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2014 CSO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX
FOR AFGHANISTAN

The 2014 CSO Sustainability Index
for Afghanistan

Developed by:
United States Agency for International Development

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INTRODUCTION

The fourth edition of the *CSO Sustainability Index for Afghanistan* reports on the strength and overall viability of the civil society sector in Afghanistan based on the assessment of local civil society representatives and experts.

The *CSO Sustainability Index* is an important and unique tool for local civil society organizations (CSOs), governments, donors, academics, and others to understand and measure the sustainability of the CSO sector. This publication complements similar publications covering other regions, which include reports on twenty-nine countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia; twenty-five countries in Sub-Saharan Africa; seven countries and territories in the Middle East and North Africa; seven countries in Asia; and Pakistan.[1] These editions of the *CSO Sustainability Index* bring the total number of countries surveyed to seventy.

This Index used the same methodology as that of other editions of the *CSO Sustainability Index*. A panel of local experts met to discuss progress and setbacks in seven interrelated dimensions of CSO sustainability: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, infrastructure, and public image. As part of their discussion, the panel assigned scores to the seven dimensions on a scale of 1 to 7— with 1 representing the highest and 7 the lowest level of sustainability—which were then averaged to produce an overall CSO sustainability score.

Based on the expert panel's discussions as well as its own knowledge of the sector, the implementing partner then drafted a narrative report that describes CSO sector sustainability, both overall and for each dimension. An Editorial Committee of technical and regional experts reviewed the country report and scores. More detail about the methodology used to determine the scores and draft the report is provided in the Annex.

This publication would not have been possible without the valuable contributions of many individuals and organizations. In particular, this publication was made possible by the financial support provided by the Aga Khan Foundation. In addition, the knowledge, observations, and contributions of the many civil society experts, practitioners, and donors who participated in the panels are the foundation upon which this *CSO Sustainability Index* is based. Specific acknowledgements appear on the following page.

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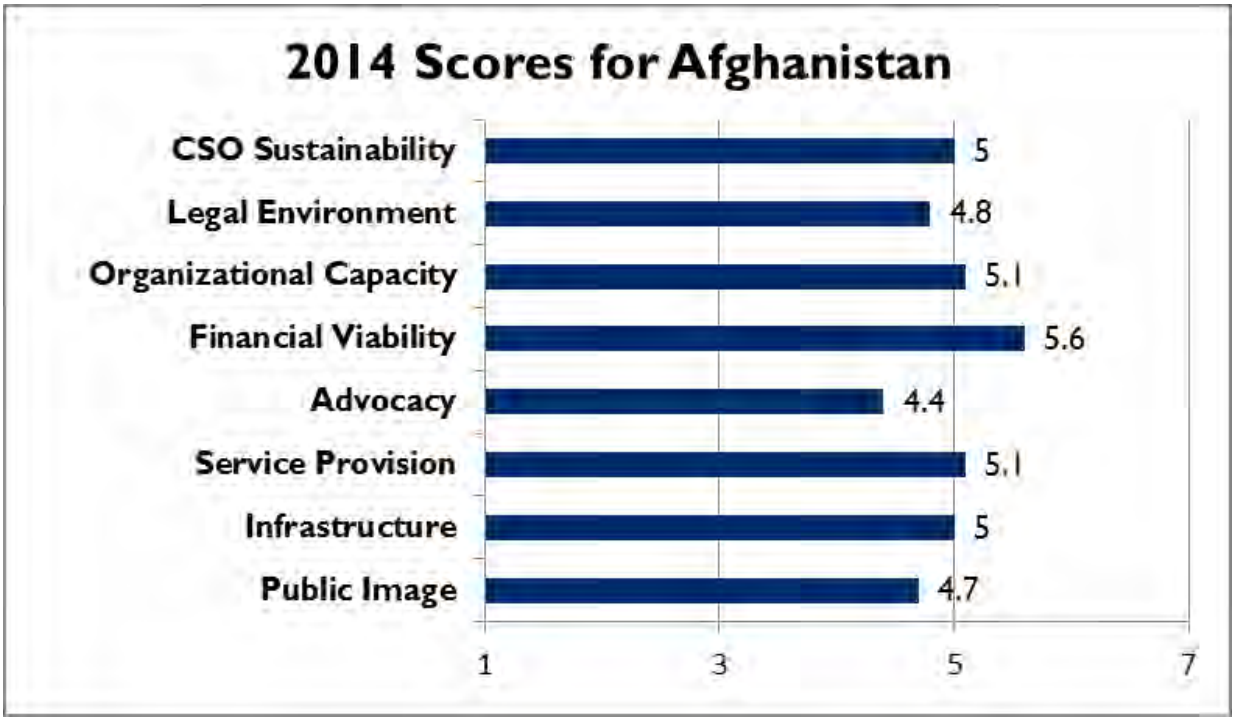
AFGHANISTAN



CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 5.0

Country Facts

Capital: Kabul

Government Type: Islamic Republic

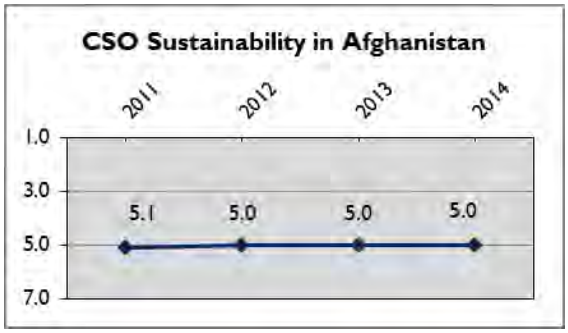
Population: 35,564,342

GDP per capita (PPP): $1,900

Human Development Index: 169

Civil society has long been a crucial actor in addressing a full range of issues in the health, educational, social, cultural, religious, humanitarian, and political arenas in Afghanistan.[2] Since the beginning of the war in Afghanistan in 2001, the international donor community and the government have placed great emphasis on strengthening civil society.

In 2014, Afghanistan held presidential elections, with a first round of voting in April and a second round in June. Widespread accusations of fraud delayed the results until September 2014, when Ashraf Ghani was declared the new president. The resulting National Unity Government, established in September 2014, has proved to be more supportive of CSOs than the Karzai administration.



During 2014, CSOs improved their self-regulation systems, reached out to communities, and formed

[2] Capital, government type, population, and GDP in all reports are drawn from the Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, available online at https://www.cia.gov/l brary/publications/the-world-factbook/. Human Development Index rankings available at http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi.

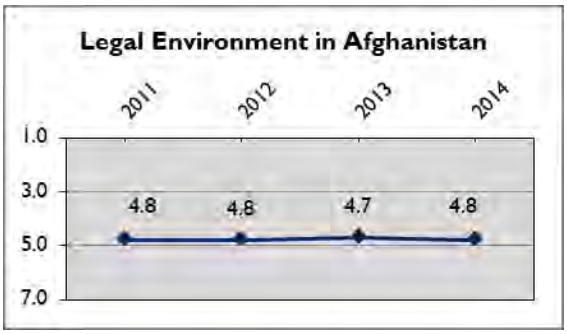
strategic partnerships with media, government bodies, the private sector, religious leaders, other CSOs, and international organizations. Such strategic partnerships both within and across sectors strengthened CSOs' influence in policy reform and development processes in 2014. In addition to playing a critical role in service delivery—especially in the health and education fields—CSOs promoted volunteerism during the elections, monitored the election process, advocated for freedom of speech through a vibrant media, encouraged women's inclusion in government, championed human rights protection, and actively demanded and monitored good governance.

