

CIVIL SOCIETY IN NEPAL: SEARCHING FOR A VIABLE ROLE

CIVICUS CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX REPORT FOR NEPAL

2006

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CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

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FOREWORD

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) Nepal is part of a worldwide network of the Institute of Cultural Affairs International that has worked for 40 years in more than 35 countries around the world to build human capacities through participatory training and facilitation activities and to establish community development programmes. It tries to bring the human factor into development, strengthens human capabilities in the public sphere, CSOs and private sectors, and focuses on promoting change for a better future through personal and organisational transformation and through building robust civil society groups. This is the way to achieve the rationalisation of society.

ICA Nepal was founded in 1998, and has grown rapidly. Currently it is active in the area of civil society development through community development activities, research and training and facilitation. ICA runs several community development programmes focusing on *Dalit* communities in rural parts of Nepal, and organises public and in-house training courses on various themes of civil society capacity-building.

The Civil Society Index project in Nepal was started as a pioneering work by ICA Nepal with the support of CIVICUS in order to initiate dialogue and intervention to enhance the quality of CSOs. Most parts of this project were carried out at a time when the country was experiencing various political changes including widespread conflict. Because of the political changes, the perception towards CSOs by a particular regime was completely different which tremendously affected our work. Despite all these difficulties, ICA Nepal accomplished its task.

The work has been coordinated by Mr. Tatwa P. Timsina, Senior Facilitator of ICA Nepal, with the assistance of a number of staff and volunteers of ICA Nepal. Mr. Dev Raj Dahal from FES Nepal contributed as Civil Society Expert. Mr. Deepak Raj Chapa contributed as the interim coordinator and Mr. Ashbin Pudasaini, Mr. Prakash Timsina, Mr. Atma Ram Upadhaya, Mrs. Sabita Paudel, Mr. Hemant Pokhrel, Mrs. Sarala Sharma, Mrs. Rekha Maskey, Mr. Madan Raj Bista and Mr. Juju Raj Tuladhar as the Participatory Researchers. Similarly, Mr. Bhairav K. C. served as the Data Base Manager and Ms. Laxmi Chapagain, Mr. Raju Dahal and Mrs. Sangita Paudel as Research Assistants. The Working Team was advised by a 17-member National Advisory Group consisting of civil society advocates, academicians and researchers well-known for their contributions.

Since the work is the first of its kind in Nepal, there might be some areas that need improvement. Many points may appear obscure at a general level. It is our hope, however, that this report will initiate a debate for improving the performance of civil society in Nepal. Comments and suggestions are most welcome in assisting us to improve this work in the future.

Hemant Pokhrel
Director
ICA Nepal

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Institute of Cultural Affairs Nepal, in cooperation with CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, conducted this research project in Nepal. The project's approach and research methodology was developed by the international NGO CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. CIVICUS deserves special thanks for allowing us to use this innovative process of analysing civil society in our context. We are particularly grateful to Volkhart Finn Heinrich, Navin Vasudev, Andria Hayes-Birchler, Hannelore Wallner and all the past and present staff of CIVICUS who tirelessly supported us throughout this project period by offering constructive comments and suggestions.

The work received partial financial support from Action Aid Nepal and IDRC, and without their support this work would not have been possible. ICA Nepal acknowledges their contribution. I would like to thank Dr. Sibesh C. Regmi, Country Director of Action Aid Nepal and Mr. Anil Pant and Ms. Sarita Karki, staff of Action Aid Nepal who not only provided constructive comments and suggestions but also passionately supported our work.

The work would not have been carried out in this form had we not received support from the members of the National Advisory Group. Despite the political turmoil and busy schedule of NAG members, they supported us by attending the workshops and contributing thoughtful comments and suggestions. We would like to thank all the members of the National Advisory Group for their great cooperation and support. I would also like to thank Mr. Dev Raj Dahal, who supported us as Civil Society Expert.

I would also like to thank key informants, surveyors and the media review team for their contribution to this study; Mr. Tatwa P. Timsina who took the responsibility of coordinating the project as well as writing the greater part of this report; and all the ICA Nepal staff and volunteers who spent several months working tirelessly to accomplish this task.

Deepak Raj Chapa
Chairman
ICA Nepal

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CIVICUS	CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
CS	Civil Society
CSI	Civil Society Index
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICA	Institute of Cultural Affairs
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NAG	National Advisory Group
NCO	National Coordinating Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIT	National Index Team
NPC	National Planning Commission
SAG	Stakeholder Assessment Group
TI	Transparency International
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WGEID	Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This part of the report presents the findings, observations and implications of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project in Nepal. The report aims to provide evidence-based information on civil society in Nepal in order to build a healthy and vibrant civil society in the country. The report helps in assessing Nepalese civil society and its strengths and weaknesses, which can then be compared to other civil societies globally.

This work is part of an international project coordinated by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation and aimed at assessing civil societies in more than 50 countries, . In Nepal, this work was carried out by Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA), a national organisation dedicated to the promotion and development of CSOs in Nepal.

CIVICUS has defined civil society as the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market where people associate to advance common interests. In the Nepalese context, CSOs include a large number of organisations such as voluntary organisations, consumer groups, advocacy groups, human rights organisations, peace movements, and religious organisations.

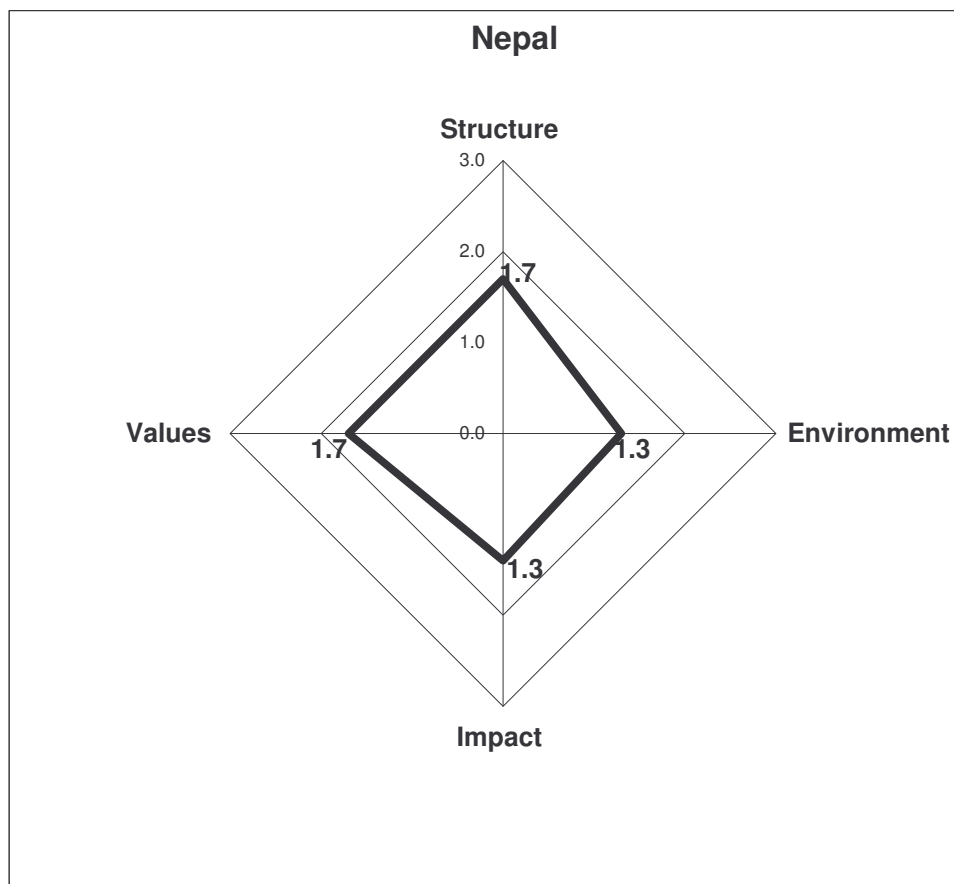
In Nepal, the project formally started on 23 January 2006 when the first National Advisory Group (NAG) meeting took place. It was formally completed on May 12, 2006 when the National Workshop was convened. During this period a series of activities such as regional stakeholder surveys and workshops, population survey, and media review were conducted.

The CSI uses 74 indicators under four dimensions: structure, environment, values and impacts. The indicators are based on a mix of qualitative and quantitative data and are scored between 0 and 3. Based on the information collected and analysed by the research team, the NAG members assessed the overall state of civil society in the country and scored for each of the dimensions. By plotting the scores, a Civil Society Diamond for Nepal was developed, and is presented below.

THE FINDINGS:

The diagram of the Civil Society Diamond for Nepal shows that it is rather well-balanced and of medium size. The figure shows that the structure and values are in slightly better condition than the environment and impact. The scores vary from 1.3 to 1.7 indicating that the status of civil society in Nepal is almost at the middle and needs much improvement in all dimensions almost equally.

FIGURE 1: Civil Society Diamond for Nepal



A brief summary of each dimension

Structure: Nepalese CSOs have demonstrated their strength in participating in non-partisan political activities by also participating in the recent movement to reinstate democracy. Participation of Nepalese people in global CSOs is nominal; CSOs in Nepal have very limited communication facilities and also have inadequate numbers of capable human resources. However, CSOs in Nepal are quite diverse and reflect the social, economic and political plurality of the country. CSOs are more urban-based and representation of different ethnic groups is unequal. Various other indicators such as ‘existence of umbrella bodies’, ‘support infrastructure’, ‘international linkages’, ‘cooperation between CSOs’ also show rather low scores. Financial and structural facilities for CSOs are nominal, and many CSOs do not even have their own office. This indicates that many CSOs in Nepal are working in a very difficult setting with nominal resources and physical facilities. The score of structure i.e., 1.7 indicates that there is a need for massive intervention to improve this aspect of the CSI Diamond. Despite the lower scoring in most of the indicators, Nepalese CSOs see promising and conducive socio-political conditions in future. During the NAG meeting, the members reiterated that the Structure of Nepalese civil society will be improved in the future as a result of the revival of democracy in the country in April, 2006.

Environment: The Environment dimension of the CSI diamond in Nepal is in a state of change. The analysis of the indicators produces a rather poor score for the environment dimension. One

of the major disabling factors was the country's volatile political environment. The political rights of citizens were violated, CSOs were threatened and the state was almost on the verge of collapse. In the last few years, the political system of the country was changed several times which, in turn, directly affected the functioning of CSOs. Although in all political systems in the past, the regime emphasized full rights to people, in practice the respect and promotion of these rights varied drastically. In April 2006, after three weeks of mobilisations and riots, the autocratic regime of King Gyanendra was ousted and a parliament reinstated.

In the last few years, because of the conflict, the country was in a chaotic situation. CSOs were threatened in rural areas. All the subdimensions such as political context, basic freedoms, socio-economic and socio-cultural context, legal environment, state-CS relations and private sector-CS relations showed a problematic stage. The overall situation in the last years was so negative that the regime lost control over about half of the country, corruption became rampant, press freedom was curtailed and the public lost hope. Despite such a harsh political environment, people did not lose trust, which enabled many CSOs to operate even in such a difficult period of history. Some CSOs tried their best to reach the most needy people and to create space for activism and to encourage respect for human rights, even between warring factions. The score for environment was low (1.3), indicating that CSOs went through a very difficult period.

Values: Nepalese civil society promotes and practices positive values only to a certain extent. The score for values dimension is 1.7. The study revealed that civil society is dedicated to practice of democratic norms not only within the organisations but also in society at large, with a view to supporting the democratization of the Nepalese society. It is also active in promoting transparency, non-violence, gender equity and environmental sustainability.

Nepalese civil society is weak in tackling corruption and financial transparency issues, it remains unable to instil a gender equity-friendly value system within organisations, and the role of CSOs in poverty eradication is still not very impressive. Ordinary citizens do not believe that CSOs were established mainly for fighting poverty, since CSOs have not yet been able to include this as one of their major values.

CSOs have played a central role in the restoration of democracy and peace. Although non-partisan political actions are dominated by men and only few CSOs are led by women, women's participation in community forestry and environmental improvement activities is increasing.

Impact: Nepalese CSOs have not been very successful in influencing public policies and exerting pressure on government and other decision-makers. This is reflected in the rather low score for the impact dimension (1.4). CSOs have partially contributed to empowering marginalized communities and getting basic services closer to the people. More specifically, CSOs have been working hard to support minorities, women and children. Moreover, CSOs role in supporting livelihoods has been rather significant and has made many people more interested in the role played by CSOs in social and economic development. In all the consultations, participants felt that without the participation of CSOs, the country will not achieve the Millennium Development Goals set by the UNDP and supported also by the government of Nepal.

The impact of CSOs in the promotion of human rights, drafting of social policies, and lobbying the state is not very strong. CSOs in Nepal are not very active in holding the state or private sector accountable. Nevertheless, the public trust in CSOs is quite high and this helps them to implement their activities in local communities in spite of numerous limitations.

Some key recommendations:

- Broaden awareness of citizens: CSOs should educate citizens about the changing nature of the national and local political environment, to continue promoting the values of democracy, peace, social justice and progress.
- Enhance internal capacity: CSOs should focus on developing internal capacity to carry out activities with greater impact. CSOs should promote professionalism and invest in training.
- Improve transparency: CSOs should improve internal transparency so that information is accessible to all citizens, not just direct stakeholders. More transparency will benefit their legitimacy, public ownership and participation.
- Government support: CSOs should lobby to get government support. At the same time government should establish a mechanism to work with CSOs. With the democratization of the state, political parties and public institutions, a more conducive environment will be created for civil society-state-market synergy.
- More cooperation within civil society: CSOs should collaborate and cooperate so as to maximize the impact of their work. They should identify areas where they have competitive advantages and expertise.
- Capacity-building and local ownership: International donors should focus on building the capacity of local and national CSOs in Nepal. INGOs should work through local partners rather than run their activities independently. This would increase knowledge and expertise for local CSOs to address the causes of poverty, inequality, and conflict. Local people should be given preference during recruitment of the staff, setting of goals and priorities, implementation, evaluation and feedback for further reforms.

Conclusion:

The CSI study emphasizes the important role of CSOs in the overall development of the country. As this study is the first comprehensive analysis of civil society in Nepal, it will most probably start a phase of more in-depth analysis of the role that CSOs play in Nepalese society.

To this end, the findings of this study will be publicised widely. We believe that not only CSOs, but also government, the private sector and the international community may benefit from the recommendations that this study has identified. We hope that this report will also be useful as a reference text for civil society students. The findings of this report will also have a global relevance, as they are part of the CSI project, and can be used to analyse the status of Nepalese in light of an international perspective.

ICA Nepal is also committed to putting the recommendations into practice and facilitating the participation of other organisations in this endeavour.

INTRODUCTION

This report is based on intensive research work conducted to assess the status of civil society in Nepal through the CIVICUS Civil Society Index. It was carried out between November 2004 and May 2006 as part of the global CSI project coordinated by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation.

The Civil Society Index (CSI) is both a tool and a process to assess and score four different dimensions of civil society: the structure of civil society, the external environment in which civil society exists and functions, the values held and advocated in the civil society arena, and the impact of activities pursued by civil society actors. It is a participatory, action-research project that aims to assess the state of civil society in countries around the world.

The goal of the CSI is to increase knowledge and understanding of civil society in Nepal through reflecting on and assessing the nature, strength, health, and impact of civil society. It aims to raise awareness among civil society stakeholders through promoting and strengthening dialogue, alliances, and networks. The CSI also aims to design strategy to strengthen the capacity of indigenous civil society organisations through local ownership of the CSI initiative.

The Nepal study was implemented by the Institute of Cultural Affairs as National Coordinating Organisation (NCO), advised by a 17-person National Advisory Group (NAG) representing a diverse set of civil society stakeholders. The NCO - ICA Nepal conducted intensive primary research through regional stakeholder consultations and community sample research. In total, 680 respondents were contacted for community sampling and 141 for regional stakeholder consultations. Most of the research work was done from February to June 2005. The regional stakeholder consultations and community samples were conducted in different locations in the country.

The NAG met twice to review the comprehensive report and conduct social forces analysis exercises. The first meeting took place in January 2005 and the second in January 2006. The scoring exercise was conducted by the National Advisory Group, which functioned as a 'jury' and allocated the score based on the information gathered through the research. These scores were then aggregated into a score for each subdimension and, finally, into an overall score for each of the four dimensions of civil society.

A review of eight appropriate media, both electronic and print, was conducted during February and March, 2005 to gather information on civil society activities, attitudes and values expressed by civil society and other public actors, as well as to establish the media image of civil society. Information/data about civil society that already exists but that is not necessarily published or publicly disseminated was obtained, through interviewing 60 key informants knowledgeable about civil society issues. This was done during May and June, 2005. A national workshop was convened on May 12, 2006 to review and validate the CSI research findings, to analyse principal strengths and weaknesses of civil society and to identify potential civil society strengthening activities.

Availability of Data

While a substantial amount of data on civil society is already available in Nepal, such data needs to be carefully examined for CSI purpose. During this study, many documents were evaluated and both qualitative and quantitative data collected.

Limitations

The report is based on the primary and secondary information collected during the study period. The major limitations of this study are:

- Not all tasks could be carried out in the designated period.
- Internal conflict disrupted the research work in some parts of the country and only a small group of stakeholders could be involved.

Although this study is the first of its kind in Nepal, there are some organisations already using NGO assessment tools as an alternative way of measuring the health of NGOs. The study would therefore benefit from further research work to ensure more complete coverage of existing data and studies.

The study was mainly conducted during a politically volatile period. There were many changes during this time that directly affected the functioning of CSOs, and also the implementation of the CSI study. The study commenced when there was a democratic government in place, followed by a period of direct rule by the king, and completed during a period of negotiations for a multi-party government.

Since the results of this study reflect the period of transition period, it cannot capture the impact of the immediate changes in the country. Many new ordinances and decisions favourable to CSOs were introduced immediately after the success of the peoples' movement, the impact of which can only be assessed at some future point. It is therefore recommended that a similar study be conducted again in Nepal.

Structure of the Report

The report was prepared in accordance with the guidelines provided by CIVICUS and the Civil Society Index Project.

The executive summary provides the overview of the findings.

Part I consists of the Introduction. Part II deals with Civil Society in the context of Historical Overview, Concept of Civil Society and Key Distinguishing Features of the County Context. It also describes Mapping of Civil Society. Part III provides an Analysis of Civil Society, based on the structure, environment, values and impact of civil society. Part IV describes the 'Strengths and Weaknesses of Civil Society in Nepal'. Part V includes 'Recommendations' which are based mainly on the suggestions made by the participants in the National Workshop held in May 2006. Finally, Part VI is the conclusion which briefly interprets the overall study and the Civil Society Diamond information.

Included in the annexes is the list of the NAG members and the working team, overall project methodology, Civil Society's Media Image and the CSI Scoring Matrix.

I. CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX PROJECT AND APPROACH

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The idea of a Civil Society Index originated in 1997, when the international non-governmental organisation CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation published the *New Civic Atlas* containing profiles of civil society in 60 countries around the world (CIVICUS 1997). To improve the comparability and quality of the information contained in the *New Civic Atlas*, CIVICUS decided to develop a comprehensive assessment tool for civil society, the Civil Society Index (Heinrich/Naidoo 2001; Holloway 2001). In 1999, Helmut Anheier, the director of the Centre for Civil Society at the London School of Economics, played a significant role in the creation of the CSI (Anheier 2004). The CSI concept was then tested in 14 countries during a pilot phase lasting from 2000 to 2002. On completion of the pilot phase, the project approach was thoroughly evaluated and refined. In its current implementation phase (2003-2005), CIVICUS and its country partners are implementing the project in more than fifty countries (see Table I.1.1).

Table I.1.1: Countries participating in the CSI implementation phase 2003-2005¹

1. Argentina	19. Germany	37. Palestine
2. Armenia	20. Ghana	38. Poland
3. Azerbaijan	21. Greece	39. Romania
4. Bolivia	22. Guatemala	40. Russia
5. Bulgaria	23. Honduras	41. Scotland
6. Burkina Faso	24. Hong Kong (VR China)	42. Serbia
7. Chile	25. Indonesia	43. Sierra Leone
8. China	26. Italy	44. Slovenia
9. Costa Rica	27. Jamaica	45. South Korea
10. Croatia	28. Lebanon	46. Taiwan
11. Cyprus	29. Macedonia	47. Togo
12. Czech Republic	30. Mauritius	48. Turkey
13. East Timor	31. Mongolia	49. Uganda
14. Ecuador	32. Montenegro	50. Ukraine
15. Egypt	33. Nepal	51. Uruguay
16. Fiji	34. Nigeria	52. Vietnam
17. Gambia	35. Northern Ireland	53. Wales
18. Georgia	36. Orissa (India)	

In Nepal, the Institute of Cultural Affairs implemented the project with the support of CIVICUS. ICA Nepal took up this challenge as the CSI project is in line with ICA's mission of promoting civil society in the country. The CSI combines action-oriented research with a comprehensive set of instruments for civil society assessment, which result in concrete recommendations and action points for various stakeholders to strengthen civil society. This fits very well with ICA's mission as a means for building new knowledge on practical civil society issues. The project is also significant for Nepalese civil society, since its findings can be compared with other countries. The overall goal of the project is to assess the status of civil society in Nepal, enrich the

¹ This list encompasses independent countries as well as other territories in which the CSI has been conducted, as of January 2006.

knowledge of civil society, increase awareness among all stakeholders on the importance of civil society, and learn by comparing the project findings among various countries.

The preparations for the project implementation were intensive. In 2003, two ICA representatives participated in a CIVICUS' training workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa to acquire the knowledge needed for the implementation of project. The next step was to secure the necessary financial resources, which were provided by Action Aid Nepal and IDRC/CIVICUS. Project activities commenced on 23 January 2005, when the first meeting of the NAG was held.

2. PROJECT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The CSI uses a comprehensive approach to studying civil society in the country, based on a broad definition of civil society and utilizing various research methods. In order to assess the status of civil society, the CSI examines four key dimensions of civil society: structure, environment, values and impact. Each dimension comprises a number of subdimensions, which include a number of individual indicators. The indicators represent the basis for data collection within the CSI. The data are collected through several methods: secondary data collection, a population survey, civil society stakeholder survey, regional workshops, media review, structured expert consultations and several case studies. The indicators are then separately assessed and discussed by the NAG. The outcomes of the research and assessment are also discussed by the representatives of the key stakeholders at the National Workshop. The task at the National Workshop is to identify the specific strengths and weaknesses and to provide recommendations for key actions aimed at strengthening civil society. The CSI project approach, the conceptual framework, research and assessment methodology are described in detail in this section.

2.1 Conceptual framework

How to define civil society?

CIVICUS defines civil society as *the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market where people associate to advance common interests*. The CSI has two interesting features that contrast with other civil society concepts. First, its goal is to avoid the conventional focus on formal and institutionalized civil society organisations (CSOs) by also considering informal coalitions and groups. Second, whereas civil society is sometimes perceived as an area with positive actions and values, the CSI seeks to assess both the positive and the negative manifestations of civil society. This concept consequently includes a variety of organisations. The CSI not only assesses the extent to which the CSOs support democracy and tolerance, but also the extent of their intolerance or even violence.

How to conceptualize the state of civil society?

To assess the state of civil society, the CSI examines civil society along four main dimensions:

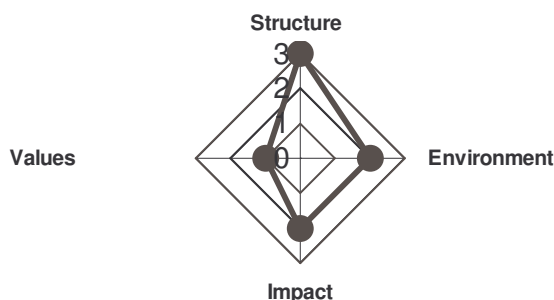
- The **structure** of civil society (e.g. number of members, extent of giving and volunteering, number and features of umbrella organisations and civil society infrastructure, human and financial resources);
- The external **environment** in which civil society exists and functions (e.g. legislative, political, cultural and economic context, relationship between civil society and the state, as well as the private sector);

- The *values* practiced and promoted within the civil society arena (e.g. democracy, tolerance or protection of the environment) and
- The *impact* of activities pursued by civil society actors (e.g. public policy impact, empowerment of people, meeting societal needs).

Each of these main dimensions is divided into a set of subdimensions that contains a total of 74 indicators.² These indicators are at the heart of the CSI and form the basis of the data presented in this report. The indicator - subdimension - dimension framework underpinned the entire process of data collection, the writing of the research report, the NAG's assessment of civil society in Nepal and the presentations at the National Workshop. It is also used to structure the main section of this publication.

FIGURE I.2.1: CIVICUS Civil Society Diamond

To visually present the scores of the four main dimensions, the CSI makes use of the Civil Society Diamond tool (see figure I.2.1 below as an example).³ The Civil Society diamond graph, with its four extremities, visually summarises the strengths and weaknesses of civil society. The diagram is the result of the individual indicator scores aggregated into subdimension and then dimension scores. Because it



captures the essence of the state of civil society across its key dimensions, the Civil Society Diamond can provide a useful starting point for interpretations and discussions about how civil society appears in a given country. As the Diamond does not aggregate the dimension scores into a single score, it cannot, and should not, be used to rank countries according to their scores for the four dimensions. Such an approach was deemed inappropriate for a civil society assessment, with so many multi-faceted dimensions, contributing factors and actors. The Diamond also depicts civil society at a certain point in time and therefore lacks a dynamic perspective. However, if applied iteratively, it can be used to chart the development of civil society over time, as well as compare the state of civil societies across countries (Anheier 2004).

² See Appendix 1.

³ The Civil Society Diamond was developed for CIVICUS by Helmut Anheier (see Anheier 2004).

2.2. Project methodology

This section describes the methods used for collecting and aggregating of various data used in the project.

2.2.1. Data Collection

The CSI recognized that, in order to generate a valid and comprehensive assessment of civil society, a variety of perspectives and data should be included – insider, external stakeholder and outsiders' views, as well as objective data ranging from the local, regional and national levels. The CSI therefore includes the following research methods: (1) Review of existing information; (2) Regional stakeholder consultations; (3) Population Survey; (4) Media review; and (5) Fact-finding studies.

