



2022 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

GHANA
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For Ghana

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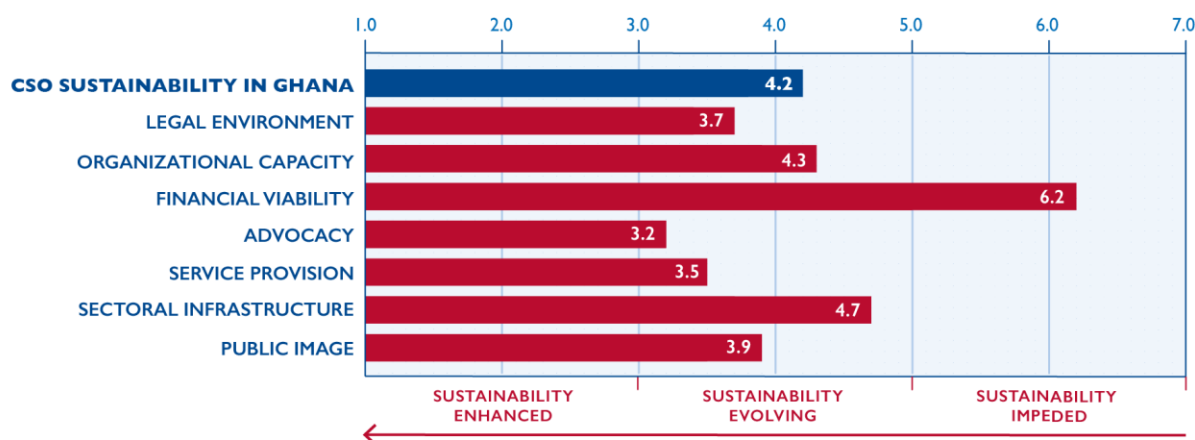
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OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.2



In 2022, Ghana commemorated the thirtieth anniversary of the referendum that returned the country to a constitutional democracy. President Nana Akufo-Addo delivered a public speech celebrating the anniversary, in which he emphasized the importance of strengthening democracy and ensuring greater participation by civil society. Former president John Dramani Mahama and the leader of the major opposition party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), made public statements commending the country's achievements and calling on citizens to continue them.

In the course of this historic year, several unfavorable events raised public concerns. The economy suffered a near meltdown that was widely attributed to the failure of the government's fiscal policies. The Ghana cedi depreciated by 40 percent, and year-over-year inflation reached 54.1 percent in December, according to the World Bank. Despite calls from economists and the opposition for the government to seek a bailout from the International Monetary Fund, the finance minister and other government leaders vehemently opposed the idea. In the face of overwhelming public resistance, in April the government introduced an electronic transaction levy (or e-levy) to help raise revenue. After the e-levy failed to generate needed revenue, fifty-six parliamentarians from the ruling New Patriotic Party expressed dissatisfaction with the country's precarious economic situation and urged the president to sack the finance minister. In December, NDC parliamentarians brought a censure motion against the minister, accusing him of reckless management of the economy. The censure motion failed, and the finance minister remained in office.

Growing dissatisfaction with the economy dominated public life in the second half of the year. In June, Arise Ghana organized a two-day demonstration criticizing government policies and demanding economic relief. On November 5, protesters demanded the president's resignation because of bad governance. In December, a public outcry greeted the launch by the Ministry of Finance of a domestic debt exchange, which sought to postpone the payment of government debt to bond holders upon maturity by offering new bonds with lower coupons, contrary to the established terms of the bonds. On December 30, the auditor general published a damning report about the government's COVID-19 expenditures. The report attracted public attention after it was published by the media in January 2023, heightening tensions over the use of public funds. As part of its anti-graft campaign, the Coalition for Democratic Accountability and Inclusive Governance (also known as the Citizens' Coalition) organized street demonstrations demanding that the auditor general prosecute or impose surcharges on the institutions responsible for the lost revenue.