However, the security situation and political transition presented challenges for civil society in 2014. For instance, declining security in many provinces, vacant government positions (including ministers and provincial governors), and decreased availability of funds curtailed the work of many CSOs. At the same time, the transition presented Afghan civil society with a valuable opportunity to reflect on its work, prompting ideas for more collaboration, new funding modalities, and new ways of working with local communities, international donors, and the Government of Afghanistan.

According to a study by the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR) published in January 2015, there are approximately 7,000 CSOs registered in Afghanistan, including 2,000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) registered with the Ministry of Economy (MoEc) and 5,000 associations (including social organizations, foundations, and unions) registered with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). There are also numerous informal and unregistered CSOs, including village-based *Shuras* (community-based councils), *Jirgas* (tribal assemblies of elders), and youth movements advocating for change in their communities.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.8

The Law on Associations, adopted in 2013 to replace the 2002 Law on Social Organizations, allows associations to access foreign funding and conduct advocacy. However, many proposals that would benefit the sector, such as the draft Law on Foundations, a draft Law on Volunteerism, and proposed amendments to the Income Tax Law, were not adopted by the end of 2014. Also, no progress was made on the draft NGO Law which remained with the MoEc and MoJ. As a result, both domestic and foreign NGOs continue to be governed by the 2005 Law on NGOs.



In 2014, the Council of Ministers approved a Regulation on Procedure of Establishment and Registration of Associations, which serves as an implementing regulation and addresses several issues not originally addressed by the Law on Associations. The new regulation contains both enabling and restrictive provisions. First, the Law on Associations does not specify the required minimum number of founders for an association, while the regulation requires a minimum of ten founding members. The Law on Associations did not set a fixed time period within which the government must act on the registration application of an association, while the regulation requires the MoJ to register an association within fifteen days from the date the application is submitted. The Law on Associations is silent about what happens if a registration application is refused. According to the regulation, however, the MoJ has to provide written reasons when rejecting an application, and the applicant has the right to appeal the decision to a competent court. In addition, the regulation decreases the cost of a three-year license from 10,000 AFNs (approximately $150) to 5,000 AFNs (approximately $75). Finally, while the Law of Associations requires the MoJ to establish offices to register associations in the provinces, the regulation gives the authority of registration only to the Department of Coordination, Assessment and Registration of Associations and Political Parties in Kabul.

According to the law, associations register with the MoJ, while NGOs register with MoEc. CSO registration continued to be a burdensome process in 2014. Both domestic and foreign NGOs must undergo a two-tiered

registration process, involving first the MoEc Technical Commission and then the High Evaluation Commission, which is composed of representatives from the MoEC, MoJ, and Ministries of Finance and Labor and Social Affairs; the Control and Audit Department, the Attorney General's Office, and National Security Department; and the NGO coordination bodies. The process for foreign NGOs also involves the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other burdens on registration include a ban on foreign citizens founding associations (though they can found NGOs), high registration fees, corruption at the ministerial level, the need to pay bribes, lack of capacity of registration staff, numerous documentation requirements, delays in application decisions that sometimes last months, and the need to travel to Kabul from the provinces. Most small-scale community-based organizations (CBOs) and associations cannot receive funds for their activities because they have difficulty meeting the registration requirements.

The MoEc dissolves NGOs if they fail to submit annual reports for two consecutive years. International NGOs (INGOs) dissolve voluntarily when their projects end. After the voluntary dissolution of an INGO, its remaining assets are supposed to be distributed to other organizations with similar activities. According to the NGO Department of MoEc, as of February 2015, 1,750 local and 141 international NGOs had been terminated since 2005, including 239 local and 11 international NGOs in 2014.

Many small CSOs lack adequate information regarding internal management, scope of permissible activities, financial reporting, and grounds for dissolution. Both the MoEc and MoJ lack guides for these legal requirements and do not monitor adherence to them or help CSOs comply with them. CSOs find that government officials themselves often are not aware of the legal framework or procedures and lack expertise to assess CSO reports. Furthermore, various government officials impose their own reporting requirements.

Levels of freedom of expression and public debate varied among different regions of Afghanistan in 2014. While Kabul has a fairly open environment for political debate, outside of Kabul CSOs were at high risk of harassment by government and political entities if they criticized government policy, electoral processes, and other sensitive issues. For example, in Herat and Ghor, security agents made arbitrary arrests of CSO staff and left warnings for the CSOs. In Samangan, the Afghan Civil Society Forum-organization (ACSFo) convened a roundtable on local government achievements and challenges to promote accountability and information sharing from the government to the public and media. Local outlets of national TV channels were expected to broadcast the roundtable, where most of the guests were local government representatives. However, the provincial governor warned ACSFo not to broadcast the roundtable because exposing government weaknesses would harm the government, worsen the security situation, and heighten public dissatisfaction with the delivery of government services. In addition, some local authorities, provincial departments, and Ministry of Finance tax officers harassed CSOs, and sometimes asked for bribes in order to process their financial reports.

Per the 2005 Income Tax Law, CSOs that operate exclusively for educational, cultural, literary, scientific, or charitable purposes are exempt from income tax. However, the application process to access tax exemptions is difficult and lengthy, and in practice, only NGOs working for humanitarian purposes receive tax exemptions. Due to unclear information and tax reporting requirements by the Ministry of Finance, CSOs pay bribes to tax department officials to process their tax reports even if they do not have taxable income. The government charges taxes on the import and export of CSO goods as well. The Income Tax Law does not provide tax deductions for individuals or corporations that donate to CSOs.

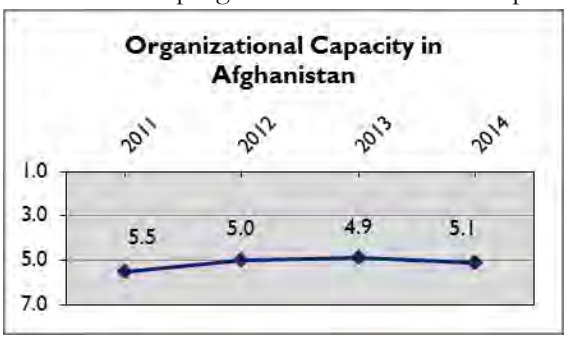
The 2005 Law on NGOs allows NGOs to earn income from the provision of goods and services. The 2013 Law on Associations neither specifically allows nor prohibits the carrying out of economic activities. The Civil Code, however, specifies that an association "may not carry on any financial business," which could be interpreted as restricting economic activity for associations. In practice, however, associations perform economic activities without government interference. There are no legal barriers to competing for government funds, contracts, or procurements at the local and central levels. At the same time, there is no organized state coordination between different ministries to assist CSOs in accessing government funding.

There is no specific organization that provides legal advice to CSOs. Most local lawyers are not trained in or familiar with CSO law. Although a handful of lawyers support CSOs in Kabul and some other major cities,

the practice of CSO law is not yet robust—different interpretations of the law persist and the judicial system is weak.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 5.1

Organizational capacity of CSOs in the country decreased in 2014 as foreign donors—the sector's main source of funding—dramatically decreased their support for CSO capacity building. For example, the US Embassy-funded Quick Response Fund Grant Program and the Provincial Response Teams (PRTs) ceased their funding for small grants during the year. Other organizations also decreased their funding for CSO capacity building activities, while some donors shifted their focus from capacity building to advocacy, research, and policy engagement as well as election-related civic education programs. This decrease in capacity building support led many local CSOs to either close down or reduce their staff during the year.