It is believed that this mix of different methods is essential to generate accurate and useful data and information. It also accommodates the variations of civil society in rural and urban areas. The CSI also seeks to utilize all available sources of information to avoid 're-inventing research wheels' and wasting scarce resources. Lastly, the research methodology is explicitly designed to promote learning and, ultimately, action on the part of participants. Besides feeding into the final national level seminar, data collection processes also aim to contribute to participant learning. This is done, for example, through group-based approaches that challenge participants to see themselves as part of a 'bigger picture', to think beyond their own organisational or sectoral context, to reflect strategically about relations within and between civil society and other parts of society, to identify key strengths and weaknesses of their civil society and assess collective needs. It is important to note that the CSI provides an aggregate needs assessment on civil society as a whole, and is not designed to exhaustively map the various actors active within civil society. However, it does examine power relations within civil society and between civil society and other sectors, and identifies key civil society actors when looking at specific indicators under the structure, values and impact dimensions.

The CSI study applied the complete list of proposed methods for data collection:

- Secondary sources: The research team carried out extensive literature review on CSOs in Nepal and the region. An overview of existing research data, consultations and other information relating to the issue of civil society development is summarized in the overview of civil society status in Nepal.
- Regional stakeholder survey: The research team met key informants in person to learn more about their response towards CSOs in Nepal. Representatives of CSOs, government, the corporate sector, the media and other stakeholders were interviewed in nine districts.
- Regional stakeholder consultations (RSCs): In nine districts, representatives of various stakeholders, who had previously completed the questionnaire, were invited to participate in a one-day discussion on research outcomes for their respective region. The total number of participating representatives was 141.
- Civil Society Mapping Exercise: The Civil Society mapping exercise was designed to obtain a comprehensive cognitive picture.
- Population survey: The survey team carried out extensive door-to-door surveys, visiting about 680 people in seven districts of the country.
- Media review: The reporting of eight daily newspapers and other media on civil society was reviewed for a two-month period, and conducted jointly with the College of Journalism and Mass Communication.

- Expert consultations: About 80 interviews with relevant representatives of civil society, the state and academic community were carried out. Four of the interviews referred to the issue of CSO impact on particular policies.

2.2.2. Aggregating data

The project team collected various types of data for the draft report and structured them according to the CSI indicators, subdimensions and dimensions. Each indicator was attributed a score between 0 and 3 (0 being the lowest value and 3 the highest). Each potential indicator score (0, 1, 2 and 3) was described in either qualitative or (sometimes) quantitative terms. The NAG scoring exercise is modelled along a ‘citizen jury’ approach (Jefferson Centre 2002), in which citizens come together to deliberate, and make decisions on a public issue, based on the available information. The NAG’s role is to give a score (similar to passing a judgement) on each indicator based on the evidence (or data) presented by the National Index Team (NIT) in the form of the draft country report.

The process of indicator scoring, performed by the NAG, was based on a discussion on the information provided for each indicator. Based on this discussion and the scoring matrix featuring the indicator score descriptions, the NAG decided on a score for each respective indicator. The National Workshop also played a role in validating the indicators, where, if an adequate rationale was provided, national workshop participants could decide to change the indicator score provided by the NAG. This only happened in one case, and national workshop participants were also asked to provide comments and inputs related to the CSI findings. As a result of the workshop, participants developed a common understanding of the current state of civil society and recommended initiatives for civil society strengthening.

2.3 Linking research with action

The CSI is not a purely academic project. Its goal is to involve civil society actors in the research process, contribute to a discussion on civil society and provide recommendations on how to strengthen civil society. This categorizes the project as action-oriented research.

Various relevant stakeholders participated in the project implementation at several levels. The NAG included representatives from CSOs, the state, the corporate sector, foreign organisations and researchers. It discussed the definition of civil society, the project methodology and assisted with calibrating certain indicator score categories.

Another important component of the project was the regional consultations, organised to discuss the findings of a survey conducted in nine districts. These consultations were held in various places that are recognised as regional centres for CSOs and thus convenient locations for such meetings. Representatives of various CSOs, the state, the corporate sector, the media, researchers and foreign donors participated in these workshops, where they discussed key issues for Nepalese civil society, and identified regionally specific strengths and weaknesses.

The final component of the participatory CSI approach was the discussion of the draft CSI report at the National Workshop, in which participants were asked to identify overall strengths and weaknesses of Nepalese civil society and provide recommendations for future activities.

2.4. Project outputs

The CSI implementation in Nepal delivered several products, including:

- A comprehensive report on the status of civil society in the country;
- A list of recommendations, strategies and priority actions developed by various stakeholders, aimed at strengthening civil society in Nepal;
- A press conference on key findings;
- Information on the project and its outcomes presented through several media outlets; and
- Consultations with 80 stakeholders at national level on the status of civil society in Nepal.

II. CIVIL SOCIETY IN NEPAL

1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

FIGURE II.1.1: Country Information

Civil society in Nepal has a long history dating back to the *Vedic* age around 2000 BC. Civic life in Nepal was evident during the *Vedic* age when *dharma* (institutional duties and role), *shastras* (moral and legal treatises) and *shastartha* (philosophical discourses) shaped the intellect and character of the subjects and rulers, defined the governing norms of the society and polity according to *barnashram dharma*, and oriented people towards public welfare. The Buddha's teachings of *Pancha Sheela* that evolved around 2,500 years ago laid down five rules of life, which have also had some influence on Nepalese society.

Country size: 147 181 km ²
Population: 26.3 million (UN, 2005)
Population density:
Population growth rate: 2.25% (1991-2001)
Life expectancy: 61 years (men), 62 years (women)
Urban population: 14%
Literacy rate: 54.1%
Form of government: Parliamentary democracy
Major language: Nepali
Religion: Hindu (80.6%), Buddhist, Christian, Muslim
GDP per capita: US \$ 1 420 (PPP) GNI per capita: US \$270 (World Bank, 2006)

The history of civil society in Nepal is also related to its ethnic background and caste system. Nepal is a country of minorities, comprising more than sixty ethnic and caste groups. The history of the caste system in Nepal dates back to the *Varna* System, practiced during medieval times, in which people were grouped into four groups, *Bahun*, *Kshetri*, *Vaishya* and *Sudra*. In the 1300s, King Jayasthiti Malla further segregated the population into 64 different castes, which affected ethnic groups that had previously been outside the Hindu *varna* (SC US and INSEC, 2004).

Nepal has traditionally hosted indigenous organisations such as *Gurukul* (voluntary residential school), *Guthi* (trusts), and *Parma* (voluntary contribution and exchange of labour). The community selects the few leaders/judges known as the *pancha bhaladmi* (five eminent people), who are mainly responsible for settling local disputes.

The accession of the Rana regime as the result of a massacre in 1846 made the state a captive of the aristocracy and bureaucracy, effectively preventing democratic ideas from entering the social milieu. The Rana regime codified laws under Muluki Ain in 1854, which legitimised various castes and ethnic groups. During the anti-Rana movement, *Arya Samaj* (civic society) was founded in 1909 to address superstition, social prejudice and conservative thinking. Prem B. Kansakar established Prajatantra Sangh (Democratic Association), and Daya B. Kansakar formed the Paropakar Sansthan (Charity Association).

Nepal has a long tradition of feudalistic governance in which the entire state machinery was geared toward fulfilling the interests of the upper caste ruling elite. The common people were subjected to extreme exploitation and marginalization during the periods of Gorkhali Conquest (1768-1846) and the autocratic Rana Regime (1846-1950) (Regmi 1971; Stiller 1993). During those times, there were few intermittent efforts to provide relief to the disadvantaged masses.

The Rana rule was overthrown in 1951, heralding a new era of awareness about individual freedom and the fundamental rights of the citizens. However, the basic rights of the people were

later curtailed and civil society's activities were suspended during the thirty years of the authoritarian Panchayat Regime (1959-1990).

Following the rise of the democratic movement in 1990 and the promulgation of a new Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal in 1990, basic human rights were afforded all citizens. The more recent political upheaval in the country is expected to bring significant change in the development of CSOs in the country. CSOs were threatened by the previous autocratic regime and as a result played an active role in overthrowing the regime, participating strongly in the peoples' movement and the recent struggle for democracy. Since April 2006, the government has emphasised the active role of CSOs in national development, and it is expected that the environment for CSOs in Nepal will be very conducive in the future.

Since the revival of democracy in 1990, the Nepalese civil society groups have played an important role in education, health, community development, network building, organising discourse and providing relief to the needy. These efforts have also provided sustained impetus for a peaceful transformation of Nepal's political structure and political culture and capture the essential conditions of modernity.

2. THE CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NEPAL

Civil society in Nepal normally encompasses non-state, non-governmental, voluntary people's networks, fora, organisations and movements organised from below. Because of a number of conflicting definitions, civil society can be difficult to understand. Some define civil society to include only non-profit organisations. Others define it to include only self-organising communities with a common interest, others apply the term to all forms of non-governmental cooperation including big business, while others define it to exclude all forms of institutionalized human activity. Civil society is a space for popular forces, the majority of people, for the recomposition of their capacity to imagine, organise and develop their identity and bring real progress in the lives of the majority of the population (Bongartz and Dahal 1996).

The CSI defines civil society as "the arena, between family, government, and market where people voluntarily associate to advance common interests." Within this arena, people 'associate' with one another through a large and diverse array of formal and informal associations as organisations. For the purposes of the CSI, civil society organisation (CSO) is used as a generic term to include all forms of peoples' associations within civil society, be they formally registered NGOs or informal groups of people such as local CBOs. A major challenge in assessing civil society is to take into account the extremely broad range of CSOs that represent very diverse groups/ interests, existing at different levels and taking on a variety of organisational forms.

There is a widely held view that the state, market and civil society are the major forces in the nation-building process. "The harmonious balance between these three forces would contribute to a society's innovative creativity (through the market), just and equitable regulation (through the state), and timely caution and upholding of values other than profit (through an alert civil society). It would be a contested but civilized terrain with constructive engagement" (Gyawali 2003).

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1990, Article 12 (2.C), states that any citizen has the right to open an NGO and this is considered a fundamental right of any citizen. The Constitution thus makes provision for the mobilization of non-government organisations for the fulfilment of the guiding principles of the state.

Key distinguishing features of the country context

Nepal is a landlocked country situated between two large neighbours i.e., China and India. It is a multiethnic and multilingual country, with a population of over 26 million. The country is known for its legendary mountains and its ancient civilization.

Nepal remains one of the poorest countries, despite a plethora of development experiments that span nearly five decades (Gurung 1999). Geographically, the country is divided into three main ecological belts, the terai (plain), hill and mountain regions. It is also divided on the basis of development regions: Eastern, Central, Western, Mid-Western and Far Western Development Regions. The Mid-Western and Far Western Development Regions are comparatively less developed areas of the country.

Poverty in Nepal has a strong correlation with ecological conditions as well as socio-economic variables such as caste, occupation, and sector of employment, education level, composition of income and family size (SAAPE 2003).

According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2005, Nepal's HDI score stood at 0.526, a graduation from low HDI status to medium HDI. The figure is lower than all the other South Asian nations except Bangladesh (UNDP, 2005). Within Nepal, HDI in the mountain region scores lowest (0.478) followed by the hills (0.512) while the people in the mountain region are poorer than those in the terai and the hills. The Far Western and Mid-Western development regions score the lowest HDI values of the country (UNDP, 2004).

3. MAPPING CIVIL SOCIETY IN NEPAL

Civil society groups in Nepal have been divided into various types by several authors and organisations. Some of the major divisions are listed below.

Dahal (2001) has divided civil society in the Nepalese context as Economic Society, Social and Cultural Associations, Educational and Informational Institutions, Promotional and Protective Interest Groups, Relief and Development Associations, Advocacy Groups, Civic Groups, Public Trusts and Private Philanthropic Associations.

Integrated Development System (IDS 1985) divided CSOs into Socio-Cultural, Community Services, Economic, Assets Creation, Labor Exchange and Credit Groups.

According to the Social Welfare Council (SWC 2003), CSOs can be classed as Child Development, Health Development, Handicapped and Disabled Service, Community Development, Women Service, Youth Service, Moral Development, Environmental Protection, Education Development and AIDS and Drugs Control groups.

The National Planning Commission of Nepal (2003) has divided CSOs into Community Development, Child, Health & Sanitation, AIDS Control, Forestry, Housing, Moral Upliftment, Agricultural and Displaced People groups.

People Acting Together (PACT, 1987) divides CSOs into Social Service Development, Traditional, Social Service, Development Promotion, Mixed Service Delivery and Development

Promotion, Local Development Promotion, Sustainable Local Development Promotion, and Sustainable Geographically Extendable Development Promotion.

The South Asia Partnership (SAP 1988) divides civil society into Social Welfare, Sectoral, Community Development, Income Generation, Research & Development and Activist Groups.

According to Bongartz and Dahal (1996), CSOs may be Voluntary Organisations, Public Service Contractors, People's Organisations, Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations.

During NAG meetings, social forces analysis was carried out and discussed with regard to the main forces active in Nepalese society at large and their relationships to the civil society. The National Advisory Group of the Civil Society Index and the respondents identified some of the major Civil Societies in Nepal as follows:

- Secular movement organisations
- Ama Samuha (Mothers' Group)
- Bar Associations
- Consumer Groups
- Educational and informational institutions
- Advocacy groups
- International CSOs
- Various social groups fighting for their rights
- Agencies that fight for public rights, such as the *Dalit* rights organisation
- Human rights and peace institutions
- Promotional and protective interest groups
- Relief and development associations
- Civic groups
- Social and cultural associations
- Rights-based organisations
- Heritage societies
- Madheshi Organisations
- Reform groups
- Conservation Societies
- Economic societies
- Indigenous, Dalit, Women, NGO
- Religious organisations
- Student organisations
- Public trusts and private philanthropic associations.

III. ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

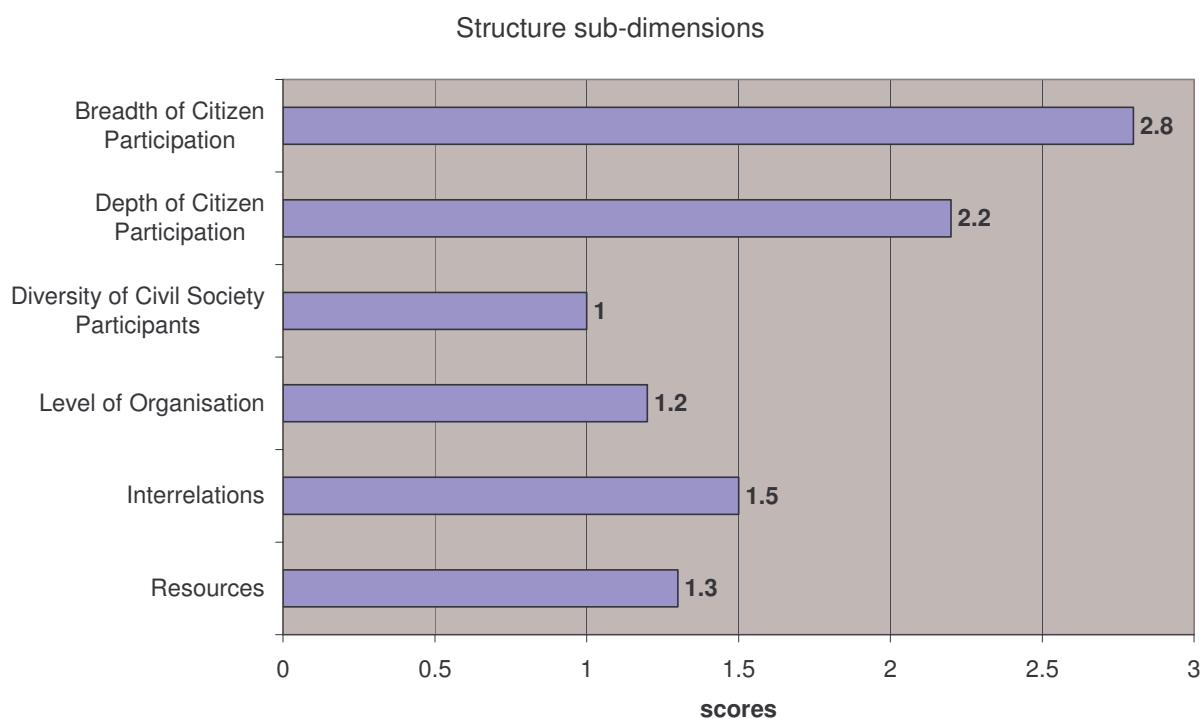
This section includes the greater part of the information and data collected nationally as part of the project. The analysis was carried out following the structured methodology with indicators, dimensions and subdimensions. Secondary information was also used to support specific indicators.

The section is divided into four dimensions, namely Structure, Environment, Values and Impact. These are fundamental components of the CSI Diamond, which is presented in the form of a graph with scores ranging from 0 to 3. The findings of the work are examined meticulously and are scored by the NAG members. The scores are then plotted into the graph.

1. STRUCTURE

This section describes and analyses the overall size, strength and vibrancy of civil society in human, organisational and economic terms. The score for the Structure dimension is 1.7, indicating a medium-sized civil society. Figure III.1.1 provides the scores for the six dimensions: extent and depth of citizen participation, diversity of civil society participants, level of organisation, inter-relations and civil society resources.

FIGURE III.1.1: Subdimension scores in Structure dimension



1.1. Breadth of citizen participation in Civil Society

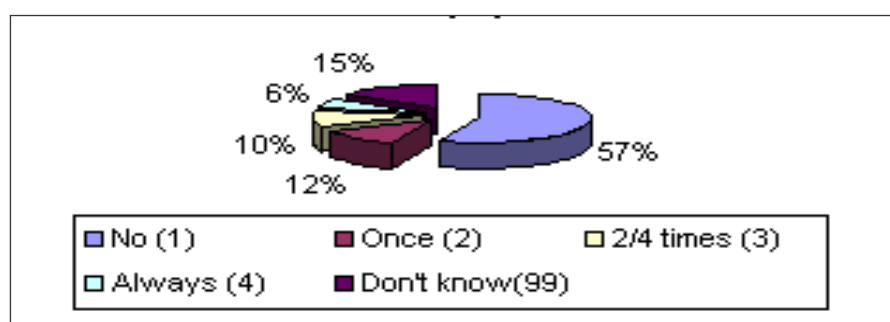
It is essential to understand the depth of meaningful participation of citizens in Civil Society. The frequency of citizen involvement in Civil Society is a crucial indicator of civic empowerment. This section provides details on the analysis of the survey data collected regarding various aspects of citizen participation in Nepalese civil society. Table III.1.1 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

Table III.1.1: Indicators assessing the extent of citizen participation

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
1.1.1	Non-partisan political action	3
1.1.2	Charitable giving	3
1.1.3	CSO membership	2
1.1.4	Volunteer work	3
1.1.5	Community action	3

1.1.1 Non-partisan political action. Non-partisan political action, from the Nepalese perspective, means action taken by citizens, which does not support a particular political party but benefits all sections of the society. The non-partisan action in Nepal differs from the rural to the urban context and this practice is common in the rural areas. Nepal has historically hosted the traditional indigenous organisations such as *Gurukul* (voluntary residential school), *Guthi* (trusts), and *Parma* (voluntary contribution and exchange of labour). The community selects the few leaders/judges known as the *pancha bhaladmi* (five eminent people), who are mainly responsible for the settling of local disputes. Citizens usually obey the decisions of these people, but if the person concerned is not happy with the decision they have the right to approach the judicial system for redress. The government provided salaries for the people in these positions until the 1950s. There used to be a strong volunteer contribution in the country, but this is decreasing due to the process of modernization where the accessibility of the NGO, GO and political parties has increased in the remote areas. Non-partisan citizen groups are also gradually emerging in the country in support of democracy and constitutional government. Sober and constructive political debate is now more frequent than before (NESAC 1998).

The community survey indicates that 6% of the people have written letters frequently to the newspapers regarding community issues, while 12% have written once. People signing a petition regularly comprise 8%, while 12% have signed once in their lifetime. While 9% of the people have taken part in a protest march or demonstration regularly, 25% have done so once in their lifetime. Overall, 79% of respondents have undertaken at least one of the mentioned activities.

FIGURE III.1.2: Percentage of people who have written a letter to a newspaper

1.1.2 Charitable giving. Donating for a common purpose has long been popular in Nepalese society. Urban people donate more than rural people because the income of the rural areas is comparatively low, mostly because of the vagaries of the traditional agriculture system (Tewa 1999). In the population survey, 68% of respondents were involved in charitable activities on a regular basis.

1.1.3 CSO membership. There is no previous concrete study regarding the percentage of people involved with CSOs in Nepal. However, for the last few years, in conjunction with the

downsizing of the state, people in all spheres of life have been attracted towards such CSOs. From the population survey, the percentages of citizens involved in CSOs are shown below in the table.

Table III.1.2: Percentage of citizens involved in CSOs

S.N	Organisation	%
1	Farmer or Fisherman group or cooperative	14
2	Death rites society	9
3	Neighbourhood and Village committee	7
4	Education Groups	7
5	Religious and Spiritual group	7
6	Women's Group	6
7	NGO/Civic Group/ Human rights	5
8	Professional Association	6
9	Youth Group	5
10	Environment or Conservation organisation	5
11	Trade/ labour union	4
12	Political Group	4
13	Health Group/Social service association	4
14	Trade or business	4
15	Ethnic Based community Group	3
16	Cultural group or association	4
17	Other organisation	2
18	Sports association	2
19	Cooperative/credit or savings group	1
20	Hobby organisation	1

As Nepal is an agrarian country, 14% of the respondents were found to be involved in farmer or fisherman groups or cooperatives. One percent of respondents were found to be involved in the cooperative/credit or saving group, which is the burning issue in the present context that mainly focuses on income generation. Overall, according to the community sample survey, 55% of respondents are members of at least one CSO.

Besides those who are full members of CSOs (that is, those who are paid-up members), most individuals participate in CSOs by donating money, or contributing their spare time to CSOs' activities.

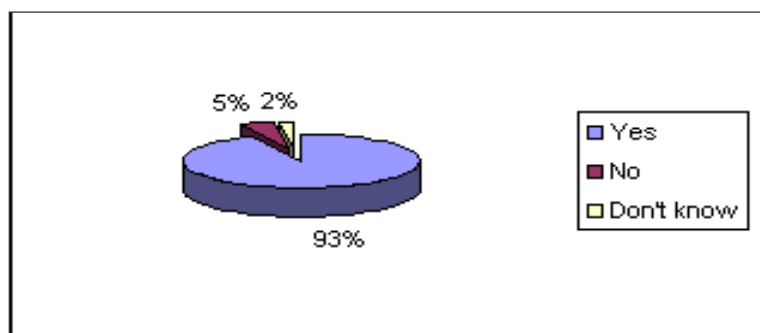
1.1.4 Volunteering. Most people in the rural areas participate in community level volunteer activities. Engaging in community work is less common among urban Nepali people. Volunteerism in Nepal is mainly divided into mutual aid and self-help, philanthropy, service to others, participation in self-governance and campaign advocacy. It is said that the Nepalese are materially poor but rich in spirit from the ancient period digging a spring or well, constructing a fountain or waterspout, building and maintaining a shady trailside resting place (Chautaaro) or an overnight rest house (paati pauwa) for passing travellers, and contributing their free labour to public works.

The population survey shows that volunteer services are provided in sectors such as training, labour, social, economic and intellectual cooperation, economic and physical help to those experiencing social difficulties, help for poor people, providing awareness programmes, offering financial support through savings programmes, or running adult literacy classes.

The community survey indicated that 93% of people volunteer in the various sectors. The survey findings also reflect that rural people prefer to volunteer by providing labour rather than

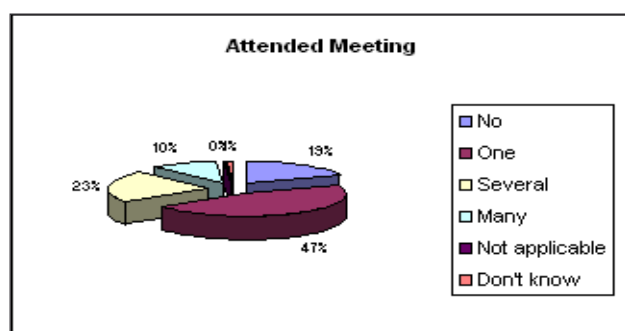
contributing cash. Further, utilitarian motivation is strong among urban classes because they volunteer in the sectors like training, social, economical and intellectual cooperation, running adult literacy groups, for example, so that they can contribute in the social sectors as well as maintain their livelihoods.

FIGURE III.1.3: Percentage of participation in volunteering



1.1.5 Collective community action. The community survey reveals that 47% of people have attended community meeting once, 23% several times and 10% many times in the previous 12 months. Overall 86% of respondents have participated in a collective action within the last year. Some of the laws such as the Environmental Impact Assessment Law (1996) have made public participation a mandatory step. Similarly, the Local Self Governance Act (1999) places emphasis on public participation for community level activities.

FIGURE III.1.4: Attending a meeting



1.2. Depth of citizen participation

This part of the report analyses the intensity of various forms of citizen participation in Nepalese civil society. Table III.1.4 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

Table III.1.3: Indicators assessing depth of citizen participation

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
1.2.1	Charitable Giving	2
1.2.2	Volunteering	2
1.2.3	CSO membership	2

1.2.1 Charitable giving. The community survey shows that the average donation is Rs. 1,848.9 (US \$26.41) per year. The survey also indicates that the extent of charitable giving is correlated

to the socio-economic background of the giver and the location. According to the community sample data, the average donation of personal income is 2% per year.

Table III.1.4: Charitable giving

Charitable Giving		
1	Total response	460
2	Total Rs.	850,512.0
3	Average Rs.	1,848.9

1.2.2 Volunteering. Volunteering in Nepal has a long tradition, with people participating in various activities such as environmental activities and educational development. According to the community sample survey, respondents spend an average of 15 hours per month in various forms of volunteering.

1.2.3 CSO membership. There is a high degree of willingness to join CSOs. In rural communities, the majority of the people are associated with CSOs such as the community forestry groups. The population survey reflects that overall, 22% of CSO members belong to more than one civil society organisation.

1.3. Diversity of civil society participants

This subdimension examines the diversity and representivity of the civil society arena. It analyses whether all social groups participate equally in civil society, and whether there are any groups that dominate or that are excluded. Table III.1.5 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.1.5: Indicators assessing diversity of civil society participants

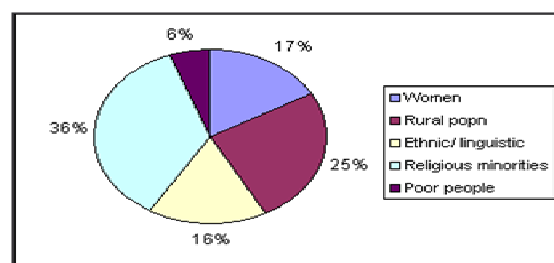
Indicator #	Indicators	Score
1.3.1	Representation of social groups among CSO members	1
1.3.2	Representation of social groups among CSO leadership	1
1.3.3	Distribution of CSOs around the country	1

1.3.1 Representation of social groups among CSO members. The regional stakeholder consultations reveal that CSO membership of women comprises 17%. Similarly, the rural population, ethnic/linguistic, religious minorities and poor people comprise 25%, 16%, 36% and 6% respectively.

