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2014 CSO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX FOR PAKISTAN



The 2014 CSO Sustainability Index for Pakistan

**Developed by:
United States Agency for International Development**

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INTRODUCTION

The fourth edition of the *CSO Sustainability Index for Pakistan* reports on the strength and overall viability of the civil society sector in Pakistan 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 Afghanistan.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.

¹ The *CSO Sustainability Index for Pakistan* and *CSO Sustainability Index for Afghanistan* are made possible by the support of the Aga Khan Foundation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Local Partner

Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy

Shazia Maqsood Amjad
Falak Raja

Project Managers

Management Systems International, Inc. (MSI)

Gwendolyn G. Bevis
Steven Robison

The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL)

Catherine Shea
Jennifer Stuart
Margaret Scotti

Editorial Committee

USAID: Mariam Afrasiabi, Waseem Ashraf, Joseph Brinker, Khalid Saleem, Brian Vogt

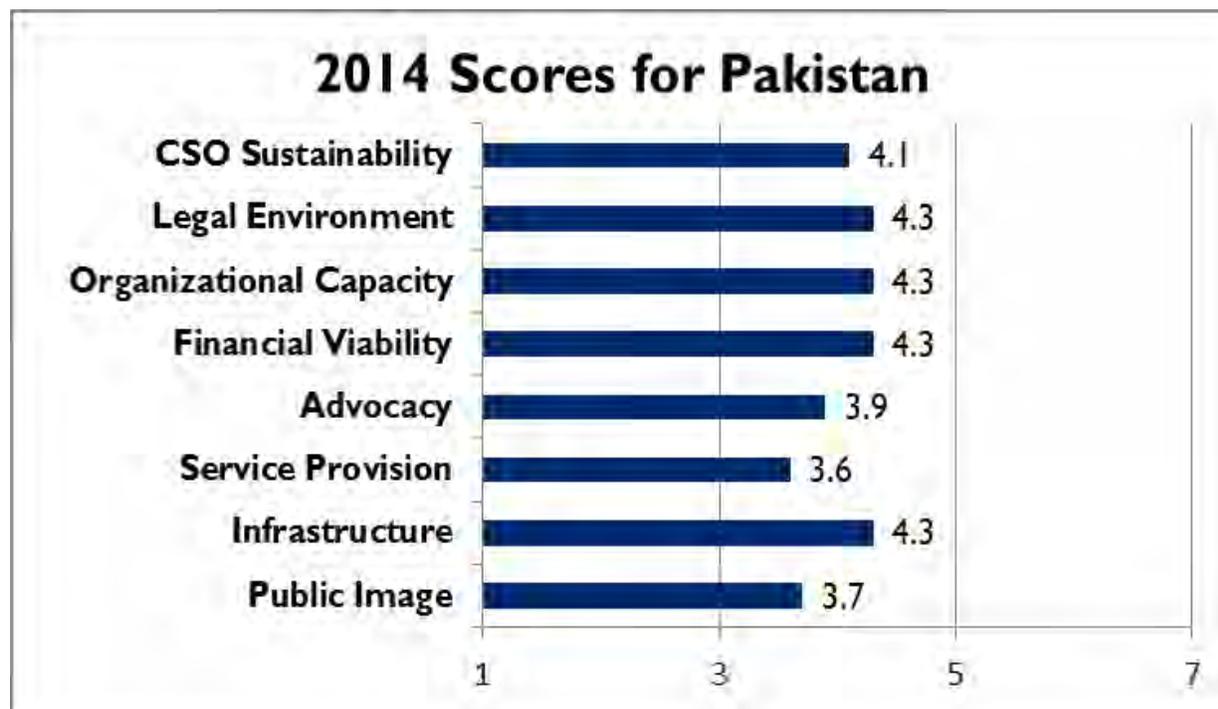
Aga Khan Foundation: Brian Haupt

ICNL: Catherine Shea

MSI: Gwendolyn G. Bevis

Country Expert: Mehreen Farooq

PAKISTAN



CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.1

Country Facts

Capital: Islamabad

Government Type:
Federal Republic

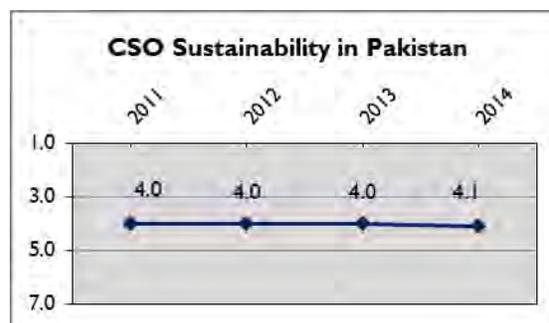
Population:
199,085,847

GDP per capita (PPP): \$4,700

Human Development Index:
146

The year 2014 was tumultuous in Pakistan.² Floods, drought, and security crises at the border created dire challenges during the year. Torrential rains caused widespread floods in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and Gilgit-Baltistan provinces, as well as Pakistan-administered Kashmir. Meanwhile water receded in the Thar Desert, causing a drought that killed hundreds and forced many others to leave their homes. CSOs rose to these challenges by extending aid in the affected regions. While service delivery CSOs were most involved in such efforts, even rights-based organizations responded to relief needs during these trying times.

Several high-profile terrorist attacks occurred in 2014. In January, a senior anti-terrorism investigator was killed in a blast in Karachi as retribution for his work. In June 2014, armed militants attacked Jinnah International Airport, killing or wounding dozens. The military operation launched in response to this attack, while reportedly killing thousands of militants, has resulted in the displacement of more than one million people. The government and civil society struggled to accommodate these internally displaced