Donors increased their eligibility requirements for funding, asking applicants to submit information about their organizational structures, as well as audit reports, policies, and strategies. Donors also began asking to observe an organization's premises and requiring grantees to have well-functioning internal governance structures and financial procedures. A significant number of CSOs were unable to meet these requirements, evidencing their lack of organizational capacity.

Despite notable investment in CSOs' capacity development in recent years, a large number of CSOs, particularly small organizations, still lack strategic plans. Increased competition for funding during the year further encouraged CSOs to become involved in activities beyond their mandates and missions in order to survive. Consequently, many CSOs produce strategic plans only to meet formal requirements, and very few are able to implement them.

CSOs' dependence on donor funding and increased involvement in activities outside of their missions affected their relationships and responsiveness to their communities. At the same time, community mobilization and civic awareness campaigns organized around the presidential and provincial council elections allowed some CSOs to improve their relationships with their constituencies. Some traditional CSOs, such as *Shuras*, *Jirgas*, and community councils, have strong and sustainable relationships with their constituencies. Meanwhile, the governments in Kabul and Balkh established government-organized non-governmental organizations (GONGOs) that represent the government instead of constituents.

There were few changes to CSOs' internal management and governance systems during 2014. Both associations and NGOs are required to specify organizational structures in their charters in order to register. Larger CSOs generally have functioning boards of directors that meet at least twice a year. However, most small and medium size CSOs lack boards of directors or have dysfunctional governance structures. Sometimes directors are not selected based on merit, but rather on personal or political ties. Therefore, internal governance structures often fail to promote accountability.

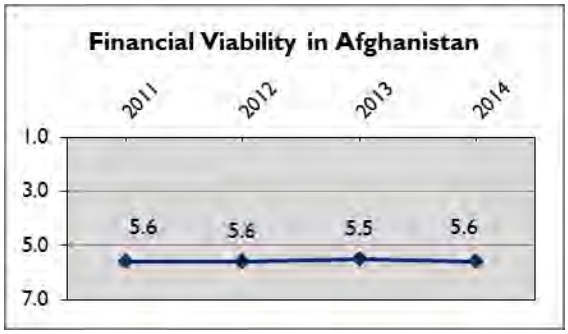
Most CSOs are understaffed or lack qualified personnel. In most cases, CSOs have only a few permanent staff members, such as executive directors and administrative and financial officers, while all other staff members are hired on a project basis. As funding for the sector has declined, CSOs have had to decrease salaries or layoff staff. Some activists left civil society and joined the National Unity Government in 2014.

The country witnessed significant volunteerism in 2014. Many people volunteered to help support the Elections Commission observe the election process, and conduct electoral campaigns, civic education, and community mobilization. However, CSOs continue to lack volunteer support for activities such as education, health, and agriculture.

Larger CSOs enjoy and maintain advanced technical resources. Smaller CSOs, which are concentrated in provincial, district and rural areas, lack access to advanced technology, particularly information technologies, Internet access, printers, and scanners. Afghanistan has cell phone coverage, but 3G service is not available throughout the country. The lack of technology in less urban areas hinders CSOs' consistent access to the donor community, the government, and CSO networks. For instance, CSOs that work in remote areas may have to send an employee to a town or city to email, print, or scan documents and communicate with donors.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.6

The financial viability of CSOs in Afghanistan decreased during 2014. Most CSOs rely on foreign funding, which dramatically contracted in 2014, resulting in intense competition among CSOs over resources. At the same time, the 2014 political transition shifted funding away from development to electoral and civic education, community mobilization, and outreach projects. The funding situation is expected to be more challenging during the coming decade as Afghanistan is expected to receive less international support and become more self-reliant. Most donors do not fund administrative costs.



There is limited and sometimes no local support for CSOs. Since 2001, the international community has funded almost all reconstruction and development projects. CSOs have come to rely on these resources instead of engaging in public fundraising. With the exception of informal organizations, CSOs generally do not receive in-kind support from communities.

Many CSOs that relied solely on one or two international funding sources did not survive the shift in funding in 2014. On the other hand, CSOs that diversified their funding and expanded their networks flourished. Many CSOs began focusing on alternative funding sources and initiated partnerships within and across sectors. For instance, Civil Society Coordination Center (CSCC), an umbrella organization, received some funding after approaching corporations. Roshan, Tolo, and some private banks are among the major corporations that support CSOs and are involved in their activities. In 2014, the government also emphasized corporate social responsibility (CSR) through conferences, seminars, and workshops, which could lead to more support from the business sector. However, private sector support for CSOs is still nascent.

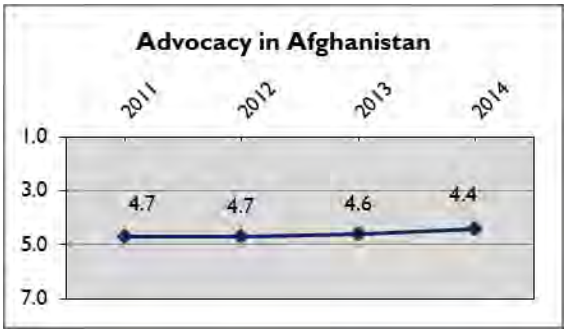
The government has very limited capacity to fund CSOs. The main governmental institutions that provide some funding to CSOs include the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development's National Solidarity Program (NSP); health campaigns supported by the Ministry of Public Health; the Ministry of Education's Afghanistan Workforce Development Program (AWDP); as well as select programs funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock; Ministry of Information and Culture; and Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled. In 2014, the government further decreased funding to CSOs that were previously implementing partners in various sectors. For instance, the Ministry of Education decreased funding levels for partner CSOs and increased eligibility requirements for funding.

Larger network organizations collect membership fees from their member organizations. Only a few organizations engage in income generating activities. For instance, Zardozi—a local organization—produces handicrafts, sells them in the market, and uses the income generated to pay for staff salaries and materials.

With the exception of larger and some medium size CSOs, most organizations lack proper financial management systems. Very few CSOs conduct financial audits or publish reports to comply with their bylaws. Local and small CSOs often do not undergo external audits due to the cost, which has led to accusations that they lack transparency and accountability. Many CSOs lack proper payrolls and inventory logs and only have one staff member managing their bank accounts. However, donors' emphasis on transparency and their heightened eligibility requirements, as well as the government's frequent reporting requirements—every six

months for the MoEc and annually for the MoJ—might have improved financial accountability and transparency in some CSOs.

ADVOCACY: 4.4



Advocacy, which is the strongest dimension of CSO sustainability in Afghanistan, significantly improved in 2014, as National Unity Government leaders at all levels sought input from CSOs. The new administration engaged actively with civil society leaders and activists, primarily through the Civil Society Joint Working Group (CS-JWG). The CS-JWG includes over 200 CSO networks and CSOs and plays important roles in nationwide networking, coordination, policy development, service delivery, and joint advocacy efforts. The government also established a Special Representative of the President in the Reforms and Good Governance office, which has engaged with civil society to ensure its involvement in reforms and plans to promote good governance. In addition, the president's office helped draft a mechanism to improve engagement with civil society.

