0

SUSTAINABILITY IMPEDED	
Côte d'Ivoire	5.1
DRC	5.1
Cameroon	5.2
Gabon	5.2
Liberia	5.2
Mozambique	5.2
Ethiopia	5.3
South Sudan	5.3
Burkina Faso	5.4
Malawi	5.5
Angola	5.6
Sudan	5.6
Guinea	5.7
Burundi	6.1

Financial Viability

SUSTAINABILITY ENHANCED

SUSTAINABILITY EVOLVING	
South Africa	4.8
Botswana	4.9
Kenya	4.9
Niger	5.0

SUSTAINABILITY IMPEDED	
Madagascar	5.1
Senegal	5.1
Tanzania	5.1
Uganda	5.2
Côte d'Ivoire	5.3
Mozambique	5.3
Benin	5.4
Mali	5.6
DRC	5.7
Nigeria	5.7
Rwanda	5.7
Sierra Leone	5.7
Namibia	5.9
Zimbabwe	5.9
Cameroon	6.0
The Gambia	6.1
Liberia	6.1
Zambia	6.1
Burkina Faso	6.2
Ethiopia	6.2
Ghana	6.2
Guinea	6.2
Sudan	6.2
Angola	6.3
Gabon	6.3
Burundi	6.5
Malawi	6.5
South Sudan	6.5

Advocacy

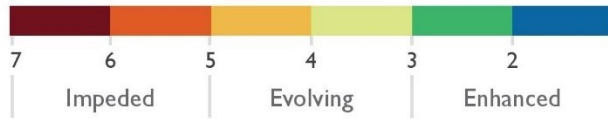
SUSTAINABILITY ENHANCED

South Africa	2.7
Nigeria	2.8
Kenya	2.9

SUSTAINABILITY EVOLVING	
Burkina Faso	3.1
Zambia	3.2
Ghana	3.3
Madagascar	3.3
Liberia	3.4
Mali	3.4
Namibia	3.5
Senegal	3.5
Sierra Leone	3.5
Uganda	3.6
Botswana	3.7
DRC	3.7
Benin	3.8
The Gambia	3.9
Rwanda	3.9
Tanzania	4.0
Zimbabwe	4.0
Malawi	4.1
Mozambique	4.2
Niger	4.2
Côte d'Ivoire	4.3
Sudan	4.4
Cameroon	4.6
South Sudan	4.6
Gabon	4.7
Angola	4.9
Guinea	4.9

SUSTAINABILITY IMPEDED	
Ethiopia	5.2
Burundi	5.5

COUNTRIES RANKED BY SCORE



Service Provision

SUSTAINABILITY ENHANCED

SUSTAINABILITY EVOLVING

South Africa	3.2
Zimbabwe	3.3
Kenya	3.4
Uganda	3.4
Ghana	3.5
Tanzania	3.5
Botswana	3.6
Mali	3.6
Nigeria	3.6
Côte d'Ivoire	3.7
Senegal	3.7
Sierra Leone	3.9
Madagascar	4.0
Rwanda	4.0
Benin	4.1
Mozambique	4.1
Namibia	4.1
Burkina Faso	4.2
Malawi	4.3
Niger	4.3
DRC	4.4
The Gambia	4.4
Zambia	4.5
Cameroon	4.6
Ethiopia	4.6
South Sudan	4.8
Burundi	5.0
Guinea	5.0
Liberia	5.0

SUSTAINABILITY IMPEDED

Angola	5.1
Gabon	5.1
Sudan	5.1

Sectoral Infrastructure

SUSTAINABILITY ENHANCED

SUSTAINABILITY EVOLVING

Kenya	3.6
South Africa	3.6
Madagascar	4.1
Tanzania	4.1
Benin	4.2
Mali	4.3
Uganda	4.3
Senegal	4.5
Burkina Faso	4.7
Ghana	4.7
Namibia	4.7
Nigeria	4.7
Botswana	4.8
Liberia	4.8
Zambia	4.9
Zimbabwe	4.9
Mozambique	5.0
Rwanda	5.0

SUSTAINABILITY IMPEDED

Gabon	5.1
The Gambia	5.1
Niger	5.1
Sierra Leone	5.2
Sudan	5.2
Cameroon	5.3
Côte d'Ivoire	5.3
Ethiopia	5.3
Malawi	5.4
DRC	5.5
Guinea	5.5
South Sudan	5.6
Angola	5.7
Burundi	5.9