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/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>. Human Development Index rankings available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>.

persons (IDPs). On December 16, 2014, now known as Black Day in Pakistan, militants attacked the Army Public School in Peshawar and brutally killed 132 children and a dozen others.

The country also experienced major political and economic setbacks in 2014. Power outages crippled economic activities nationwide. Investments dwindled due to terrorism and the country's energy crisis. Islamabad was paralyzed in August by thousands of protesters, who demanded increased transparency in election procedures and the resignation of the prime minister and the government due to alleged rigging of the 2013 elections. These political sit-ins lasted for months before being called off immediately after the attack on the school in Peshawar.

The exercise of freedom of expression in the country was tumultuous in 2014. CSOs and journalists were under immense pressure from both the state and extremist groups. Journalists in particular reported frequent death threats for voicing sensitive issues like minority rights or criticizing the August protests in Islamabad.

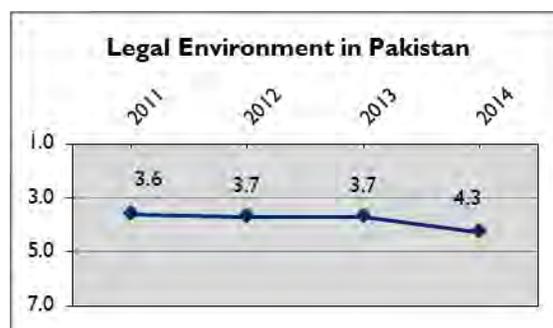
Sectarian issues continued to grow in 2014, especially in Balochistan. Twin suicide attacks killed twenty-four Shia pilgrims and injured eighteen. Jaishul Islam—a Sunni militant group—claimed responsibility, but no arrests were made. In Karachi, a Shia and a Sunni cleric were killed in an apparent revenge attack.

The government recognizes the role of CSOs in promoting the welfare of the country. CSOs provide health, education, and basic facilities in remote areas where the government's presence is limited or absent. The government has launched various initiatives to encourage philanthropic activities to fund CSOs, especially through corporate social responsibility (CSR). The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, for example, has made it mandatory for companies in the oil and gas sector to allocate a certain share of their annual profits in their concession areas to CSR initiatives for social development. At the same time, the relationship between CSOs and the government remains tense, particularly in KP and Balochistan, where CSOs need permission from the military to operate due to security concerns.