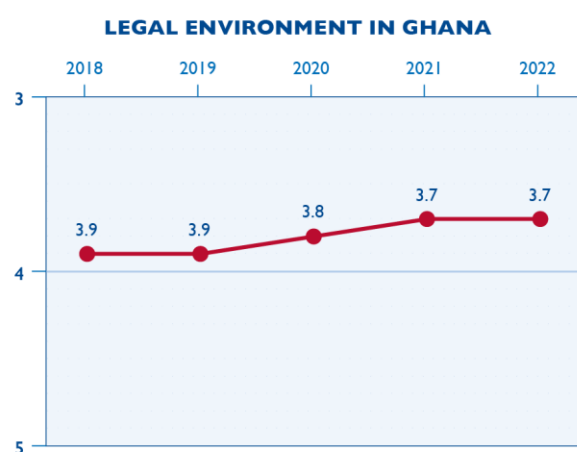
Ghana also faced significant social pressures in 2022. The alarming increase in illegal mining activities known as *galamsey* dominated public discussion for weeks. The Ghana Water Company Limited warned that it would have to shut down operations in areas where the cost of treating water was not economically viable because of *galamsey*, and the president issued an ominous statement about the involvement of foreign nationals in *galamsey*.

activities. Police brutality was another concern, especially after the police were accused on three separate occasions of infringing political rights and freedom of expressions by harassing political activists and commentators. In an especially worrying incident, a political activist was arrested and charged with treason after frequently criticizing the government and the ruling party on Facebook. His arrest raised significant concerns about freedom of expression in Ghana. Several other incidents of brutal police treatment of journalists were reported.

CSO sustainability was stable in 2022, with no changes in score recorded.

A total of 11,161 CSOs were registered with the Non-Profit Organizations Secretariat (NPOS) at the end of 2022. Of this number, 687 organizations renewed their operating permits during the year, far fewer than the 4,840 organizations that renewed in 2021. The decline is attributable to the initial rush for operating permits after the launch of the new NPO Policy in 2020. Since then, fewer organizations have bothered to renew their operating permits.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 3.7



CSOs' legal environment was unchanged in 2022.

The laws for CSO registration remained favorable. Under the revised Companies Act, 2019 (Act 992) and the NPO Policy approved in 2020, CSOs, like other business entities, are required to register with the Office of the Registrar of Companies as companies limited by guarantee. They must then register with the NPOS as not-for-profit organizations to obtain operating licenses. The registration process requires organizations to submit information about their governance structures, including personal details about all directors and beneficial owners. The process should take about one week, although in practice more time is required to fulfill all requirements, especially those related to beneficial ownership. The registration process is usually somewhat faster for CSOs

in urban areas than in rural areas, mainly because they enjoy easier access to branch offices of the Registrar of Companies.

The Companies Act provides clear accountability guidelines for CSOs. All CSOs must renew their operating licenses annually with the NPOS and submit annual activity and financial reports as part of the renewal process. Most registered CSOs must also submit annual audit reports, although community-based organizations (CBOs) need only to submit financial reports to renew their permits. CSOs must also report annually to the Registrar of Companies, Ghana Revenue Authority, and other regulatory institutions. They must update their records on their directors and beneficial ownership as needed in accordance with guidelines for combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism. New CSOs sometimes find these multiple reporting requirements burdensome. The Registrar of Companies has started to delist companies that are not in compliance. Informal groups such as social movements may operate without registration, although entities without legal identity may not open bank accounts or engage in fundraising.

CSOs are free to operate under the laws of Ghana and have the right to participate in public protests. They face no restrictions on engaging in advocacy issues unless a national law expressly bars work on a particular issue. Although Ghana has laws prohibiting homosexuality, CSOs are not barred from carrying out advocacy activities on the issue. However, several negative comments were made in the media about CSOs advocating against the Proper Human Sexual Rights and Ghanaian Family Values Bill, which was introduced in the parliament in 2021 and seeks to criminalize same-sex sexual relationships and the promotion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) rights. Political interference in CSOs' activities is not a major concern. There were no notable instances of state harassment of or threats against CSOs in 2022. CSOs have recourse to the courts for judicial review and access to justice.

CSOs can apply through the NPOS for exemptions on taxes for imported goods. Few CSOs, including those engaged in humanitarian activities, bother to seek such exemptions because of the burdensome application requirements and past abuses of the application process. As companies limited by guarantee, CSOs do not pay corporate taxes, but they are obliged to pay withholding taxes on goods and services procured.