At the London Conference on Afghanistan in December 2014, the National Unity Government made ambitious commitments to provide Afghan civil society with full and meaningful involvement in key political processes, strengthening governance and the rule of law, and the development and monitoring of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) and the London Conference communiqué. The London Conference communiqué recognizes the prominent role of Afghan civil society in advocating for human rights, good governance, and sustainable development through robust dialogue.

The CS-JWG engaged in successful lobbying efforts before and during the London Conference on Afghanistan, including bringing together high-ranking officials from the government and international community in the Ayenda Conference a few days before the London Conference. In the Ayenda Conference, Afghan CSO representatives presented civil society position papers, describing challenges and opportunities for reform, and contributions of CSOs to the country's development and democratization processes.

In 2014, Afghan CSOs were actively involved in the presidential election as well as advocacy for various laws and policies, including laws on access to information, youth policy, family law, and electoral laws.

CSOs played a major role in raising awareness among citizens about the importance of being active in the 2014 election by casting their votes and mobilizing their communities. Local CSOs and media shared poignant stories of people voting—including that of a young man whose fingers were cut off by the Taliban in the last round of elections—which had significant impact on public participation in the elections. The nation had not previously witnessed the level of engagement and volunteerism that civil society mobilized around the presidential election in 2014.

The Afghanistan Civil Society Elections Network (ACSEN), composed of more than 150 organizations with representation in all thirty-four provinces, was a leading voice for electoral reform. It organized more than twenty national conferences, campaigns, and press conferences with electoral organizations to demand transparency, foster peaceful electoral campaigns, and improve the electoral process. As a result of ACSEN's efforts, the recruitment process of staff at polling stations, observation procedures, transparency, and reporting processes all improved. ACSEN also launched a successful nationwide campaign to recruit female election officials to staff polling stations throughout the country, which was reported to be the main impetus for increasing female voter turnout.

Several CSOs developed coalitions and implemented advocacy campaigns to educate and engage both men and women in human rights, women's rights, and youth development activities. The Volunteer Civil Society Advocacy Group in Kabul launched a successful campaign to reduce the use of plastic bags and disposable

dishware. Seven hundred citizens in Kabul signed a petition, and the media helped the group gain the attention of officials to urge them to take serious measures to address the issue. Media and CSO coalitions involved in the 2014 elections were instrumental in exposing corruption, fraud, and violence. For instance, media outlets disseminated audio and video recordings provided by CSOs and civil society activists throughout the country to expose fraud in the first round of elections, including the involvement of the director of the Independent Elections Commission.

In 2014, CSO advocacy campaigns successfully influenced government policies and programs. CSOs shared information and networked with one another to advocate their needs within the government. For example, as a result of CSO advocacy, favorable amendments were made to Article 26 of the Criminal Procedure Code. As originally passed, Article 26 prohibited judicial authorities from questioning the relatives of a criminal defendant, effectively silencing victims of domestic violence and forced or child marriage and their family members who have witnessed abuse. The Presidential Decree that amended this article allows—but does not require—relatives of the accused person to testify against them. Influenced by civil society's advocacy initiatives, the National Unity Government approved the Access to Information Law, which was signed into law in December 2014. In addition, as a result of civil society-led advocacy campaigns and demonstrations, the upper house of parliament and the president's office rejected a draft law that would have allowed members of parliament to retain privileges and part of their salaries after they leave office.

At the same time, several factors weakened CSO advocacy during the year. The donor-oriented approach of CSOs remained a source of public mistrust, particularly in the south of the country, undermining advocacy efforts. Security also continued to be an impediment to advocacy efforts. For instance, in some insecure areas and districts with minimum government presence, CSOs involved in human rights, women's rights, public participation, and other topics received threats. CSOs made few efforts to coordinate with the international community on advocacy.

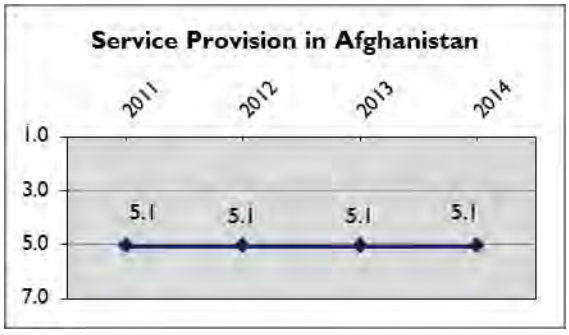
Lobbying in Afghanistan has been constrained in the past because it was seen as a threat to the traditional top-down decision-making processes in the country. However, in 2014, CSOs successfully lobbied the National Unity Government leaders, the parliament, and international agencies to establish the Electoral Reform Commission and recommended amendments to the electoral laws that would need to occur before the parliamentary election.

Civil society representatives have called for a robust legal and institutional framework to address the negative tax treatment of CSOs and sustain economic activities and growth of the sector. As a result, the president made commitments to bring robust reforms in tax departments in order to eradicate corruption in the system. Civil Society Actors (CSA)—a coalition of individuals, associations, and networks including ACBAR, ACSFo, Civil Society and Human Rights Network (CSHRN), and Afghanistan Women Network (AWN)—coordinated with traditional leaders and civil society groups, individual activists, and media representatives to strengthen civil society in 2014. CSA tried to support CSOs' advocacy efforts by organizing meetings with CSOs and the donor community to harmonize civil society capacity building interventions in the country. However, soon after the establishment of the CS-JWG, CSA members left and joined the CS-JWG to further their impact through a wider and stronger civil society platform. In some rural communities, advocacy that addresses the legal environment for CSOs is limited due to other advocacy priorities, state harassment, or CSOs' inability to influence the law.

SERVICE PROVISION: 5.1

CSOs in the country provide a variety of services to the public in such fields as health, education, humanitarian aid, legal aid, vocational assistance, and environmental protection. They also provide government oversight and policy recommendations to improve governance, civil rights, accountability, transparency, and the provision of quality basic services throughout the country. Specialized CSOs and CSO networks and partnerships had a strong impact on the quality of service provision. For instance, ACSEN was hugely expanded and played a vital role during the elections.

Although many CSOs continued to respond to programs and projects proposed by donors, some CSOs proactively engaged with donors, proposing projects based on local needs. Some CSOs, including those involved with the NSP, involved communities in project conceptualization, planning, implementation, and evaluation. However, donor agencies preferred funding projects that were more relevant to their own missions. Therefore, it remained a challenge for CSOs to receive funds for activities that they and their communities proposed.

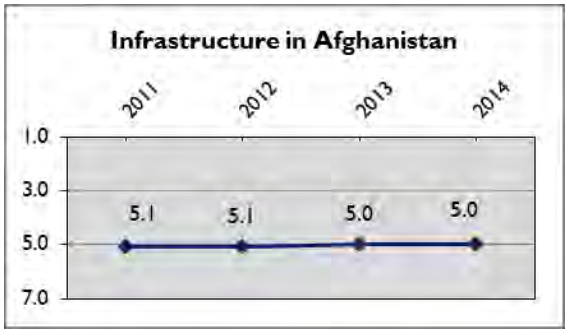


A considerable number of CSOs are involved in research and policy analysis, and their products are used by many other organizations and the government. Some organizations like Zardozi, AWDP, and Harakat implement programs on career skills and vocational development. They sell their products, such as handicrafts and embroidery, allowing them to recover the costs of their operations.