It is difficult to assess the magnitude of civil society in Pakistan, as there is no comprehensive database of CSOs and a large number of CSOs remain unregistered. According to a statement by the Minister of Social Welfare and Special Education in 2010, there were approximately 100,000 CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) operating in the country, 60,000 to 70,000 of which were registered. At the same time, preliminary findings of a mapping study being conducted by the Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP) suggest that at least 80 percent of registered organizations are inactive, indicating that the number of active registered CSOs in the country is much smaller.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.3

The legal environment in Pakistan remains complex. CSOs register and operate under various laws and ordinances including the Societies Act of 1860, Charitable and Endowment Act of 1890, Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance of 1961, Trust Act of 1882, Cooperative Societies Act of 1925, and Companies Ordinance of 1984. Approximately 80 percent of CSOs register under the Societies Registration Act and the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance. However, the rationale for choosing which law to register under is unclear. CSOs report various impediments, such as inconsistent implementation of laws, bureaucracy, rampant corruption, and bribery during the registration process and when conducting activities.



In recent years, the government has introduced new regulations for CSOs receiving foreign funding. The 2013 Policy for the Regulation of Organizations Receiving Foreign Contributions requires international NGOs (INGOs) and national CSOs seeking monetary and non-monetary foreign assistance to register with the

Economic Affairs Division and sign memoranda of understanding (MoU) with the Government of Pakistan declaring their scope of work, including geographical location, and their use of foreign contributions. Implementation and enforcement of the Policy was incomplete during 2014. Some CSOs have signed such MoUs, while others appear to be resisting this requirement. At the same time, a draft of the Foreign Contributions Act, which largely reflected the content of the 2013 Policy, remained under consideration by the parliament during 2014.

The Protection of Pakistan Act (PPA)—a counter-terrorism law that gives the national security forces increased powers—was passed in July. The PPA has been criticized for violating international human rights standards, particularly the right to fair trial. Despite immense criticism of the Act, there were no effective measures by CSOs or others to revoke it during the year.

CSOs require No Objection Certificates (NOCs), which are difficult to obtain, to work in some areas. The application process through MOI can take up to ten weeks, with no guarantee that an NOC will ultimately be issued. Cases like that of Baran NGO, which allegedly misappropriated foreign funds for terrorist purposes, led to increased requirements in the NOC process, including disclosure of funding sources, area of operations, and range of activities being carried out, and greater scrutiny.

State harassment of CSOs remains a significant concern, especially for those CSOs receiving funding from international donors. In 2014, several NGOs—not-for-profit organizations registered under the Companies Ordinance of 1984—were scrutinized by multiple government agencies for misappropriating donor funding. These cases were still pending in court at the end of 2014. CSOs were also more frequently harassed by various extremist groups. For example, a polio health worker was kidnapped by militant groups and brutally murdered in KPK. This gruesome act heightened fear amongst health workers struggling across the region to help eradicate polio from Peshawar, which was named as the “largest reservoir of endemic polio virus in the world” by the World Health Organization (WHO).

There were no changes in the tax regime governing CSOs in 2014. All registered CSOs are entitled to income tax exemptions if they are also registered with the Central Board of Revenue or certified by PCP. Once certified, CSOs have no trouble accessing the tax exemptions to which they are entitled. Individual and corporate donors also benefit from tax exemptions.

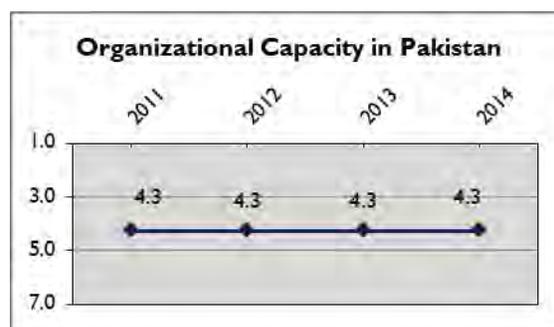
CSOs in Pakistan are generally allowed to earn income and compete for some government contracts. CSOs must pay taxes on earned income.

