

# 2019 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index – Mexico

**Overview** The 2019 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (CSOSI) for Mexico reports on the state of the Mexican CSO sector. The report addresses seven key components or “dimensions” of the sustainability of the civil society sector: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, sectoral infrastructure, and public image. The Index is intended to be a useful source of information for local CSOs, governments, donors, academics, and others who want to better understand and monitor key aspects of sustainability in the Mexican 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 74 countries across the globe were surveyed in various regional editions of the CSOSI in 2019. This is the second year the CSOSI reports on developments in Mexico, the first country in the Latin American region to be covered by the CSOSI.

**Results** In 2019, the first year of the incoming federal administration headed by President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, brought about a new paradigm in government-CSO relations in Mexico in which CSOs are no longer considered partners in development. In this context, overall CSO sustainability deteriorated slightly in 2019, with most dimensions of the Index experiencing some negative developments. While the legal framework governing CSOs remained largely unchanged, new rules and stricter oversight increased the administrative burden to which tax-exempt organizations were subject. Sharp cuts to the federal budget allocated to CSOs dealt a significant blow to the sector’s financial viability, producing a cascading effect on its service provision capabilities. CSOs’ ability to influence public opinion and policy shrunk due to a reduction of opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, while the executive’s negative rhetoric tarnished the sector’s public image. These adverse developments were counterbalanced to some extent by a slight improvement in the infrastructure supporting the sector, driven by a flourishing institutional strengthening and capacity-building ecosystem. The sector’s organizational capacity did not change significantly from 2018.

**Resources** The 2019 CSOSI regional reports can be found at FHI 360’s [resource page](https://www.csosi.org). Explore historical CSOSI data at <https://www.csosi.org>