Table III.1.6: CSO membership

Women	78
Rural population	116
Ethnic/ linguistic	76
Religious minorities	166
Poor people	26

FIGURE III.1.5: CSO membership



1.3.2 Representation of social groups in CSO leadership. Since CSOs are operating throughout the country, the majority of them have local leadership. In urban areas, women are equally active in assuming the leadership role while in the rural areas, males tend to dominate in leadership

roles. There is also an increase in the number of *dalit* CSOs (so-called lower caste people), which are led by *dalits* themselves.

The regional stakeholder consultations showed the following levels of participation of the following social groups as leaders of CSOs:

Table III.1.7: Participation of social groups as leaders of civil society

	Absent /excluded %	Severely under-represented %	Somewhat under-represented %	Equitably represented %	Don't know %
Women	12	6	15	19	9
Rural Population	23	20	30	28	31
Ethnic/linguistic minorities	22	30	20	13	19
Religious minorities	38	39	30	32	36
Poor people	5	5	5	8	5

Given that the Nepalese have strong religious affiliations, the equitable representation was highest from the religious minorities. However, equitable representation was very poor among the lower classes, who are generally more occupied with livelihood activities. Representation from the rural population was high because of the strong bond with the community and the tendency to come together to address social issues.

1.3.3 Distribution of CSOs around the country. The regional stakeholder consultations show that the number of CSOs is quite high in the urban areas. This is most likely because of the easy accessibility and reduced impact of the Maoist insurgency and the State's counter-insurgency in urban areas. Overall, 58% of the respondents state that CSOs are largely concentrated in major cities or limited to urban areas, while 18% believe that CSOs are distributed throughout the country even in the very remote areas.

The geographical distribution of CSOs throughout the country is as follows:

Table III.1.8: Geographical distribution of civil society

S.N	Particulars	Percentage (%)
1	Largely concentrated in the major cities	13
2	Largely limited to the urban areas	45
3	Present in all, except the most remote areas of the country	24
4	Present in all, even the most remote areas of the country	18

From 1978 to June 2003, a total of 15,043 NGOs was registered with the Social Welfare Council, and have been categorized according to the groups or nature of their activities.

The following table shows the distribution of NGOs by region.

Table III.1.9: Distribution of NGOs by region

Sector	Region					Total
	Far Western	Mid Western	Western	Central	Eastern	
Child	2	3	6	363	16	390
Health	1	3	5	11	7	132
Disability	2	211	48	58	8	327
Community Development	128	182	335	1398	291	2334
Women	12	32	112	293	55	504
Youth	27	50	169	591	101	938
Environment	3	20	35	200	26	284
Education	0	2	7	26	4	39
AIDS	1	1	0	21	0	23
Moral Development	4	10	20	105	18	157
Total	180	514	737	3171	526	5128

Source: Nepal Human Development Report, 1998.

The data shows that NGOs are most highly concentrated at the central region, followed by the western region (SWC 2003).

1.4. Level of organisation

This subdimension examines the infrastructure and internal organisation of CSOs in Nepal. Table III.1.4 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.1.10: Indicators assessing level of organisation

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.4.1	Existence of umbrella bodies	<u>1</u>
1.4.2	Effectiveness of umbrella bodies	<u>2</u>
1.4.3	Self-regulation within civil society	<u>1</u>
1.4.4	Support infrastructure	<u>1</u>
1.4.5	International linkages	<u>1</u>

1.4.1 Existence of umbrella bodies. Civil society organisations have their own federations in the country, based on their working background. This means that they form their own networks as a federation and work through these structures for the benefit of the members and the stakeholders. A number of CSOs are associated with a federation or umbrella organisation. As at June 2003, 15,043 CSOs were affiliated to the Social Welfare Council (SWC 2003).

The SWC remains the primary structure for coordinating and facilitating CSOs, and was established through the Social Welfare Act. While all NGOs are expected to comply with the requirements of the SWC, there is some perception that the SWC has been heavily politicized.

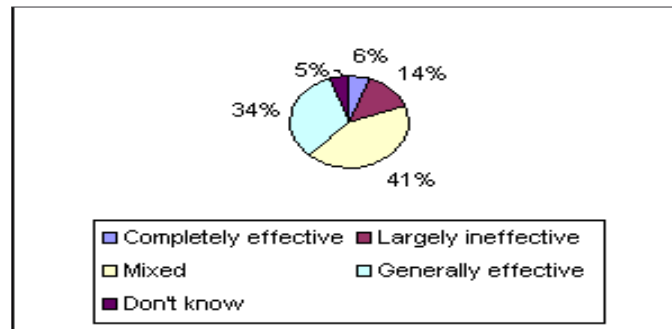
The findings of the regional stakeholder consultation survey shows that respondents are divided in their assessment of how many CSOs belong to a federation. One third of respondents think it is less than 20%, and a further third believe that between 20% and 40% of CSOs belong to a federation.

Table III.1.11: Representation of CSOs in federations

S.N	Percentage	Percentage (%)
1	Less than 20%	34
2	Between 20% and 40%	35
3	Between 40%-60%	12
4	More than 60%	9
5	Don't Know	10

One such network is the Nepal Civil Society Forum. Launched in 2004 as a campaign, it was formed by civil society actors at the establishment of the Nepal Development Forum (NDF). It provided a common forum for civil society groups to present proposals and recommendations at the meetings of the NDF. It has created mass awareness about the NDF, sensitized people and civil society on the importance of the NDF and promoted an environment for civil society involvement in the NDF to influence the current process of multi-party negotiations.

1.4.2 Effectiveness of CSO federations. The evidence reflects that 34% of stakeholders perceive CSO umbrella bodies as completely effective. Forty-one percent gave a mixed response, 14% said largely ineffective and 5% did not know about the issue. The evidence thus points to the fact that to a large extent, stakeholders assess Nepali umbrella bodies as achieving what is expected from them. Respondents reported that the effectiveness of the CSO federations is undergoing change, based on the existing political system, and that such federations are also experiencing challenges to their effectiveness in the present political climate.

FIGURE III.1.6: Effectiveness of umbrella organisation or federations

1.4.3 Self regulation. The functioning of Nepalese CSOs is regulated by government requirements, as stipulated in the Social Welfare Act 2046 and Social Welfare Regulation 2046. However CSOs are strengthening themselves jointly through codes of conduct, and organisational and constitutional networking as a means of self-regulation. Self-regulation in the Nepalese context means the application of relevant approaches, policies and systems to sustain CSOs as independent and self-governing organisations. A majority of respondents (63%) say that preliminary efforts have been made to self-regulate the CSOs but only a small number of them are involved in such efforts and the impact is, as yet, extremely limited.

The findings of the regional stakeholder survey about the efforts made within civil society to establish codes of conduct or other means of self-regulation of CSO are tabulated below. Sixty-three percent of respondents believe that preliminary efforts are in place, although the impact remains limited. Only 9% believe that no effort has been made in this regard.

Table III.1.12: Efforts made by CSOs to establish codes of conduct

S.N	Categories	Percentage (%)
1	No effort made	9
2	Preliminary efforts are in place, although impact as yet is extremely limited	63
3	Some mechanisms for self-regulation are in place, but CSO involvement /impact is limited	14
4	Mechanisms for self-regulation are in place and function quite effectively.	4
5	A discernible impact can be detected	4
6	Don't know	6

In the regional stakeholder consultation 76% of respondents said that they abide by a collective code of conduct and 23% gave no response to this question.

Table III.1.13: Response to abide by a collective code of conduct

S.N	Category	Percentage (%)
1	No	1
2	Yes	76
3	No response	23

The table reflects that CSOs have undoubtedly made efforts to self-regulate and that they abide by such regulations. However, the impact of such regulations is thus far very limited.

Table III.1.14: NGO Code of Conduct

The NGO Federation that is the umbrella organisation of more than 2,200 NGOs active in Nepal has developed the *NGO Code of Conduct and Implementation*, containing rules and regulations about behavioral conduct for office bearers, organisations and members associated with NGOs. Such an NGO code of conduct is essential to ensure commitment, transparency and self-discipline. It includes issues such as developing professionalism, impartiality, cooperation, coordination, self-reliance, sustainability, financial discipline, self-regulation, service orientation and good conduct. Each NGO/CBO has to formulate its code of conduct first and then the relevant personnel have to internalise all of the components. Successful implementation of the Code will bring positive change in behavior.

On 10 November 2005, the Social Welfare Council enforced a strict code of conduct for social organisations in Nepal, which has been severely criticized by some CS actors. For example, people working in an NGO should not take part in any party politics within the premises of those organisations and no one may head any social organisations for more than two terms. The code stipulates that CSOs should receive permission from the SWC before receiving any foreign assistance. The local bodies have to be informed before any programmes are launched with foreign assistance (THT, November 11, 2005). However, the Supreme Court later ordered the Council not to implement this code and the government - after the restoration of democracy - cancelled all the ordinances. This is expected to now create a more congenial environment for CSOs.

1.4.4 Support Infrastructure. The findings of the regional stakeholder survey about existing capacity-building and support infrastructure in terms of resource centres, information databanks and technical assistance to the CSO organisations are presented below.

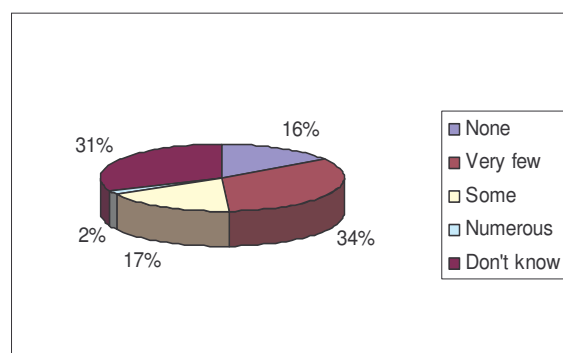
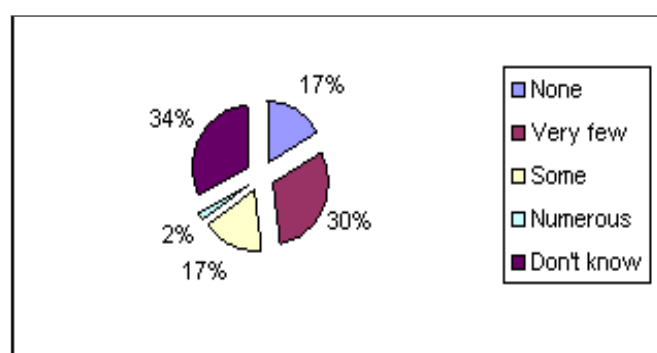
Table III.1.15: Existing capacity-building and support infrastructure

S.N	Categories	Percentage (%)
1	No such infrastructure exists	17%
2	Very limited infrastructure exists	61%
3	Moderate infrastructure exists	14%
4	Well-developed infrastructure exists	2%
5	Don't know	6%

The above table shows that a clear majority of respondents (61%) stated that very limited infrastructure exists for capacity-building of CSOs. Only 2% believed that well-developed infrastructure exists. Various CSOs, such as Samuhik Abhiyan, ICA Nepal, Didi Bahini and USC Nepal, and a number of private institutions, are involved in building capacity of other CSOs.

The government has allocated token resources for CSOs through the Social Welfare Council, which supports selected CSOs with nominal funding (SWC 2003). Similarly, some other organisations such as CECI and the Asia Foundation have supported infrastructure for some organisations. Some of the local organisations such as saving and credit groups may receive this kind of support from their promoters.

1.4.5 International Linkages. Very few CS organisations in Nepal have global linkages, and CS participation in international events is limited.

FIGURE III.1.7: CSOs participation in international events**FIGURE III.1.8: Member of international networks**

In the regional stakeholder consultations, only 2% of the respondents said that CSO membership of international networks is numerous, 30% said that it is very limited, 17% said that some of the CSOs are members of an international network, 34% seemed unconcerned regarding the matter, and 17% said that none of the CSOs are members of international networks.

1.5. Inter-relations within civil society

This subdimension analyses the relations amongst civil society across Nepal. Table III.1.16 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III. 1.16: Indicators assessing inter-relations within civil society

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
1.5.1	Communication between CSOs	2
1.5.2	Cooperation between CSOs	1

1.5.1 Communication. In order to increase communication among CSOs, a number of organisations such as the NGO Federation and the NGO Coordination Committee have been established, along with other network organisations. Interest among CSOs regarding communication is increasing, particularly with regard to networking. CSOs also communicate with each other through newsletters, e-newsletters, e-mail, Internet forums, and conferences. Many CSOs organise regular sharing meetings to discuss relevant issues.

In the regional stakeholder consultations, 39% of the respondents stated that the level of communication and information-sharing between civil society actors is limited, 29% of respondents felt it was significant and 25% saw only a moderate level of communication and information-sharing between CSO actors.

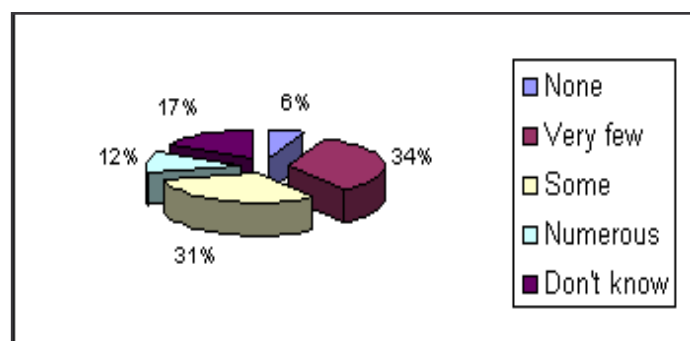
Table III.1.17: Level of communication and information sharing between civil society actors

S.N	Categories	Percentage (%)
1	Non existent/Insignificant	3%
2	Limited	39%
3	Moderate	25%
4	Significant	29%
5	Don't know	4%

1.5.2 Cooperation. Few alliances/coalition of cross-sectoral CSOs are formed in the country. The most prominent is the Professional Alliances for Peace and Democracy (PAPAD), a coalition of professional organisations such as Nepal Medical Association, Nepal Engineers Association, and University Teachers Association. PAPAD is active in lobbying for the revival of democracy in the country. The media review also revealed few instances of such alliances, for example, participation of CSOs in a motorcycle rally to mark 50 years of Nepal-China relations.

Some of the examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances/coalitions given by the respondents are as follows:

- ◆ Alliance for social, economical and peace building: CSOs active mainly in advocacy and community development are part of this alliance. Three major trade unions of the country also form an alliance for collective interest.
- ◆ Conflict resolution, transformation and economic development: CSOs active in human rights are forming such an alliance.
- ◆ To organise a peace rally: Professional organisations such as the Nepal Medical Council, the Nepal Engineering Association are active in this work.
- ◆ Working together with District Education Offices, NGOs, VDCs and DDCs: Local level organisations working for the upliftment of the marginalized and general population are involved in improving quality of education for children.
- ◆ Amnesty International and ICRC: Organisations active for the protection of human rights and supporting people threatened by the internal conflict in Nepal.

FIGURE III.1.9: CSOs forming alliances/networks or coalitions

A number of networks or alliances such as the NGO Federation, the NGO Coordination Committee, the Social Welfare Council, the Nepal Participatory Action Network (NEPAN), NGOs against HIV/AIDS (NANGAN) and other professional alliances help in facilitating communication and cooperation amongst themselves.

In the regional stakeholder consultations, 34% of respondents said that different sectors of civil society forming alliances/networks or coalitions around issues of common concern is very few, 31% said there are some, whereas 12% said there were numerous examples. NGOs, VDCs and DDCs, Consumer groups, Ama Samuha, Health Groups, Education Groups, Parents Committees, Labour Unions, Public Transport Associations are active within CS in forming alliances/networks or coalitions on issues of common concern.

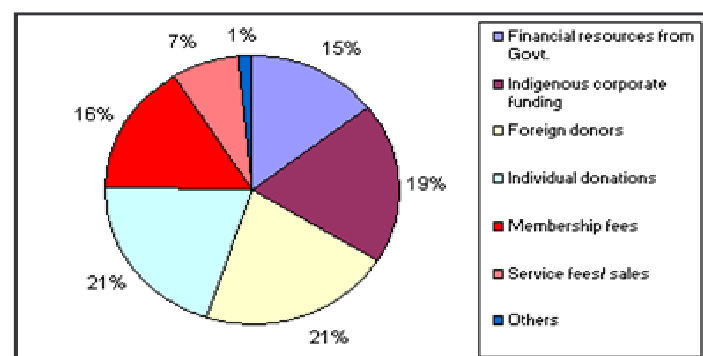
1.6. Civil society resources

This subdimension examines the resources available to CSOs in Nepal. Table III.1.18 summarises the respective indicator scores.

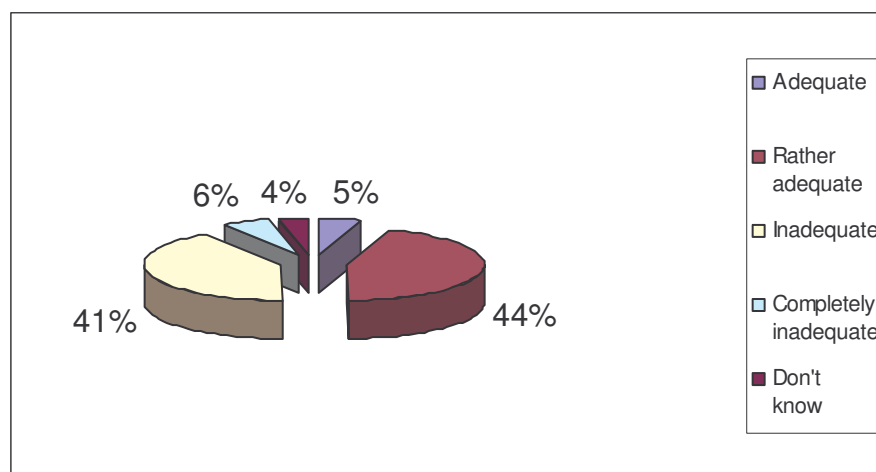
Table III.1.18: Indicators assessing civil society resources

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.6.1	Financial resources	1
1.6.2	Human resources	2
1.6.3	Technical and infrastructural resources	1

1.6.1 Financial Resources. About 21% of the funding in the organisations comes from foreign donors and almost the same amount of funding comes from individual donations.

FIGURE III.1.10: Source of financial resources

In the regional stakeholder consultations, 44% of respondents said that the financial resource base of the organisation to achieve its defined goal is rather adequate and 41% of respondents stated that it is inadequate.

FIGURE III.1.11: Level of financial resources

Dependence on the external donation of funds has also meant a lack of balance around the agenda and priorities of civil society (NESAC 1998).

1.6.2 Human Resources. For the last few years, particularly after the restoration of democracy in 1990, Nepalese CSOs have gained knowledge and skills in operating CSOs effectively. In the regional stakeholder consultations, 33% of the respondents believed that staff skill in CSOs is adequate, 38% felt it is rather adequate and 20% of the respondents said that it is inadequate.

1.6.3 Technologies and infrastructure resources. Regarding the equipment, technology and infrastructure of organisations to achieve their defined goals, 44% of respondents said that it is rather adequate, 13% said it is adequate, only 8% said that it is completely inadequate and 21% saw it as inadequate. Nevertheless, stakeholders pointed out that a number of CSOs experience a severe lack of technological and infrastructural resources and there is anecdotal evidence of some CSOs not even possessing an office in which to hold meetings with their members.

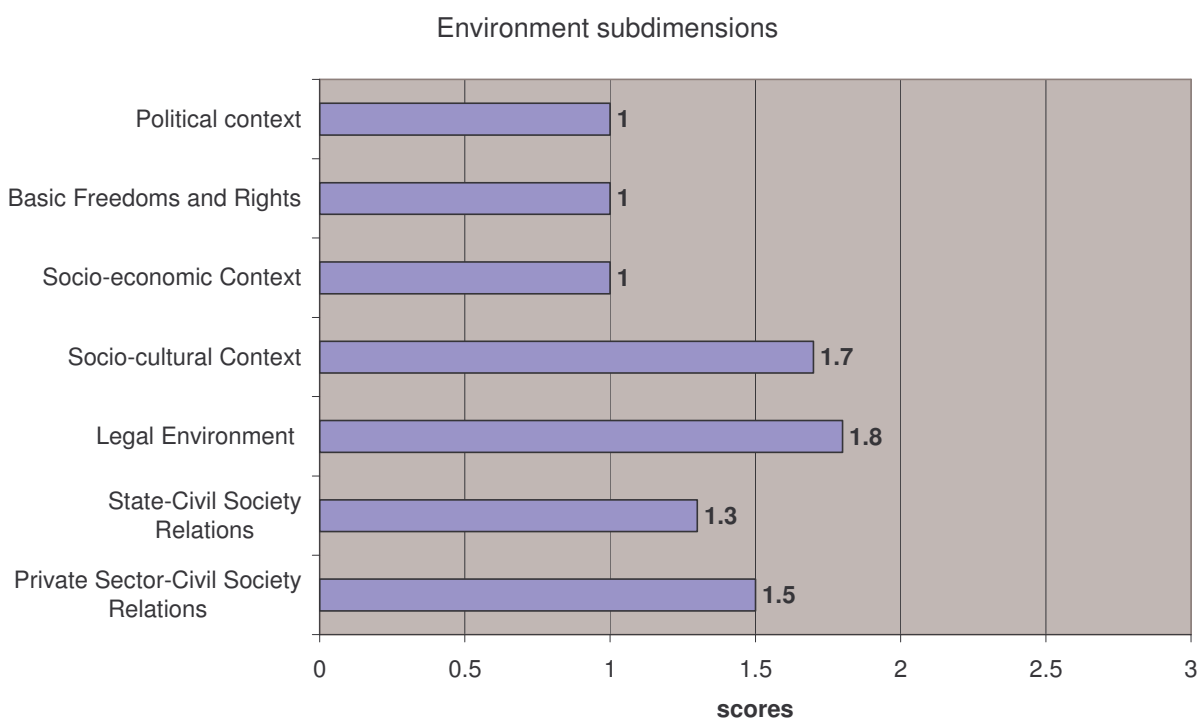
Conclusion

Nepalese CSOs have demonstrated their strength in participating in non-partisan political activities by also participating in the recent movement for democracy. Participation in global CSOs is nominal; CSOs have very limited communication facilities and also inadequate human resources. However, CSOs are quite diverse and reflect the social, economic and political plurality of the country. CSOs are more urban-based and representation of different ethnic groups in CSOs is also unequal. Various other indicators such as 'existence of umbrella bodies', 'support infrastructure', 'international linkages', 'cooperation between CSOs' show rather low scores. Financial and structural facilities for CSOs are nominal, and many CSOs do not even have their own office. This indicates that many CSOs in Nepal are working in difficult circumstances with few resources or physical facilities. The score of structure i.e., 1.7 indicates a need for significant intervention to improve this aspect of the CSI diamond. Despite the lower scoring in most of the indicators, Nepalese CSOs see promising and conducive socio-political conditions in the future. During the NAG meetings, the members reiterated that the Structure of Nepalese civil society will be improved in future as a result of the revival of democracy in the country in April, 2006.

2. ENVIRONMENT

This section describes and analyses the overall political, social, economic, cultural and legal environment in which civil society in Nepal exists and functions. The score for the Environment dimension is 1.4. Figure III.2.1 presents the scores for the seven subdimensions within the Environment dimension.

FIGURE III.2.1: Subdimension scores in Environment dimension



2.1. Political context

This subdimension examines the political situation in Nepal. Table III.2.1 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.2.1: Indicators assessing political context

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
<u>2.1.1</u>	Political rights	<u>2</u>
<u>2.1.2</u>	Political competition	<u>1</u>
<u>2.1.3</u>	Rule of law	<u>1</u>
<u>2.1.4</u>	Corruption	<u>0</u>
<u>2.1.5</u>	State effectiveness	<u>1</u>
<u>2.1.6</u>	Decentralization	<u>1</u>

2.1.1 Political rights. Nepal is an independent and non-aligned state with a democratically elected government. The country is guided by the constitution promulgated in 1990 as the result of a democratic movement. The constitution safeguards the rights and duties of the citizen. People have the full freedom and choice to exercise their political rights and meaningfully

participate in political processes. The constitution provides for the main source of state power as the people and the sovereignty of Nepal is vested in the Nepalese people.

The basic principles of Nepalese democratic systems are constitutional monarchy, multiparty democracy, and sovereignty of the people and the protection of human rights.

The Nepalese political arena changed dramatically in 1990 when political parties were re-legalized following a pro-democracy movement. Under the 1990 Constitution, Nepal became both a multiparty parliamentary political system and a constitutional monarchy with a directly elected lower house of parliament (205 seats) and an upper house (60 seats) elected by an electoral college and nominated by the king. Nevertheless, these constitutional provisions were halted following the November 2001 state of emergency, which hoped to combat the Maoist insurgency. The constitutional provisions were officially suspended in May 2002 when parliament was dissolved following heightened political instability. Though elections were scheduled for November 2002, these were indefinitely postponed and a new parliament was not elected.

At present, there is a crisis of stability because of the dissolved parliament recently being restored following the success of the people's uprising in April 2006. The monarchy has been reduced to a ceremonial role, the Nepali army has been brought under civilian control, an interim constitution is being drafted, peace talks are under way for elections to a constituent assembly, and the inclusion of the CPN (Maoists) in the government. The royal regime had restricted the democratic process by attempting to curtail the work of human rights organisations, while allowing voluntary organisations such as the Guthi, Paropakar and Red Cross, which are less politically motivated to continue their work.

Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2005* gave Nepal a score of 5 on the political rights index, indicating that is 'partly free'.

2.1.2 Political competition. Nepal has a multiparty system with more than 217 registered political parties. Despite multiparty rule, representation of social diversity in political power is highly skewed. Since 1990 political parties have become a feature of the Nepalese political system (notably political parties based on ethnic, religious, caste, tribal and regional lines are not allowed). In 1991, the Nepali Congress (NC) obtained a majority in parliament (110 of 205 seats) and the United Marxist-Leftist Party (UML) won 69 seats. The two '*pancha*' parties associated with the old system won only four seats. Elections in 1994 and 1999 were characterized by political wrangling and instability. Overall, infighting, corruption and a culture of impunity are rife within Nepalese political parties.