Legal capacity for CSO matters is limited throughout the country, as CSO law is not part of the curriculum in law schools. Generally, lawyers are not fully aware of the laws pertaining to CSOs. Expert legal advice is available in the major cities, but is typically too expensive for most CSOs. No pro bono legal assistance is known to be offered to CSOs.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.3

There continues to be a significant gap in capacity between larger foreign-funded CSOs and local small and medium-sized or grassroots organizations, with the former generally having well-defined boards, annual reports, and standard office equipment, and the latter often being “one-man shows” that operate on an ad hoc basis depending on the immediate concerns of their constituencies.

CSOs with long-term, grassroots-based programs like the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Akhuwat, and Sungi Development Foundation have built constituencies. CSOs engaged in issue-based



advocacy like the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER), Aurat Foundation, Strengthening Participatory Organisation (SPO) Pakistan, and South Asia Partnership Pakistan (SAPPK) have also succeeded in building constituencies. However, CSOs receiving project-based donor funding generally have weak constituencies and limited local community support.

Many CSOs have broad missions and alter their strategic plans based on donor funding opportunities. Smaller CSOs generally operate without missions due to a lack of resources and management expertise. Organizations working on short-term projects lack long-term strategic plans due to reliance on such short-term funding. Meanwhile, INGOs have country strategies aligned with their global objectives.

Most CSOs have stagnant management structures and rarely go through leadership changes. These organizations tend to have boards consisting of friends and family. INGOs, large CSOs, and registered CSOs are more likely to have clearly defined management and governance structures that divide responsibilities between the boards of directors and staff members.

Human resources remain a challenging aspect of organizational capacity. Most CSO activities are now project-based, leaving fewer opportunities to train and develop staff and rendering organizations less able to retain long-term or permanent staff. Instead, CSOs recruit staff members on a project basis. CSOs have some permanent staff, but the project-based nature of the sector leads staff to seek employment elsewhere. Volunteering has declined in civil society as job opportunities with CSOs increase.

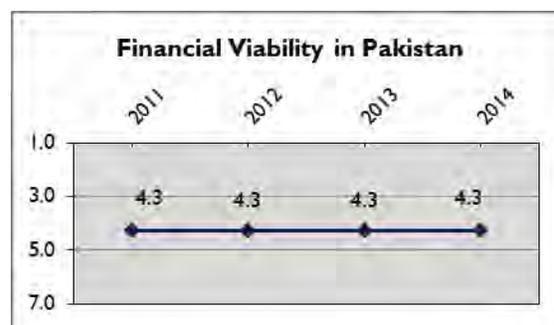
State-of-the-art technology is growing more affordable in the country. Both large CSOs and small CSOs in urban and rural areas easily access basic office equipment, the Internet, and information technologies. Social media is increasingly being used by all CSOs and has provided a strong platform for CSOs to create awareness of various social issues.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 4.3

CSOs depend primarily on donor funding rather than local support. CSOs have a weak public image, which hinders their capacity to raise funds locally. While there are many local philanthropists and a regular influx of foreign remittances, funding from these sources typically goes to well-known charitable and faith-based organizations that have built their credibility over many years.

Major international donors to CSOs in Pakistan include USAID, the European Union, World Bank, Department for International Development (DfID), and KfW (a German government-owned development bank). Since the formation of the new government in 2013, DfID has extended its support, particularly in Punjab, while USAID has extended its work to other areas of the country. No data is available on the effect of the government's increased monitoring of foreign funding on CSOs' access to such funds during 2014.

CSR and corporate philanthropy has increased dramatically over the last ten years. According to a 2014 synthesis report on corporate giving by PCP, donations from Public Listed Companies (PLCs) have increased from PKR 200 million (approximately \$1.9 million) in 2000 to PKR 5.9 billion (approximately \$55.9 million) in 2014. On average, 54 percent of PLCs are involved in giving. Major thematic areas of support include education, health, civic and community development, and disaster relief. The five PLCs that donate the most include Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL), Oil & Gas Development Corporation Limited (OGDCL), Habib Bank Limited (HBL), Lucky Cement, and Engro Corporation.



Most CSOs tend to have diverse sources of funds since they carry out multiple projects simultaneously. Despite the fact that CSOs largely lack the capacity to raise local funds and donor priorities do not necessarily align with CSOs' missions, CSOs generally have enough resources to remain viable in the short-term.