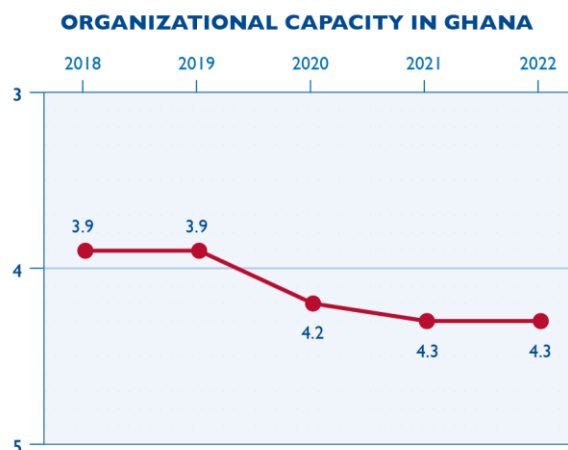
CSOs are free to undertake fundraising, including through crowdfunding. They may accept funds from donors provided the funds are used mainly for development work and do not go to political activities, money laundering, or terrorism. Although legislation on social enterprises does not exist and a government policy on social enterprises is still in draft form, some CSOs have registered social enterprises that engage in for-profit activities to support their operations.

There are no specialized lawyers serving only CSOs. Organizations may access legal services from corporate lawyers and advocates, who operate mainly in regional capitals and major urban centers. A few lawyers offer services to CSOs on a pro bono basis, usually in cooperation with other CSOs.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.3

CSOs' organizational capacity was stable in 2022.

CSOs' activities are informed by the needs of targeted beneficiaries. The targets are usually not a fixed list of people but rather are determined by the issues, funding, location, gender, or other aspects of a given project. Organizations usually identify their potential constituents through research and engagement with community leaders, including chiefs, assembly members, and representatives of women and youth. Informal social movements rely on constituents to support their actions in various ways, including by offering in-kind support. For instance, people taking part in demonstrations in 2022 arranged transportation to and from the venues. Social movements often use social media platforms to mobilize supporters.



CSOs largely adhered to their missions and strategic plans in 2022, in contrast to the pandemic period, when almost all organizations had to adopt new strategies. CSOs normally have clear mission and vision statements and standard operational procedures, which are usually outlined at the time of registration. The development and use of strategic plans is common except among informal social movements, which tend to focus on issues-driven activism and seek a direct response from the government rather than implementing a broad-based set of programs. Most organizations attempt to adhere to their plans, although they sometimes venture into areas that are tangential to their defined missions. While there are no standard metrics for measuring CSOs' success in their work, most organizations assess their progress and impact through activity reports and feedback from beneficiaries and donors, which they use to inform future activities. For example, Adanu, an organization focused on community development in the Volta Region, marked its twenty-year anniversary by reviewing some of its key achievements, including the establishment of Adanu Radio, a medium for community development.

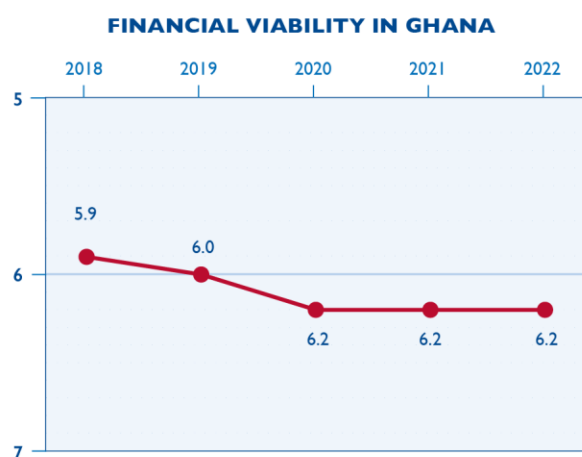
CSOs usually have clearly defined management structures and boards, which provide operational and policy guidance. Most CSOs have policies and guidelines to guide their activities; these include their founding constitutions, operating manuals, and financial, management, gender, and communications policies. Currently, some donors require CSOs to embrace principles addressing issues such as sexual misconduct, exploitation, abuse, and harassment. For instance, all CSOs in Ghana that received USAID grants in 2022 signed onto a policy to offer protection from sexual exploitation and abuse as part of their contracts.

Because they lack core funding, most CSOs hire staff on contracts for periods determined by the duration of projects. The limited periods of employment and resulting job insecurity make it difficult for people to continue working in the sector. Staff turnover is becoming a major challenge as project-based funding dries up. The use of volunteers and interns has become a common practice among both urban and rural CSOs, and many larger CSOs

outsource professional services such as accounting, information technology, and, in some cases, communications. Some CSOs adhere to proper human resource practices, such as granting annual and maternity leave and avoiding discrimination in employment, especially of women.