Elections are usually held every five years. During the royal regime, seven political parties entered into coalitions to safeguard democracy. Politicians belonging to some of these parties were arrested by the ruling government and some have stood trial on corruption charges.

Following the 1991 election, the 1990s were characterized by political instability in Nepal, reaching an apex in 2001 with the murder by Crown Prince Dipendra of most of the royal family. The 1999 election campaign was marked by corruption allegations, economic stagnation and the Maoist insurgency. Political competition has worsened in recent years due to the Maoist insurgency and poor relations between the King and the political parties. The King took over direct power on February 1, 2005 on the pretext of fighting the Maoists, but this was countered

by a democratic movement made up of political as well as civil society groups, which managed to depose the king.

2.1.3 Rule of law. The rule of law is protected by the constitution, which states that Nepalese society should be governed by fair and predictable rules, adhered to by all.

Since the Maoist insurgency began, however, the rule of law has significantly deteriorated. In February 1996, the Maoist faction of the Communist Party of Nepal submitted a 40 point list of demands to the government, which was refused. The Party responded with violence and assaults on the police. The government attempted to use the poorly equipped police force to combat the Maoists, and in 2001, in response to rising insurgency, issued a state of emergency enabling it to deploy the Royal Nepalese Army against the insurgents. Though emergency legislation has since been repealed, the Army remains the primary counterinsurgency force against the Maoists.

Summary executions, torture, forced disappearances, unlawful killings and other human rights abuses have proliferated in Nepal as the government and Maoist insurgents continue to wage war. In the last two years, according to the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID), Nepal recorded the largest number of forced disappearance cases in the world. A further issue relates to impunity. In one well-publicized case, three Army officers were found guilty of abducting, torturing and murdering a 15-year-old girl, and were simply confined to barracks rather than serving jail sentences.⁴

While the Supreme Court is primarily independent from the executive, effective access to justice for many Nepalese remains limited. In routine criminal cases, police may commit unlawful extrajudicial murders. Torture and beatings have also been documented and security laws such as the Public Security Act (PSA) of 2002 and the Terrorism and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA) enable government officials to detain suspects for up to six months without charges or trial. Under TADA, the government has detained dozens of civilians including journalists, teachers, lawyers and political activists.

Both the government and the Maoists have been accused of increasing human rights abuses in the context of the conflict.⁵ The Maoists control large sections of the rural areas while the government controls Kathmandu and the district capitals. The conflict has affected the entire country, with a death toll of over 13,000 people since 1996. After the recent people's uprising, the Maoists and the government are engaging in talks as part of a transitional process, which include a 20-point document of resolutions; and the country is gradually normalizing.

2.1.4 Corruption. Nepal ranks 117th among 159 countries surveyed in Transparency International's (TI) Corruption Perception Index 2005 with a score of 2.5 out of a maximum score of 10 (THT, October 19, 2005). The TI score in 2004 for Nepal was 2.8 (90th out of 146 countries), indicating a rather high level of corruption. Based on the research '*A household survey on corruption*' carried out by Transparency International Nepal in August 2002, the respondents found the following sectors most corrupt, where the respondents identified more than one sector responsible for corruption.

⁴ "Nepal: Army Officers Avoid Jail Time for Torture, Murder" *Human Rights Watch*.

⁵ See the Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and UN Press Releases on Nepal, 2005.

Table III.2.2: Corruption in different sectors in Nepal

S. No.	Sectors	Percentage
1.	Land administration	49.9
2.	Customs department	40.6
3.	Police	24.2
4.	Judiciary	19.5
5.	Taxation	18.1
6.	Power	14.1
7.	Education	13.7
8.	Health	11.8
9.	Bank	9.6
10.	NGOs	4.5
11.	Telephone	3.4
12.	Post Office	0.2

Source: Transparency International Nepal, August 2002

According to a study carried out by Transparency International entitled '*Corruption in South Asia*', the three most corrupt sectors in Nepal were found to be the police, health and power sectors respectively (TI Nepal, August 2002).

Opinion Polls on Corruption in Nepal in May 2004, supported by the Westminster Foundation, posed the question, "Do you think there is corruption in Nepal?" More than 98% of respondents said they believe corruption is rampant in Nepal. While 1.4% refused to answer the question, 0.3% said there is no corruption in Nepal. Furthermore, 51.3% of respondents said that corruption exists in the upper echelons of society while 41% said there was corruption at the "highest" level of the society.

There is a growing demand for corruption to be addressed, for transparency, people's participation in public activities and increased civil society awareness around social mobilization. Citizens still seem unaware of the facilities and services they should be getting from the state. Some steps taken by the government against corruption are:

- Formation of the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority.
- Establishment of the Special Court for Corruption Litigation.
- Establishment of the National Vigilance Center.
- Enhancement of the Corruption Elimination Act, 2002 (2059)
- Enhancement of the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority Act 2002 (2059)
- Enactment of the Political Party Act 2001 (2058).
- Preparation of the code of conduct for the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority.
- Formulation of the government's anti-corruption policy and anti-corruption strategy.
- Approval of the UN Convention Against Corruption.

Overall, corruption is perceived as endemic in politics and government administration.⁶ Legislation passed in 2002 disqualified those convicted on corruption charges from contesting political elections for five years and placed the burden of proof in corruption cases on the accused. Nonetheless, compliance with anticorruption legislation continues to be weak, and the prosecution of officials is rare, creating a climate of impunity.

⁶ See Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2005 Report, Nepal.

Within the development sector, a few studies reflect corruption in the disbursement of funding. Only about 15% of the Nepalese people are the real beneficiaries of foreign aid projects in Nepal (Dhruba Kumar 1998).

2.1.5 State effectiveness. Despite the well-developed constitutional system, the state bureaucracy is functional but perceived by the average citizen as an incompetent and/or non-responsive authority. Violent insurgency has eroded the state's monopoly on power and is causing the retreat of the state from society (Dahal 2001).

According to the World Bank Governance Dataset, depicting Nepal's percentile ranking in 2004 on government effectiveness, only 17.8% of countries ranked below Nepal. Currently, the Maoists are believed to control 45% of Nepal's territory and moreover have established their own "people's courts" to deliver justice in some districts, and "people's governments" to tax citizen incomes and assets.⁷ The Maoists enforce control through public punishment and human rights abuses. Since the beginning of the insurgency, Maoist forces have controlled much of the countryside with rural dwellers regularly coerced into accommodating the Maoist forces and providing foodstuffs and lodgings or participating in political indoctrination programs. According to Human Rights Watch, Nepali security forces have effectively retreated to bases in district headquarters. Considering that 90% of the population lives in underdeveloped rural areas, a lack of government rule outside city centres profoundly limits the state's effectiveness and ability to fulfil its functions. As a result of the conflict, government institutions have largely collapsed in rural areas.

2.1.6 Decentralization. Nepal is experiencing a turning point in the decentralization process of authority and use of resources. There are limited areas of local governance responsibility in policy implementation. Decision-making and budgetary powers, in most cases, rest with the central government. Nevertheless, some attempts have been made by the government to devolve government expenditure. For example, in 2005, the government decided to develop 16 districts (out of 75) as fully devolved districts.

2.2. Basic freedoms and rights

This subdimension examines the extent to which basic freedoms are guaranteed by law and in practice in Nepal. Table III.2.3 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.2.3: Indicators assessing basic rights and freedoms

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
<u>2.2.1</u>	Civil liberties	<u>1</u>
<u>2.2.2</u>	Information rights	<u>1</u>
<u>2.2.3</u>	Press freedom	<u>1</u>

2.2.1 Civil liberties. Nepal has a democratic constitution that guarantees the basic freedoms and rights of its citizens. Citizens enjoy the right to freedom of expression and association, and to organise and assemble. These fundamental rights have been enshrined in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1990. The state has ratified a total of 16 international human rights instruments including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

⁷ See Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2005 Report, Nepal.

Nepal is also a signatory to various international rights instruments, and more than 35 instruments related to human rights (from the slavery convention, 1926 to the Declaration on the Right to Development, 1986, and the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) have been ratified (INSEC, 2003).

Despite these theoretical constitutional provisions, civil liberties have been increasingly eroded in recent years. The *Freedom House 2005 Country Report on Nepal* reveals that civil liberties decreased from a score of 3.4 in 2000 to a score of 5.5 or 'partly free' in 2004. The Report explains that, for example, although there is academic freedom, over 100 teachers have been killed by security forces and by Maoists. There are reports of freedom of assembly and association also being occasionally restricted and government forces using excessive force against peaceful demonstrators. In April 2004, the government banned groups of more than 5 people from assembling. According to the UN human rights representative in Nepal, in September 2005 the Nepalese police used excessive force against peaceful demonstrators, restricting their right to gather and torturing prisoners, all in violation of international conventions.⁸

There have been many documented instances of alleged human rights violations by both sides in the conflict. Notably, in August 2003, an incident in the Ramechhap district, commonly referred to as the 'Doramba massacre', received considerable attention when 19 people were reportedly executed in a small village by army forces.⁹ Likewise, Maoist forces have killed, tortured and kidnapped civilians, with thousands being abducted in the name of the 'people's war'. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, a campaign of abductions in 2004 caused thousands of students to flee to other parts of Nepal. The persistent violations of human rights have led the United States, India and the United Kingdom to suspend military aid.

Since the conflict began, many basic freedoms have been suspended. Additional evidence of new restrictions includes the April 2005 government legislation that again banned the assembly of more than 5 people.

2.2.2 Information rights. The public right to information is guaranteed by the constitution, but because of the volatile political situation in the country, information rights have frequently been infringed upon by the state.

It is reported by Freedom House that most ministries operate with little openness and accountability. The World Bank Governance dataset reports that 22.3% of countries ranked lower than Nepal in the 'voice and accountability' indicator, indicating that citizen's access to information is very limited. This has presented difficulties when attempting to hold the government accountable.

2.2.3 Press freedoms. Press freedom is ensured by the constitution, and the National Communication Policy of 1992 has promised greater autonomy of the government-controlled broadcast media and privatization of electronic media industry through the issuing of licenses.

⁸ See "UN human rights group condemns excessive police force and torture in Nepal" *UN News Service*, 20 September 2005.

⁹ Sarkar, Sudeshna. "Nepal King Wages War on NGOs" *Global Policy Forum ISN Security Watch* November 14, 2005.

However, in reality, writing that is perceived as undermining the monarchy, national security and public order is broadly suppressed by both the constitution and the Press and Publications Act. The country's main television and radio station is owned and operated by the government and favours the ruling party. In April 2004, hundreds of reporters were arrested and harassed by police in Kathmandu, following pro-democracy demonstrations. Press figures that are viewed as sympathetic to, or associated with, the Maoists are routinely arrested and detained by the state and there have been reported incidents of harassment and torture, as well as occasional deaths. Likewise, the Maoists have targeted media personalities. In August 2004, a journalist with the state-owned Radio Nepal, Dakendra Raj Thapa, was killed by Maoist rebels.

On October 9 2005, the King issued an order that prohibits any criticism of the royal family, and broadly prohibits any FM radio stations from broadcasting any news-related item.¹⁰ Freedom of expression has been compromised, and Nepal's largest FM radio news network, Kantipur FM, has closed as a result of the harsh media restrictions. Without a court order, the police confiscated all of Kantipur FM's operating equipment, forcing the station to close. These media restrictions constitute an affront not only to a free media, but also to freedom of expression under domestic and international law. Journalist licenses can be cancelled summarily and defamation provisions that include harsh criminal penalties have been extended to cover broadcast media.

The study carried out by Freedom House (2005) rated Nepal with a low score of 69 (out of 100) indicating a 'not free' status with regard to press freedom in the country.

According to Human Rights Watch (October 2005), the October ordinance continues restrictions already in place. In addition to the ban on the broadcast of news, the ordinance affects other forms of media as well. The right of political parties to provide information on their programs during election periods has been weakened without explanation. Journalists' licenses can be cancelled summarily and defamation provisions that include harsh criminal penalties have been extended to cover broadcast media". After the restoration of democracy in early 2006, restrictions to the freedom of the press were abolished.

2.3. Socio-economic context

This subdimension analyses the socio-economic situation in Nepal. Table III.2.3 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.2.4: Indicator assessing socio-economic context

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.3.1	Socio-economic context	1

To study the socio-economic environment, eight indicators were selected, which represent the different means through which the socio-economic context can potentially impact on civil society: 1) poverty; 2) Civil war; 3) Ethnic/Religious conflict; 4) Economic crisis; 5) Social crisis; 6) Socio-economic inequities; 7) Adult literacy; and 8) Lack of information technology infrastructure. For each of these indicators, a specific benchmark was defined, which explores whether they present an obstacle for further civil society development. The available data for these indicators is as follows:

¹⁰ See "Nepal: Attacks on Media Freedoms Expand" *Human Rights Watch* NY, October 28, 2005.

- 1) Poverty: Yes, there is widespread poverty with 32% of the population living below the national poverty line (NLSS). Per capita income is less than US\$1 a day, and according to 2004 world development indicators (WDI) 82.5% of the population is living on less than US \$2 a day.
- 2) Civil War: Yes. The country is facing direct, manifest and latent conflict resulting in political instability. According to the Uppsala Conflict Dataset, Nepal scored 1, meaning the country has experienced armed conflict over the last five years.
- 3) Ethnic/Religious conflict: Yes. According to the CIDCM, 2003 database, Nepal scores 2 for Human Security that implies that the country has experienced problems of somewhat lower magnitude over a more limited span of time. Furthermore, according to the data, Nepal scores 1 for armed conflict. This indicates that the country has experienced either a sporadic intensity armed conflict in late 2002 or an armed conflict that was suspended or repressed between late 1999 and mid-2002.
- 4) Economic Crisis: Yes. The country is also economically one of the poorest in the world as indicated by its external debt, which is greater than the GDP.
- 5) Social Crisis: It is steadily building up due to migration of youth abroad, conflict and lack of participatory opportunities.
- 6) Socio-economic inequities: No. The Gini coefficient for Nepal is .36 and lower than 0.4.
- 7) Adult Illiteracy: Yes. According to the Human Development Report indicators (2004) 56% of people aged 15 and older are illiterate.
- 8) IT Infrastructure: Yes. According to ITU (2003), there are 0.39 hosts per 10,000 inhabitants.

In 2005, Nepal was ranked as 136 with 0.526 in the Human Development Index. Life expectancy at birth is 61.6 years; GDP per capita (PPP) is US\$ 1,420. The Human Development Report estimates the Human Poverty Index (HPI) for Nepal at 38.7, with a rank of 74.

The analysis of civil society's socio-economic environment showed that some of these variables present some challenges, and indicates that the overall environment for Nepalese civil society is still not very conducive. However, recent political developments indicate the likelihood of a conducive environment in the foreseeable future.

2.4. Socio-cultural context

This subdimension examines the socio-cultural norms and attitudes that are conducive or detrimental to civil society. Table III.2.5 summarises the respective scores.

Table III.2.5: Indicators assessing socio-cultural context

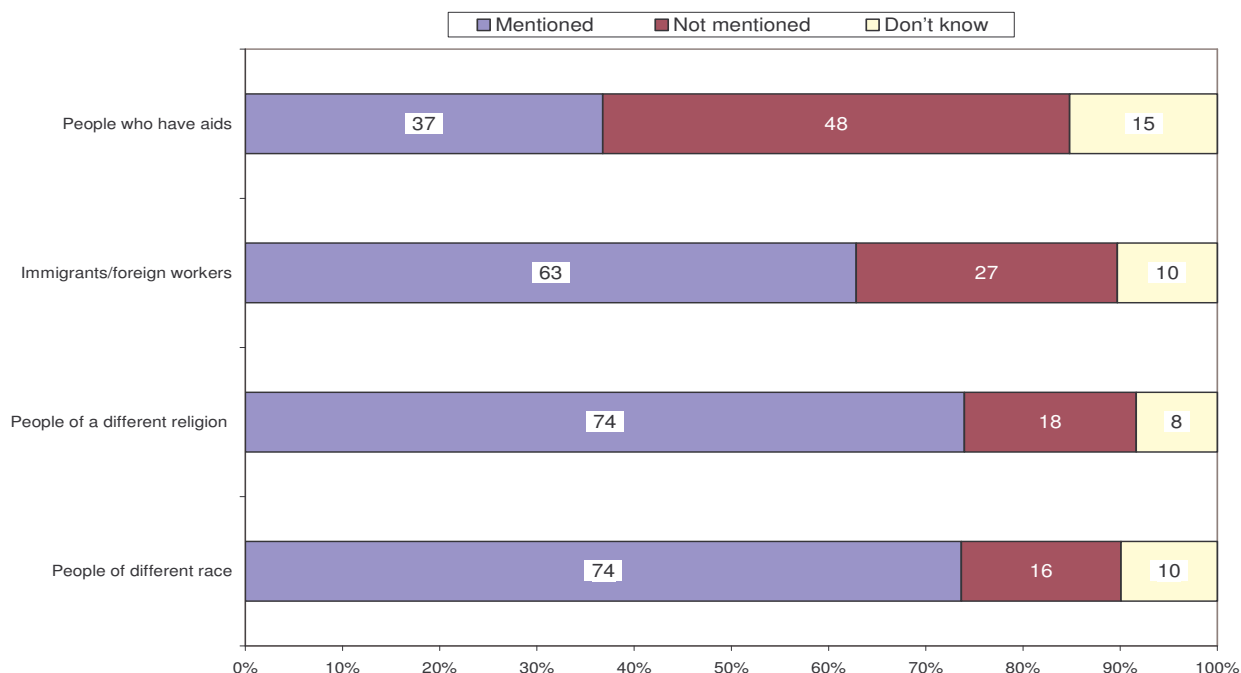
Indicator #	Indicators	Score
2.4.1	Trust	3
2.4.2	Tolerance	0
2.4.3	Public spiritedness	2

Nepalese socio-cultural norms are highly favourable to civil society organisations. Social diversity (62 ethnic groups) ensures scope for democratic pluralism. This is mainly due to the religious and cultural harmony among different groups that has existed for hundreds of years. It has also been stipulated by the constitution as the principle of 'unity in diversity' giving all the religions and ethnic minorities equal rights. In Nepal, many groups of poor people stay poor because of social and cultural factors, notably historic inequalities in the distribution of social and economic power. Caste-related bias has confined the so-called "untouchable castes" to the

lowest-paying menial jobs, restricted their access to common resources, and has limited or denied their access to government and public services. Some of the minorities and indigenous groups also face similar discrimination. Women especially continue to face discrimination in almost all aspects of life (UNDP, 2001).

2.4.1 Trust. Cultural norms of Nepali society allow for a high level of trust amongst Nepali people. Out of the 562 respondents in the community survey, 88% of respondents have trust in other fellow citizens, while 12% do not trust other people.

FIGURE III.2.2: Tolerance for different social groups



2.4.2. Tolerance. The results of the population survey show that 74% of respondents of the community sample would not mind people of a different race and different religion as their neighbour. Overall studies show that racism is negligible in Nepal. Altogether, 63% of respondents stated that they would have an immigrant/foreign worker as a neighbour.

On the other hand, with regard to other categories of persons, the situation is less tolerant. In the present context, while awareness of HIV/AIDS is increasing, views on sexual orientation remain conservative. Homosexuality is not tolerated by Nepalese society and exists by and large underground. Thus, while 37% stated that they would accept an HIV/AIDS-infected person as a neighbour, only 9% stated that they would live next to a homosexual.

Consequently, the tolerance index for Nepal is 3.00 (on a scale from 0 (high tolerance) to 5 (low tolerance)) which reflects a somewhat high level of intolerance within Nepali society.

According to the Freedom House Country Report, members of the Hindu upper castes dominate government and business while low-caste Hindus, ethnic minorities and Christians face discrimination in the civil service, courts, and government offices. “Despite constitutional provisions that ban caste-based discrimination, *dalits* continue to be subjected to particularly severe exploitation, violence, and social exclusion. Nepalese officials at times extort money

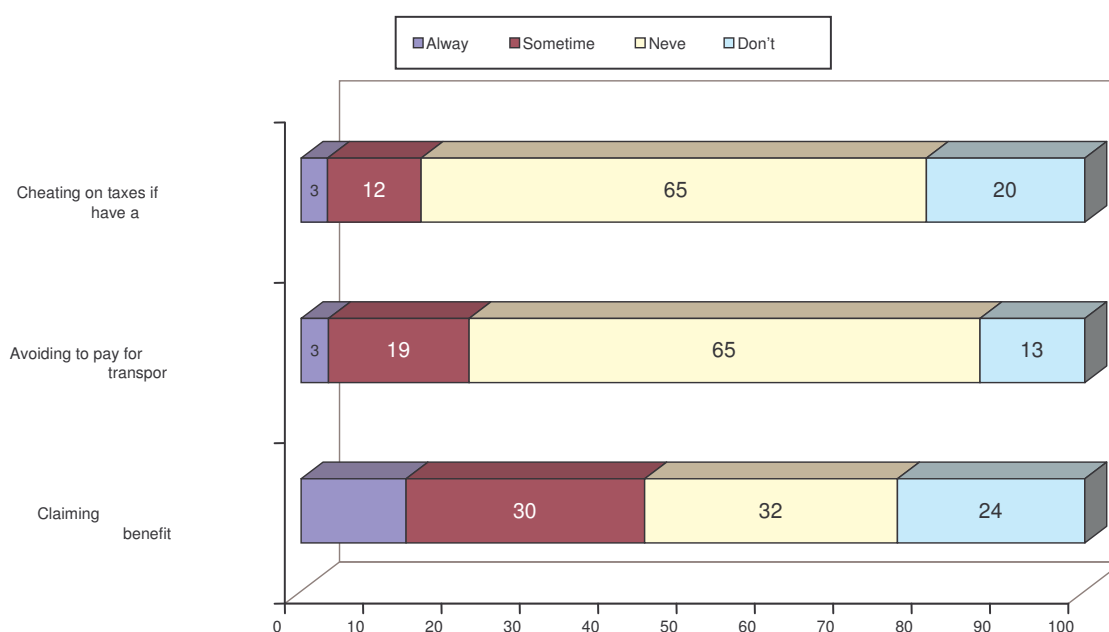
from, or otherwise harass, Tibetan asylum seekers who cross the border into Nepal and occasionally hand Tibetans back to Chinese authorities”.¹¹

Women do not have the same opportunities in society as men, and in the government itself there are relatively few women. Many women remain in jail on abortion offences despite a 2002 law legalizing abortion. Many laws relating to property and divorce continue to discriminate against women, and domestic violence and rape continue to be serious problems. Every year 5000-12,000 Nepalese girls are trafficked into brothels in India and the majority of prostitutes who return to Nepal are HIV-positive and are rejected by their communities (FH 2005 Country Report).

2.4.3 Public spiritedness. There is the widespread view based in Hindu-Buddhist teachings that unless one fulfils public duties one cannot achieve spiritual enlightenment.

The population survey states that 65% of the respondents would never cheat on taxes if they have the chance and only 12% of the respondents say that they would cheat on taxes if they have a chance. Likewise, 65% of the people never avoid paying the fare on public transport and 19% of the respondents sometimes avoid paying for public transport. Meanwhile, 32% never claim government benefits to which they are not entitled, whereas 14% claimed the benefit from the government. Combining these results in a Public Spiritedness Index, its score of 2.5 (on a scale from 1 (low) to 3 (high)) reflects a moderate level of public spiritedness in Nepal.

¹¹ See Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2005 Report on Nepal.

FIGURE III.3.2.3: Public Spiritedness among the Nepalese People

2.5. Legal environment

This subdimension examines the legal environment for civil society and assesses to what extent it is enabling or disabling to civil society. Table III.2.6 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.2.6 Indicators assessing legal environment

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
<u>2.5.1</u>	CSO registration	<u>1</u>
<u>2.5.2</u>	Allowable advocacy activities	<u>2</u>
<u>2.5.3</u>	Tax laws favourable to CSOs	<u>2</u>
<u>2.5.4</u>	Tax benefits for philanthropy	<u>2</u>

2.5.1 CSO registration. There are several forms of legal entities for the registration of a CSO. Legally, it is very simple and inexpensive to register civil society organisations in Nepal. However, the process becomes cumbersome because of the bureaucracy. The SSNCC Act of 1977 says at least 7 persons should gather to form an organisation. The SSNCC Act was very specific in excluding organisations that were based on professions, ethnic-based, research organisations and friendship and cultural institutions. The intrinsic reason was that there were already mechanisms to register institutions performing these functions (Chand 1999). Similarly, the Social Welfare Act of 1993 states that a CSO should be registered with the Social Welfare Council. It coordinates social organisations and assists them in mobilizing and managing resources and to undertake social welfare activities in a more systematic manner.

2.5.2. Allowable advocacy activities. Civil society has the right to criticise the government and can express itself peacefully, rights enshrined in the constitution (SAHAKARYA 2004).

This is also reflected in the finding of the RSC (C2) where 33% of respondents stated that the existing laws do not place any degree of restriction on civil society advocacy activities.

Altogether, 29% of respondents said that the restriction is reasonable. On the other hand 23% of respondents stated that the restrictions were unreasonable.

2.5.3 Tax laws favourable to CSOs. The tax system contains some incentives favouring CSO sustainability. For example, CSOs are entitled to tax waivers for non-profit activities. However, should NGOs wish to bid for contracts relating to social work, then the government requires VAT registration papers (communication with VAT expert). In Nepal, non-profit organisations, such as NGOs, public and community schools, and charities (clubs, *Guthi*) may have taxes waived. However, even non-profit CSOs must pay 15% tax on items such as the hire of a consultant.

2.5.4 Tax benefits for philanthropy. Tax benefits are available for a fairly broad set of purposes or type of organisation. The tax deduction policies made by the government are as follows:

- Industries do not pay tax for NRs 1 lakh if they have donated this money
- There is a tax deduction of 10% to those companies providing direct employment to 600 people or more.
- There is provision of 30%, 25% and 20% tax deductions for industries based in the highly undeveloped, underdeveloped and partially developed areas of the country.

In the past, many prominent individuals like Dayabir Singh Kansakar and Tulsi Mehar Shrestha had championed individual philanthropy, motivating a range of people to support worthy causes. There are, however, no clear policies regarding tax benefits to individuals from philanthropic contributions.