The government recognizes CSOs' role in identifying community needs, overseeing government performance, increasing government accountability and transparency, and improving service delivery. Only a few governmental institutions, such as the Ministry of Education, provide contracts to CSOs to deliver certain services, however.

INFRASTRUCTURE: 5.0

CSO infrastructure did not change significantly in 2014. The major organizations and programs supporting CSOs still include ACSEN, supported by Democracy International; Tawanmandi; the USAID-funded Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society (I-PACS II); and Afghan Civic Engagement Project (ACEP). These organizations and programs provide small grants, develop their partners' organizational capacities, and provide partners with technical support, including on advocacy. Many of these organizations and institutions are based in Kabul, which makes it difficult for CSOs in the provinces to access them. There are limited resource centers for CSOs in the provinces, except for Balkh and Herat, which have effective resource centers.

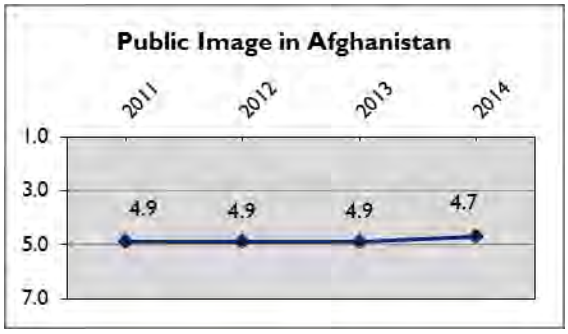


Except for the major ISOs, there are very few organizations that provide continuous capacity development trainings for CSOs in the country. Trainings around the country are uncoordinated and therefore sometimes redundant. For instance, at both national and provincial levels, many INGOs, donors, foreign embassies, and donor agencies provide duplicate capacity building trainings, including in human resources, monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning, and proposal writing.

During 2014, successful civil society coalitions such as ACSEN and CS-JWG emerged. Both coalitions were marked by consistent and regular information sharing and coordination meetings among their member organizations. While the majority of members are based in Kabul, many have regional offices, which provide support to the provinces.

During the 2014 elections, CSOs provided stories and reports from the field to media outlets. ACSEN and Democracy International established a partnership with Moby group (Tolo News TV, Arakozia Radio, Lemar TV, and Tolo TV), Ariana News TV, and Shamshad TV for civic education and public outreach activities surrounding the elections. Similar partnerships were formed to monitor progress on the TMAF as well as provide joint CSO-media-business representation at the London Conference on Afghanistan. However, CSOs have generally not attempted to collaborate with other sectors on the national level based on shared interests and concerns.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.7



The public image of CSOs improved in 2014. Most CSOs have good relationships with private and public media, including press, radio, and TV. The media has grown tremendously since 2001, with around sixty-five local and national television channels, 174 radio stations, 200 print outlets, and twelve news agencies operating as of 2013. Media coverage in 2014 was focused on the presidential and provincial council elections. CSOs and media throughout Afghanistan formed coalitions to conduct awareness campaigns to increase voter turnout. Such partnerships improved the relationship between media and CSOs, evolving from knowledge sharing to collaboration on various issues. CSOs' presence in media outlets became more prominent especially after allegations of fraud were raised against the Independent Elections Commission. CSOs presented evidence showing fraudulent acts during the elections and advocated for reforms to the Electoral Law to ensure a transparent and accountable electoral system in the future.

Public perception of CSOs improved significantly during 2014 due to CSOs' provision of civic education and mobilization of voters, even in insecure and remote areas. According to The Asia Foundation's *A Survey of the Afghan People*, confidence in national NGOs increased from 52 percent in 2013 to 57 percent in 2014. Since the establishment of the National Unity Government, CSOs have been perceived as filling the need for a dissenting voice against the government. However, the public generally perceives CSOs' contributions to improving governance as less remarkable than their contributions to education, health, humanitarian assistance, women's empowerment, and policy advocacy. Furthermore, CSOs' failure to report to constituencies or publish external audit reports, as well as propaganda by insurgents that CSOs are agents for the west, undermine public trust in and support of CSOs.

During the year, President Ghani and Chief Executive Dr. Abdullah expressed appreciation for the role of CSOs in the country's development, stability, and governance. The international community and Afghan government appreciated CSOs' active role in the 2014 elections, lobbying efforts around the London Conference on Afghanistan, influence on legislation and public policies, representation of the Afghan people, and provision of employment opportunities, which have advanced security and development in the country. The private sector has begun to realize that its own growth and sustainability require collaboration with CSOs to market products and garner public support. Some corporations and CSOs started joint initiatives, mainly small-scale projects such as humanitarian assistance, infrastructure, and basic services. However, these joint activities remain limited.

Some CSOs use media outlets and online social media to promote their activities, but in general, very few CSOs actively seek to promote their public images. The majority of CSOs do not plan activities or have budgets to promote their image in society or the communities in which they operate. In addition, security threats in some eastern, southern, and western provinces impeded CSOs' outreach efforts.

ACBAR has a code of conduct for CSOs, but only a few CSOs—primarily large CSOs based in Kabul—are aware of and adhere to it. However, CSOs' self-regulation is gradually improving. Many CSOs now realize the

importance of having policies, strategies, and efficient reporting and accountability systems in place. Moreover, the government's stronger emphasis on financial reporting and taxation and the heightened donor requirements promote CSOs' self-regulation. However, very few CSOs—including leading CSOs—publish annual reports.

ANNEX A: CSO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX METHODOLOGY (AFGHANISTAN)

I. Overview

The 2014 *CSO Sustainability Index* for Afghanistan was developed in close cooperation with local CSOs. A local implementing partner convened an expert panel in the national capital, consisting of a diverse group of CSOs and related experts, to assess the sector in each of seven dimensions: Legal Environment, Organizational Capacity, Financial Viability, Advocacy, Service Provision, Infrastructure and Public Image. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has developed indicators for each dimension, and the panel discussed and scored each indicator. Indicator scores were averaged to produce dimension scores, and the dimension scores were averaged to produce an overall CSO sustainability score. The Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society drafted a country report based on the expert panel's discussions, as well as its own knowledge of the sector.

The Editorial Committee is made up of specialists on civil society in the region and the Index methodology, including staff from the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), USAID, Management Systems International (MSI), and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), and independent regional experts. The Editorial Committee reviewed the narrative and scores to ensure that scores were adequately supported by the narrative's information and that they accurately reflected the state of CSO sector development. The Editorial Committee further considered the country's proposed scores in relation to the scores of other countries, to ensure comparability of scores within and across regions. In some cases, the Editorial Committee recommended adjustments to the proposed scores. The Editorial Committee also raised points for clarification and requested additional information necessary to complete the report. The project editor edited the report and sent it, along with the score recommendations and requests, to the implementing partner for comment and revision.

Where the implementing partner disagreed with the Editorial Committee's score recommendations and/or narrative, it had a chance to revise its narrative to better justify the proposed scores. The Editorial Committee made final decisions on the scores and narrative.

A description of the methodology, the complete instructions provided to the implementing partner, and the questionnaire used by the expert panel can be found below.

