

Mauritius

Country Focus Report

2025



Credit: Yannick Apollon



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A) An Introduction to the Enabling Environment

What we understand by an Enabling Environment is the combination of laws, rules and social attitudes that support and promote the work of civil society. Within such an environment, civil society can engage in political and public life without fear of reprisals, openly express its views, and actively participate in shaping its context. This includes a supportive legal and regulatory framework for civil society, ensuring access to information and resources that are sustainable and flexible to pursue their goals unhindered, in safe physical and digital spaces. In an enabling environment, the state demonstrates openness and responsiveness in governance, promoting transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making. Positive values, norms, attitudes, and practices towards civil society from state and non-state actors further underscore the supportive environment.

To capture the state of the Enabling Environment, we use the following six principles:

SIX ENABLING PRINCIPLES

- 1. Respect and Protection of Fundamental Freedoms**
- 2. Supportive Legal and Regulatory Framework**
- 3. Accessible and Sustainable Resources**
- 4. Open and Responsive State**
- 5. Supportive Public Culture and Discourses on Civil Society**
- 6. Access to a Secure Digital Environment**

In this Country Focus Report, each enabling principle is assessed with a quantitative score and complemented by an analysis and recommendations written by our Network Members. Rather than offering a singular index to rank countries, the report aims to measure the enabling environment for civil society across the six principles, discerning dimensions of strength and those requiring attention.

The findings presented in this report are grounded in the insights and diverse perspectives of civil society actors who came together in a dedicated panel with representatives from civil society to discuss and evaluate the state of the Enabling Environment. Their collective input enriches the report with a grounded, participatory assessment. This primary input is further supported by secondary sources of information, which provide additional context and strengthen the analysis.

Brief Overview of the Country Context

Mauritius benefits from a longstanding democratic framework and a relatively open civic space, providing a sound foundation for civil society organisations (CSOs). The country hosts approximately 6,000 voluntary organisations registered under the [Registrar of Associations Act \(1978\)](#), including some 300 classified as NGOs. The umbrella body, the [Mauritius Council for Social Service \(MACOSS\)](#), plays a coordinating role for over 200 member organisations. Civil society actors are visible in areas such as environmental protection, gender equality, and health, and increasingly engage in advocacy, policy dialogue and governance reforms. [An analysis](#) done in 2024 revealed growing CSO involvement in shaping policy and public debate.

The country's constitution further underpins this potential. Under the [Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius](#), Chapter II lays out fundamental rights, including the freedoms of conscience, expression, assembly and association. Section 13 specifically states that “except with his own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of assembly and association ... to form or belong to ... other associations for the protection of his interests.” These protections establish a formal legal basis for CSO operations and advocacy, though they are qualified by provisions permitting restrictions in the interest of public order, health or morality.

However, the enabling environment for CSOs also presents systemic constraints which limit the full exercise of civic-space and oversight functions. While CSOs participate in consultations and policy processes, gaps remain in their meaningful engagement—for example, in the area of public procurement integrity the [2023 MAPS assessment](#) found “no involvement of CSOs” in oversight mechanisms and little evidence of institutionalised participation channels. This was reiterated by the panel of experts consulted during the study. Legislative and regulatory frameworks are not always sufficiently supportive of independent advocacy, and CSOs addressing sensitive topics (such as corruption, procurement, or extractive-economy governance) may find their scope restricted.

Moreover, while international donor support remains available—for example via a [recent EU call for CSO empowerment in Mauritius and Seychelles](#)—smaller and geographically remote CSOs face pressures from limited funding, capacity constraints, the digital divide and inadequate resources for outreach. Government–CSO collaboration is evolving but remains variable in depth and consistency. In sectors such as climate and environment, CSOs contribute actively, though their [capacity and structural support](#) could be strengthened.

B) Assessment of the Enabling Environment

PRINCIPLE SCORE

1. Respect and Protection of Fundamental Freedoms

Score: ¹



This section outlines the state of respect and protection of fundamental freedoms in Mauritius—association, assembly, and expression—where strong constitutional guarantees (Constitution, ss.12–13) coexist with tightening constraints in practice. While CSOs can form and operate, watchdogs note discretionary policing, ICT-era data and speech controls, and reprisals that deter coalition-building, particularly for human rights and LGBTIQ+ actors; capacity strains at oversight bodies such as the IPCC further weaken trust. Peaceful assembly nominally follows a notification regime under the Public Gatherings Act, including the 12-person exemption, yet inconsistent facilitation and sporadic crackdowns—alongside broad counter-terrorism powers—reintroduce de facto permissioning for politically sensitive causes. Freedom of expression has similarly fluctuated: the late-2024 social-media suspension and ongoing proposals to expand decryption and content blocking have chilled journalism and online activism, even as 2025 saw modest press-freedom gains and draft reforms to protect sources and curb provisional charges. Overall, predictable safeguards—clear limits on surveillance and content controls, consistent policing of assemblies, and adequately resourced, independent complaint mechanisms—are pivotal to ensure constitutional rights translate into reliable space for civic participation.

1.1 | Freedom of Association

¹This is a rebased score derived from the [CIVICUS Monitor rating](#) published in December 2025.

Mauritius retains strong constitutional guarantees for association ([Constitution, s.13](#)), and is assessed “Free” in 2025, yet the civic space in the country was rated as “narrowed” in the [2025 CIVICUS Monitor](#). Watchdogs note tightening constraints for human rights defenders and LGBTIQ+ groups. Monitoring [reports](#) highlight legal ambiguities, monitoring of assemblies, and arbitrary arrests and reprisals (e.g., job discrimination) that cumulatively depress associational participation and collaboration with the state. Freedom House’s [2025 country profile](#) similarly records media limitations and occasional harassment of journalists, signalling pressures on organisations that critique government policy.

Institutional independence remains contested. The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)’s own [publications and reporting](#) show rising complaint volumes and capacity strain since 2018; the commission lists annual reports through 2023/24, reflecting resource challenges and public trust concerns. Media-facing actors report that [ICT regulation](#)—especially proposals to decrypt or filter social media—has chilled online organising since 2021 and, notably, during the [2024 social-media shutdown](#) reversed after backlash.

Even with formal protections, associational life is vulnerable to discretionary policing and complaints systems perceived as politicised; data and speech controls under ICT frameworks; and reputational and economic reprisals against activists. Independent, adequately funded oversight—and clear limits on surveillance and content controls—remain pivotal to ensure CSOs can form coalitions, secure funding and represent constituencies without fear of sanction.