2.6. State-civil society relations

This subdimension describes and analyses the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the state in Nepal. Table III.2.7 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.2.7: Indicators assessing state-civil society relations

Indicator#	Indicators	Score
<u>2.6.1</u>	Autonomy of CSOs	<u>2</u>
<u>2.6.2</u>	Dialogue between CSOs and the state	<u>1</u>
<u>2.6.3</u>	Support for CSOs on the part of the state	<u>1</u>

2.6.1 Autonomy. The effects of liberalization and globalization have weakened the capacity of the state to engage autonomously with the various social classes and castes. When the state, market and conventional politics fail to "to deliver the conventional goods, the politics of identity and culturally distinctive value become salient" (Evans 1996). Because of the centralised planning system, NGOs are forced to conform to the plans through local District Development Committees (DDCs). NGOs are struggling for greater autonomy, since the autonomy of Civil Society is essential for breaking the monopoly of power and wealth and promoting a pluralist sense of justice (Dahal et al 2002) for diverse citizens.

However, according to the consultations 44% of RSC respondents perceive that there is significant interference by the state, while at 40%, almost half are of the opinion that there is only little interference or no interference at all.

Respondents provided the following examples of state interference:

- ◆ Sometimes asking unnecessary questions.
- Disturbances in peace rallies and conferences.
- Meetings and other activities are prevented from taking place under the emergency situation which impacts on the civil rights of citizens.
- The negative impact of the political crisis on civil society activities.
- Freedom of expression and association has been curtailed.

Amnesty International and others reported that in 2004 there were increased incidents of abuses by both government and Maoist forces against human rights activists, forcing many organisations to curtail their work. Furthermore, three major Western donor organisations suspended their activities due to persistent harassment by Maoist insurgents.

In March 2004, the government extended legislation that specified which organisations have the right to strike; “essential industries” in the transport, tourism, telecommunications and public utilities cannot strike legally.

In November 2005, the government adopted a Code of Conduct to regulate the activities of non-governmental organisations. The Code has received considerable criticism from international organisations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, as well as intergovernmental bodies such as the UN. The Code is perceived as being a direct assault against civil society activities and an attempt to silence any critics of the regime. Opponents of the Code argue that it legitimizes the government’s ability to obstruct individual freedom of expression and freedom of association.

The primary concern with regard to the Code is that it has ill-defined and vague provisions that can be arbitrarily abused. For example, the government can dissolve any organisation that does not comply with its rules. Broad provisions in the Code can be interpreted in different ways and some are highly restrictive. For example, the Code states “officials, members, personnel and staff of social organisations should not be involved in activities that endanger social harmony.” Secondly, the Code bans CSO workers from having any political affiliation, which in practical terms prevents CSO staff from taking part in legitimate and peaceful political activities, a restriction that undermines the right to freedom of association. Thirdly, the Code holds individuals working for CSOs legally responsible for the CSO’s activities even if an individual is not involved in that activity. Fourthly, the Code bans local and international NGOs from disclosing ‘confidential’ information. Finally, the Code provides for governmental control over international aid or funding given to NGOs working in the area of human rights.¹²

CSOs in Nepal have protested strongly; immediately after the adoption of the Code, the NGO Federation, an umbrella organisation of over 2,600 associations, led rallies in Kathmandu and in many districts throughout the country to protest the legislation.¹³ It is important to note that many critics argue that such potentially repressive legislation may adversely affect human rights defenders. Since the February coup, many human rights activists have been detained, fled the country, gone into hiding or ceased their work, and those that continue to document human rights abuses appear to be at risk.

¹² See “Nepal: Open letter on the proposed code of conduct for NGOs” *Amnesty International* November 7, 2005; “Nepal: Legal Veneer for Repressing Civil Society” *Human Rights Watch NY*, 14 November, 2005; “Nepal: UN rights official urges Government to repeal code for social groups” *UN News Service* 10 November, 2005.

¹³ Sarakar, Sudeshna. “Nepal King Wages War on NGOs” *Global Policy Forum* 14 November, 2005, p.1.

2.6.2 Dialogue. While the state emphasizes partnerships with civil society, and existing laws promote this, the attitude of the state towards civil society is more inclined towards domination or control than coordination.

As reflected in the RSC survey, dialogue between the state and civil society is limited, although some attempts have been made by the state to dialogue with civil society. For example, the Nepal Development Forum has on occasion requested CSOs to participate in a dialogue. The Local Self-Governance Act of 1998 favours the role of civil society in Village Development Committees, Municipalities and District Development Committees in the areas of education, planning, execution and service delivery. It is a means to enhance dialogue among various actors including the state and CSOs.

There are, however, no specific directives regarding participation and the extent of dialogue. In many cases, government has been quite selective about who it chooses to engage with; for example, it invites only those CSOs that are supportive of the present regime. This has fostered a clientelist pattern and defined the possibility of critical feedback.

Local Self-Governance Act, 1999

The objective of the Local Self-Governance Act of 1999 is to promote democracy through broad citizen participation, using a decentralization approach.

Other objectives are to institutionalize the process of development by enhancing citizen participation, institutional development of local bodies capable of taking responsibility at the local level for implementation, and constituting local structures that promote local self-governance.

In the RSC, 41% of respondents stated that the dialogue between the state and civil society is very limited, 20% said that it is moderate, 26% felt it was extensive, and 6% said that it is non-existent. Following the people's uprising in April 2006, the government has shown greater interest and willingness to dialogue with the CSOs.

2.6.3 Cooperation/support. Government has allocated less than 1% of its budget to civil society organisations, mainly through Social Welfare Council, although several ministries and line agencies work with CSOs. This makes it difficult to accurately assess the extent of government support to CSOs. Existing support is channelled to CSOs favoured by government through the Social Welfare Council and other subsidiary bodies of the government. Some Ministries/Departments have designated funds for CSO support that again are given primarily to pro-government CSOs. In the RSC, only 30% of respondents could provide data regarding government funding to their organisations. Nevertheless, among those who responded, 55% said their organisations received more than 10% of their funding from state sources.

2.7. Private sector-civil society relations

This subdimension describes and assesses the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the private sector. Table III.2.8 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.2.8: Indicators assessing private sector – civil society relations

Indicator#	Indicators	Score
<u>2.7.1</u>	Private sector attitude to Civil Society	<u>1</u>
<u>2.7.2</u>	Corporate social responsibility	<u>1</u>
<u>2.7.3</u>	Corporate philanthropy	<u>2</u>

2.7.1 Private sector attitudes. Many of the private sector entities are involved with CSOs, given the increasing tendency of the private sector to support civil society activities. The private sector is open to dialogue and interaction with civil society, with 39% of the respondents believing that the private sector attitude towards CS is supportive; 28% found it to be favourable and 2% found it to be hostile. Collectively, 67% perceived a positive relationship/attitude to civil society while 2% found them to be hostile.

Similarly, 43% of respondents said that business associations have sometimes participated in broader civil society initiatives whereas 32%, 9% and 6% respectively have rarely, frequently and never participated.

2.7.2 Corporate social responsibility. As reflected below, there are few corporations which espouse the concept of social responsibility. A study on the status of corporate social responsibility in Nepal conducted by FNCCI, Action Aid and Lotus Holding Pvt. Ltd. in 2003 revealed that “the business cannot create wealth and thrive in an island of poverty.” CSR is defined as the responsibility of the business community towards the well-being of the society and the overall development of the nation.

The study, which examined 100 companies, presented an unclear image of CSR, and highlighted diverse perceptions of CSR among key players, such as corporations, CSOs and government, and also highlights the importance of CSR within the industrial sector.

The role of industries in CSR is increasing and many more companies are becoming keen to fulfil their social roles and responsibilities. FNCCI has established a separate unit to promote CSR activities in the country.

Table: III.2.9: Corporate social responsibility through volunteering

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become more relevant in the present context of globalization and extension of the developing countries in the membership of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). CSR calls upon the business organisations to undertake the responsibility of being prominent actors in the process of social development.

"The age-old practices of voluntary mobilization, both in rural and urban areas of Nepal, are gradually diminishing due to lack of proper motivation, support and encouragement, and initiative to work for common benefit. The cause is gradually waning and vested interest is slowly becoming the order of the day, with an occasional tinge of political interference."

A large section of the business community as well as civil society are still unfamiliar with the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as well as Corporate Volunteering. Good business practices, concern towards workers and their family's welfare, sensitivity to environmental issues, getting involved in social welfare works for the betterment of the society and so on. Corporate Volunteering is mainly concerned with the employees of business firms offering themselves as volunteers within the communities in need in an organized way. Corporate Volunteering is thus an important part of CSR.

"The concepts of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and corporate volunteering have drawing the attention of the business community, although these concepts have yet to be made popular." Some of them have made several contributions to carry out social work in the various sector, including some especially generous contributions to the creation of physical facilities in the various social sectors like health and education, and also by short-term health camps being set-up in rural areas.

Many business organizations in Nepal are now motivated to participate in community welfare activities. In this regard, FNCCI has taken the lead role to develop awareness on corporate philanthropy.

Source: Enhancing Corporate Social Responsibility through Volunteering Spirit Promotion. NPC/NDVS, UNV and FNCCI, January 2005, Kathmandu.

Similar findings emerge from the regional stakeholder consultations, where respondents stated that corporate social responsibility in Nepal is mainly limited (44%) and even moderate (18%). Another 14% found it insignificant, while 9% judged it to be significant.

2.7.3 Corporate philanthropy. There are few corporate organisations that contribute financial support to civil society. Corporations such as Dugar Group, Golcha Organisation, Kedia Group, Jyoti Group and Mercantile have established hospitals, supported schools and colleges, or launched environmental improvement programmes as charity activities. Corporate philanthropy in Nepal is allied with their commercial interests. The regional stakeholder consultations reveal that 21% of funding comes from individual donations, 21% from foreign donors, 19% from indigenous corporate funding and 16% from individual membership. While 15% of financial resources come from the government, 79% of CSO respondents stated that more than 10% of their funding came from corporate sources.

Conclusion

The Environment dimension of the CSI diamond in Nepal is in a state of change. The analysis of the indicators produces a rather poor score for the environment dimension. One of the major disabling factors was the country's volatile political environment. The political rights of citizens were violated, CSOs were threatened and the state was almost on the verge of collapse. In the last few years, the political system of the country was changed several times which, in turn, directly affected the functioning of CSOs. Although in all political systems in the past, the

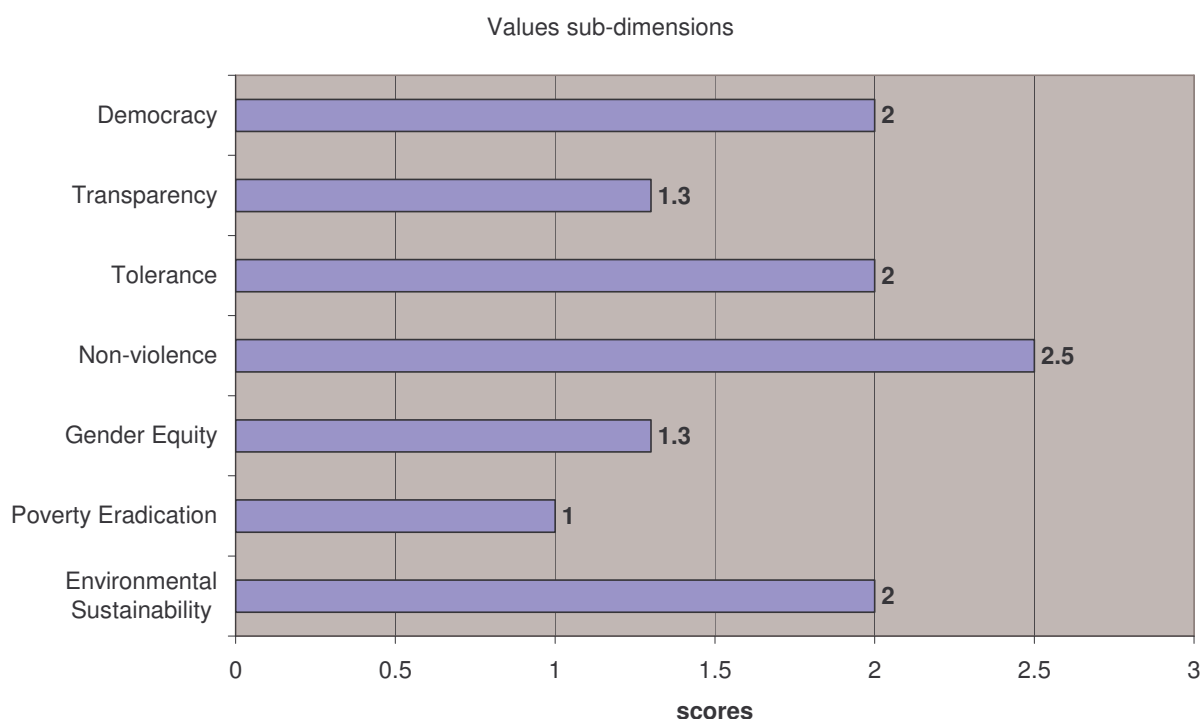
various regimes emphasized full citizen rights, in practice the respect and promotion of these rights varied greatly.

Over the past few years, in the context of political flux, CSOs have faced a number of challenges. All of the subdimensions, such as political context, basic freedoms, socio-economic and socio-cultural context, legal environment, state-CS relations and private sector-CS relations showed a problematic stage. The overall situation has often been very negative with large parts of the country not within the control of the state; corruption increasing; press freedom curtailed; and citizens generally discouraged. Despite such a harsh political environment, people did not lose trust, which enabled many CSOs to continue their operations, supporting the needy, fostering the space for activism and encouraging respect for human rights, even between warring factions. The score for environment was low (1.3), indicating that CSOs will have experienced a very challenging period.

3. VALUES

This section describes and analyses the values promoted and practiced by Nepalese civil society. The score for the Values Dimension is 1.7. Figure III.3.1 shows the scores for the seven subdimensions that make up the values dimension.

FIGURE III.3.1: Subdimension scores in Values dimension



3.1. Democracy

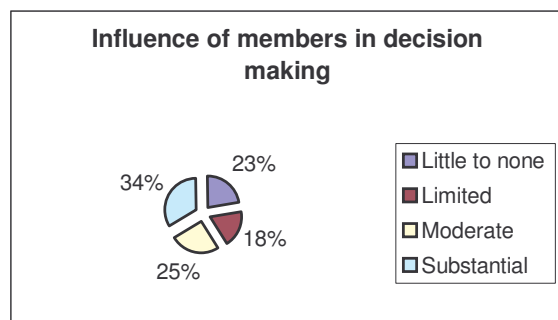
This subdimension examines the extent to which Nepalese civil society actors practice and promote democracy. Table III. 3.1 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.3.1: Indicators assessing democracy

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.1.1	Democratic practices within CSOs	2
3.1.2	Civil society actions to promote democracy	2

3.1.1 Democratic practices within CSOs. In the context of uniting and pressuring for political democracy in the country, Nepalese CSOs are also aware of issues of internal democracy within their organisations. Internal democracy encourages everyone to participate freely in defining the vision and activities as well as ensuring accountability.

Regional stakeholder consultations indicate that democratic patterns of leadership selection are practiced in most of the organisations, 81% of the organisations select leaders through election, 11% by self-election, 5% on the basis of selection and only 3% through other means such as seniority, inherent leadership capability, family background.

FIGURE III.3.2: Influence of CSO members on decision-making

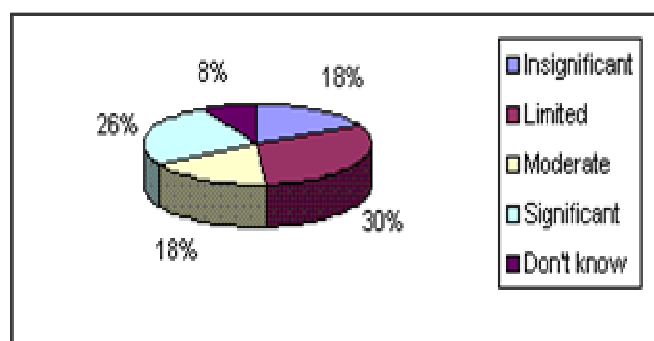
Many CSOs have the same chairperson for several years. Regarding the level of members' influence on the organisational decision-making process, the findings of the regional stakeholder consultations reveal that in 34% of cases, the influence of members in decision-making is regarded as substantial, 25% found it moderate, 18% said it was limited and 23% said that it is almost non-existent in the organisation.

3.1.2 CS actions to promote democracy. It is not possible to promote democracy without civil society putting pressure on the government. A vibrant civil society helps make the institutions and actors of governance accountable to the people and empowers civil society to articulate the democratisation of human existence (Dahal 2001).

The data show that over 30% of participants shared one or two examples of civil society campaigns, actions or programmes, 16% shared several examples and 9% shared many examples. Some of the examples of civil society activities on this issue include:

- Organising seminars, workshops, open discussions, rallies through different communities to restore peace and to protect democracy, human rights, rights of children and women.
- Running literacy classes and organising training to empower women.
- Pro-Public, one of the leading NGOs in Nepal, organised programmes to develop awareness on the prominent role of civil society
- Civil society has acted as a mediator to promote peace and for the reestablishment of democracy. Many organisations have established Alliances for Peace aimed at encouraging participation in the peace dialogue as mediators.
- The civil society groups boldly raised their voice against corruption, organising publicity and awareness programmes to curb corruption in the country. Social discrimination towards corrupt people is increasing as one impact of such a programme.
- Theatre has been used by civil society groups to raise public awareness about the current situation of the country and to consider how best to resolve conflict.

While the above data reveal that civil society groups have been fairly active in promoting democracy at the societal level, the CSI study could not make a clear decision as to the impact of such activities. Thus findings from the RSC show that 30% of respondents believe that the CS role is limited while another 18% stated that the role of CS in promoting democracy is insignificant. An almost equal number of RSC respondents expressed a more positive answer. Twenty-six percent of respondents believe that the role of civil society in promoting democracy at societal level is significant, while another 18% saw it as moderate. Even in the present context of turmoil and deadlock of democratic activities, CSOs are mobilizing their efforts separately as well as collectively through alliances or coalitions to restore democracy. CSOs are active in demanding the restoration of peace by organising peace rallies, workshops, conferences, and street dramas, or as mediators.

FIGURE III.3.3: CSOs promoting democracy at societal level

CSO activists supported the people's uprising of April 2006, in efforts to resolve a deadlock between three opposing sectors – the monarchy, Parliament and the Maoists. Dialogue was encouraged and the authoritarian monarchy opposed. Most CSOs participated in the protests, and mobilized democratic forces. As a result, Parliament was reinstated and the King's power reduced.

3.2. Transparency

This subdimension examines the extent to which civil society practices and promotes transparency. Table III.3.2 summarises the scores for individual indicators.

Table III.3.2: Indicators assessing transparency

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.2.1	Corruption within civil society	1
3.2.2	Financial transparency of CSOs	1
3.2.3	Civil Society actions to promote transparency	2

People and organisations close to the royal regime tend to oppose CSOs and have asserted in the media and in informal gatherings that NGOs are not transparent in their operations, and tend to have a hidden agenda, work in isolation and lack a coordinated approach. The authorities therefore demand that NGOs secure prior approval from the government to undertake any project especially when it is related to foreign donations of any size and kind (Chand 1999).

3.2.1 Corruption within civil society. Maintaining transparency is a critical challenge in many CSOs in Nepal, and many activists concede that this remains an ongoing concern. It is generally believed that donors, including INGOs themselves are not transparent although they demand that their partners be transparent (SAHAKARYA 2004). However, along with the changes in the political regime, CSOs are now taking such concerns about transparency more seriously

There is little accountability and transparency on the part of NGOs regarding financial matters. Very few NGOs clearly state the amount of money they spend on staff remuneration, office maintenance and so on. Most of the time, money is spent on infrastructures such as constructing buildings, buying equipment, vehicles, and furniture, all in the name of development projects (SAHAKARYA 2004). The media has reported on issues of mismanagement, conflict and miscommunication within the CS sector.

In regional stakeholder consultations, 28% of respondents said that corruption is very rare, 16% said that it is very frequent, 26% felt that it happens frequently and 6% felt it happens occasionally. However, 24% responded that they 'do not know' about it.

In the media review section, few articles were found that were mainly focused on the misuse of funds, and some articles reported on a lack of transparency in organisations, namely

- Misuse of fund by Nepal Indigenous Academy members; and
- Corruption and lack of transparency in one NGO.

3.2.2 Financial Transparency of CSOs. The majority - 93% - of respondents clearly mentioned that CSOs do not make their financial accounts publicly available, an indication of a lack of transparency. This signifies that the issue of financial transparency is weak in Nepali CSOs. Furthermore, such financial transparency is questionable, since incidents of corruption within civil society are also reported by the mass media. This is an area where suspicions between the government and CSOs runs high.

3.2.3 CS actions to promote transparency. In the regional stakeholder consultations, 29% of respondents found the CS role is limited in promoting government transparency while 27% stated that CS role is insignificant. Only 17% stated transparency factor as significant, while 13% said moderate regarding this issue. The lack of any article on this issue in the media review also mirrors this finding. CSOs in Nepal encourage participation of the concerned people including stakeholders in programme planning, problem solving and decision making as a means of promoting transparency (Fact Finding). The regional stakeholder consultation workshop reveals few examples of CS actions to promote transparency such as investigation of good and bad aspects of organisational functions at district level, important role of CSOs in tackling the Maoist issues, forecast each action through general meeting, group discussion, regular meeting, group formation and formation of committee and social auditing.

3.3. Tolerance

This subdimension examines the extent to which civil society practices and promotes tolerance. Table III.3.3 summarises the scores for individual variables.

Table III.3.3: Indicators assessing tolerance

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.3.1	Tolerance within the civil society arena	2
3.3.2	Civil society activities to promote tolerance	2

3.3.1 Tolerance within the CS arena. Even in periods of national crisis, many CSOs remain tolerant, manifested by the activities carried out by CSOs in difficult and conflict-ridden that government is unable to reach. The media review includes articles on this indicator that have addressed issues around women, children, culture, newspaper censorship, and SAFMA. The degree of tolerance generally remains high given that both Hindu and Buddhist religions respect the values and opinions of others and mutually promote their cultures.

However, the RSC survey provided a different perspective, with 15% of respondents stating that intolerant forces dominate civil society, 28% stating that they are significant actors, 19% who feel that they are marginal actors within civil society, and 6% who said that they are completely isolated and strongly denounced by civil society at large. These negative views may be a reflection of the increasing dissatisfaction of the Nepalese people with the ongoing conflict, as well as a growing intolerance of the elites.

3.3.2 CS actions to promote tolerance. CSOs play an important role in promoting tolerance in society, organising various programmes such as mediation, conflict resolution and peace-building with the aim of increasing and maintaining tolerance among various groups. Although the

ongoing conflict in the country has undermined the general level of tolerance, it is felt that this is only temporary, in view of the strong historic ties among different religious, ethnic, political, social and cultural groups.

Government policy states that NGOs are not allowed to work in the political domain but should rather focus on the developmental sector, which can be termed an institutional barrier. There may also be structural barriers, for example, in that CSOs are expected to work through Maoist structures when doing developmental work in an area under their control.

The regional stakeholder consultations reveal that the role of CSOs in promoting tolerance at societal level varies from significant (19%), moderate (17%), limited (34%) to insignificant (7%).

One-third of respondents in the regional stakeholder consultations knew of one or two examples, while 18% could not provide any examples. Only 10% of respondents were aware of many examples of civil society publicity campaigns, actions or programmes aimed at promoting tolerance.

The regional stakeholder consultations show that while CSOs do not actively promote tolerance at the societal level, some attempts have been made to organise campaigns, assemblies and conferences to do so. Examples include public discussion with people affected by conflict, or assisting women who are in situations of exploitation or violence.

3.4. Non-violence

This subdimension describes and assesses the extent to which Nepalese civil society actors and organisations practice and promote non-violence. Table III.3.4 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.3.4: Indicators assessing non-violence

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.4.1	Non-violence within the CS arena	2
3.4.2	CS actions to promote non-violence	3

3.4.1 Non-violence within the CS arena. There is a mixed response among the respondents regarding non-violence within civil society. In the regional stakeholder consultations, 31% of the respondents stated that the forces within civil society are isolated groups regularly using violence to express their interests, whereas 27% of the respondents stated that the use of violence is extremely rare; 20% felt that the isolated groups occasionally resort to violence and 7% said that they express in significant mass based group. Even in the movement of CSOs for the restoration of democracy, the regime infiltrated violent groups such as vigilante and hooligans to disturb CSOs' activities.

Regarding acts of violence within CS, 32% of the respondents stated that such acts are never denounced by other CS actors, 31% said that they are rarely denounced, 5% said that denouncement is usual and 11% stated that violence is always denounced.

3.4.2 CS actions to promote non-violence and peace. The data reflect that a majority of respondents in the RSC (59%) consider the CS role in promoting non-violence as either

insignificant or limited. This indicates that CS is not very actively involved in peace-building efforts in the country, although CSOs are involved in organising peace movements, offering alternative perspectives, resolving conflicts through mediation and promoting reconciliation. Workshops, conferences, seminars, gatherings, inter-group discussions between different organisations and information dissemination through role-play are regularly organised. An example is the 'Movement for Peace' where people gather frequently in public spaces and light candles to promote the need for peace.

3.5. Gender equity

This subdimension analyses the extent to which Nepalese civil society actors practice and promote gender equity. Table III.3.5 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.3.5: Indicators assessing gender equity

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
<u>3.5.1</u>	Gender equity within the CS arena	<u>1</u>
<u>3.5.2</u>	Gender-equitable practices within CSOs	<u>1</u>
<u>3.5.3</u>	CS actions to promote gender equity	<u>2</u>

In the context of Nepal, gender-based exclusion covers physical survival, health and educational opportunities, ownership of assets, mobility, and overall cultural status. The GDI of Nepal is 0.511 (Human Development Index 2005, UNDP). As compared to the overall economic situation of the country, the GDI of Nepal indicates that the condition of Nepalese women is improving, and is better than some rich countries with high HDI (UNDP, 2005). The country has achieved some measurable result in gender development, and the improved socio-cultural status of women when compared to counterparts in some wealthier countries, particularly in the Arab region. However, there are many issues such as improving literacy, increasing per capita income, and reducing discrimination against women that have not been adequately addressed.

Women's participation in the political process is only one-fifth that of men; the same pattern is manifested in professional occupations and even more so in administrative employment (UNDP, 2004).

There are some special rights for women workers incorporated within the Labour Act and accompanying labour regulations. Women are legally entitled to equal pay for similar jobs and enjoy some gender-related privileges, such as maternity leave, feeding intervals during working hours and crèche facilities (ILO, 2004).