II. Dimensions of CSO Sustainability and Ratings: A Closer Look

The *CSO Sustainability Index* measures the strength and overall viability of civil society sectors. The Index is not intended to gauge the sustainability of individual CSOs, but to fairly evaluate the overall level of development of the CSO sector as a whole. The *CSO Sustainability Index* defines civil society broadly, as follows:

> 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.

Seven different dimensions of the CSO sector are analyzed in the *CSO Sustainability Index*. A brief description of each dimension of sustainability follows:

Legal Environment

For a CSO sector to be sustainable, the legal and regulatory environment should support the needs of CSOs. It should facilitate new entrants, help prevent governmental interference, and give CSOs the necessary legal basis to engage in appropriate fundraising activities and legitimate income-producing ventures. Factors shaping the legal environment include the ease of registration; legal rights and conditions regulating CSOs; and the degree to which laws and regulations regarding taxation, procurement, and other issues benefit or deter CSOs' effectiveness and viability. The extent to which government officials, CSO representatives, and private lawyers have the legal knowledge and experience to work within and improve the legal and regulatory environment for CSOs is also examined.

Organizational Capacity

A sustainable CSO sector will contain a critical mass of CSOs that are transparently governed and publicly accountable, capably managed, and that exhibit essential organizational skills. The organizational capacity dimension of the Index addresses the sector's ability to engage in constituency building and strategic planning, as well as internal management and staffing practices within CSOs. Finally, this dimension looks at the technical resources CSOs have available for their work.

Financial Viability

A critical mass of CSOs must be financially viable, and the economy must be robust enough to support CSO self-financing efforts and generate philanthropic donations from local sources. For many CSOs, financial viability may be equally dependent upon the availability of and their ability to compete for international donor support funds. Factors influencing the financial viability of the CSO sector include the state of the economy, the extent to which philanthropy and volunteerism are being nurtured in the local culture, as well as the extent to which government procurement and commercial revenue raising opportunities are being developed. The sophistication and prevalence of fundraising and strong financial management skills are also considered.

Advocacy

The political and advocacy environment must support the formation of coalitions and networks, and offer CSOs the means to communicate their messages through the media to the broader public, articulate their demands to government officials, and monitor government actions to ensure accountability. The advocacy dimension looks at CSOs' record in influencing public policy. The prevalence of advocacy in different sectors, at different levels of government, as well as with the private sector is analyzed. The extent to which coalitions of CSOs have been formed around issues is considered, as well as whether CSOs monitor party platforms and government performance.

Service Provision

Sectoral sustainability will require a critical mass of CSOs that can efficiently provide services that consistently meet the needs, priorities, and expectations of their constituents. The service provision dimension examines the range of goods and services CSOs provide and how responsive these services are to community needs and priorities. The extent to which CSOs recover costs and receive recognition and support from the government for these services is also considered.

Infrastructure

A strong sectoral infrastructure is necessary to provide CSOs with broad access to local CSO support services. Intermediary support organizations (ISOs) providing these services must be able to inform, train, and advise other CSOs; and provide access to CSO networks and coalitions that share information and pursue issues of common interest. The prevalence and effectiveness of CSO partnerships with local business, government, and the media are also examined.

Public Image

For the sector to be sustainable, government, the business sector, and communities should have a positive public image of CSOs, including a broad understanding and appreciation of the role that CSOs play in society. Public awareness and credibility directly affect CSOs' ability to recruit members and volunteers, and encourage indigenous donors. The public image dimension looks at the extent and nature of the media's coverage of CSOs, the awareness and willingness of government officials to engage CSOs, as well as the public's knowledge and perception of the sector as a whole. CSOs' public relations and self-regulation efforts are also considered.

III. Methodology for the Implementer

Steps in Preparing the Report

The following steps should be followed to assemble the Expert Panel that will meet in person to discuss the status of civil society over the reporting year, determine scores, and provide qualitative data for the country report for the 2014 CSO (Civil Society Organization) Sustainability Index for Afghanistan. The reporting year will cover the period of January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014.

1. Carefully select a group of 10-12 representatives of civil society to serve as panel experts. Implementers should select panel members based on the following guidelines. The panel members should include representatives of a diverse range of civil society organizations including the following types:

- Local CSO support centers, resource centers or intermediary civil society support organizations (ISOs);
- Local CSOs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) involved in a range of service delivery and/or 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;
- International donors who support civil society and CSOs; and
- Other local partners familiar with civil society.

CSOs represented on the panel can be focused on advocacy or social service delivery. We recommend that at least 70% of the Expert Panels be nationals.

To the extent possible, CSOs should also represent a variety of key sub-populations, including:

- Rural and urban parts of the country, and all major regions of the country;
- Women's groups;
- Minority populations;
- Marginalized groups; and
- Sub- sectors such as women's rights, community-based development, civic education, micro finance, environment, human rights, youth, etc.

The panel should include equal representation of men and women. If the implementer believes that this will not be possible, please explain why in a note submitted to Gwendolyn Bevis (gbevis@msi-inc.com) at MSI.

In some instances, it may be appropriate to select a larger group in order to reflect the diversity and breadth of the sector. Please keep in mind, however, that a significantly larger group may make building consensus within the panel more difficult – and more expensive if it entails arranging transportation for representatives who are based far from the meeting place.

The panel should also include one representative from the USAID Mission and one representative from the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), but they will not have the ability to cast their vote in terms of scores. They are welcome to provide some words of introduction to open the event, as it is funded by AKF and the methodology was developed by USAID, and they are welcome to observe and participate in the discussion.

2. Ensure that panel members understand the objectives of the exercise. The objective of the panel is to develop a consensus-based rating for each of the seven dimensions of sustainability covered by the Index and to articulate a justification for each rating consistent with the methodology described below. The overall goal of the Index is to track and compare progress in the sector, increasing the ability of local entities to undertake self-assessment and analysis. It also aims to develop an increased understanding of the CSO sector among donors, governments, and CSOs for the purposes of better support and programming.

We recommend distributing the instructions and rating description documents 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 indicator before meeting with the other panel members. If possible, it may be useful to hold a brief orientation session for the panelists prior to the panel discussion. Some partners chose to hold a formal training session with panel members, reviewing the methodology document and instructions, other partners provide more of a general discussion about the objectives of the exercise and process to the panelists.

3. Convene the meeting of the CSO Expert Panel. We request that you plan to complete this meeting, no later than July 25, 2015.

4. At the Expert Panel meeting, please remind participants that each indicator and dimension of CSOSI should be scored according to evidence-based, country-relevant examples of recent or historical conditions, policies, events, etc. The rating process should take place alongside or directly following a review of the rating process and categories provided in "Ratings: A Closer Look." For each indicator of each dimension, allow each panel member to share his or her initial score and justification with the rest of the group. At the end of the discussion of each indicator, allow panel members to adjust their scores, if desired.

Then, **eliminate the highest score and the lowest score**, and **average the remaining scores together** to come up with one score for each *indicator* with the dimension. Once a final score has been reached for each indicator within a given dimension, calculate the average or arithmetic mean of these scores for a preliminary score for the dimension. Be sure to take careful notes during the discussion of each indicator, detailing the justifications for all scores, as this should serve as the basis of the written report. Please keep all scores on record, making sure that personal attribution cannot be made to individual panel members. Implementers may use the score sheet attached as Annex A to track panel member scores without personal attribution. Ultimately, every rating awarded should be supported by evidence in the country report (see #8 below), and should reflect consensus among group members.