1.2 | Freedom of Assembly

Civil society actors in Mauritius are constitutionally guaranteed the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly under Section 13 of the [Constitution](#). The Supreme Court has generally upheld these rights, interpreting them in ways that limit government overreach. However, this freedom is increasingly constrained in practice. Legislation such as the [Public Gathering Act \(1991\)](#) and the [Prevention of Terrorism Act \(2002\)](#) provides the state with broad powers to restrict public assemblies. The [Public Gatherings Act](#) defines “meeting” as 12+ persons and prescribes notice, not permission, anchoring domestic law to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Article 21. However, authorities have frequently [denied](#) gatherings, even those exempt from notification (e.g., with fewer than 12 participants, [as per Section 2\(a\)12](#)) generating a chilling effect. A 2024 [incident involving the Rann Nou Later](#) movement describes arrests during a deliberately sub-12, peaceful protest, raising questions about necessity and proportionality of force.

While large marches such as the [pro-Palestine demonstrations](#) in August–September 2025 have proceeded without disruptions, reports emphasise political and religious sensitivities, and the need for consistent police facilitation of peaceful protests. Oversight bodies have dealt with assembly-adjacent complaints; the [IPCC acknowledges](#) thousands of complaints since 2018, many touching [police conduct at public events](#)—an indicator of stress in the assembly environment.

The [Prevention of Terrorism Act \(2002\)](#) provides broad levers around investigation, detention and control orders; although aimed at terrorism, its breadth underscores the need for careful safeguards to prevent encroachment on lawful assemblies.

Overall, the state of the right to freedom of assembly in Mauritius shows that a notification regime can be undermined by practice that re-introduces permissioning or routine denial,

particularly for politically sensitive causes. Consistent adherence to the 12-person exemption, transparent criteria for restrictions, and robust after-action accountability via IPCC/NHRC are essential to restore predictability and public trust. Otherwise, sporadic crackdowns and contested policing will continue to dissuade civic mobilisation and public debate.

1.3 | Freedom of Expression

Mauritius' constitution guarantees freedom of expression (s.12), but practice has been inconsistent. In late 2024, a [nationwide social-media suspension](#) was ordered and reversed within 24 hours amid a wire-tapping scandal, illustrating executive willingness to restrict digital speech on national security grounds—an overreach widely criticised by academics and civic groups. The ICT Act's [longstanding push \(since 2021\) for amendments](#) enabling traffic decryption and content blocking continues to alarm [press-freedom advocates](#), who warn of risks to source confidentiality and self-censorship.

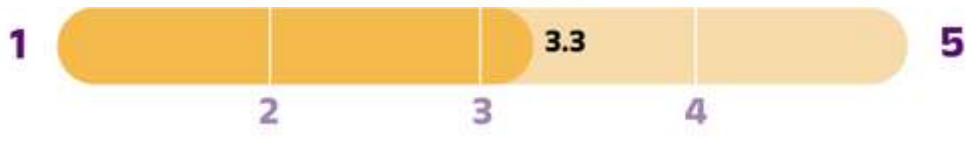
In 2025, press-freedom metrics improved slightly in global rankings but with caveats: [RSF lists Mauritius 51st](#) (up from 57th in 2024), yet highlights polarisation, MBC's political control and the 2021 regulatory law's threat to source confidentiality. Locally, debate over police powers and journalists' protections has intensified; a draft [Police & Criminal Justice Bill](#) (October 2025) proposes stronger safeguards for *journalistic material* and abolition of “provisional charge”—potentially curbing arbitrary detention of critics if enacted.

Reports through [2024–2025 note](#) police questioning and device seizures of journalists under ICT provisions, sparking concern about legal overreach and chilling effects on investigative reporting. Digital restrictions and politicised regulation can swiftly degrade expression, particularly for watchdog journalism and online activism. While 2025 shows rhetorical commitments to reform (including access-to-information pledges), only legislation that protects sources, narrows offences (e.g., “annoyance” clauses), and insulates public broadcasters from executive influence will structurally improve the climate for free expression.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

2. Supportive Legal and Regulatory Framework

Score:



This section provides an overview of the legal and regulatory framework governing civil society organisations in Mauritius—covering registration, day-to-day operation, and protection from interference. The legal framework governing the registration of civil society organisations in Mauritius is formally inclusive, allowing any individual or group to establish an association under the Registrar of Associations Act (RAA) without explicit discrimination on grounds such as political affiliation, gender, religion, or ethnicity. Although the RAA is formally inclusive and sets out procedures open to all, documentary and governance requirements can create indirect hurdles for smaller or resource-constrained groups, and while refusals may be appealed, the process is often slow and not widely publicised. In practice, operational obligations—such as annual reporting and compliance checks—can be onerous, and access to foreign funding, though not prohibited, may be delayed by exchange-control approvals and anti-money-laundering procedures. Finally, while due-process guarantees, data protection provisions and avenues for judicial review exist to guard against arbitrary dissolution or intrusion, their effectiveness varies, with inspections and administrative demands sometimes perceived as burdensome or subject to discretionary application, particularly for grassroots organisations.

2.1 | Registration

Any individual or group, especially underrepresented groups, may create a civil society organisation in Mauritius under the [Registrar of Associations Act](#). The regulations do not specifically prohibit registration on the basis of political affiliation, gender, religion, or ethnicity. However, some documentary or procedural requirements as per sections 4 to 10 of the Registrar of Associations Act—like financial accounts, confirmation of a physical address, or particular governance structures—can disproportionately impact smaller, grassroots, or resource-constrained groups, resulting in [indirect hurdles](#). Although the law is officially

inclusive, organisations without financial means, legal counsel, or literacy may find it more [challenging](#) to register.

The Registrar of Associations or other appropriate agencies describe standard forms, fees, and procedures for [CSO registration](#) in Mauritius. Most organisations can afford registration fees since they are often reasonable. However, registration may be [discouraged](#) for smaller or informal groups due to bureaucratic delays, complicated documentation requirements, and ambiguous procedural instructions. To manage compliance with reporting requirements or governance standards, [legal aid can be required](#). Although the procedure is theoretically accessible, administrative complexity, sporadic delays, and a lack of support can serve as real deterrents, particularly for grassroots or underprivileged actors. Although there are no official statistics published by the Registrar on average processing times, anecdotal and civil-society discussions (e.g., in guides and NGO resources) point to the need for careful preparation and understanding of these procedures.

If a CSO's registration is denied, the legal framework provides for appeal to the relevant authority or courts as per section 7(3) of the RAA. However, the appeal process is often [slow, formalistic, and not widely publicised](#), making it less accessible for small or under-resourced organisations. Transparency of decisions varies; authorities may provide reasons for denial, but there is limited guidance or support for corrective action. Consequently, while a legal right to appeal exists, the process is not always effective, and denial can significantly delay or impede the ability of new CSOs to operate.