3.5.1 Gender equity within the CS arena. While some CSOs are led by women, for example, the Aama Milan Kendra (Mothers Group), Saathi (Friend), Maiti Nepal (Mothers' Home) and Didi Bahini (Sisters), there are few disadvantaged women in CSOs. According to the regional stakeholder consultations, 41% of the respondents stated that discrimination against women exists significantly, 25% said it is limited, 14% felt it exists at a moderate level and 7% said that it is insignificant. Studies show that women in CSOs often face problems such as harassment or increased workload (SAHAKARYA 2004).

Table III.3.6: Discriminatory actions against women

<i>SN</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	Percentage (%)
1	Insignificant	7
2	Limited	25
3	Moderate	14
4	Significant	41
5	Don't know	13

On the question of how active civil society is in denouncing sexism, the response of RSC respondents was mixed, where 28% said that civil society actors always publicly denounce sexist practices within civil society; 27% agreed that CS actors usually denounce sexism, 26% and 11% respectively felt that such practice rarely or never takes place. It is interesting to note that the media review did not locate any reports in the media regarding sexist practices within civil society.

3.5.2 Gender-equitable practices within CSOs. While equitable distribution of benefits is being practiced within organisations in Nepal, these are mainly limited to large donor agencies and do not include local Nepali CSOs. Almost all donors have prioritized gender in their country programmes. The most active donors against gender discrimination include UNIFEM, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, SNV, DANIDA, FES, and MS Nepal. CSOs doing advocacy work around gender equality include ABC-Nepal, Center for Research Environment Health and Population Activities (CREHPA), Didi Bahini, Legal Advice and Counseling Center (LACC), Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD), Maiti-Nepal, Saathi, Sancharika Samuha-Nepal (SAS-N), Women Rehabilitation Center (WOREC) and Women for Human Rights (WHR). Most of these CSOs are led by women and also have gender policies in place.

The RSC reflected that the majority of CSOs do not have policies within their organisation to ensure gender equity. Thus, out of 141 respondents, only 16% said they have written policies regarding equal opportunity and/or equal pay for equal work for women, whereas 81% said they do not have this policy in their organisation.

3.5.3 CS actions to promote gender equity. NGOs have helped to form women's pressure groups to fight gender discrimination. Women's Watch Group, Working Group Active for Women's Rights. are some examples. In some cases, NGOs, especially women's rights activists, work together on critical issues such as the Bill to Amend the New National Code of Nepal concerning women's equal property rights and abortion (Bhattachan 2003). However, the RSC research indicates that only 30% of the respondents are of the view that civil society is promoting gender equity at societal level in a significant way. A further 24% said they moderately promote gender equity and 23% limited, 8% insignificant and 15% said they 'don't know' about this.

Within CSOs, women-centred NGOs have contributed significantly to raising awareness of women about the nature, forms and effects of gender discrimination and the ways to fight back. Maiti Nepal, and ABC Nepal, both led by women activists, have saved hundreds of women from entering prostitution. Women-led CSOs are also active in social mobilisation, advocacy, rights-based and welfare-based activities. There are a number of women lobbying government to incorporate gender issues in legislation.

Table III.3.7: Promoting gender equity in society at large

<i>SN</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
1	Insignificant	8	None	6
2	Limited	23	One or two examples	22
3	Moderate	24	Several	14
4	Significant	30	Many	33
5	Don't know	15	Don't know	25

The regional stakeholder consultation reveals that 22% of respondents cited one or two examples, 14% gave several, and 33% illustrated many cases in promoting gender equity at societal level.

From the media review, various actions to promote gender equity were found which are mentioned below:

- Distribution of the red cloth and *tika* for the widow women of Bardiya. This has created a national movement on the rights of single women. .
- Direct aid programmes and implementation of adult literacy programmes for women's empowerment.
- Women's groups enhance the programme to preserve the Magar culture, the Magar being an indigenous community with a unique culture. Women's groups formed by the Magar community are active in preserving their own culture. Formation of CSOs by women in this community have enabled them to speak out on their rights and other social issues which in turn is helping to enhance gender equity.

3.6. Poverty eradication

This subdimension examines the extent to which Nepalese civil society actors promote poverty eradication. Table III.3.8 presents the indicator score.

Table III.3.8: Indicator assessing poverty eradication

<i>Ref. #</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Score</i>
3.6.1	CS actions to eradicate poverty	1

3.6.1 CS actions to eradicate poverty. Most CSOs are actively involved in carrying out poverty eradication activities through advocacy, policy influence and other service delivery measures. However, the work being undertaken is, at best, an isolated attempt at addressing poverty issues. The only large-scale attempt at putting poverty eradication at the forefront has been the recent attempt to participate in the 'Global Call to Action Against Poverty' campaign, where CS participation was high throughout the country. Some of the more specific poverty reduction programmes include the cooperative saving programme, community forestry programme, Ama Samuha, Credit Investment and Small Industries.

Most government ministries and several INGOs are working jointly with CS in the field of poverty eradication, and the Tenth Plan/Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Local Self-Governance Act have emphasised the inclusion of CS.

In the RSC, close to half of the respondents considered civil society's activities to promote poverty eradication to be limited. Altogether, 10% of respondents said that CSOs have a significant role, while 16% and 16% respectively felt this was either moderate or insignificant.

Table III.3.9: Overall role of CSOs in reducing poverty

<i>SN</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	Percentage (%)
1	Insignificant	16
2	Limited	49
3	Moderate	16
4	Significant	11
5	Don't know	8

3.7. Environmental sustainability

This subdimension analyses the extent to which Nepalese civil society actors practice and promote environmental sustainability. Table III.3.10 presents the indicator score.

Table III.3.10: Indicator assessing environmental sustainability

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.7.1	CS actions to sustain the environment	2

3.7.1 CS actions to sustain the environment. Because of its rich biological and cultural diversity, Nepal until recently was referred to a “Shangrila”. A consequence of this has been a significant tourism industry as one of the main areas of economic development. In the last few years there has also been impressive growth in community forestry.

CSOs and conservation groups have prioritised environmental awareness and conservation activities. CSOs are involved in educating high school students throughout the country about a wide range of environmental issues, and advocacy groups have begun to increase awareness through public meetings about urban pollution issues arising from emissions from vehicles and industries like brick kilns (HMG, 2002).

The regional stakeholders' consultations show that 27% of the respondents can cite one or two examples of civil society public campaigns, actions or programmes dedicated to protecting the environment while 37% cite many examples regarding this matter. A few examples are as follows:

- Awareness of the need for environmental protection
- Forest conservation and reward system
- Tree plantation and environmental pollution control, and
- Forest preservation and community forest users group.

The media review also reflects a similar trend with a fairly high coverage of articles on environmental concerns, including CS actions to promote environmental sustainability.

Conclusion

Nepalese civil society promotes and practices positive values only to a certain extent. The score for the values dimension is 1.7. The study revealed that CS is committed to the practice of democratic norms not only within the organisations but also in society at large, with a view to

supporting democratization. It is also active in promoting transparency, non-violence, gender equity and environmental sustainability.

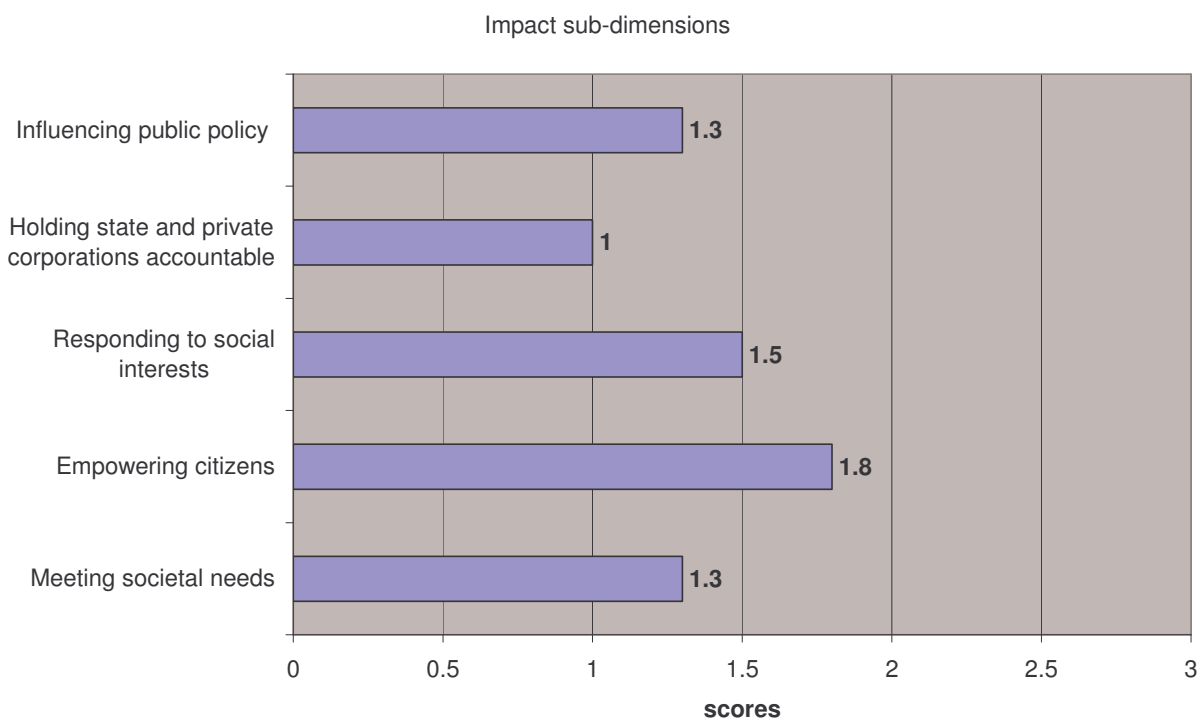
The study shows a discrepancy regarding the scores. Nepalese civil society is weak in tackling corruption and financial transparency issues, it is still not able to install a gender equity-friendly value system within organisations, and the role of CSOs in poverty eradication is still not very impressive. Ordinary citizens do not believe that CSOs were established mainly to address poverty, since CSOs have not yet been able to include this as one of their major values.

CSOs in Nepal have played a catalytic role in the restoration of democracy and peace. Although non-partisan political actions are dominated by men and only few CSOs are led by women, women's participation in community forestry and environmental improvement activities is increasing.

4. IMPACT

This section describes and analyses the extent to which civil society is active and successful in fulfilling several essential functions in Nepalese society and politics. The score for the Impact Dimension is 1.3. Figure III.4.1 presents the scores for the five subdimensions within the impact dimension.

FIGURE III.4.1: Subdimension scores for Impact dimension



4.1. Influencing public policy

This subdimension describes and assesses the extent to which Nepalese civil society is active and successful in influencing public policy, in the fields of social policy and human rights policy, as well as its impact on the national budgeting process. Table III.4.1 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.4.1: Indicators assessing influence on public policy

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
4.1.1	Human rights impact	1
4.1.2	Social policy impact	1
4.1.3	Impact on national budgeting process	1

The question of CSO impact on public policy was assessed through the regional stakeholder survey and consultations and expert interviews. Priority concerns of the population in terms of public policy were analysed.

Many civil society institutions have successfully sensitized the political leadership and functionaries to many important issues including human rights, environment and gender equity. However, they have not been able to significantly impact the political culture and institutions of

the country owing to its diverse nature and weak form of collective action (NESAC 1998). Recently, however, its influence can be noticed in broadening the space for policy dialogue.

4.1.1 Human Rights. As regards CSOs' influence on policies aimed at protecting human rights, the regional stakeholders believe that CSOs in Nepal are active or very active (36%) or somewhat active (57%).

Table III.4.2: Activeness of civil society in human rights protection

	Inactive %	Somewhat Active %	Active %	Very Active %
Human rights protection	7	57	30	6

CSOs are playing a role in influencing public policy, but implementation of policy is seemingly very weak. After the restoration of a multiparty system in 1990, basic human rights were also restored. Development efforts are planned and implemented targeting the basic needs of the people, since the provision of such basic needs is also considered a human right.

The implementation of government's development programmes is not adequate to achieve the basic rights of the poor. The ongoing conflict has also violated human rights on several occasions. Those issues have to be identified and change advocated for, and development interventions must support these processes if the root causes of poverty are to be challenged (IGD, 2003).

4.1.2 Social Policy Impact. The level of activeness of civil society that has influenced public policy in empowering disadvantaged communities is shown below. In raising these issues, regional stakeholder participants found that CSOs are somewhat active (55%), active (25%), very active (6%) and inactive (14%). Similarly, regarding the protection of human rights, it was felt that CSOs are somewhat active (57%), active (30%), very active (6%) and inactive (6%).

Table III.4.3: Influencing public policy to empower disadvantaged communities

	Inactive %	Somewhat Active %	Active %	Very Active %
Empowerment of Disadvantaged communities	14	55	25	6

As regards the success of CSO activities (lobbying the government on various issues such as inclusion of minorities in development, development of far western regions of the country), the regional stakeholders felt that CSOs were somewhat successful (71%), successful (8%), and unsuccessful (7%).

4.1.3 Civil Society's impact on national budgeting process case studies. The national budgeting process in Nepal underestimates the role of CSOs, and is mainly done by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning Commission with nominal input from CSOs. The Finance Ministry asks for suggestions on the forthcoming budget from interested parties and CSOs through interaction

programmes. After the release of the budget at the annual budget speech, the Finance Minister then meets with the media, concerned parties and CSOs for interaction. However, in any of these interactions, there is very little chance for CSOs to exert any influence.

Because of the overwhelming pressure from CSOs regarding the development of the Far Western part of the country, the government has allocated a substantial amount for the development of this region.

4.2. Holding state and private corporations accountable

This subdimension analyses the extent to which civil society is active and successful in holding the state and private corporations accountable. Table III.4.4 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.4.4: Indicators assessing holding state and private corporations accountable

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
4.2.1	Holding the state accountable	1
4.2.2	Holding private corporations accountable	1

4.2.1 Holding the state accountable. CSOs are now monitoring the state's activities with regard to progress/achievement and sustainability of programmes, human rights monitoring and social justice. In the regional stakeholder consultations, 63% of respondents said that CSOs are somewhat active in holding the state accountable while another 18% state that civil society is active in holding the state accountable. The CSOs' collective role through advocacy has compelled the state to explain its policies and actions; one example is where the government had to ban the use of expired pesticides and reconsider its dumping policies.

During the peoples' movement in April 2006, CSOs played a very active and decisive role. CSOs publicly announced that they would be participating in the movement until the democratic system was reinstated. This encouraged political parties to be more active in reviving democracy. After the successful reinstatement of parliament, a number of resolutions were passed which benefited ordinary citizens, while political parties and the state made commitments to transparency, pro-public and anti-corruption measures.

4.2.2 Holding private corporations accountable. CSOs have pressured private corporations through public demonstrations, especially with regard to environmental issues.

According to the regional stakeholder consultation, 65% of respondents indicate that the CSOs are somewhat active in holding the private corporations accountable while 9% state that CSOs are very active in this regard. In terms of how successful these activities have been, 63% felt that civil society is somewhat successful and 18% of the respondents said that it is successful. On the other hand, 9% of respondents stated that CS has been unsuccessful in this regard. The media review found the following examples regarding this indicator:

- Discussion with Ministry and CSO representatives.
- Programme organised by consumers' forum in the linkages of electricity, telephone and health service.
- Different organisations, institutions and civil society launch various programmes against social injustice.

- Civil rights education conducted for employees of disadvantaged and victimised groups.
- Different types of training organised for disadvantaged groups.

Table III.4.5: CS activity in holding private corporations accountable

<i>SN</i>	<i>Answers</i>	<i>%</i>
1	Inactive	10.1
2	Somewhat active	65.2
3	Active	9.42
4	Very active	3.62
5	Don't know	11.59

4.3. Responding to social interests

This subdimension analyses the extent to which civil society actors are responsive to social interests. Table III.4.6 summarises the respective indicator scores.

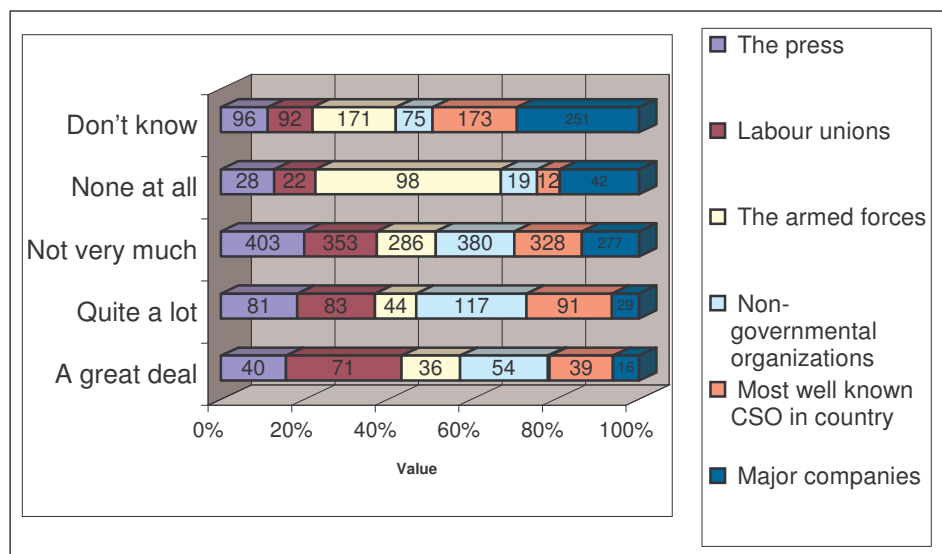
Table III.4.6: Indicators assessing response to social interests

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
4.3.1	Responsiveness	<u>1</u>
4.3.2	Public trust in CSOs	<u>2</u>

4.3.1 Responsiveness. CSOs are very sensitive to diverse social concerns. They raise their voices when human rights are violated and they have become an eye, ear and light for the victims of society. Many CSOs are established to support disabled people, those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, and the aged.

4.3.2 Public Trust. People have begun to better understand the importance of CSOs, which, because of diverse orientation and flexibility are more efficient than government organisations in communicating and delivering services.

The findings of the population survey comment on the confidence level of the organisations; 47% of the individuals have no confidence at all in the leaders of the country because they are mainly responsible for the current adverse situation and appear incapable of good leadership. This was especially apparent during the royal regime where 66% of the people expressed a lack of confidence in their leaders. As a state-centred approach is focused on the overall development of the nation, 21% of the people have a lot of confidence and 24% have a great level of confidence in the government. Furthermore, 60% of respondents said they do not trust the police very much.

FIGURE III.4.2. Opinion of various stakeholders on public trust

The opinion of the respondents in different arenas regarding this issue - such as the temple, armed forces, press, labour unions, NGOs, major companies and most well-known CSOs in the country are presented in the graph. According to the community survey, 28% of respondents express trust in civil society.

4.4. Empowering citizens

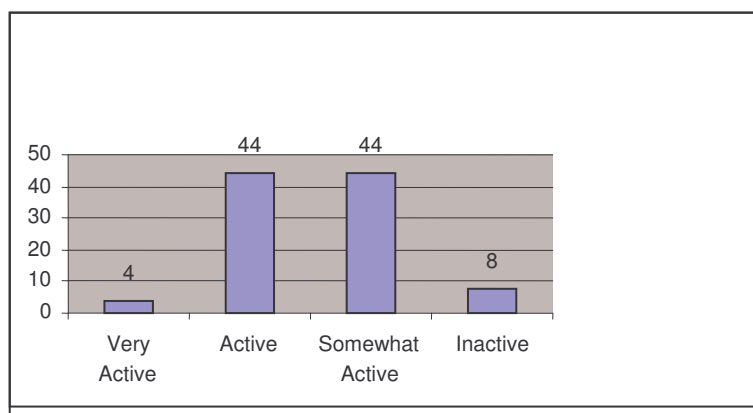
This subdimension describes and assesses the extent to which civil society is active and successful in empowering citizens to shape decisions that affect their lives, especially traditionally marginalised groups. Table III.4.7 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.4.7: Indicators assessing empowering citizens

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
4.4.1	Informing/educating citizens	<u>2</u>
4.4.2	Building capacity for collective action	<u>2</u>
4.4.3	Empowering marginalized people	<u>2</u>
4.4.4	Empowering women	<u>2</u>
4.4.5	Building social capital	<u>1</u>
4.4.6	Supporting/creating livelihoods	<u>2</u>

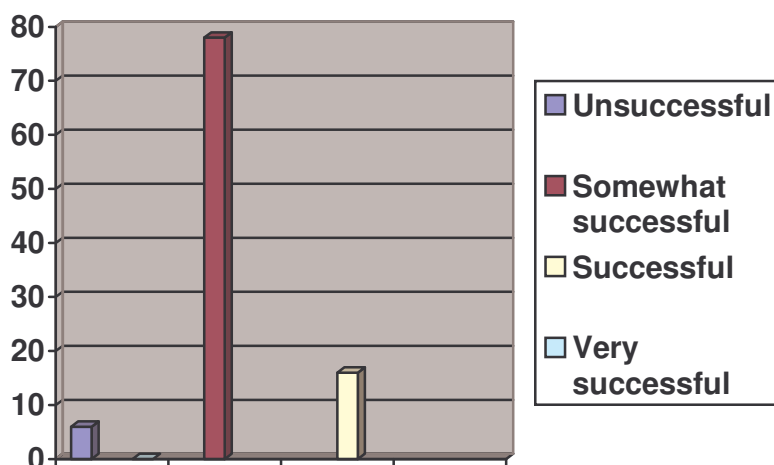
4.4.1 Informing/educating citizens. CS is active in informing and educating citizens on public issues. Media - print and electronic - contributes to establishing people's access to information, which plays a significant role in development. The CSI found that 68% of respondents participated in public education activities organised by CSOs; 48% of stakeholders believed that civil society is quite or very active in informing/educating citizens; while a large majority of stakeholders felt that CSOs were only somewhat successful in this area.

FIGURE III.4.3: Activity of CSOs in undertaking public information or public education activities



Likewise, the levels of success of civil society in undertaking public information or public education activities are as follows:

FIGURE III.4.4: Success of civil society in undertaking public information or public education activities (%)



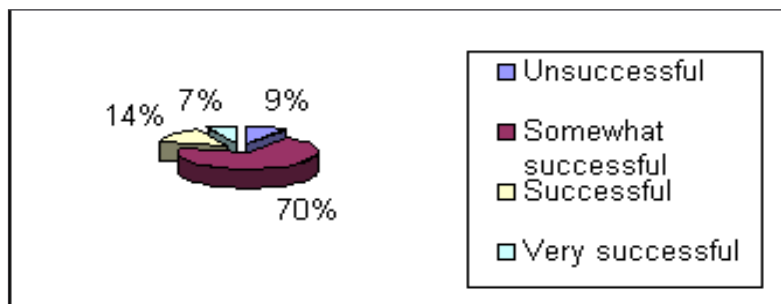
4.4.2 Building capacity for collective action. There is an increasing tendency towards CS involvement in building capacity of people to organise themselves, mobilise resources and work together to solve common problems. CSOs such as Samuhic Abhiyan, ICA Nepal, New Era, Management Association of Nepal and the Environmental Camp for Conservation Awareness are active in building capacity, by providing capacity-building training such as leadership development, community development, training of trainers and facilitation skills. This helps people to build their confidence level in their own areas of interest. Some organisations also provide skill-based training for the self-employment of individuals and groups. According to the RSC, 58% of respondents state that CSOs in Nepal are active on this issue to a limited extent, 29% are quite active while another 2% are very active. On the other hand, only a small percentage (11%) of respondents felt that CSOs in Nepal are not active in this regard.

On the question of how successful CSOs have been with regard to building capacities, the RSC reflects that close to 70% of respondents perceive CSOs to be somewhat successful in building

capacities of people to organise themselves, 14% as successful and 7% as very successful, whereas 9% of the respondents considered CSO activities in this regard as unsuccessful.

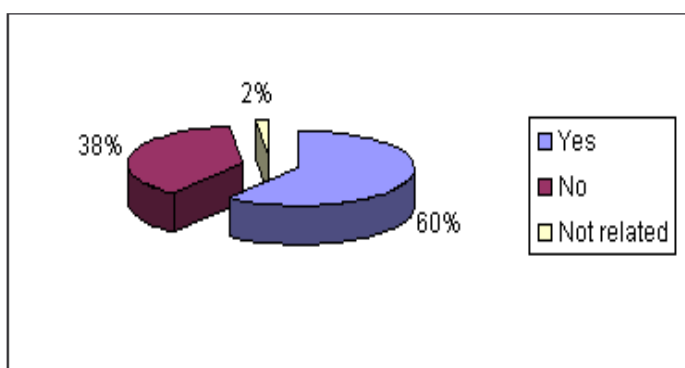
The level of activeness of civil society in building the capacities of local communities is as follows:

FIGURE III.4.5: Extent of CS success in building the capacity of local communities



4.4.3 Empowering marginalized people. A number of organisations have been established to support this initiative. Marginalised people are becoming aware of their status and rights, partly as a result of the ongoing conflict. Civil society groups are mobilising local groups, community-based organisations and NGOs for poverty alleviation and social mobilization for development. In this respect, some NGOs have performed remarkably well in social mobilization, income generation and generation of social capital. The experience of NGOs demonstrates the motivation of the rural poor, both men and women, to organise themselves into groups.

FIGURE III.4.6: CSO support to poor people



“Social mobilisation has also become instrumental in initiating activities that directly help to uplift the socio-economic status of the rural poor. Group organisation, social mobilization, savings and credit components with literacy and some basic skill development are some of the components of the programme. In many areas of rural Nepal, because of the governmental and nongovernmental efforts, the poor have not only empowered themselves but have also raised their income level through activities within and beyond their villages. A number of NGOs are involved in these activities” (National Planning Commission, 2000). Undoubtedly, credit also

goes to the CSOs for the empowerment of the marginalised groups. Most of the CSOs' interventions target a wider population covering both general as well as marginalised population. Several efforts have been made by CSOs to improve the life of marginalized people at national level.

According to the regional consultations, 60% of stakeholders believed that CSOs' activities are aimed at poor communities.

4.4.4. Empowering women. Women-led organisations are a vital component of CS, and are more aware of their rights than before, partly because of the rapid development of social and political movements. Women activists like Rita Thapa, Dr. Aruna Uprety, Sapana Malla, Binda Pande, Anuradha Koirala, Lily Thapa, Arju Deuba, Durga Ghimire, Santa Thapaliya have raised issues of the right to inherit parental property, equal property rights, right to self-determination; reproductive health rights including family planning and safe motherhood; tackling the problem of prostitution and trafficking of women; positive/affirmative action, both remedial and preferential, in education, politics, the police and army and public offices; equal wages; eradication of violence against women, including domestic violence; elimination of the problem of dowry; the education of girl children; political representation at national and local level; the elimination of girls' labor; women's empowerment; and mainstreaming gender (IGD 2003).