5. Once scores for each dimension are determined, as a final step, **review the descriptions of the dimensions in "Ratings: A Closer Look."** Discuss with your groups whether each of the scores matches the rating description for that score. For example, a score of 2.3 in organizational capacity would mean that the CSO 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 environment. If not, discuss with your groups to determine a more accurate score that fits the description for that dimension.

6. 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 final country Index score. Be sure to include a synopsis of this discussion in the draft country report.

7. Please remind the group at this stage that reports will be reviewed by an Editorial Committee (EC) in Washington, D.C. that will provide feedback on recommended scores and possibly request adjustments in scores pending additional justification of scores.

8. Prepare a Draft Country Report. The report should cover events during the calendar (as opposed to fiscal) year January 1, 2014, through December 31, 2014. The draft should include an overview statement, and a brief discussion of the current state of the sustainability of the CSO sector with regard to each dimension at the national level. The section on each dimension should include a discussion of both accomplishments and strengths in that dimension, as well as obstacles to sustainability and weaknesses. While the report should address the country as a whole, it should also note any significant regional variations in the sustainability of CSOs. In the Overview Statement, please include an estimated number of registered and active CSOs, as well as an overview of the primary fields and geographic areas in which CSOs operate.

Please limit your submission to a maximum of ten pages, in English. Please keep in mind that we rely on your organization to ensure that reports are an appropriate length and well-written. We do not have the capacity to do extensive editing.

Please include a list of the experts who served on the panels with your report. This will be for our reference only and will not be made public.

While the individual country reports for the 2014 *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.

Deliver your draft country report with rankings via email to Gwendolyn Bevis (gbevis@msi-inc.com) at MSI **no later than August 10, 2015.** Please cc: Brian Haupt (Brian.Haupt@akdn.org) at AKF, and Catherine Shea (cshea@icnl.org) and Jennifer Stuart (jstuart@icnl.org) at the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) which is assisting in the review and editing of the reports.

The project editor will be in contact with you following receipt of your report to discuss any outstanding questions and clarifications regarding the scoring and the report's content.

9. In Washington, **an Editorial Committee (EC) will review the scores and draft report,** and will discuss any issues or remaining concerns with the implementer. The EC consists of representatives from AKF, MSI, USAID and ICNL and at least one regional/country expert well versed in current events and circumstances affecting the CSO sector in your country. Further description of the EC is included in the following section, "The Role of the Editorial Committee." If the EC does not feel that the scores are adequately supported, they may request a score adjustment. The implementer will be responsible for responding to all outstanding comments from the EC, communicated by the project editor, until the report is approved and accepted by AKF who chairs the EC.

10. In addition, you will arrange for a public launch – including both soft, via electronic means (list serves, websites) and hard, via a public event to promote the release of the report in your country. We will arrange for a public launch, soft and/or hard, in the United States.

11. 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 your recording and submitting any observations you might have that will increase the usefulness of this important tool to Gwendolyn Bevis (gbevis@msi-inc.com) at MSI.

IV. The Role of the Editorial Committee

As a final step in the *CSO Sustainability Index* process, all country reports are reviewed and discussed by an Editorial Committee (EC) composed of regional and sector experts in Washington, DC. This committee will be chaired by AKF, and includes (but is not limited to) civil society experts representing USAID, MSI 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. 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 large 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 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, and most importantly, the Editorial Committee considers a country's score in relation to the proposed scores in other countries, ensuring comparability of scores across countries and regions.

AKF has the final say on all scores and may contact an implementer directly to discuss final scores and to clarify items in the country report prior to finalizing the scores and country reports.

Implementers are encouraged to remind their expert panels from the outset that the Editorial Committee may ask for further clarification of scores and may modify scores, where appropriate. However, by adding the step for each panel to compare their scores with "Ratings: A Closer Look" (which is essentially what the Editorial Committee does), it is hoped that there will be fewer differences between proposed scores and final scores. Ensuring that the narrative section for each dimension includes an adequate explanation for a score will also limit the need for the Editorial Committee to ask for further clarification.

V. Instructions for the Expert Panel Members

Steps in Assigning Scores

Each member of the panel should use the following steps to guide him or her through the individual rating process. The same process will be then be used the CSO Expert Panel meeting, where panel members will discuss scores and evidence, and will decide by consensus scores for each of the indicators, dimensions, and ultimately the country score.

Region-specific circumstances, or regional exceptions to national level conclusions, should be carefully recorded.

Step 1: Please rate each of the seven dimensions and each of their indicators on the following scale from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating a very advanced CSO sector with a high level of sustainability, and 7 indicating a fragile, unsustainable sector with a low level of development. Fractional scores to one decimal place are encouraged.

Step 2: When rating each indicator, please remember to carefully consider each one and make note of solid, relevant examples of recent or historical conditions, policies, events, etc. that you considered as you determined your score.

Step 3: When you have rated each indicator within one of the seven dimensions, average your scores to come up with an overall score for that dimension. Write them in the spaces provided.

Step 4: Once scores for each dimension are determined, as a final step, review the description of that dimension in "Ratings: A Closer Look" to ensure that this accurately describes the environment.

Step 5: Once you have scores for each dimension, average these seven scores together to get an overall rating for the region or country level, depending on the level of the panel.

VI. Scoring Scale

The *CSO Sustainability Index* uses a seven-point scale, with 1 representing the highest and 7 the lowest level of sustainability. The following broad guidelines can be used in determining scores for individual indicators and dimensions:

1. CSO sector's sustainability enhanced significantly by practices/policies in this area. While the needed reforms may not be complete, the local CSO community recognizes which reforms or developments are still needed, and have a plan and the ability to pursue them itself.
2. CSO sector's sustainability enhanced by practices/policies in this area. Local CSO community demonstrates a commitment to pursuing reforms and developing its professionalism in this area.
3. CSO sector's sustainability somewhat enhanced by practices/policies in this area or commitment to developing the aspect in question is significant.
4. CSO sector's sustainability minimally affected by practices/policies in this area. Progress may be hampered by a stagnant economy, a passive government, a disinterested media, or a community of good-willed but inexperienced activists.
5. CSO sector's sustainability somewhat impeded by practices/policies in this area. Progress may be hampered by a contracting economy, authoritarian leader and centralized government, controlled or reactionary media, or a low level of capacity, will or interest on the part of the CSO community.
6. CSO sector's sustainability impeded by practices/policies in this area. A hostile environment and low capacity and public support prevent the growth of the CSO sector.
7. CSO sector's sustainability significantly impeded by practices/policies in this area, generally as a result of an authoritarian government that aggressively opposes the development of independent CSOs.

For more specific information about the meaning of ratings for individual dimensions, please refer to "Ratings: A Closer Look."

VII. Dimensions and Indicators

1. LEGAL ENVIRONMENT _____

___ *REGISTRATION.* Is there a favorable law on CSO registration? In practice, are CSOs easily able to register and operate?

___ *OPERATION.* Is the internal management, scope of permissible activities, financial reporting, and/or dissolution of CSOs well detailed in current legislation? Does clear legal terminology preclude unwanted state control over CSOs? Is the law implemented in accordance with its terms? Are CSOs protected from the possibility of the State dissolving a CSO for political/arbitrary reasons?