2.2 | Operating Environment

Regular administrative oversight of CSOs in Mauritius includes yearly reporting of accounts as per section 23 of the RAA, governance information, and operational summaries to the Registrar of Associations or other pertinent regulatory agency. Although these reporting requirements are meant to guarantee accountability and transparency, they can be onerous for small or grassroots organisations, particularly those with minimal administrative resources. Fines or registration suspension may follow noncompliance or late reporting as per section 37 of the RAA. Excessive procedural requirements may hinder operations, pull resources away from programming activity, and discourage unofficial or volunteer-driven projects, even when oversight is meant to safeguard stakeholders and uphold legal compliance.

While Mauritius does not have a standalone “foreign contribution licensing” law for CSOs, various regulatory and administrative measures can affect access to foreign funding. For example, under exchange control provisions, associations cannot collect foreign funds on behalf of third parties, or transfer funds abroad, without prior approval of the Minister, and unauthorised [cross-border payments](#) may be recovered by regulators. Banks and financial institutions also apply anti-money-laundering and compliance checks before processing international transfers, which can [delay receipt of donated funds](#).

In practice, the absence of clear published procedures, combined with these compliance requirements and occasional discretionary decision-making by authorities, can result in delays or uncertainty for smaller or under-resourced organisations seeking to receive or manage foreign grants or donations, even if no specific foreign funding licence is mandated. Third-party analyses underscore bureaucratic hurdles and interpretative discretion in regulatory practice.

CSOs are allowed to receive both domestic and foreign money under Mauritius legislation, including grants, donations, and partnerships; however, there are reporting and compliance requirements, especially for overseas contributions. CSOs are required to keep open financial records and report foreign funding to the appropriate authorities. Access to resources may be hampered by complicated documentation, disclosure requirements, and approval delays, even though there are no general prohibitions. Priorities may also be indirectly impacted by

funding requirements, particularly for smaller organisations that depend on outside assistance. Overall, CSOs' flexibility and financial sustainability may be [restricted](#) by administrative hurdles and conditional control, even while the legal structure permits funding from a variety of sources.

2.3 | Protection against interference

With the Societies Act and Non-Profit Organisations Act outlining legal grounds for winding up, such as insolvency, noncompliance with reporting responsibilities, or criminal activity, Mauritius law offers some safeguards against the arbitrary dissolution of CSOs. CSOs have the right to appeal or request judicial review if they feel a decision is politically motivated or unfair, and dissolution cannot legally take place without due process. Small or underfunded organisations may find it challenging to file legal challenges, making them susceptible to administrative or procedural pressure. In reality, however, the clarity and execution of these safeguards [can differ](#).

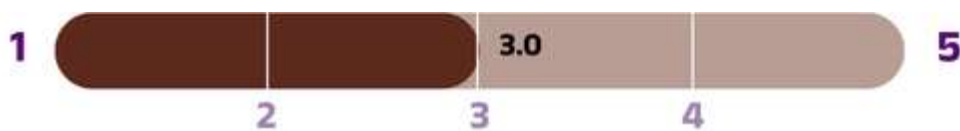
The legal framework protects CSOs' internal governance, goals, and decision-making from unjustified interference and ensures that they can operate freely within their mandate. Organisations are protected from unwanted access to records and communication privacy by provisions in the [Data Protection Act \(section 13\)](#) and the [Foundations Act 2012 \(section 36 to 38\)](#). However, these protections mostly deal with procedural compliance; in reality, autonomy may be limited by indirect pressures like financing scrutiny, surveillance, or permission delays. Although civil and criminal laws cover third-party intervention (such as harassment by competitors or individuals), implementation of these laws may be sluggish, which diminishes their practical efficacy.

In order to guarantee adherence to reporting, financial, and operational requirements, [state inspections](#) and interventions are permitted by law; nevertheless, they must be reasonable, proportionate, and non-arbitrary. Accounts, governance records, and property inspections are all possible for authorities. Organisations might use appeal or complaint procedures to avoid excessive or repeated inspections. Despite this, smaller CSOs frequently view inspections as [onerous](#), particularly in situations where staffing is scarce or procedures are unclear. Inspections can be used as instruments for intimidation, control, or surveillance if they are done incorrectly, which emphasises the necessity of open procedures and oversight to safeguard CSO operational independence.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

3. Accessible and Sustainable Resources

Score:



This section reviews the accessibility, effectiveness, and sustainability of resources available to civil society actors in Mauritius. While formal pathways to funding and support exist in Mauritius, access is often constrained by competitive grant landscapes, regulatory approvals, and compliance burdens—pressures that are heightened for organisations working on sensitive issues and compounded by banking and tax-related practicalities. Effectiveness of resources is shaped by stringent donor and governmental conditions: detailed budgeting, reporting, and prior approvals can curtail operational flexibility, press CSOs to align closely with funder agendas, and make rapid adaptation uneven, even as some multi-year or flexible grants and growing attention to security offer partial mitigation. Sustainability of resources remains fragile, with heavy reliance on a narrow funding base, project-bound cycles, and limited core support disrupting continuity and inhibiting investment in organisational capacity. Despite these constraints, civil society actors increasingly pursue self-reliance through fundraising, memberships, and social enterprise, yet encounter regulatory, cultural, and capability barriers that make long-term resilience challenging.

3.1 | Accessibility

Although they are frequently scarce and competitive, resources are available for civil society actors in Mauritius, including those who work on delicate subjects or with underrepresented communities. Access to these resources may be [impacted](#) by government rules, approvals, and compliance requirements, especially for projects requiring public gatherings or foreign finance. CSOs working in politically or socially sensitive fields, such as human rights, minority rights, or anti-corruption campaigning, may be subject to extra scrutiny or permit delays, which can limit their ability to obtain financial or operational support on time. Despite the existence of formal systems, administrative discretion and conformity with government aims can have an impact on [resource allocation](#).

Through donor communications, [NGO networks](#), and government portals, Civil society actors in Mauritius typically have access to information on both domestic and foreign financing

sources. While smaller or grassroots CSOs may struggle with a lack of staff, technical expertise, or proposal-writing experience, larger organisations are usually able to respond to requests for proposals in [an efficient manner](#). The complexity of funding requests varies; some are designed to make it easier to match with priorities, while others are more stringent and call for thorough reporting, budgeting, and compliance records. To guarantee fair access, capacity-building assistance is frequently required, especially for organisations that represent [underprivileged or marginalised populations](#).