Thirty percent of the regional stakeholders saw women as a key target group of CSO activities. Many CSOs are undertaking development projects on micro-credit, literacy, and income generation with a focus on women. The government has also included women's rights issues in the Constitution and has drafted other bills such as 'women's property rights', 'rights to equality for citizenship' and protection from marital rape, that provide equal status for women. International agreements and instruments favourable to women have been ratified. Civil society has played a major role by advocating and lobbying for these policies, which are also reflected in the media review. Articles on CSOs supporting women on legal issues address issues of sexual assault against women and girls, the high priority of women's empowerment, women launching financial institutions and celebrating Women's Day.

4.4.5 Building social capital. Civil society has assisted community groups in building social capital. Public spiritedness has increased because of the exposure of community members to overall development activities carried out by CSOs. People are becoming more aware of the needs of the present as well as future generations. New civic norms and networks are being established. Social mobilisation activities launched by hundreds of CSOs have helped in building social capital in the country. In the last few years, local people have been united through local CSOs raising their voices for local level development. There are some examples of how civil society has tried to enhance social capital within the communities that they are working in.

However, the community survey data provides a different picture. The CSI attempts to measure the contribution of CS to strengthening social capital by comparing the levels of trust of members of CS to non-CS members, and shows that 88% of respondents to the community survey showed high levels of inter-personal trust, reflecting high levels of social capital. At the same time, however, the analysis also tells us that there is not much difference in levels of trust among members of CS (88.5%) against non-members (88.1%). According to the survey, while Nepali society enjoys high levels of social capital, this is not necessarily accredited to civil society.

4.4.6 Supporting livelihoods. A majority of the CSOs are urban-based and are removed from the needs of the poor, especially those based in the rural areas. Among all respondents in the community survey, 59% maintained that they had participated in CSO-led activities aimed at generating income for their community.

Nevertheless, those who are working in the most disadvantaged areas are quite active in supporting livelihoods with considerable impact. CSOs such as SODEC in the east, LIBIRD in the west and KIRDAC in the far west, as well as the Rural Reconstruction Network (RRN) and King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) at national level are active in helping the poor through community development activities.

4.5. Meeting societal needs

This subdimension examines the extent to which Nepalese civil society is active and successful in meeting societal needs, especially those of poor people and other marginalized groups. Table III.4.8 summarises the respective indicator scores.

Table III.4.8: Indicators assessing meeting societal needs

Indicator #	Indicators	Score
4.5.1	Lobbying for state service provision	<u>1</u>
4.5.2	Meeting societal needs directly	<u>1</u>
4.5.3	Meeting the needs of marginalized groups	<u>2</u>

4.5.1 Lobbying for state service provision. A number of CSOs are lobbying and doing advocacy work for the realization of people's and societal needs. CSOs have acted as the bridging element for the various specific issues such as Maoist issues, gender issues, human rights. CSOs in Nepal are actively lobbying for rural development, for example, with the pressure of CSOs and others, the government is compelled to carry out massive development works in the far western part of the country.

In response to whether RSC respondents could recall specific examples of civil society lobbying the government, only 11% of respondents were able to do so. However, almost all respondents were of the view that despite the lack of initiatives by CS in lobbying activities, those that were carried out have been somewhat successful (83%). Only 8% stated that the attempts at lobbying were not successful at all. Under 'Meeting Social Needs of Impact' (4.5) there were 17 articles, among them only 4 articles under this indicator in the media review.

Table III.4.9: Specific examples of civil society lobbying government to provide public services to the population

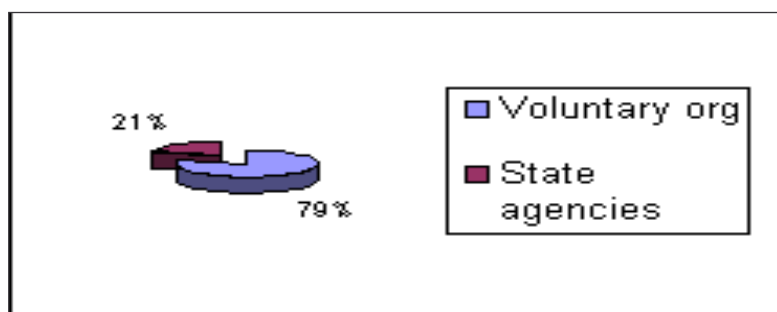
Yes	No
11%	89%

4.5.2 Meeting pressing societal needs directly. Twenty-one percent of respondents to the population survey were able to provide examples of where civil society has provided services to the population. In addition, a majority of the respondents to the regional consultations (59%) state that these services targeted the general population. In terms of impact, the results reflect a

negative trend. Altogether, 81% of the respondents to the regional surveys stated that the services provided by CSOs were unsuccessful.

4.5.3 Meeting needs of marginalized groups. CSOs are mainly focused on social mobilization, income and skill generation programmes to uplift the socio-economic conditions of the poor, run literacy classes, and so on. According to the population sample survey, 79% of respondents assessed CSOs as more helpful than state agencies.

FIGURE III.4.7: Meeting needs of marginalized groups (state/voluntary orgs)



The main marginalized group is the Dalits, with several aspects of Intra-Dalit Discrimination existing in society today. These discriminatory practices range from personal to organisational attitudes of untouchability. The elimination of Intra-Dalit Discrimination from among the Dalit remains as a huge and, to some extent, unexplored challenge. There has been little significant effort made by the government and NGOs to address Intra-Dalit Discrimination.

Conclusion

Nepalese CSOs have not been very successful in influencing public policies and exerting pressure on government and other decision-makers. This is reflected in the rather low score for the impact dimension (1.4). CSOs have partially contributed to empowering marginalized communities and getting basic services closer to the people. More specifically, CSOs have been working hard to support minorities, women and children. Moreover, the CSO role in supporting livelihoods has been rather significant and has made many people more interested in the role played by CSOs towards social and economic development. In all the consultations, participants stated that without the participation of CSOs, the country may not achieve the Millennium Development Goals set by the UNDP and accepted by the government of Nepal.

However, the impact of CSOs in the promotion of human rights, drafting of social policies, and lobbying the state is not very impressive; and CSOs are not very active in holding the state or private sector accountable. Nevertheless, the public trust in CSOs is quite high and this helps CSOs to carry out their activities in local communities in spite of numerous limitations.

IV. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NEPAL

This part of the report is based on the outcomes of the NAG meetings, regional consultations and National Workshop. The National Workshop is one of the major opportunities of examining the strengths and weaknesses of CSOs in Nepal since 105 participants from various CSOs attended. After the presentation of the overall report, participants were requested to identify the strengths and weaknesses of CSOs in Nepal and produce a set of recommendations. Participants were divided into four groups in order to examine each of the dimensions of the CSI.

STRENGTHS

- **Presence of CSOs in major parts of the country/Wide coverage**
After the restoration of democracy in 1990, thousands of CSOs were established throughout the country covering the majority of districts.
- **Diversity of CSOs**
CSOs are active in many sectors and represent different social groups. There is hardly any sector or group of people which is not covered by CSOs.
- **Promoting good governance**
Activity of CSOs has increased the transparency within the public and private sectors, which in turn has increased the need for good governance.
- **Advocating for full democracy and human rights**
CSOs are quite active in promoting democracy and human rights. In the popular movement of April 2006 which made drastic changes to the political situation, CSOs played a very active and catalytic role.
- **Promoting awareness**
CSOs are reported to be responsible for promoting awareness about various issues such as environment, health, education, peace-building. In the last few years, because of the CSOs activities, public awareness has increased tremendously, and there is increased awareness of civic and human rights and duties.
- **Role of CSOs in promoting participation of minorities in mainstream development**
In the last few years, many CSOs have directed their activities towards uplifting the socio-economic conditions of the marginalised communities, particularly the *dalit* or 'untouchable' people. Intentional donors have also focused their work on this area and enabled socially legitimate collective action.
- **Contribution to overall development**
The majority of CSOs aim to contribute to the overall development of the country. Many CSOs are now assisting the government and other international organisations to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA).
- **Protection of the natural environment**

CSOs have been playing a significant role in protecting the natural environment in Nepal. Community forestry which helps in protecting the green environment is a leading initiative, with approximately one million members, who work directly on improving the environmental quality of the area.

WEAKNESSES

- CSOs are not able to include diverse groups in their structure

The majority of CSOs are established through individual effort. Some of these are not able to include diverse groups in their committee since they are dominated by the relatives or friends of the particular founder. However, this practice is decreasing and professionalism is increasing.

- Dependency on donors

Unlike traditional charity-based organisations, CSOs (particularly NGOs) are dependent on external assistance for their operation. Most of them are not able to develop their own sustainable resources and are active only when they are supported externally.

- Inadequate transparency

This is one of the major problems for CSOs in Nepal. CSOs are less transparent to the general public and many things go unnoticed. Most CSOs do not produce annual reports. There is corruption in some CSOs, which contributes to a negative image of civil society as a whole.

- Weak professionalism and management

Many CSOs do not have qualified staff. They lack expertise in fundraising, strategic planning, etc. CSOs also often have weak management systems. Some CSOs are closely affiliated with particular political parties.

- Umbrella organisations are not able to unite all CSOs

Few federations or umbrella organisations are established in the country and they attract very few CSOs. There are challenges in dissemination of information and networking. There may be difficult bureaucratic procedures which discourage new organisations to join.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

During the National Workshop, CSI participants were asked to give recommendations for civil society based on the finding of the CSI report. On the basis of these recommendations, it is hoped that civil society stakeholders and other actors will find common ground for collaboration.

- Broaden awareness of citizens: CSOs should educate citizens about the changing nature of the national and local political environment, to continue promoting the values of democracy, peace, social justice and progress.
- Enhance internal capacity: CSOs should focus on developing internal capacity so that they can carry out activities with greater impact. CSOs should promote professionalism and invest in training.
- Establishing effective public communications systems: CSOs should strive to establish effective communication systems within their organisations.
- Strengthen umbrella bodies: Umbrella organisations such as the Social Welfare Council and the NGO Federation should be flexible enough to accommodate organisations that want to join them as members.
- Improve transparency: CSOs should improve internal transparency so that information is accessible to all citizens and not just direct stakeholders. More transparency will benefit their legitimacy, public ownership and participation.
- Government support: CSOs should lobby to get government support. At the same time, government should establish a mechanism to work with CSOs. With the democratization of the state, political parties and public institutions, a more conducive environment will be created for civil society-state-market synergy.
- More cooperation within civil society: CSOs should collaborate and cooperate so as to maximize the impact of their work. They should identify areas where they have competitive advantages and expertise.
- Central role for marginalized groups: CSOs should allow all groups of people including the marginalized communities to fully participate in their activities. This will enable them to become people-centric, rights-based, demand-driven and change-oriented.
- Capacity-building and local ownership: International donors and CSOs should focus on building the capacity of local and national CSOs in Nepal. INGOs should work through local partners rather than run their activities independently. This would increase knowledge and expertise for local CSOs to address the causes of poverty, inequality, and conflict. Local people should be given preference during recruitment of staff, setting of goals and priorities, implementation, evaluation and feedback for further reforms.

VI. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

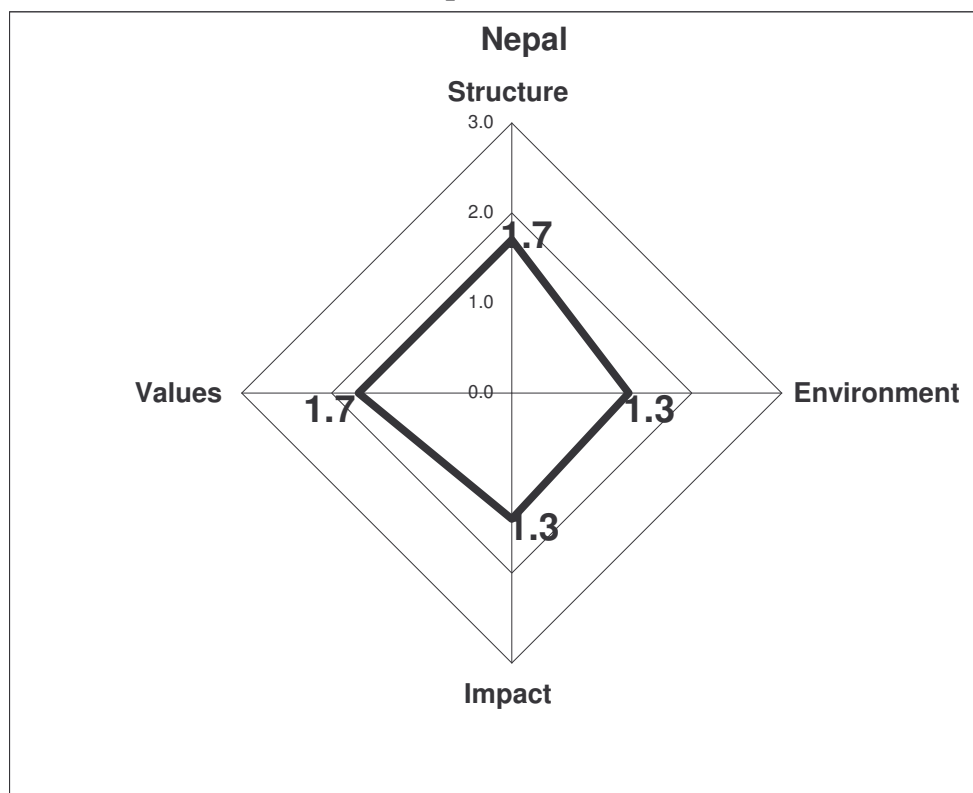
1. CS DIAMOND FOR NEPAL 2005

The CSI study has revealed that civil society in Nepal is overall not very strong. The dimensions scored as Structure 1.7, Environment 1.3, Values 1.7 and Impact 1.3. Despite being at the lower score, the diagram clearly indicates that all the four dimensions are more or less balanced, indicating that effort should be given to all the dimensions more or less equally to improve their status.

Structure and Values both score 1.7, indicating that the participation and diversity of citizens in CSOs, democracy, transparency, tolerance and non-violence are comparatively better than the two other dimensions, namely Environment and Impact which score 1.3. It was quite obvious that because of the ongoing conflict in the country the environment for CSOs to work in the rural areas was not conducive, which in turn affected achieving good impact. Environment is the weakest aspect of civil society development in the country. CSOs have had to work in a very inhospitable environment in the past few years. However, along with the changing political situation, there is the possibility of improving the operating environment of CSOs and their impact.

The recent change in the political environment of the country may have positive repercussions in other aspects of civil society development. Many new rules and regulations are in preparation and some are already in place. Some of them are aimed at promoting women's participation in politics and creating an environment conducive to socio-economic development. However, despite the promulgation of such rules, it may take some years to see positive impact.

FIGURE VI.1.1: CSI Diamond for Nepal



4. NEXT STEPS:

The CSI project confirms that civil society's development is critical to the overall development of the country. The work has revealed various issues pertinent for the development of CSOs in a sustainable and comprehensive way. It is hoped that the study will initiate an era of comprehensive analysis of CSOs in Nepal.

This study has clearly indicated the need to improve the role of CSOs in Nepal. To this end, partnerships and collaborations across sectors (i.e. involving the public and private sectors as well) are crucial.

ICA Nepal will publicise and disseminate the findings of the work to the broadest audience so as to give CSOs research-based evidence to improve their role in Nepalese society. Since the effort is a pioneering one, ICA will support other organisations in carrying out future research on civil society and social progress in the country.

CSOs, government, the private sector and the international community may benefit from this study and it is hoped that they will take recommendations of this work into account. The report may also be useful as a reference text for students and researchers interested in civil society in Nepal.

The findings of this report will also have a global relevance. CIVICUS, as well as other organisations, will use the findings of the CSI in Nepal to conduct an analysis of the state of civil society around the world.

ICA Nepal will convene workshops and seminars on civil society development, where all the participants in the various forums organised during this study and other interested stakeholders will participate and discuss the way forward. Obviously, this is the first step towards the long journey of further civil society development in the country.

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1- List of National Advisory Group and the team

Annex 2 – Overview of CSI Research Methods

Annex 3 – Media Analysis – Report on "Civil Society in the Media"

Annex 4 – The CSI Scoring Matrix

ANNEX 1: LIST OF NATIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (NAG) AND THE TEAM

Table A.1: Name of the NAG members and Team

S. No.	Name	Add.
1.	Mr. Anil Pant	Action Aid Nepal
2.	Dr. Arjun Karki	RRN/NGO Federation
3.	Mr. B. P. Yadav	Activist
4.	Mr. Bhairav Risal	Journalist, NEFEJ
5.	Mr. Chandra Singh Kulung	Association of Nepalese Indigenous Nationalities Journalists
6.	Mr. Chhongduk Bhotia	Nepal Bhotia Education Centre, Kimathanka, Sankhuwasabha
7.	Mr. Dipak Gwayali	Academician, RONAST
8.	Mrs. Indu Aryal	Executive Director, ABC Nepal
9.	Mr. Karna Shakya	Businessman and Philanthropist
10.	Mr. Krishna Jung Rayamajhi	Former Supreme Court Judge
11.	Mr. Kumar Sharma Acharya	Vice Chairman, Nepal Bar Association
12.	Dr. Manju Mishra	Principal, College of Journalism and Mass Communication
13.	Mr. Padma Lal Bishwakarma	Dalit Liberation Society
14.	Dr. Rohit Kumar Nepali	SAP International
15.	Dr. Sibesh C. Regmi	Country Representative, Action Aid Nepal
16.	Dr. Shanta Thapaliya	Legal Advice and Counseling Center (LACC)
17.	Dr. Surendra K. C.	T. U. /CICOPED
	Civil Society Expert: Dev Raj Dahal	
	Participatory Researchers: Ashbin Kumar Pudasaini Prakash Timsina Rekha Maskey Atma Ram Upadhaya Sabita Paudel Hemant Pokhrel Madan Raj Bista Juju Raj Tuladhar	
	Research Assistants: Ms. Laxmi Chapagain Mr. Raju Dahal and Mrs. Sangita Paudel Data Base Manager: Bhairav K. C.	
	Interim Coordinator: Deepak Raj Chapa National Coordinator: Tatwa P. Timsina	

ANNEX 2: OVERVIEW OF CSI RESEARCH METHODS

The activities performed under this project and associated methodologies are mentioned below.

Participation in the Global Training

After the selection of ICA Nepal as the National Coordinating Organisation, two members of the ICA Nepal participated in the training course on implementing CSI organised by CIVICUS.

Formation of the Team

In order to carry out the work, ICA Nepal formed the National Index Team and team of Participatory Researchers. ICA Nepal also requested distinguished members of various civil societies to participate in the National Advisory Group.

Overview Report

The overview report was drafted on the basis of the secondary data. It was submitted to CIVICUS and to all NAG members for their reference. Many members provided their comments to the report and these have been incorporated in the final report.

First NAG Meeting

The team of 17 members was formed as the National Advisory Group, including members of Civil Society, former Supreme Court Judge, renowned businessman and philanthropist, activist working in the trans-Himalayan region, Dalit (so-called untouchable community) activist, academician on CSO, senior citizen activist, and others. The first NAG meeting was held successfully on 23rd January 2005 at the Radisson Hotel in Kathmandu. The members were briefed on the purpose of the project. All the events of the meeting are mentioned in the report along with the evaluation form completed by the NAG members. The report was distributed to all the NAG members and sent to CIVICUS.

Social force analysis and civil society mapping were carried out during the first NAG meeting.

Press Conference

After the NAG meeting, a press orientation as well as a press briefing took place. A brief overview on CSI was provided and various aspects of CSO development in Nepal discussed. There were 14 journalists from various mass media. The news of the programme was also covered in several mass media.

Regional Stakeholder Survey

The regional stakeholder questionnaire was sent to about 20 organisations in eight districts, in line with the format given by CIVICUS with nominal adjustment. The questionnaires were in the Nepali language. The report of each of the regional stakeholder surveys was prepared and presented to the NAG meeting.

Regional Stakeholder Consultations

A one-day workshop with 15-20 organisations in 8 districts was convened, involving the people to whom the questionnaires were sent. Representatives from various organisations such as human rights organisations, youth clubs, women's organisations, saving credit organisations, labour organisations, consumer organisations, political parties, religious organisations, transport organisations, *dalit* organisations, the NGO Federation, and NGO CC were present.

The workshop focused on the potential and weakness of civil society and the future strategy to be followed for its improvement. In the plenary discussion, the participants also shared their views about the difficulties in completing the questionnaire. The participants were made clear about the need and purpose of the project.

Table A.2: Sites of Community Survey

<i>SN</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Nos.</i>
1	Banke	101
2	Dadeldhura	100
3	Jhapa	99
4	Rupendehi	94
5	Saptari	99
6	Chitawan	96
7	Sankhuwasava	91
Total		680

Table A.3: Sites of Regional Stakeholder Meeting

<i>SN</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Count</i>
1	Banke	17
2	Bhaktapur	16
3	Bharatpur	12
4	Dadeldhura	19
5	Jhapa	20
6	Rasuwa	15
7	Rupendehi	15
8	Sankhuwasabha	12
9	Saptari	15
Total		141

Population Survey

The research team visited the 8 districts as per the plan and implemented this work simultaneously with the regional stakeholder consultation programme. Here, the local inhabitants were made clear about the purpose of the project and questions were asked of about 100 people, including ethnic, indigenous, poor, lower caste, religious communities. We followed the format for the questionnaire with minor adjustments. The total of 680 questionnaires was completed and analysed.

Civil Society Policy Impact Study and Other Fact Finding

A list of 100 key informants was compiled for the interview to gather information on civil society and personally meet about 80 of them. Along with this, we also carried out other research activities such as policy impact study, gathering published and unpublished documents and studying the CSO laws.

Media Review

This work involved the graduate and masters degree students of the College of Journalism and Mass Communication. Before the media survey, ICA organised an orientation workshop on February 20 and 21, 2005. During this orientation, the participants and the media monitoring team was appraised of the CSI work and the various steps of the media review. They were also made aware of the sensitivity of the media monitoring and its role in civil society index work. Two students and one ICA staff member reviewed eight different media, both electronic and print, for two months – April and May, 2005.

The student conducted this work most sincerely and actively by reviewing news and views covered by the selected mass media. The information was analysed and presented in the main report.

Second NAG Meeting and National Workshop:

The second NAG meeting was organised in July, 2005. The aim of the meeting was to assign scores for indicators based on the draft country report and according to scoring guidelines. These scores were aggregated into subdimension and dimension scores. The scoring results for the four identified dimensions of civil society were graphically represented in the form of a Civil Society Diamond.

The draft country report was updated to include the results of the NAG scoring meeting. A national workshop was convened on May 12, 2006 to review and validate CSI research findings, to analyse principal strengths and weaknesses of civil society and to identify potential civil society strengthening activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation System

The CSI work is also monitored regularly by the ICA Nepal team. The National Index Team and in particular the National Coordinator took on this responsibility.

ANNEX 3: MEDIA ANALYSIS – REPORT ON "CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE MEDIA"

After the revival of democracy in 1990, there was a quantum growth in media in Nepal. This has played a decisive role in promoting and strengthening civil society activities. In order to know the frequency of reporting civil society activities in the media, intensive research work was carried out by a joint team of ICA Nepal and the College of Journalism and Mass Communication. As part of the CSI project, media were monitored for the two consecutive months of April and May in 2005. The monitoring was carried out using the guidelines provided by CIVICUS. The data was analysed using the MS- Access database programme.

For the purpose of this study, 8 media, of which 5 are print media, (3 daily and 2 weekly), 2 radios and 1 television were selected. Only one media was in English and the balance in Nepali. It is assumed that the declaration of emergency on February 1 by royal decree, when the media survey was started, heavily affected civil society coverage. Some of the media were banned and restricted to cover news only from the government. The media reports were compelled to cover the news and views provided by the authority.

The media and the number of items covered are as follows:

Table A.4: Name of the Media reviewed

Medium		
<i>SN</i>	<i>Name/Type</i>	<i>No. of items</i>
1	Radio Sagarmatha	16
2	The Himalayan Times	109
3	Kantipur	116
4	Jana Astha (weekly)	8
5	Bimarsha (weekly)	18
6	Radio Nepal	73
7	Gorkhapatra	91
8	NTV	105
Total		536

Altogether, 536 reports (news, views) were reported during this period, the majority on the cover page or as a main item. About half of the coverage was news story and about 10% features and news analysis. The following graph shows the type of item reported in the media. Kantipur (22%) reported more issues on CSOs during these two months.

Regarding the topics, items related to advocacy received most attention, followed by national politics and human rights issues. This was followed by civil society issues related to arts and culture, then the media and ICT, and finally conflict-related issues.

Regarding the origin of the coverage, civil society issues related to national, regional and local affairs received first, second and third priority.

Reporting Indicators:

There were more items on environment (182 items) and the fewest related to values (71). Among various indicators of structure, items regarding level of organisation are reported in greater number.

Table A.5: Indicator of Structure

1.1	Breadth of citizen participation	38
1.2	Depth of citizen participation	13
1.3	Diversity of civil society participants	51
1.4	Level of organisation	53
1.5	Interrelations	4
1.6	Resources	13
	Total:	172

Altogether, 182 items were covered during the survey period, of which 32% were on basic freedom and rights. However, only about one percent of the items were on state-civil society relations.

Table A.6: Indicator of Environment

2.1	Political context	22
2.2	Basic freedoms and rights	58
2.3	Socio-economic context	24
2.4	Socio-cultural context	56
2.5	Legal environment	16
2.6	State-civil society relations	2
2.7	Private sector-civil society relations	4
	Total:	182

The following graph shows that among various indicators of values, items on gender equity (46%) received highest attention.

Table A.7: Indicator of Values

3.1	Democracy	11
3.2	Transparency	5
3.3	Tolerance	8
3.4	Non-violence	10
3.5	Gender equity	32
3.6	Poverty eradication	1
3.7	Environmental sustainability	4
	Total:	71

107 items were recorded under impact during the survey period. Approximately 48% of the items were on empowering citizens. Influencing public policy also received considerable attention in the media (29%).

Table A.8: Indicator of Impact

4.1	Influencing public policy	31
4.2	State and private corporations accountable	7
4.3	Responding to social interests	5
4.4	Empowering citizens	48
4.5	Meeting societal needs	16
	Total:	107

About 23% of the items were covered in inside pages or not as major items, while 20% were reported as the cover items. Six percent were about opinion or editorial items.