Online technologies have encouraged CSOs to work virtually and reduce in-person engagement, which costs more in terms of money and time. Many organizations rely on social media for timely and efficient internal and external communications. For example, the organizers of a major social protest in 2022 rallied support through Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. Awareness of cybersecurity issues differs between large or urban organizations and small or rural CSOs. Some urban CSOs have policies that restrict the use of external devices on company laptops and equipment, but most rural or small CSOs lack such restrictions.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 6.2



CSOs' financial viability was stable in 2022.

Foreign donors remained the main source of funding for most CSOs. The major donors in 2022 included bilateral and multilateral bodies such as USAID, UK Aid Direct, European Union, German Agency for International Cooperation, Embassy of the Netherlands, Danish International Development Agency, and United Nations Development Programme. Ongoing changes in the funding landscape, including the shift of donors' focus to areas lacking a strong civil society component, such as trade, continued to reduce the pool of funding available to CSOs. For instance, a substantial portion of USAID funding now goes to agri-business projects (though some of this includes work with civil society, such as supporting professional associations and farmers groups).

Although a few CSOs have diversified funding, there are limited opportunities for most organizations to develop multiple funding sources. To overcome this gap, local philanthropy has attracted considerable attention in recent years. Norsaac, a Tamale-based CSO, is piloting participatory grant making with support from the STAR-Ghana Foundation, Oxfam, and the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI). This type of grant making cedes decision-making powers to affected community members and constituencies, and it is being tried in Ghana as a homegrown model that redefines the relationship between aid agencies in the global north and development actors in the global south. STAR-Ghana, the main local grant-making organization, earmarked GHS 10 million (approximately \$1.2 million) as grant support for CSOs, of which 5.2 million (approximately \$625,000) was disbursed in 2022. STAR-Ghana supported fourteen partners through its Conflict, Security, and Stability Fund, Giving for Change project, and Partnership Beyond Aid project in the 2021–22 financial year but did not advertise a major call for funding in 2022.

The government of Ghana does not normally give grants to CSOs. However, CSOs sometimes pool funding with government agencies to undertake joint activities at local and national levels. For instance, the US organization Advocates for Community Alternatives partnered with the assembly of Fanteakwa South District on a facilitated collective action process in thirty-four key towns in the district. Under this approach, the two sides contributed funding that allowed communities to develop and implement action plans reflecting their priority needs.

Community support for CSO projects is sometime available but usually not substantial. Corporate social responsibility programs sometimes benefit CSOs, but they are few in number and the grants are small. In 2022, with support from Tullow Oil, Youth Bridge Foundation coached 1,300 students in deprived communities on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics before they took their basic education certificate examinations.

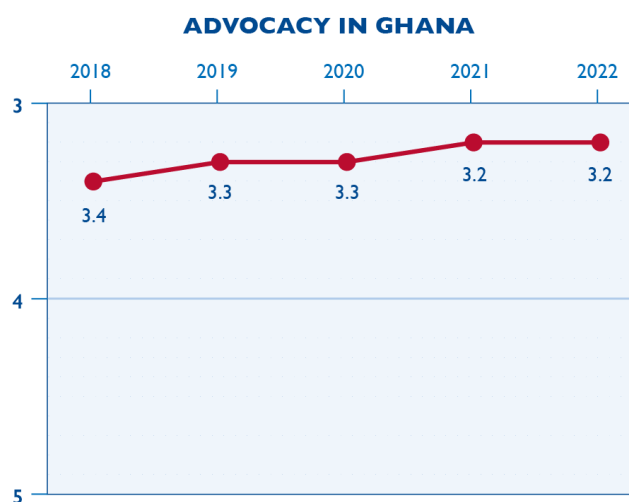
Only a few CSOs earn income from the provision of goods and services. CSOs established as social enterprises earn income from business entities associated with their organizations. The income streams from social enterprises support organizational activities but are usually not substantial.

Most large and urban CSOs have sound financial management systems with trained accountants to manage their finances. In fact, most organizations find it difficult to receive donor grants without a qualified financial officer. However, small organizations that do not receive donor grants directly usually manage their finances with simple records of income and expenditures. CSOs are required to submit annual financial reports and, except in the case of CBOs, audit reports to renew their operating licenses.