Civil society actors may profit from specific incentives provided by Mauritius tax law, such as [tax-exempt status](#) for registered non-profits and possible deductions for donors making contributions to organisations that have been [approved](#). These systems promote [philanthropic assistance and private donations](#). On the other hand, if grants or income are not automatically exempt or if compliance requirements are onerous, CSOs may encounter difficulties that could result in administrative expenses or delays. Although there is little chance of direct double taxation, small organisations may be discouraged by the difficulty of paying taxes, reporting requirements, or misconceptions about whose gifts or income are exempt, which [could affect their overall ability to make ends meet](#).

Civil society actors in Mauritius may face practical and administrative challenges while dealing with banks and financial service providers. Opening an account may involve a significant [amount of documentation](#), particularly for small or informal firms, and accounts may be terminated if regulatory [scrutiny is triggered](#), such as by suspicious transaction reports or delays in compliance. Even in the absence of systematic targeting, sensitive CSOs—especially those addressing political, human rights, or controversial social issues—may experience perceived monitoring or caution from financial institutions. This may hinder the availability of funding or complicate daily operations. Lack of institutional capabilities or financial awareness may exacerbate these [banking issues](#).

3.2 | Effectiveness

In Mauritius, donors usually have [stringent limitations](#) on how funds are used, such as stringent budgeting, reporting, and compliance guidelines, especially for foreign funding. Through reporting requirements or previous authorisation for programmes involving public engagement, advocacy, or delicate subjects, governments can further control the receipt of foreign contributions. Although the goal of these measures is to guarantee legal compliance and accountability, they may [restrict operational flexibility](#), cause implementation delays, and force CSOs to tightly align their actions with funder expectations. These [limitations](#) may be especially onerous for small or grassroots organisations, making it difficult for them to take independent initiatives or react swiftly to local needs.

Donor priorities, which may be partially or incorrectly aligned with the strategic objectives of civil society actors, are frequently reflected in [funding conditions](#). While smaller or marginalised CSOs often have less clout and are therefore dependent on donor-driven agendas, larger, more established organisations [may negotiate or modify programmes](#) to balance donor requirements with their objective. Autonomy in project design and beneficiary selection may therefore be limited. Although these options are less prevalent for grassroots organisations, some funders offer thematic flexibility or multi-year contributions that enable CSOs to combine their goals, innovate programme approaches, and retain consistency with mission of the organisation.

The ability of Mauritius donors to adapt to changes in programme priorities or operational adjustments varies. Recognising the dynamic issues CSOs confront, such as community needs, political developments, or crisis situations, several international and multinational donors permit reprogramming of funding, timeline revisions, or emergency reaction actions. However, CSOs' capacity to adjust quickly is often limited by the strict reporting and

contractual requirements of smaller funders or funds managed by the government. In general, flexibility is present but uneven; in order to negotiate changes without endangering financing or compliance, CSOs must possess good [project management, donor relations, and advocacy abilities](#).

Donors are becoming more [aware](#) of the security issues that CSOs confront, such as abuse, cyber threats, and [physical risks](#) related to sensitive work. For human rights, anti-corruption, or advocacy organisations in particular, some funders offer advice on risk reduction, emergency assistance, or backup plans. However, smaller donors might not be able to sufficiently address security concerns, and responsiveness varies. In reality, CSOs frequently use peer networks, internal protocols, or outside experts to mitigate risks. Programmes may continue in high-risk situations without adequate mitigation measures unless actively negotiated, and donor attention to security is typically reactive [rather than proactive](#).

3.3 | Sustainability

A variety of funding sources are available to CS players in Mauritius, including membership contributions, corporate social responsibility initiatives, philanthropic foundations, foreign donors, and local grants. However, many organisations—especially smaller or grassroots CSOs—[heavily depend](#) on a single or small source of funding, making them susceptible to disruptions, changing donor priorities, or delayed payments. Reliance on erratic funding can limit advocacy independence, jeopardise operational continuity, and make it more difficult to adapt to changing community needs. Due to competition, administrative complexity, and a lack of ability to [successfully manage](#) several funding sources, diversifying funding is difficult.

In Mauritius, funding cycles are frequently time-bound and [project-based](#), which might cause gaps between award periods and interfere with CSO activities. Staff pay, programme continuity and planning are all impacted by unusual donor timeframes or grant release delays, which force organisations to operate on short-term contracts or cut back on service delivery. Long-term projects are hampered by these deficits, especially those that call for complicated social interventions or ongoing involvement with vulnerable communities. The majority of grassroots CSOs lack the financial buffer to avoid disruptions, making operational [sustainability](#) and strategic programming susceptible to financing anomalies. However, some organisations preserve reserve funds or stagger programmes to alleviate shortages.

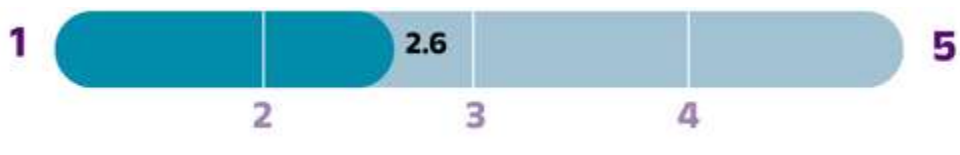
CSOs are unable to make strategic plans or invest in organisational capacity because project-based funding predominates over core or unconstrained support. Project funds facilitate short-term projects, but they never pay for long-term infrastructure, staff training, or administrative expenses, which limits programmatic ambition and organisational expansion. Long-term planning is [challenging](#) in this setting, which also makes CSOs less resilient to funding shocks and compels them to put donor-driven results ahead of community-defined goals. Multi-year, flexible funding that strikes a balance between programmatic objectives and organisational demands is necessary for sustainable operations, but it is hard to come by, especially for smaller or [advocacy-focused CSOs](#).

