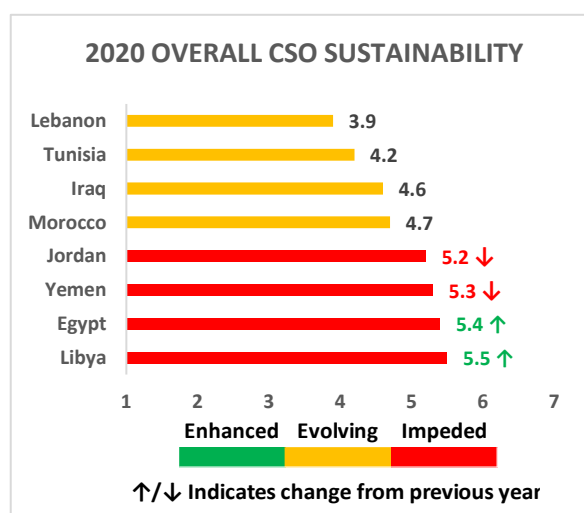


2020 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index – Middle East and North Africa

Overview The 2020 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (CSOSI) for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) reports on the strength and overall viability of the CSO sectors in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yemen. 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 73 countries across the globe were surveyed in various regional editions of the CSOSI in 2020.



Results Against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic and political and economic unrest, CSOs in the MENA region contended with the closure of civic space and a decline in financial viability. Governments imposed restrictions in response to the pandemic that limited civil liberties, leading to deteriorations in the legal environments governing CSO sectors in six of the eight countries, with the largest declines in Jordan and Yemen. The availability of funding declined in 2020 as a result of the pandemic and the resulting global economic crisis, spurring deteriorations in this dimension in five countries — Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen, and Tunisia. Despite these challenges, CSOs across the region showed their resilience and provided critical services, driving an improvement in the service provision dimension in six of the eight countries surveyed — all but Jordan and Morocco. Largely because of their increased visibility in providing aid and relief services, five countries — Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia — recorded slight improvements in the sector’s public image. Organizational capacity improved in Egypt, Libya, and Iraq, in part because of advances in CSOs’ use of technology.

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Divergent trends were noted in overall sustainability. Although Libya and Egypt both recorded improvements in their overall sustainability in 2020, they continue to have the lowest scores in the region. Overall sustainability declined in Jordan and Yemen, while it remained stable in Lebanon, Tunisia, Iraq, and Morocco.

Resources The 2020 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>.