Public Image

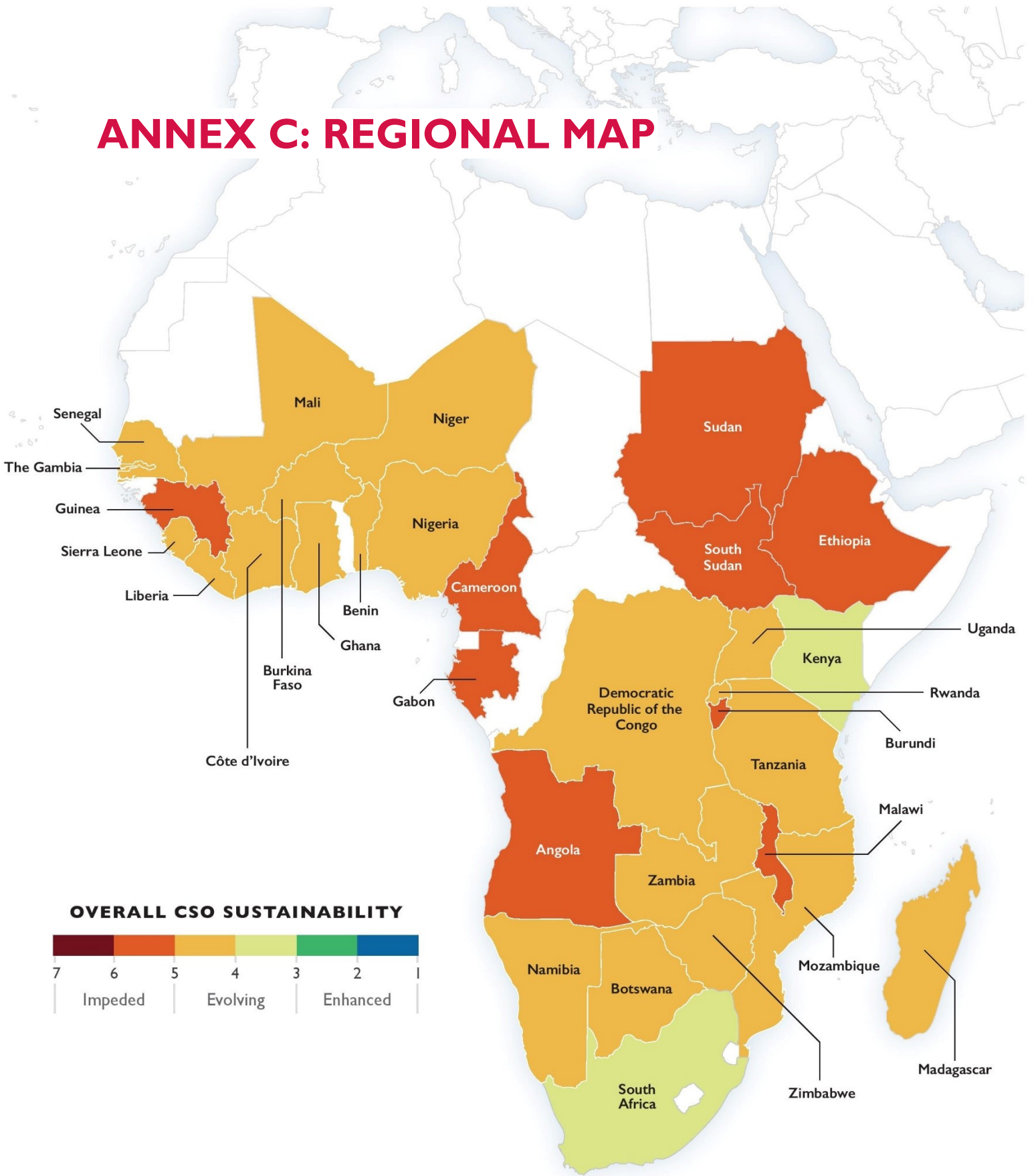
SUSTAINABILITY ENHANCED

SUSTAINABILITY EVOLVING

Benin	3.2
Burkina Faso	3.4
South Africa	3.5
Senegal	3.6
Namibia	3.7
Nigeria	3.7
Ghana	3.9
Madagascar	3.9
Tanzania	3.9
Botswana	4.0
Mali	4.0
Uganda	4.1
Sierra Leone	4.1
Zambia	4.1
Kenya	4.2
Rwanda	4.2
Ethiopia	4.3
Niger	4.3
The Gambia	4.4
Zimbabwe	4.4
Guinea	4.5
Mozambique	4.5
South Sudan	4.6
Liberia	4.7
Malawi	4.7
DRC	4.8
Gabon	4.8
Burundi	4.9
Cameroon	4.9
Côte d'Ivoire	4.9
Sudan	4.9
Angola	5.0

SUSTAINABILITY IMPEDED

ANNEX C: REGIONAL MAP



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