Through fundraising, donations, volunteer mobilisation, and revenue-generating endeavours, Mauritian civil society actors are increasingly pursuing self-reliance. While grassroots organisations frequently rely on community donations and volunteer assistance, larger [NGOs](#) have launched membership programmes, social enterprises, or fee-for-service initiatives. Regulatory obstacles for revenue-generating operations, donor fatigue, a small domestic charitable culture, and a lack of fundraising expertise are some of the challenges. Despite these challenges, self-generated resources improve organisational resilience, increase autonomy, and lessen dependency on lone donors. Promoting a local giving culture and increasing revenue generating capabilities could [enhance](#) financial sustainability and enable CSOs to pursue strategic objectives apart from donor priorities.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

4. Open and Responsive State

Score:



This section examines the transparency, participation, and accountability landscape shaping civil society engagement in Mauritius. In the absence of a dedicated Freedom of Information law in Mauritius, disclosure is largely discretionary, with uneven proactive publication and limited accessibility across public bodies and entities performing public functions. While consultation channels exist—through workshops, advisory committees, and platforms such as the NSIF—their inclusiveness and influence are variable, often favouring formally registered organisations aligned with government priorities, and leaving smaller or sensitive-issue CSOs facing administrative barriers, short deadlines, and late-stage engagement that curtails meaningful input. Accountability mechanisms are similarly weak: government feedback on how civil society contributions inform decisions is inconsistent, formal explanations for non-adoption are rare, and structured follow-up or monitoring spaces are lacking, pushing civil society actors to rely on informal advocacy and media scrutiny rather than institutionalised oversight.

4.1 | Transparency

In Mauritius, the legal framework does not formally recognise a general right of all individuals and organisations to access information held by public institutions or by private entities performing public functions. Unlike countries with a dedicated Freedom of Information law, [Mauritius has no stand-alone](#) legislation guaranteeing public access to government-held information. Existing laws, such as the [Official Secrets Act 1972](#), restrict disclosure of government documents, particularly those related to cabinet proceedings, national security, and other “sensitive” matters. As a result, there is no statutory obligation for proactive publication or timely disclosure of information, and access is often ad hoc, dependent on discretionary release by public authorities. In practice, some government ministries and agencies provide information online through official portals, annual reports, press releases, and e-government initiatives. While this improves transparency to some extent, coverage is inconsistent, updates are not always timely, and formats are not always user-friendly or

searchable. For private entities performing public functions—such as state-owned companies or outsourced service providers—there is [no comprehensive obligation](#) to make information accessible. Publication, if any, is typically limited to statutory reporting requirements or corporate communications. Overall, [Mauritius lacks](#) a comprehensive legal and institutional framework to guarantee the right to access public information. Proactive disclosure, timely updates, and accessible digital publication remain uneven, which [constrains](#) the ability of NGOs, journalists, and citizens to obtain information necessary for oversight, accountability, and civic engagement.

In Mauritius, there are currently no clear, legally established procedures for filing access to information requests, as the country does not have a stand-alone Freedom of Information law. Citizens, NGOs, and other stakeholders must rely on informal or discretionary channels to request information from public institutions. There is no statutory guidance on standardised forms, submission procedures, or designated public officers responsible for handling requests, and there are no provisions for reasonable fees or waivers for vulnerable groups. As a result, access to information is [inconsistent and highly dependent](#) on the willingness of individual institutions or officers to respond. There are no legal timeframes mandating responses to requests, and in practice, processing may be delayed or refused without formal recourse. This [lack of procedural](#) clarity limits transparency and accountability, making it difficult for civil society, journalists, and ordinary citizens to obtain information necessary for oversight, advocacy, or participation in public decision-making. Some ministries and agencies voluntarily publish limited information online, such as annual reports, policy statements, or budget summaries. However, this is neither comprehensive nor consistently updated, and formal request mechanisms remain ad hoc. Overall, the absence of clear, accessible procedures for information requests, combined with the lack of legal obligations for timely responses or fee waivers, [significantly constrains](#) the ability of NGOs and the public to exercise rights to information and to engage meaningfully in governance and accountability processes in Mauritius.

4.2 | Participation

In Mauritius, [consultation](#) of civil society actors by policymakers and political leaders exists, but its depth and effectiveness vary across sectors and issues. Formal avenues for consultation include workshops, public forums, advisory committees, and engagement through mechanisms like the National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF), which provides NGOs with opportunities to participate in policy discussions, project planning, and capacity-building initiatives. NGOs working in social development, youth programmes, and environmental conservation often participate in these structured consultations, which can [influence](#) project design and programme implementation. However, while consultation mechanisms exist, the degree of meaningful influence is [uneven](#). Smaller or grassroots organisations may find it [difficult to access](#) consultation platforms due to administrative requirements, limited capacity, or lack of formal recognition. In some cases, consultation may be more symbolic than substantive, serving to fulfill procedural obligations rather than genuinely incorporating civil society input into policy decisions. NGOs dependent on government-linked funding may also [self-censor](#).

In Mauritius, civil society actors can technically participate in consultations, but in practice, participation is not always fully free from [discrimination or bias](#). Formally registered NGOs generally have access to official consultations, workshops, and advisory mechanisms, particularly when their work aligns with government priorities, such as social inclusion, youth development, or environmental initiatives.

However, practical constraints affect inclusivity and impartiality. NGOs that are [critical of government](#) policies, advocate on politically sensitive issues, or operate outside mainstream priorities may experience limited access to formal consultation channels. Smaller grassroots organisations often face administrative or capacity barriers, which can effectively exclude them from discussions. Funding dependency can constrain criticism—especially for NGOs reliant on government-linked funding through bodies like the National Social Inclusion Foundation.

In Mauritius, civil society actors are occasionally invited to contribute to decision-making at early stages, but in practice, this varies significantly depending on the policy area, type of organisation, and level of government engagement. Some ministries and state agencies, particularly in social development, youth, and environmental sectors, organise workshops, consultations, or advisory sessions where NGOs can provide input during the policy formulation or project design phases. These platforms, when accessible, allow for structured discussion and capacity-building. However, for many decisions, CSO participation is often treated as a formality or occurs late in the process, limiting the ability of NGOs and other actors to provide meaningful feedback. Deadlines for consultation submissions are sometimes short, and information is not always provided in advance in sufficient detail, which constrains informed engagement. Smaller grassroots organisations or NGOs with limited administrative capacity may struggle to respond effectively under such time pressures, reducing the inclusiveness and quality of their input. Overall, while there are instances where civil society actors are invited early, systemic practices often fall short of ensuring genuine, timely, and substantive participation. This limits the extent to which civil society can influence decisions, particularly on politically sensitive or complex issues, and underscores the need for more structured and predictable consultation processes in Mauritius.

In Mauritius, civil society actors have both in-person and online opportunities to participate in policy consultations, workshops, and stakeholder engagement initiatives, but accessibility and effectiveness vary widely. In-person participation typically occurs through workshops, roundtables, advisory committees, and public forums organised by ministries, state agencies, or funding bodies such as the National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF). These sessions allow NGOs to engage directly with policymakers, ask questions, and provide structured feedback on policies or programmes. [Online participation](#) has increased in recent years, particularly through official government portals, webinars, virtual meetings, and e-submissions of proposals or comments. While these platforms can broaden access—especially for organisations outside the capital or in remote areas—digital access and technological literacy can limit effectiveness for smaller NGOs or grassroots actors.