___ *ADMINISTRATIVE IMPEDIMENTS AND STATE HARASSMENT.* Are CSOs and their representatives allowed to operate freely within the law? Are they free from harassment by the central government, local governments, and tax police? Can they freely address matters of public debate and express criticism?

___ *LOCAL LEGAL CAPACITY.* Are there local lawyers who are trained in and familiar with CSO law? Is legal advice available to CSOs in the capital city and in secondary cities/regions?

___ *TAXATION.* Do CSOs receive any sort of tax exemption or deduction on income from grants, endowments, fees, or economic activity? Do individual or corporate donors receive tax deductions?

___ *EARNED INCOME.* Does legislation exist that allows CSOs to earn income from the provision of goods and services? Are CSOs allowed legally to compete for government contracts/procurements at the local and central levels?

2. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY _____

___ *CONSTITUENCY BUILDING*. Do CSOs clearly identify and actively seek to build local constituencies for their initiatives? Do CSOs actively seek to build local constituencies for their initiatives? Are they successful in these endeavors?

___ *STRATEGIC PLANNING*. Do CSOs have clearly defined missions to which they adhere? Do CSOs have clearly defined strategic plans and incorporate strategic planning techniques in their decision making processes?

___ *INTERNAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE*. Is there a clearly defined management structure within CSOs, including a recognized division of responsibilities between the Board of Directors and staff members? Does the Board actively engage in the governance of the CSO? Do the Boards of Directors operate in an open and transparent manner, allowing contributors and supporters to verify appropriate use of funds?

___ *CSO STAFFING*. Are CSOs able to maintain permanent, paid staff in CSOs? Do CSOs have adequate human resources practices for staff, including contracts, job descriptions, payroll and personnel policies? Are potential volunteers sufficiently recruited and engaged? Do CSOs utilize professional services such as accountants, IT managers or lawyers?

___ *TECHNICAL ADVANCEMENT*. Do CSOs' resources generally allow for modernized basic office equipment (relatively new computers and software, cell phones, functional fax machines/scanners, Internet access, etc.)?

3. FINANCIAL VIABILITY _____

___ *LOCAL SUPPORT*. Do CSOs raise a significant percentage of their funding from local sources? Are CSOs able to draw upon a core of volunteer and non-monetary support from their communities and constituencies? Are there local sources of philanthropy?

___ *DIVERSIFICATION*. Do CSOs typically have multiple/diverse sources of funding? Do most CSOs have enough resources to remain viable for the short-term future?

___ *FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS*. Are there sound financial management systems in place? Do CSOs typically operate in a transparent manner, including independent financial audits and the publication of annual reports with financial statements?

___ *FUNDRAISING*. Have many CSOs cultivated a loyal core of financial supporters? Do CSOs engage in any sort of membership outreach and philanthropy development programs?

___ *EARNED INCOME*. Do revenues from services, products, or rent from assets supplement the income of CSOs? Do government and/or local business contract with CSOs for services? Do membership-based organizations collect dues?

4. ADVOCACY _____

___ *COOPERATION WITH LOCAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT*. Are there direct lines of communication between CSOs and policy makers? Do CSOs and government representatives work on any projects together?

___ *POLICY ADVOCACY INITIATIVES*. Have CSOs formed issue-based coalitions and conducted broad-based advocacy campaigns? Have these campaigns been effective at the local level and/or national level at increasing awareness or support for various causes? (Please provide examples, if relevant.)

___ *LOBBYING EFFORTS*. Are there mechanisms and relationships for CSOs to participate in the various levels of the government decision-making processes? Are CSOs comfortable with the concept of lobbying? Have there been any lobbying successes at the local or national level that led to the enactment or amendment of legislation? (Please provide examples, if relevant.)

___ *LOCAL ADVOCACY FOR LEGAL REFORM*. Is there awareness in the wider CSO community of how a favorable legal and regulatory framework can enhance CSO effectiveness and sustainability? Is there a local CSO advocacy effort to promote legal reforms that will benefit CSOs, local philanthropy, etc.?

5. SERVICE PROVISION _____

___ *RANGE OF GOODS AND SERVICES*. Do CSOs provide services in a variety of fields, including basic social services (such as health, education, relief, housing, water or energy) and other areas (such as economic development, environmental protection, or governance and empowerment)? Overall, is the sector's "product line" diversified?

___ *COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS*. Do the goods and services that CSOs provide reflect the needs and priorities of their constituents and communities?

___ *CONSTITUENCIES AND CLIENTELE*. Are those goods and services that go beyond basic social needs provided to a constituency broader than CSOs' own memberships? Are some products, such as publications, workshops or expert analysis, marketed to other CSOs, academia, churches or government?

___ *COST RECOVERY*. When CSOs provide goods and services, do they recover any of their costs by charging fees, etc.? Do they have knowledge of the market demand -- and the ability of distinct constituencies to pay -- for those products?

___ *GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT*. Does the government, at the national and/or local level, recognize the value that CSOs can add in the provision and monitoring of basic social services? Do they provide grants or contracts to CSOs to enable them to provide such services?

6. INFRASTRUCTURE _____

___ *INTERMEDIARY SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS (ISOS) AND CSO RESOURCE CENTERS*. Are there ISOs, CSO resource centers, or other means for CSOs to access relevant information, technology, training and technical assistance throughout the country? Do ISOs and CSO resource centers meet the needs of local CSOs? Do ISOs and resource centers earn some of their operating revenue from earned income (such as fees for service) and other locally generated sources? (Please describe the kinds of services provided by these organizations in your country report.)

___ *LOCAL GRANT MAKING ORGANIZATIONS*. Do local community foundations and/or ISOs provide grants, from either locally raised funds or by re-granting international donor funds, to address locally identified needs and projects?

___ *CSO COALITIONS*. Do CSOs share information with each other? Is there a network in place that facilitates such information sharing? Is there an organization or committee through which the sector promotes its interests?

___ *TRAINING*. Are there capable local CSO management trainers? Is basic CSO management training available in the capital city and in secondary cities? Is more advanced specialized training available in areas such as strategic management, accounting, financial management, fundraising, volunteer management, and board development? Do trainings meet the needs of local CSOs? Are training materials available in local languages?

___ *INTERSECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS*. Are there examples of CSOs working in partnership, either formally or informally, with local business, government, and the media to achieve common objectives? Is there awareness among the various sectors of the possibilities for and advantages of such partnerships?

7. PUBLIC IMAGE _____

___ *MEDIA COVERAGE*. Do CSOs enjoy positive media coverage at the local and national levels? Is a distinction made between public service announcements and corporate advertising? Do the media provide positive analysis of the role CSOs play in civil society?

___ *PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF CSOS*. Does the general public have a positive perception of CSOs? Does the public understand the concept of a CSO? Is the public supportive of CSO activity overall?

___ *GOVERNMENT/BUSINESS PERCEPTION OF CSOS*. Do the business sector and local and central government officials have a positive perception of CSOs? Do they rely on CSOs as a community resource, or as a source of expertise and credible information?

___ *PUBLIC RELATIONS*. Do CSOs publicize their activities or promote their public image? Have CSOs developed relationships with journalists to encourage positive coverage?

___ *SELF-REGULATION*. Have CSOs adopted a code of ethics or tried to demonstrate transparency in their operations? Do leading CSOs publish annual reports?

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