ADVOCACY: 3.2

CSO advocacy was largely unchanged in 2022.

CSOs in Ghana generally enjoy a cordial relationship with policymakers at all levels. In 2022, President Akufo-Addo met with CSO leaders to seek their opinion on government proposals for the country's economic recovery and negotiations with the International Monetary Fund. Several CSOs met with the speaker of the parliament to discuss their legislative and advocacy work. Many organizations worked with authorities at the regional and grassroots level on community development and public service delivery. For example, the Upper East regional minister met with Ghanaian and international CSOs and urged them to adopt a consortium approach to strengthen their working relationships with various district assemblies in the region.



Rights-based organizations seek to hold the government accountable by periodically reviewing the country's adherence to international protocols, agreements, and conventions, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In 2022, the Ghana CSO SDG-Platform issued a shadow report to accompany the country's voluntary national report to the United Nations on the implementation of the SDGs. In the report, CSOs highlighted the need for government bodies to coordinate their sectoral plans. CSOs also use mechanisms such as social audits to check public expenditures.

CSOs, including social movements, undertake both formal and informal advocacy campaigns. Policy issues are often based on research findings and emerging issues affecting community members in a particular sector. For instance, in September, the Institute for Democratic Governance revived public discussion about the need to amend the constitution and reform local government. Ghana Somubi Dwumadie, which focuses on disability issues, lobbied for a voluntary parliamentary group to become a formal caucus so that it could promote disability issues in national legislation.

CSOs serve as the mouthpiece or advocates for vulnerable communities. For instance, Tropenbos Ghana called on the government to introduce land restoration as a condition for small-scale miners to reduce the devastation of arable lands and ensure livelihoods for poor communities in mining areas. Similarly, the Cocoa Platform and its counterparts from Côte d'Ivoire made a joint call for reforms in the international pricing mechanism for cocoa to guarantee a viable income for farmers.

The Women's Rights Coalition, composed of Abantu, Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF), Network for Women's Rights in Ghana, Ark Foundation, Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Center, and other organizations, engaged with the Ministry of Gender in 2022 to support the Affirmative Action Bill, Property Rights of Spouses Bill, Intestate Succession Bill, and Criminal Offenses Bill 2022 (which would criminalize accusations of witchcraft). WiLDAF also collaborated with the Ghana AIDS Commission to submit a memorandum to the parliament as part of an ongoing advocacy campaign against the passage of a private member bill seeking to regulate issues related to LGBTQ persons. Youth-based CSOs were active participants in developing the new ten-year National Youth Policy launched by the president in September. CSOs also engaged in advocacy on the galamsey issue in 2022. For example, Tropenbos Ghana called for a five-year ban on small-scale mining and

the development of a complete restoration strategy, including an inventory of the condition of the country's forest reserves. Anti-corruption CSOs such as the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition and the Ghana Integrity Initiative called for transparency on assets declarations, including publication of those made by public officials.

The concept of lobbying has still not gained ground in Ghana, although CSOs use formal and informal channels to interact with legislators at all levels. In 2022, after a media report indicated attempts by some government officials to appropriate portions of the Achimota Forest Reserve, lobbying by Occupy Ghana resulted in the suspension of the reserve's reclassification. Other successful lobbying in 2022 included passage of the Exemptions Act after sustained efforts led by the Tax Justice Coalition.

The NPO bill is still under discussion. CSOs are for the passage of the bill and in 2022 continued to lobby the government to present the draft bill to the parliament for consultation.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.5

CSO service provision was unchanged in 2022.

The CSO sector in Ghana is highly diversified. CSOs operate in almost all sectors, including governance, health, education, environment, mining, women's and child rights, human and animal rights, transport, energy, faith and traditional affairs, and new media. Most CSOs seek to address their constituents' identified needs or fill gaps in public service delivery. For instance, WiLDAF has lawyers who provide victims of gender-based violence with legal representation in court and engage on the issue with other state agencies, such as the police, the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice, and the government-sponsored institution Legal Aid.