4.3 Accountability

In Mauritius, the government provides [limited feedback](#) to civil society actors on how their input has been used in decision-making processes. While NGOs and other CS organisations may be invited to consultations, workshops, or advisory sessions—particularly in areas such as social inclusion, youth development, and environmental programmes—the follow-up communication regarding how their contributions influenced policies or projects is often minimal or inconsistent.

In Mauritius, civil society actors are often invited to provide feedback on policies and draft legislation, but the government does not have a consistent or formal obligation to explain why it chooses not to adopt their input. While some ministries may issue brief consultation summaries or include mentions in parliamentary reports, these explanations are typically high-level and lack detail, making it difficult for civil society actors to understand the rationale behind

decisions. Accountability mechanisms are largely informal, relying on advocacy, media engagement, or parliamentary submissions, as there is no dedicated body to ensure CS contributions are meaningfully considered. Judicial review may be possible in limited cases, but it rarely addresses substantive consideration. [This lack of formal feedback](#) and accountability can weaken trust and reduce the effectiveness of participatory governance in Mauritius.

In Mauritius, the government does not consistently provide clear or formal spaces for civil society actors to follow up on how their input has been used in policymaking. While consultations may occur, there are typically no structured mechanisms—such as dedicated forums, reporting platforms, or oversight bodies—that allow civil society actors to track the integration of their feedback or to hold the government accountable for its decisions. Follow-up is often informal, relying on direct engagement with officials, public advocacy, or media scrutiny. This limited [transparency](#) and lack of systematic feedback can make it difficult for civil society actors to assess whether their contributions have influenced policies, undermining trust and the effectiveness of participatory governance processes.

In Mauritius, there is no formalised process or dedicated space for civil society actors to systematically monitor or report on the government's adherence to its commitments or the consideration of CS input in policymaking. While civil society actors may attempt to track progress through informal channels such as meetings with officials, parliamentary submissions, media engagement, or advocacy campaigns, these mechanisms are ad hoc and not institutionalised. Consequently, there is limited transparency regarding how government decisions reflect civil society contributions, and civil society actors [have minimal formal avenues](#) to hold the government accountable for integrating their feedback or fulfilling consultation commitments. This gap can undermine trust and meaningful participation in governance.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

5. Supportive Public Culture and Discourses on Civil Society

Score:



This section assesses the cultural, symbolic, and discursive climate towards civil society in Mauritius across public discourse, civic participation, and equality and inclusion. Official rhetoric broadly presents civil society actors as partners in development—especially in service delivery—yet watchdog and advocacy roles are often cast as oppositional, with media coverage amplifying both praise and suspicion in a politically polarised environment. Participation is formally possible but uneven: while elections attract high engagement, meaningful influence between polls is limited, with smaller or critical organisations facing access barriers and civic education remaining largely theoretical. Legal guarantees of equality and non-discrimination exist, but practical inclusion is constrained by socio-economic disparities, gender norms, disability access challenges, and geographic factors; oversight bodies provide avenues for redress, though enforcement is inconsistent. Overall, civil society enjoys visibility and some collaborative spaces, but sustained, evidence-based influence and equal participation remain curtailed by selective consultation, variable public trust, and enduring structural inequalities.

5.1 | Public discourse and constructive dialogue on civil society

Political leaders in Mauritius typically present CS actors as collaborators in democracy and development, particularly in domains like social welfare, gender equality, the environment, and service provision. [Consultation](#), collaboration, and social cohesiveness are emphasised in official discourse. But this acknowledgment is frequently biased. Civil society actors are sometimes depicted as disruptive, politically motivated, or associated with foreign interests when they participate in litigation, public protest, or harsh political criticism. As a result, whereas service-oriented organisations are more widely accepted, watchdog and advocacy-oriented civil society actors are typically marginalised. In general, CS is not treated as a co-equal governance partner, although it is [acknowledged rhetorically](#).

Public impressions of civil society actors are shaped by media coverage, which has a significant but conflicting impact. On the one hand, [mainstream newspapers](#), radio, and online channels frequently emphasise CS's efforts in areas including poverty alleviation, environmental protection, gender-based violence, disability rights, and anti-corruption campaigning, which helps to increase public awareness and credibility. However, some media outlets—[particularly those that support economic or political agendas](#)—sometimes magnify negative tales, depicting critical civil society actors as destabilising, politically biased, or opportunistic. Trust can be damaged by sensationalist framing and biased reporting, especially in times of political unrest. The Mauritian media alternates between acknowledging the social usefulness of civil society actors and suspicion motivated by political polarisation, rather than continuously [fostering trust and admiration for them](#).

Although communication between the government, political figures, and members of CS is formally framed as respectful and inclusive in Mauritius, it is really uneven and frequently constrained. On social policy, environmental, gender, disability, and poverty-related issues, CS players are requested to participate in consultations, and their contributions are occasionally recognised in theory. But these interactions are often procedural rather than genuinely deliberative and provide little room for discussion of fundamental political or economic decisions. Strong evidence-based research and policy proposals are produced by many CS organisations, but their information and viewpoints are only selectively incorporated into social and political discussions—primarily when they coincide with government agendas. Counter-narratives and critical narratives are frequently marginalised. As a result, although there is discussion, systematic adoption of CS evidence into decision-making is still limited and uneven.

The space available for civil society actors to make important contributions is greatly influenced by the culture of public discourse. Although conversation at the governmental level is frequently presented as consultative, it is typically selective, formalistic, and restricted, which limits real contestation of policy decisions. They gain from being visible in mainstream media, [yet](#) political polarisation sometimes distorts or oversimplifies their messaging. Social media has given CS voices and mobilisation more room, but it has also increased animosity, false information, and personal attacks on activists. They run the danger of damaging their reputation in this setting, which discourages thoughtful, fact-based discussion. All things considered, although there are [platforms](#) for discussion, their capacity to regularly contribute to positive, trust-based public conversation is limited by the dominant culture of political polarisation and lax deliberative standards.

5.2 | Perception of civil society and civic participation

Many Mauritius residents believe that civil society is generally [beneficial](#), especially when it comes to issues like consumer rights, social welfare, poverty reduction, disability advocacy, and environmental protection. NGOs and community organisations are frequently perceived as bridging the gaps left by the government and giving vulnerable populations direct assistance. Public opinion is not always favourable, though. When CS organisations participate in overt political criticism or anti-corruption activities, trust tends to wane because some people perceive them as politically connected. In general, civil society has a modest level of public legitimacy; it is strongest when it comes to providing services and weakest when it comes to aggressive [campaigning](#).

