

# 2018 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index – Asia

**Overview** The 2018 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (CSOSI) for Asia reports on the strength and overall viability of the CSO sectors in Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. It addresses both advances and setbacks in seven key components or “dimensions” of the sustainability of civil society sectors: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, sectoral infrastructure, and public image. The CSOSI is intended to be a useful source of information for local CSOs, governments, donors, academics, and others who want to better understand and monitor key aspects of sustainability in the CSO sector.



The CSOSI provides a comprehensive assessment of the capacity of civil society to serve as both a short-term partner in implementing development solutions and a long-term actor in ensuring that development outcomes are sustained. The CSOSI empowers local civil society actors to collectively assess not only the environments in which they operate, but also their own capacities to advocate, operate sustainably, and communicate with citizens. Allowing local civil society to self-identify their development challenges is the first step in promoting resiliency and long-term self-reliance.

The CSOSI is produced by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with FHI 360, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), and a local implementing partner in each participating country. A total of 72 countries across the globe were surveyed in various editions of the CSOSI in 2018.

**Results** In 2018, political developments and ongoing conflicts continued to affect the operational environment for CSOs in Asia. For example, political and human rights activists were arrested and media outlets silenced in the run-up to the problematic elections in Bangladesh and Cambodia, and CSOs in Burma and Thailand continued to face restricted space due to systematic challenges that stunt democratic development. CSOs’ efforts had positive impacts in responding to the humanitarian challenges in Mindanao in the Philippines, and in advocating successfully for government actions towards transitional justice in Sri Lanka. While only three countries – Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Thailand – reported declines in their overall CSO sustainability scores, most others experienced decline in at least one dimension. Civic space continued to decrease across the region. Seven countries reported deterioration in their legal environment scores, five noted declines in their advocacy scores, and five recorded declines in public image.



The 2018 CSOSI regional reports can be found at <https://www.fhi360.org/resource/civil-society-organization-sustainability-index-reports>.

Explore historical CSOSI data at <https://www.csosi.org>.