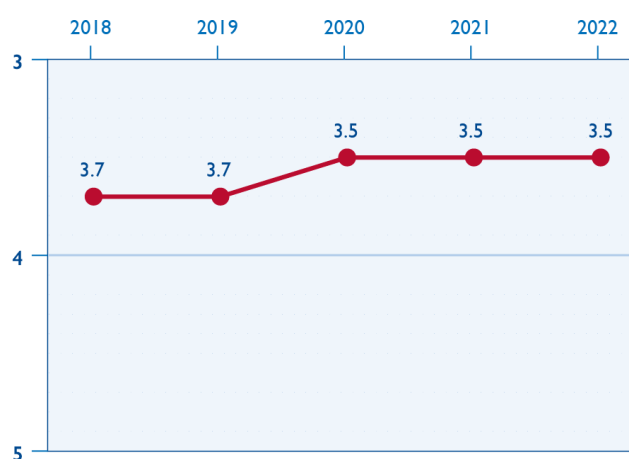
CSOs' services usually respond to the priorities of their constituents and communities as determined through community engagements, needs assessments, and direct requests from communities themselves. For example, Sancore Animal Rescue and Shelter is a nonprofit organization in the greater Accra region set up to help stray dogs and cats, which were a problem in the community. CSOs typically measure the effectiveness of their work through feedback from beneficiaries, donors, and government agencies.

CSO usually provide goods and services to everyone, not only their members. CSO networks and membership associations provide goods and services to their members. Generally, CSOs in Ghana do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, or ethnicity. However, some CSOs, particularly faith-based organizations, do not endorse activities that promote LGBTQ interests.

CSOs registered as social enterprises recover costs through their business initiatives. For example, the Sungbo Women Empowerment Organization based in the Upper West region has set up two shea butter processing mills that raise funds to support the activities of thirty-four women's groups. A few research and advocacy-based organizations recover costs from consultancy services. However, the demand for paid services is very low, especially in rural areas, where CSOs' constituencies are vulnerable groups without financial resources. A few CSOs distribute products such as publications at workshops and public events.

Government officials and agencies at both the national and local levels recognize and appreciate the work of CSOs. Government officials recognize CSOs' role in complementing the efforts of the state to provide goods and services and further national development. Public officials regularly issue statements of commendation. For instance, in 2022, the minister of information commended the Media Foundation for West Africa and its media affiliate, The Fourth Estate, for testing the Right to Information Act under its accountability journalism project. Government officials sometimes criticize CSOs for certain aspects of their work, particularly if they expose inefficiencies or corruption in government.

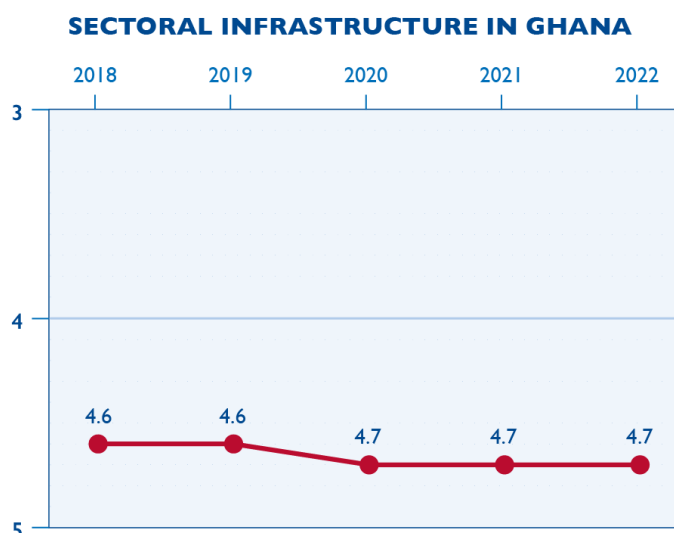
SERVICE PROVISION IN GHANA



SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.7

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector did not change in 2022.

Only a few organizations, such as WACSI and the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), serve as resource centers for CSOs. WACSI focuses on capacity development, while AWDF mainly provides resources on women's issues. Several intermediary support organizations provide training and other technical support. For example, STAR-Ghana Foundation, with support from WACSI and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, organized a workshop in July on building relationships with potential donors under its Giving for Change project. Otherwise, CSOs access information through peers and internet-based sources, such as the websites and social media platforms of donors, the government, and publications.



STAR-Ghana Foundation is the major local grant-making organization. In the 2021–22 financial year, STAR-Ghana supported fourteen partners, but it did not issue a major call for grant proposals in 2022. Very few CSOs access funds from other local foundations, such as the Vodafone and MTN foundations, because funding allocations for CSOs are usually small and sector- or geographic-specific. In recent years, several local funding schemes for start-ups and community development initiatives have emerged.