The [majority of Mauritians](#) think that elections, which are still competitive and heavily attended, are the main way they may affect political decisions. Voter confidence in formal democratic processes is reflected in the comparatively high turnout. But many citizens believe they have

little direct influence over policy-making outside of elections. Participation in labour unions, NGOs, [religious organisations](#), and community projects is prevalent yet uneven, concentrated among particular social groupings. Outside of party politics, youth political engagement is still comparatively low. Although there is civic engagement at the municipal and community levels, significant involvement in national decision-making is generally thought to be limited.

In Mauritius, civic education is formally incorporated into the curriculum through courses related to social studies, history, and citizenship. Although democratic institutions, rights, and obligations are taught to students, this instruction is frequently theoretical rather than applied. NGO-led community-based civic education initiatives do exist, but their scope and funding are still constrained. Public funding for grassroots political literacy and adult civic education is inconsistent. Because of this, deeper understanding of participation, responsibility, and advocacy remains inconsistent across age, class, and area, even while fundamental knowledge of voting and constitutional rights is ubiquitous.

5.3 | Equality and civic inclusion

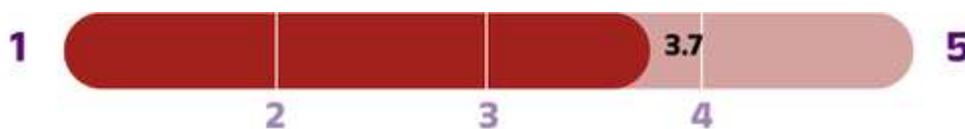
Equal rights and nondiscrimination, including political participation through universal suffrage and constitutional safeguards, are explicitly guaranteed under Mauritius' legal system. All citizens can participate in civic and political processes, in theory. However, real access is greatly impacted by social and economic disparities. For many groups, effective participation is limited by poverty, educational gaps, [gender norms](#), disability, and geographic location. Despite the existence of organisations like the Equal Opportunities Commission and social protection programmes, enforcement is still inconsistent. Because of this, equality is only partially realised in practice, especially for women, low-income groups, and people with disabilities, even though it is largely guaranteed by law.

In Mauritius, social and economic hurdles for underprivileged and marginalised groups are still moderate but enduring. Access to political networks, civic engagement, and education are all significantly impacted by class-based inequality. While people with impairments suffer accessibility issues, women continue to face institutional and cultural impediments to full political involvement. Though subtle kinds of discrimination and stereotyping still exist, ethnic and religious diversity is generally accepted. Due to stigma and a lack of legal protection, sexual minorities are the most vulnerable in society. In general, Mauritian [society](#) exhibits comparatively high levels of social tolerance when compared to many other situations, but pervasive injustices nevertheless prevent vulnerable groups from participating equally and moving up the social ladder.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

6. Access to a Secure Digital Environment

Score:



This section assesses the digital environment for civil society in Mauritius across rights and freedoms, security and privacy, and accessibility in 2025. Internet access was generally stable and nationwide shutdowns were rare, yet even brief or targeted disruptions—often justified on grounds of security or disinformation—can significantly hinder CSO communication, mobilisation, and election-related activities. A patchwork of laws (including data protection, cybercrime, and ICT statutes) regulates online expression and personal data, but uneven enforcement, selective surveillance, opaque takedowns, and periodic arrests or harassment create a chilling effect, compounded by smear campaigns and disinformation targeting journalists and activists. While the Data Protection Act offers a comparatively robust privacy framework and recourse mechanisms, practical oversight of state surveillance is limited and remedies may be slow or costly for grassroots actors. Access and skills were comparatively strong—bolstered by high mobile and broadband penetration—though rural connectivity gaps, resource constraints, and uneven digital literacy limit full participation, particularly in advanced cybersecurity and data use. Emerging tools—AI, analytics, and platform-based outreach—provide new opportunities for evidence-driven advocacy, but also introduce risks of manipulation and bias, underscoring the need for sustained capacity-building in digital security, privacy, and responsible technology use.

6.1 | Digital rights and freedoms

Even during times of political unrest, Mauritius often maintains [uninterrupted](#) access, and complete nationwide internet or social media shutdowns are extremely uncommon. However, civil society organisations (CSOs) are immediately [and severely impacted](#) when limits or threatened suspensions take place, particularly during elections, significant scandals, or protests. CSOs use digital channels extensively for public communication, fundraising, service delivery coordination, and advocacy. Election monitoring, public education, and mobilisation activities are weakened by even brief disruptions. Such actions create significant

proportionality and necessity [issues](#), but their timing is usually justified on the basis of national security, public order, or disinformation.

Online activity is governed by a number of regulations in Mauritius, including the Data Protection Act, the Computer Misuse and Cybercrime Act, and the Information and Communication Technologies Act. These control cybersecurity, monitoring, online expression, and personal information. Although intended to combat misinformation and cybercrime, enforcement tactics have sparked concerns about [civil liberties](#), especially with regard to content regulation and monitoring capabilities. Both state and non-state actors are subject to regulations, although enforcement is seen as inconsistent, with political speech being subject to more attention than commercial manipulation. There is a chance that oversight procedures will be applied arbitrarily or in a politically biased manner [because they are still institutionally weak](#).

While there is not always widespread, routine censorship of political information in Mauritius, there are instances of targeted surveillance, takedowns, and investigations, particularly during politically delicate times. Authorities have the authority to monitor activists' internet activities, order the removal of content, and launch investigations based on posts made online. In general, surveillance is selective rather than all-encompassing, concentrating on journalists, political opponents, whistleblowers, and CSO leaders engaged in governance or anti-corruption campaigning. The absence of clear safeguards and judicial control has a chilling effect, deterring critical digital involvement among activists and civil society actors, even though it is not comparable with fully securitised nations.

For CSOs and activists in Mauritius, private platforms like Facebook, X (Twitter), YouTube, and WhatsApp are the primary means of communication. When it comes to damaging or deceptive content, these platforms adopt their own international community standards and occasionally remove messages without consulting the authorities. However, platforms and local internet service providers usually cooperate when authorities make formal directions through regulators or law enforcement channels. There are no strong public reporting systems for government takedown requests, filtering orders, or ISP compliance, which limits transparency. It is challenging to determine whether limits are legitimate, reasonable, or politically driven due to this inadequate accountability system.