Few organizations collect membership fees, and they constitute a small portion of the budgets of organizations that do collect them. Although CSOs can apply for local government contracts, few CSOs have the capacity to compete for bids and prepare project proposals. The income generated by CSOs through service provision, products, or rent of assets is insufficient to supplement their operations.

Small CSOs have weak financial management systems, whereas large CSOs employ full-time financial teams, have sound systems in place, and conduct regular external audits. CSOs are required to conduct external audits and share reports with relevant government agencies and donors. While large CSOs generally comply with these regulations, most CSOs lack the capacity to prepare reports and conduct external audits. The government and international donors are becoming more adamant about CSOs adhering to reporting requirements and monitoring the funding they receive. However, financial transparency remains questionable, as there is still no mechanism in place to ensure compliance with the requirements to report financial information and conduct external audits.

ADVOCACY: 3.9

Democratic institutions still remain undeveloped in Pakistan, impeding CSOs' ability to influence policy. CSOs—both those engaged in advocacy and those that provide services—have direct, but limited, lines of communication with policy makers. However, there are no formal mechanisms in place to promote such communication. Instead, communication depends largely on personal connections and CSOs' initiative.

Despite these obstacles, CSOs continue to conduct advocacy on various issues and campaign on a large scale, including through social media. Their efforts have been successful in many areas. For example, in August 2014, police and media in Punjab worked with CSOs to successfully foil a child marriage and publicize the issue.

Certain advocacy issues remain sensitive in the country. For example, the blasphemy law continues to place limits on expression and advocacy. A Lahore court sentenced Sawan Masih to death in 2014 for blasphemy after he was accused of making derogatory remarks about the Prophet Muhammad. Another court in Toba Tek Singh sentenced a couple to death for allegedly sending blasphemous text messages. A mob in Gujranwala burned down the houses of a minority (Ahmadi) community due to alleged blasphemy. Furthermore, Rashid Rehman, a renowned human rights lawyer, was murdered in 2014 for representing people accused of blasphemy. While there is no clear evidence of the impact of such incidents, they may have dissuaded CSOs from exercising their right to freedom of expression.

Despite numerous efforts to prevent forced marriages and promote laws to protect women's rights, honor killings remain a significant phenomenon in the country. According to the database of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), 923 women and eighty-two minor girls fell victim to honor killings in 2014. In response to such incidents, the government makes a number of promises each year to better protect minority rights, but civil society did not engage in any prominent efforts to address these issues in 2014.

One of civil society's most notable advocacy efforts during the year was the demonstrations and candlelight vigil organized to protest the cleric of the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) in Islamabad for his refusal to condemn the brutal attack in Peshawar. Several CSO representatives were arrested in connection with the protests, but the unprecedented vigor of the civil society activists led to a major victory as a police report was filed against the cleric and the arrested CSO representatives were released.



Recently, CSOs increased their lobbying efforts to influence local and national legislation. For example, in May women’s rights activists and CSOs met with provincial assembly members and representatives from the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women to encourage lawmakers to push forward certain bills and amendments to protect women from violence, such as the Domestic Violence Bill, Prevention and Control of Internal Women Trafficking, Comprehensive Provincial Legislation on Acid and Burn Control, and an amendment to the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929. In June, a group of CSOs working under the aegis of the Pakistan Forum on Democratic Policing (PFDP) conducted a discussion on the draft Sindh Police Act, 2014. The draft focused on bridging the communication gap between citizens and the police, and suggested devolving the concept of citizen-police liaison to the local level from the existing model of district-based Citizens-Police Liaison Committees (CPLC). However, such lobbying efforts are generally not fruitful. CSOs form many issue-based coalitions and conduct broad-based advocacy campaigns, but are of the opinion that lobbying is only successful if their agenda is already a government priority. For example, in Punjab, CSOs successfully pursued the government to make appropriate amendments to the Local Government Act 2013 to comply with the constitution.