Table A. 9: Prom Points

<i>SN</i>	<i>Prom points</i>	<i>Nos.</i>
1	1	109
2	2	63
3	3	121
4	Op/Ed	31
5	Value image	12
6	No response	200
Total		536

A relative majority (45%) of the issues covered in the media reflected CSOs positively. Only a small fraction i.e., 3% presented CSOs' image negatively.

Table A.10: Rep CSO

	<i>CSO</i>	<i>Nos.</i>
<i>SN</i>	0	93
1	+1	240
2	-1	17
3	No response	186
Total		536

Annex 4 – The CSI Scoring Matrix

1 – STRUCTURE

1.1 - Breadth of citizen participation

Description: How widespread is citizen involvement in civil society? What proportion of citizens engages in civil society activities?

1.1.1 - Non-partisan political action

Description: What percentage of people have ever undertaken any form of non-partisan political action (e.g. written a letter to a newspaper, signed a petition, attended a demonstration)?

A very small minority (less than 10%).	Score 0
A minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A significant proportion (31% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.2 - Charitable giving

Description: What percentage of people donate to charity on a regular basis?

A very small minority (less than 10%)	Score 0
A minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A significant proportion (31% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.3 - CSO membership

Description: What percentage of people belong to at least one CSO?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.4 - Volunteering

Description: What percentage of people undertake volunteer work on a regular basis (at least once a year)?

A very small minority (less than 10%)	Score 0
A small minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A minority (31% to 50%)	Score 2
A majority (more than 50%)	Score 3

1.1.5 - Collective community action

Description: What percentage of people have participated in a collective community action within the last year (e.g. attended a community meeting, participated in a community-organised event or a collective effort to solve a community problem)?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% -50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.2 - Depth of citizen participation

Description: How deep/meaningful is citizen participation in civil society? How frequently/extensively do people engage in civil society activities?

1.2.1 - Charitable giving

Description: How much (i.e. what percentage of personal income) do people who give to charity on a regular basis donate, on average, per year?

Less than 1%	Score 0
1% to 2%	Score 1
2.1% to 3%	Score 2
More than 3%	Score 3

1.2.2 - Volunteering

Description: How many hours per month, on average, do volunteers devote to volunteer work?

Less than 2 hours	Score 0
2 to 5 hours	Score 1
5.1 to 8 hours	Score 2
More than 8 hours.	Score 3

1.2.3 - CSO membership

Description: What percentage of CSO members belong to more than one CSO?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.3 - Diversity of civil society participants

***Description:* How diverse/representative is the civil society arena? Do all social groups participate equitably in civil society? Are any groups dominant or excluded?**

1.3.1 - CSO membership

Description: To what extent do CSOs represent all significant social groups (e.g. women, rural dwellers, poor people and minorities)?

Significant social groups are absent / excluded from CSOs.	Score 0
Significant social groups are largely absent from CSOs.	Score 1
Significant social groups are under-represented in CSOs.	Score 2
CSOs equitably represent all social groups. No group is noticeably under-represented.	Score 3

1.3.2 - CSO leadership

Description: To what extent is there diversity in CSO leadership? To what extent does CSO leadership represent all significant social groups (e.g. women, rural dwellers, poor people, and minorities)?

Significant social groups are absent / excluded from CSO leadership roles.	Score 0
Significant social groups are largely absent from CSO leadership roles.	Score 1
Significant social groups are under-represented in CSO leadership roles. CSO leadership equitably represents all social groups. No group is noticeably under-represented.	Score 2
	Score 3

1.3.3 Distribution of CSOs

Description: How are CSOs distributed throughout the country?

CSOs are highly concentrated in the major urban centres.	Score 0
CSOs are largely concentrated in urban areas.	Score 1
CSOs are present in all but the most remote areas of the country.	Score 2
CSOs are present in all areas of the country.	Score 3

1.4 - Level of organisation

***Description:* How well-organised is civil society? What kind of infrastructure exists for civil society?**

1.4.1 - Existence of CSO umbrella bodies

Description: What percentage of CSOs belong to a federation or umbrella body of related organisations?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 70%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 70%)	Score 3

1.4.2 - Effectiveness of CSO umbrella bodies

Description: How effective do CSO stakeholders judge existing federations or umbrella bodies to be in achieving their defined goals?

Completely ineffective (or non-existent)	Score 0
Largely ineffective	Score 1
Somewhat effective	Score 2
Effective	Score 3

1.4.3 - Self-regulation

Description: Are there efforts among CSOs to self-regulate? How effective and enforceable are existing selfregulatory mechanisms? What percentage of CSOs abide by a collective code of conduct (or some other form of self-regulation)?

There are no efforts among CSOs to self-regulate.	Score 0
Preliminary efforts have been to self-regulate but only a small minority of CSOs are involved and impact is extremely limited.	Score 1
Some mechanisms for CSO self-regulation are in place but only some sectors of CSOs are involved and there is no effective method of enforcement. As a result, impact is limited.	Score 2
Mechanisms for CSO self-regulation are in place and function quite effectively. A discernible impact on CSO behaviour can be detected.	Score 3

1.4.4 - Support infrastructure

Description: What is the level of support infrastructure for civil society? How many civil society support organisations exist in the country? Are they effective?

There is no support infrastructure for civil society.	Score 0
There is very limited infrastructure for civil society.	Score 1
Support infrastructure exists for some sectors of civil society and is expanding.	Score 2
There is a well-developed support infrastructure for civil society.	Score 3

1.4.5 - International linkages

Description: What proportion of CSOs have international linkages (e.g. are members of international networks, participate in global events)?

Only a handful of “elite” CSOs have international linkages.	Score 0
A limited number of (mainly national-level) CSOs have international linkages.	Score 1
A moderate number of (mainly national-level) CSOs have international linkages.	Score 2
A significant number of CSOs from different sectors and different levels (grassroots to national) have international linkages.	Score 3

1.5 - Inter-relations

Description: How strong / productive are relations among civil society actors?

1.5.1 - Communication

Description: What is the extent of communication between civil society actors?

Very little	Score 0
Limited	Score 1
Moderate	Score 2
Significant	Score 3

1.5.2 – Cooperation

Description: How much do civil society actors cooperate with each other on issues of common concern? Can examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances/coalitions (around a specific issue or common concern) be identified?

CS actors do not cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. No examples of crosssectoral CSO alliances/coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 0
It is very rare that CS actors cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Very few examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 1
CS actors on occasion cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Some examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 2
CS actors regularly cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Numerous examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 3

1.6 – Resources

Description: To what extent do CSOs have adequate resources to achieve their goals?

1.6.1 - Financial resources

Description: How adequate is the level of financial resources for CSOs?

On average CSOs suffer from a serious financial resource problem.	Score 0
On average CSOs have inadequate financial resources to achieve their goals .	Score 1
On average CSOs have most of the financial resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average CSOs have an adequate and secure financial resource base.	Score 3

1.6.2 - Human resources

Description: How adequate is the level of human resources for CSOs?

On average CSOs suffer from a serious human resource problem.	Score 0
On average CSOs have inadequate human resources to achieve their goal.	Score 1
On average CSOs have most of the human resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average CSOs have an adequate and secure human resource base.	Score 3

1.6.3 - Technological and infrastructural resources

Description: How adequate is the level of technological and infrastructural resources for CSOs?

On average, CSOs suffer from a serious technological and infrastructural resource problem.	Score 0
On average, CSOs have inadequate technological and infrastructural resources to achieve their goals.	Score 1
On average, CSOs have most of the technological and infrastructural resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average, CSOs have an adequate and secure technological and infrastructural resource base.	Score 3

2 - ENVIRONMENT

2.1 - Political context

Description: What is the political situation in the country and its impact on civil society?

2.1.1 - Political rights

Description: How strong are the restrictions on citizens' political rights (e.g. to participate freely in political processes, elect political leaders through free and fair elections, freely organise in political parties)?

There are severe restrictions on the political rights of citizens. Citizens cannot participate in political processes.	Score 0
There are some restrictions on the political rights of citizens and their participation in political processes.	Score 1
Citizens are endowed with substantial political rights and meaningful opportunities for political participation. There are minor and isolated restrictions on the full freedom of citizens' political rights and their participation in political processes.	Score 2
People have the full freedom and choice to exercise their political rights and meaningfully participate in political processes.	Score 3

2.1.2 - Political competition

Description: What are the main characteristics of the party system in terms of number of parties, ideological spectrum, institutionalisation and party competition?

Single party system.	Score 0
Small number of parties based on personalism, clientelism or appealing to identity politics.	Score 1
Multiple parties, but weakly institutionalised and / or lacking ideological distinction.	Score 2
Robust, multi-party competition, with well-institutionalised and ideologically diverse parties.	Score 3

2.1.3 - Rule of law

⁸⁵ For most of the indicators, secondary data sources are available for a broad range of countries. For each indicator, the scores indicate how to translate the original secondary data into the 4-point scale of the CSI scoring matrix.

Description: To what extent is the rule of law entrenched in the country?

There is general disregard for the law by citizens and the state.	Score 0
There is low confidence in and frequent violations of the law by citizens and the state.	Score 1
There is a moderate level of confidence in the law. Violations of the law by citizens and the state are not uncommon.	Score 2
Society is governed by fair and predictable rules, which are generally abided by.	Score 3

2.1.4 – Corruption

Description: What is the level of perceived corruption in the public sector?

High	Score 0
Substantial	Score 1
Moderate	Score 2
Low	Score 3

2.1.5 – State effectiveness

Description: To what extent is the state able to fulfil its defined functions?

The state bureaucracy has collapsed or is entirely ineffective (e.g. due to political, economic or social crisis).	Score 0
The capacity of the state bureaucracy is extremely limited.	Score 1
State bureaucracy is functional but perceived as incompetent and / or non-responsive.	Score 2
State bureaucracy is fully functional and perceived to work in the public's interests.	Score 3

2.1.6 – Decentralisation

Description: To what extent is government expenditure devolved to sub-national authorities?

Sub national share of government expenditure is less than 20.0%.	Score 0
Sub national share of government expenditure is between 20.0% and 34.9%.	Score 1
Sub national share of government expenditure is between 35.0% and 49.9%.	Score 2
Sub national share of government expenditure is more than 49.9%.	Score 3

2.2 - Basic freedoms and rights

Description: To what extent are basic freedoms ensured by law and in practice?

2.2.1 - Civil liberties

Description: To what extent are civil liberties (e.g. freedom of expression, association, assembly) ensured by law and in practice?

Civil liberties are systematically violated.	Score 0
There are frequent violations of civil liberties.	Score 1
There are isolated or occasional violations of civil liberties.	Score 2
Civil liberties are fully ensured by law and in practice.	Score 3

2.2.2 - Information rights

Description: To what extent is public access to information guaranteed by law? How accessible are government documents to the public?

No laws guarantee information rights. Citizen access to government documents is extremely limited.	Score 0
Citizen access to government documents is limited but expanding.	Score 1
Legislation regarding public access to information is in place, but in practice, it is difficult to obtain government documents.	Score 2
Government documents are broadly and easily accessible to the public.	Score 3

2.2.3 - Press freedoms

Description: To what extent are press freedoms ensured by law and in practice?

Press freedoms are systematically violated.	Score 0
There are frequent violations of press freedoms.	Score 1
There are isolated violations of press freedoms.	Score 2
Freedom of the press is fully ensured by law and in practice.	Score 3

2.3 - Socio-economic contexts⁸⁶

Description: What is the socio-economic situation in the country and its impact on civil society?

2.3.1 - Socio-economic context

Description: How much do socio-economic conditions in the country represent a barrier to the effective functioning of civil society?

Social and economic conditions represent a serious barrier to the effective functioning of civil society. More than five of the following conditions are present: 1. Widespread poverty (e.g. more than 40% of people live on \$2 per day) 2. Civil war (armed conflict in last 5 years) 3. Severe ethnic and/or religious conflict 4. Severe economic crisis (e.g. external debt is more than GNP) 5. Severe social crisis (over last 2 years) 6. Severe socio-economic inequities (Gini coefficient > 0.4) 7. Pervasive adult illiteracy (over 40%) 8. Lack of IT infrastructure (i.e. less than 5 hosts per 10,000 inhabitants)	Score 0
Social and economic conditions significantly limit the effective functioning of civil society. Three, four or five of the conditions indicated are present.	Score 1
Social and economic conditions somewhat limit the effective functioning of civil society. One or two of the conditions indicated are present.	Score 2
Social and economic conditions do not represent a barrier to the effective functioning of civil society. None of the conditions indicated is present.	Score 3

2.4 - Socio-cultural context

Description: To what extent are socio-cultural norms and attitudes conducive or detrimental to civil society?

2.4.1 - Trust

Description: How much do members of society trust one another?

Relationships among members of society are characterised by mistrust (e.g. less than 10% of people score on the World Value Survey (WVS) trust indicator).	Score 0
There is widespread mistrust among members of society (e.g. 10% to 30% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 1
There is a moderate level of trust among members of society (e.g. 31% to 50% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 2
There is a high level of trust among members of society (e.g. more than 50% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 3

2.4.2 - Tolerance

Description: How tolerant are members of society?

Society is characterised by widespread intolerance (e.g. average score on WVS derived tolerance indicator is 3.0 or higher).	Score 0
Society is characterised by a low level of tolerance (e.g. indicator between 2.0 and 2.9).	Score 1
Society is characterised by a moderate level of tolerance (e.g. indicator between 1.0 and 1.9).	Score 2
Society is characterised by a high level of tolerance (e.g. indicator less than 1.0).	Score 3

2.4.3 - Public spiritedness⁸⁷

Description: How strong is the sense of public spiritedness among members of society?

Very low level of public spiritedness in society (e.g. average score on WVS derived public spiritedness indicator is more than 3.5).	Score 0
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Low level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator between 2.6 and 3.5).	Score 1
Moderate level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator between 1.5 and 2.5).	Score 2
High level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator less than 1.5).	Score 3

2.5 - Legal environment

Description: To what extent is the existing legal environment enabling or disabling to civil society?

2.5.1 - CSO registrations

Description: How supportive is the CSO registration process? Is the process (1) simple, (2) quick, (3) inexpensive, (4) following legal provisions and (5) consistently applied?

The CSO registration process is not supportive at all. Four or five of the quality characteristics are absent.	Score 0
The CSO registration is not very supportive. Two or three quality characteristics are absent.	Score 1
The CSO registration process can be judged as relatively supportive. One quality characteristic is absent.	Score 2
The CSO registration process is supportive. None of the quality characteristics is absent.	Score 3

2.5.2 - Allowable advocacy activities

Description: To what extent are CSOs free to engage in advocacy / criticize government?

CSOs are not allowed to engage in advocacy or criticise the government.	Score 0
There are excessive and / or vaguely defined constraints on advocacy activities.	Score 1
Constraints on CSOs' advocacy activities are minimal and clearly defined, such as prohibitions on political campaigning.	Score 2
CSOs are permitted to freely engage in advocacy and criticism of government.	Score 3

2.5.3 - Tax laws favourable to CSOs

Description: How favourable is the tax system to CSOs? How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that are eligible for tax exemptions, if any? How significant are these exemptions?

The tax system is burdensome to CSOs. Tax exemptions or preferences are available only for a narrow range of CSOs (e.g. humanitarian organisations) or for limited sources of income (e.g. grants or donations).	Score 1
The tax system contains some incentives favouring CSOs. Only a narrow range of CSOs is excluded from tax exemptions, preferences and/or exemptions, or preferences are available from some taxes and some activities.	Score 2
The tax system provides favourable treatment for CSOs. Exemptions or preferences are available from a range of taxes and for a range of activities, limited only in appropriate circumstances	Score 3

2.5.4 - Tax benefits for philanthropy

Description: How broadly available are tax deductions or credits, or other tax benefits, to encourage individual and corporate giving?

No tax benefits are available (to individuals or corporations) for charitable giving.	Score 0
Tax benefits are available for a very limited set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 1
Tax benefits are available for a fairly broad set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 2
Significant tax benefits are available for a broad set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 3

2.6 - State-civil society relations

Description: What is the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the state?

2.6.1 – Autonomy

Description: To what extent can civil society exist and function independently of the state? To what extent are CSOs free to operate without excessive government interference? Is government oversight reasonably designed and limited to protect legitimate public interests?

The state controls civil society.	Score 0
CSOs are subject to frequent unwarranted interference in their operations.	Score 1
The state accepts the existence of an independent civil society but CSOs are subject to occasional unwarranted government interference.	Score 2
CSOs operate freely. They are subject only to reasonable oversight linked to clear and legitimate public interests.	Score 3

2.6.2 - Dialogue

Description: To what extent does the state dialogue with civil society? How inclusive and institutionalized are the terms and rules of engagement, if they exist?

There is no meaningful dialogue between civil society and the state.	Score 0
The state only seeks to dialogue with a small sub-set of CSOs on an ad hoc basis.	Score 1
The state dialogues with a relatively broad range of CSOs but on a largely ad hoc basis.	Score 2
Mechanisms are in place to facilitate systematic dialogue between the state and a broad and diverse range of CSOs.	Score 3

2.6.3 - Cooperation / support

Description: How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that receive state resources (in the form of grants, contracts, etc.)?

The level of state resources channelled through CSOs is insignificant.	Score 0
Only a very limited range of CSOs receives state resources.	Score 1
A moderate range of CSOs receives state resources.	Score 2
The state channels significant resources to a large range of CSOs.	Score 3

2.7 - Private sector-civil society relations

Description: What is the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the private sector?

2.7.1 - Private sector attitude

Description: What is the general attitude of the private sector towards civil society actors?

Generally hostile	Score 0
Generally indifferent	Score 1
Generally positive	Score 2
Generally supportive	Score 3

2.7.2 - Corporate social responsibility

Description: How developed are notions and actions of corporate social responsibility?

Major companies show no concern about the social and environmental impacts of their operations.	Score 0
Major companies pay lip service to notions of corporate social responsibility. However, in their operations they frequently disregard negative social and environmental impacts.	Score 1
Major companies are beginning to take the potential negative social and environmental impacts of their operations into account.	Score 2
Major companies take effective measures to protect against negative social and environmental impacts.	Score 3

2.7.3 - Corporate philanthropy⁸⁹

Description: How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that receive support from the private sector?

Corporate philanthropy is insignificant.	Score 0
Only a very limited range of CSOs receives funding from the private sector.	Score 1
A moderate range of CSOs receives funding from the private sector.	Score 2
The private sector channels resources to a large range of CSOs.	Score 3

3 - VALUES

3.1 – Democracy

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote democracy?

3.1.1 - Democratic practices within CSOs

Description: To what extent do CSOs practice internal democracy? How much control do members have over decision-making? Are leaders selected through democratic elections?

A large majority (i.e. more than 75%) of CSOs do not practice internal democracy (e.g. members have little / no control over decision-making, CSOs are characterised by patronage, nepotism).	Score 0
A majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 50%) do not practice internal democracy (e.g. members have little/no control over decision-making, CSOs are characterised by patronage, nepotism).	Score 1
A majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 50%) practice internal democracy (e.g. members have significant control over decision-making; leaders are selected through democratic elections).	Score 2
A large majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 75%) practice internal democracy (e.g. members have significant control over decision-making; leaders are selected through democratic elections).	Score 3

3.1.2 – Civil society actions to promote democracy

Description: How much does civil society actively promote democracy at a societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1

A number of CS activities can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking .	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a democratic society. CS activities in this area enjoy broadbased support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.2 – Transparency

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote transparency?

3.2.1 - Corruption within civil society

Description: How widespread is corruption within CS?

Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are very frequent.	Score 0
Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are frequent.	Score 1
There are occasional instances of corrupt behaviour within CS.	Score 2
Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are very rare.	Score 3

3.2.2 - Financial transparency of CSOs

Description: How many CSOs are financially transparent? What percentage of CSOs make their financial accounts publicly available?

A small minority of CSOs (less than 30%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 0
A minority of CSOs (30% -50%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 1
A small majority of CSOs (51% -65%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 2
A large majority of CSOs (more than 65%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 3

3.2.3 – Civil society actions to promote transparency

Description: How much does civil society actively promote government and corporate transparency?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and/or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in demanding government and corporate transparency. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.3 – Tolerance

Description: To what extent do civil society actors and organisations practice and promote tolerance?

3.3.1 Tolerance within the civil society arena

Description: To what extent is civil society a tolerant arena?

CS is dominated by intolerant forces. The expression of only a narrow sub-set of views is tolerated.	Score 0
Significant forces within civil society do not tolerate others' views without encountering protest from civil society at large.	Score 1
There are some intolerant forces within civil society, but they are isolated from civil society at large.	Score 2
Civil society is an open arena where the expression of <i>all</i> viewpoints is actively encouraged.	Score 3
Intolerant behaviour is strongly denounced by civil society at large.	Score 3

3.3.2 – Civil society actions to promote tolerance

Description: How much does civil society actively promote tolerance at a societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and/or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a tolerant society. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.4 - Non-violence

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote non-violence?

3.4.1 - Non-violence within the civil society arena

Description: How widespread is the use of violent means (such as damage to property or personal violence) among civil society actors to express their interests in the public sphere?

Significant mass-based groups within CS use violence as the primary means of expressing their interests.	Score 0
Some isolated groups within CS regularly use violence to express their interests without encountering protest from civil society at large.	Score 1
Some isolated groups within CS occasionally resort to violent actions, but are broadly denounced by CS at large.	Score 2
There is a high level of consensus within CS regarding the principle of non-violence. Acts of violence by CS actors are extremely rare and strongly denounced.	Score 3

3.4.2 – Civil society actions to promote non-violence and peace

Description: How much does civil society actively promote a non-violent society? For example, how much does civil society support the non-violent resolution of social conflicts and peace? Address issues of violence against women, child abuse, violence among youths etc.?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions actually contribute to societal violence.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a non-violent society. CS actions in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility	Score 3

3.5 - Gender equity

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote gender equity?

3.5.1 - Gender equity within the civil society arena

Description: To what extent is civil society a gender equitable arena?

Women are excluded from civil society leadership roles.	Score 0
Women are largely absent from civil society leadership roles.	Score 1
Women are under-represented in civil society leadership positions.	Score 2
Women are equitably represented as leaders and members of CS.	Score 3

3.5.2 - Gender equitable practices within CSOs

Description: How much do CSOs practice gender equity? What percentage of CSOs with paid employees have policies in place to ensure gender equity?

A small minority (less than 20%)	Score 0
A minority (20%-50%)	Score 1
A small majority (51%-65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

3.5.3 – Civil society actions to promote gender equity

Description: How much does civil society actively promote gender equity at the societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions actually contribute to gender inequity.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a gender equitable society. CS activities in this area enjoy broadbased support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.6 - Poverty eradication

Description: To what extent do civil society actors promote poverty eradication?

3.6.1 – Civil society actions to eradicate poverty

Description: To what extent does civil society actively seek to eradicate poverty?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions serve to sustain existing economic inequities.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2

CS is a driving force in the struggle to eradicate poverty. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3
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3.7 - Environmental sustainability

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote environmental sustainability?

3.7.1 – Civil society actions to sustain the environment

Description: How much does civil society actively seek to sustain the environment?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions serve to reinforce unsustainable practices.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in protecting the environment. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

4 - IMPACT

4.1 - Influencing public policy *Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing public policy?*

4.1.1 – 4.1.2 - Human Rights and Social Policy Impact Case Studies

Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing public policy?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.1.3 - Civil Society's Impact on National Budgeting process Case Study

Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing the overall national budgeting process?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and focused only on specific budget components. ⁹⁰	Score 1
Civil society is active in the overall budgeting process, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role in the overall budgeting process. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.2 - Holding state and private corporations accountable

Description: How active and successful is civil society in holding the state and private corporations accountable?

4.2.1 - Holding state accountable

Description: How active and successful is civil society in monitoring state performance and holding the state accountable?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.2.2 - Holding private corporations accountable

Description: How active and successful is civil society in holding private corporations accountable?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.3 - Responding to social interests

Description: How much are civil society actors responding to social interests?

4.3.1 - Responsiveness

Description: How effectively do civil society actors respond to priority social concerns?

Civil society actors are out of touch with the crucial concerns of the population.	Score 0
There are frequent examples of crucial social concerns that did not find a voice among existing civil society actors.	Score 1
There are isolated examples of crucial social concerns that did not find a voice among existing civil society actors.	Score 2
Civil society actors are very effective in taking up the crucial concerns of the population.	Score 3

4.3.2 - Public Trust

Description: What percentage of the population has trust in civil society actors?

A small minority (< 25%)	Score 0
A large minority (25%-50%)	Score 1
A small majority (51%-75%)	Score 2
A large majority (> 75%)	Score 3

4.4 - Empowering citizens

***Description:* How active and successful is civil society in empowering citizens, especially traditionally marginalised groups, to shape decisions that affect their lives?**

4.4.1 - Informing/ educating citizens

Description: How active and successful is civil society in informing and educating citizens on public issues?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.2 - Building capacity for collective action

Description: How active and successful is civil society in building the capacity of people to organise themselves, mobilise resources and work together to solve common problems?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.3 - Empowering marginalized people

Description: How active and successful is civil society in empowering marginalized people?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.4 - Empowering women

Description: How active and successful is civil society in empowering women, i.e. to give them real choice and control over their lives?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.5 - Building social capital⁹¹

Description: To what extent does civil society build social capital among its members? How do levels of trust, tolerance and public spiritedness of members of civil society compare to those of non-members?

Civil society diminishes the stock of social capital in society.	Score 0
Civil society does not contribute to building social capital in society.	Score 1
Civil society does contribute moderately to building social capital in society.	Score 2
Civil Society does contribute strongly to building social capital in society.	Score 3

4.4.6 - Supporting livelihoods

Description: How active and successful is civil society in creating / supporting employment and/or income generating opportunities (especially for poor people and women)?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.5 - Meeting societal needs

Description: How active and successful is civil society in meeting societal needs, especially those of poor people and other marginalised groups?

4.5.1 - Lobbying for state service provision

Description: How active and successful is civil society in lobbying the government to meet pressing societal needs?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.5.2 - Meeting pressing societal needs directly

Description: How active and successful is civil society in directly meeting pressing societal needs (through service delivery or the promotion of self-help initiatives)?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.5.3 - Meeting needs of marginalised groups

Description: To what extent are CSOs more or less effective than the state in delivering services to marginalised groups?

CSOs are less effective than the state.	Score 0
CSOs are as effective as the state.	Score 1
CSOs are slightly more effective than the state.	Score 2
CSOs are significantly more effective than the state.	Score 3

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