CSOs in Ghana have established strong relationships through coalitions and networking, which they use to share information and pursue joint projects. For example, Oxfam and its grantees have formed consortiums to have a stronger voice when engaging with the private sector on the cocoa and shea butter value chains. Networks have also helped form consortiums to raise funds. However, declines in funding have weakened most networks by driving them to compete with their members and their members to compete with each other for funding. The sector has struggled to establish a common platform to oversee and coordinate its affairs. The Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations in Development is no longer regarded as representative of most CSOs.

Many training programs help build the capacity of CSOs. Organizations offering training in 2022 included WACSI and some private and public institutions. For instance, the University of Cape Coast has a full program in CSO management, and the Institute for Chartered Accountants Ghana and Shawbell Consulting offer training on relevant topics. Other opportunities included short courses on topics such as management, governance, fundraising, and proposal writing offered by the Institute for Statistical Social and Economic Research, Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, and the Institute of Directors. Local and foreign entities occasionally organize subject-area training programs. For example, Open Ownership, a US-based organization, collaborated with the Office of the Registrar of Companies to organize a series of trainings for CSOs on beneficial ownership in the extractive sector. Participants must pay to attend most trainings.

Partnerships between civil society and other sectors are few and often designed to meet short-term objectives. For instance, in 2022, the Media Coalition against Galamsey collaborated with urban and rural CSOs to carry out campaigns on the devastating effect of illegal mining on bodies of water and the environment. CSOs also collaborated with the ministries of interior and national security on issues related to border security. The Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center collaborated with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding to organize the annual stakeholder dialogue series, which seeks to strengthen partnerships among stakeholders to promote peace and security in the subregion.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.9

CSOs' public image was stable in 2022.

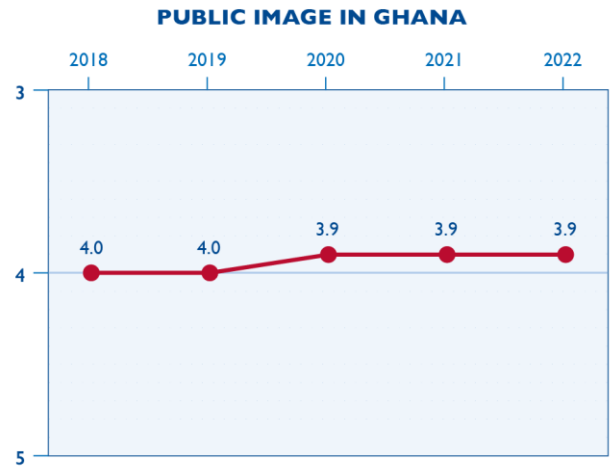
CSOs continued to enjoy positive media coverage on traditional and social media platforms. CitiFM and CitiTV provided live radio and television broadcasts of public forums on Ghana's debt organized by Imani and the Africa Center on Energy Policy in December. The activities of urban CSOs, particularly those based in Accra, usually receive prompt or same-day reportage, while rural CSOs must wait a day or two. CSOs pay for advertisements and prime-time public announcements of their activities unless the media house is a major sponsor or sole media partner for a particular event. Unmonitored social media platforms sometimes disseminate negative coverage of CSOs or are used to spread disinformation.

Public perceptions of CSOs are positive, especially in contexts in which people see the direct benefit of their work. Public understanding of the distinction between advocacy and service-oriented CSOs is blurred, particularly in rural areas. Although CSOs try to complement and improve government service delivery, local terminology describing CSOs as charitable entities hinders understanding of their role as advocacy-centered organizations.

The government has a generally positive perception of CSOs and engages with them in both policy making and service delivery. However, in the politically polarized environment of 2022, members of the ruling party often tagged CSOs criticizing government policies as working for the opposition. The relationship between the business sector and CSOs remains weak.

CSOs raise awareness of their activities through community media and social media campaigns. CSOs have developed relationships with the media and individual journalists and organize joint activities to enhance positive coverage. CSOs use social media often to publicize information, advertise for interns, or engage in other public communications.

The publication of annual reports is now common among CSOs, particularly urban organizations. As part of the implementation of the new NPO Policy, CSOs are required to establish independent forums of members that can defend their interests and ensure ethical conduct.



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