The draft Foreign Contributions Act and the 2013 Policy for the Regulation of Organizations Receiving Foreign Contributions have increased awareness in the sector of the need for a favorable legal and regulatory framework for CSOs. Despite this, minimal efforts were made in this regard in 2014. Pakistan NGOs Forum (PNF), an apex body of five CSO networks, aims to create an enabling environment for CSOs and to advocate for effective participation in decision making and good governance. PNF, along with various CSOs and networks, started a joint consultancy in 2014 to facilitate discussion on new legislation affecting CSOs and to develop a policy paper that will be shared with political parties and the parliament. However, not many CSOs are aware of such initiatives as they are not promoted widely by the media or the government.

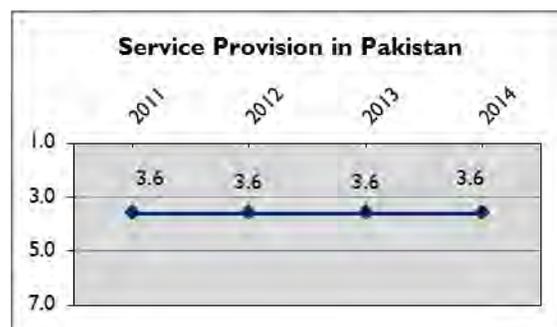
SERVICE PROVISION: 3.6

CSOs provide diverse services encompassing various sectors, including health, education, water, and sanitation. CSOs increasingly are involved in improving the livelihood of the poor. CSOs are the primary responders to relief needs and actively respond with aid in times of dire need such as natural calamities. Even rights-based organizations extended services in response to the flood, drought, and IDP situation in 2014. Service-providing CSOs also contribute to policy making, environmental protection, and advocacy to create awareness of various social issues.

CSOs aim to serve the needs and priorities of their constituencies and communities. However, service provision is mostly driven by donors’ agendas; even needs assessments are conducted to fit donor agendas.

CSOs increasingly provide services beyond their immediate constituencies. Care Foundation actively works with the Government of Punjab to take over deficient government-run schools in the province. CSOs have also extended partnerships with the business sector for such purposes. For example, Idara Taleem-o-Agahi (ITA) works with Unilever, one of the largest multinational corporations in the country, to provide education, health, and women’s economic empowerment services; Indus Resource Centre (IRC) works with Engro Corp to provide micro-credit and education services; and Mountain Institute for Education Development (MIED) has worked with Fauji Fertilizers on education and infrastructure issues.

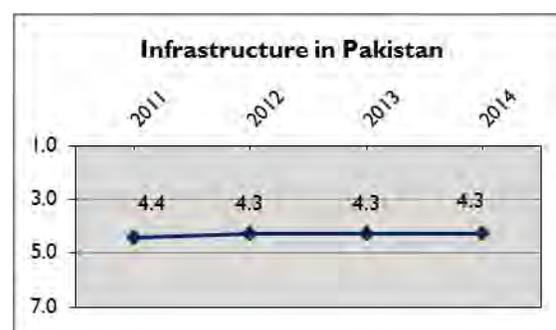
CSOs mainly provide goods and services free of charge both because donors usually cover the costs of services and because many services—particularly education—are expected to be provided for free. CSOs charge fees for a few services, such as micro-lending.



The government informally recognizes the efforts and services of CSOs, particularly those that address public service gaps, but it does not provide CSOs with grants and contracts for service provision. In fact, the government scrutinizes CSOs operating in disaster affected areas. The government remains wary of terrorism in remote areas in light of the Peshawar school attack.

INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.3

There are few resource centers and intermediary support organizations (ISOs) in Pakistan. Some of the prominent ones include Akhtar Hameed Khan Resource Centre, Civil Society Resource Centre, Applied Social Research (ASR) Resource Centre, Indus Resource Centre, Institute of Rural Management, Punjab Urban Resource Centre, PCP, and Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre. These centers provide various services like capacity building, systems development, and resource mobilization, generally free of charge. These centers are mainly donor funded and primarily based in urban areas. CSOs in rural areas and smaller cities have little access to resource centers.



Other capacity building and training programs, such as those offered by academic institutions like Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), are often too costly for small CSOs. These capacity building and training programs were previously offered free of charge when international donors funded these programs; however, this funding has recently stopped, so these academic institutions now charge fees to cover their costs.

Various ISOs in the country raise funds from donors and disburse them to smaller CSOs. For example, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) raises funds from the World Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), KFW, and other donors and then disburses these funds to small CSOs for community-based development initiatives. Recently, however, ISOs increasingly are shifting from sub-granting donor funding to implementing their own programs. Aurat Foundation, NRSP, Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA), and Save the Children are examples of such organizations.

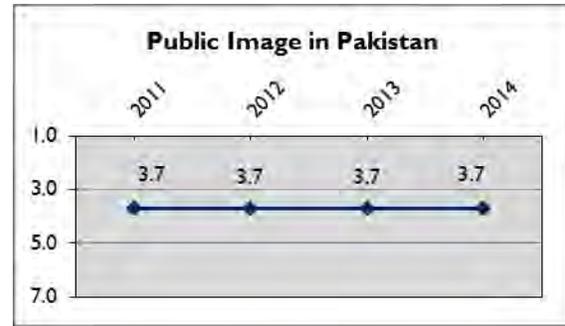
CSOs in Pakistan regularly form coalitions and networks to pursue joint objectives. Prominent networks and coalitions include National Humanitarian Network (NHN), Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE), Free And Fair Election Network (FAFEN), Pakistan Microfinancial Network (PMN), Rural Support Program Network (RSPN), South Asia Micro Finance Network (SAMN), Right to Information (RTI) Coalition, Alliance to Access led by Bolobhi, Amn-u-Nisa (Women's Peace Building Network), Chaman Development Authority, the Coalition on Media Ethics led by Rozan, and the Local Councils Association. While networks are often long-lasting, coalitions may be short-lived as they are formed to pursue a specific cause.

A limited number of CSO management trainings are available in the country. Small CSOs often are unable to afford trainings, and specialized trainings are only available in the provincial capital cities.

The government provides minimal support to CSOs. However, provincial governments are largely receptive to partnerships to strengthen civil society and have been encouraging public-private partnerships, especially in the education and health sectors.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.7

CSOs face several challenges to building a positive public image. Large CSOs are suspected of promoting foreign agendas and are viewed with increasing suspicion by the local population. Large media forums avoid publishing CSOs' names for security reasons, which reduces awareness of and support for these organizations. CSOs are threatened by militants aiming to destabilize the national image and deter social progress. Media channels, therefore, have become less activist, avoiding coverage of specific issues.



The government and the public positively recognize CSOs focused on service delivery, charitable causes, and disaster management. However, the general public perception of CSOs—especially of rights-based organizations—continues to suffer, particularly in KP, Balochistan, and the South of Punjab, where CSOs are highly distrusted as foreign agents. Conservative forces view rights-based activism and lobbying as radical and posing a threat to the social structure and national stability. With decreased media coverage of sensitive issues, the public is less supportive of CSO activity and mainly supports known philanthropic institutions. The government also has mixed views of the sector that mirror those of the public at large.

The business sector continues to have a positive perception of CSOs and contributes to the sector as part of its CSR initiatives. However, CSR contributions are mainly directed to very prominent CSOs. In some cases, as in the oil and gas sector where CSR is required, companies prefer to implement their own development projects.

CSOs largely publicize their activities through social media such as Facebook and Twitter, but their reach is limited. In addition, CSOs issue press releases, organize conferences, and otherwise cultivate relationships with journalists to promote their public image.

Many CSOs develop codes of ethics, but organizations rarely adhere to them. Only a limited number of CSOs, such as those registered under the Companies Ordinance 1984 or Security Exchange Commission of Pakistan, publish annual reports and submit legally required reports to the government.

ANNEX A: CSO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX METHODOLOGY (PAKISTAN)

I. Overview

The 2014 *CSO Sustainability Index for Pakistan* 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 Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy 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 Pakistan. 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. 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, make sure to determine a more accurate score that fits the description for that dimension.

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," Which is attached.

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?

U.S. Agency for International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20523

Tel: (202) 712-0000

Fax: (202) 216-3524

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