Periodically, journalists, activists, and people connected to online speech, leaks, or criticism of government have been arrested, questioned by police, and harassed. Allegations of cybercrime, illegal disclosure, or violations of public order are frequently present in these cases. Long-term incarceration is rare, but extended investigations, equipment seizures, and the use of police authorities have an intimidating effect. Journalists and CSO activists also have to deal with concerted smear efforts, doxxing by private individuals connected to political interests, and online abuse. State coercion and private cyberattacks work together to limit civic space and encourage self-censorship.

6.2 | Digital security and privacy

There is no systematic, publicly verified proof that the Mauritian government uses malware or spyware against civil society actors in the way that highly securitised states have been shown to do. However, there have been credible claims of illegal communication interception, digital leaks, and phone surveillance, particularly involving politically sensitive actors, journalists, and whistleblowers. Rather than being officially attributed to state operations, cyberattacks against civil society actors are more frequently associated with unidentified private players, politically motivated hackers, or harassment networks. Although these occurrences are sporadic rather

than regular, they have a substantial influence on advocacy groups' digital security, self-censorship, anxiety, and compromised sources.

The Data Protection Act of 2017 provides Mauritius with a comparatively robust formal framework for digital privacy that is in line with international norms. It governs how both public and commercial organisations gather, store, and use personal data. Civil society actors can request investigations for illegal data processing, file complaints with the Data Protection Commissioner, and pursue compensation in civil courts. However, grassroots CSOs have limited access to these processes due to their slowness, complexity, and expense. Effective protection in politically sensitive circumstances is diminished since state surveillance oversight is still inadequate and there is no independent, specialised organisation tasked with keeping an eye on digital surveillance abuses.

Particularly during politically delicate times, there is mounting evidence of concerted internet intimidation, slander tactics, and disinformation directed at journalists, activists, and CS organisations in Mauritius. Although there is little concrete evidence of state-run bot networks, political accounts frequently criticise civil society actors, cast doubt on their credibility, and propagate false information about foreign funding or covert objectives. Anonymous pages, party sympathisers, and private individuals frequently amplify these campaigns. Threats, internet harassment, reputational damage, and dwindling public confidence in advocacy activity are some of the effects. Although there is regulation at the platform level, state accountability for concerted political manipulation is still lacking.

6.3 | Digital accessibility

With extensive mobile and broadband access, particularly in urban areas, Mauritius has a comparatively high internet penetration rate [estimated](#) at 79.5% with around 67.7% of the population using social media in 2025. Civil society actors can access internet platforms for public communication, coordination, and advocacy because service quality is typically dependable and costs are competitive when compared to regional rivals. However, there are occasionally connectivity gaps and significantly slower speeds in rural and remote areas, which can restrict local organisations' ability to engage in real-time. In general, the infrastructure facilitates online communication and content sharing, although there are still gaps in reaching underserved groups. It may be difficult for civil society actors with little funding to properly utilise digital platforms for operations and community involvement.

Due to extensive smartphone use and computer access in schools and businesses, Mauritius's populace has moderate to high levels of basic ICT skills in metropolitan areas. Although CSO employees are generally well-versed in social media, online communication tools, and basic data management, there are gaps in their knowledge of advanced data analysis, cybersecurity procedures, and digital advocacy tactics. Smaller grassroots organisations, older persons, and rural groups might not be able to critically assess information or use online platforms efficiently. To maximise engagement, evidence-based advocacy, and safe online operations, the CSO sector must improve digital literacy and professional ICT training.

From automated data analysis to social media monitoring, artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics, and new digital tools are starting to impact civic engagement and advocacy in Mauritius. AI-enabled disinformation, content moderation tools, and data-driven outreach opportunities are becoming more prevalent for civil society actors. However, due to a lack of knowledge on AI ethics, algorithmic biases, and sophisticated analytical tools, the general public and many CSOs are still only partially prepared to use these technologies effectively.

For civil society actors to be successful, safe, and relevant in a changing digital world, capacity-building in AI literacy, digital security, and adaptive use of emerging technologies is crucial.

C) Recommendations

1.0 Recommendations to the Government of Mauritius

1.1 Safeguard core civic freedoms through precise, practice-level fixes

- Reaffirm constitutional protections (ss. 12–13) in policing and regulatory practice. Issue a Police Standing Order and Registrar of Associations Practice Note clarifying that constitutional rights are the default, and that any restriction must meet legality, necessity and proportionality tests; embed this in annual training and public guidance.
- Make the Public Gatherings Act genuinely notification-based. Publish a standard notification form; commit to the 12-person threshold in law and guidance; disclose clear refusal criteria and a weekly dashboard of notices received, facilitated, or restricted, with reasons.
- Resource independent oversight. Increase the IPCC's operating budget and staffing, set service standards (e.g., investigation completion timelines), and publish quarterly statistics on complaints related to assemblies and public-order policing.

1.2 Improve the information environment and transparency

- Adopt a modern Access to Information (ATI) law with narrow, harm-tested exemptions and time-bound response duties; in the interim, adopt an administrative circular designating ATI focal points in ministries and committing to 20-working-day responses. Repeal or narrow Official Secrets Act provisions that criminalise cabinet-related disclosures beyond legitimate national-security needs.
- Operationalise the 2025 Public Inquiries framework for openness. Implement the new duties to table reports, publish evidence records where possible, and provide reasoned official responses within fixed deadlines.

1.3 Reduce administrative friction for CSOs

- Publish a one-stop CSO Registration Pack (model rules, checklists, templated financial statements), expand online filing, and pilot fee waivers for micro-associations; publish average processing times and reasons for refusals.
- Create a low-cost, time-bound appeal route from Registrar decisions to an administrative review panel, with anonymised decisions published for predictability.

1.4 De-risk legitimate funding flows while meeting AML/CFT standards

- Issue joint FIU–Bank of Mauritius–FSC guidance on CSO banking and foreign grants, clarifying risk-based due diligence, documentation required for inbound transfers, and reasonable timelines for enhanced checks; publish a supervisory statement discouraging blanket “derisking” of advocacy actors.
- Implement FATF Recommendation 8 proportionately. Use the NPO risk assessment to focus outreach and supervision on genuinely higher-risk profiles (e.g., complex cross-border cash flows), not the sector as a whole; publish annual R.8 metrics.

1.5 Protect digital rights while tackling online harms

- Drop decryption/proxy proposals and adopt rights-respecting content governance. Close out the 2021 ICTA decryption plan; publish a transparent, court-supervised takedown process and a biannual report on all government requests to platforms/ISPs.
- Adopt an ‘internet shutdowns-last resort’ policy. Require Cabinet-level written necessity/proportionality assessments, judicial review within 24–48 hours, and immediate public notice; commit to publishing any orders and post-event reviews.
- Strengthen privacy oversight. Equip the Data Protection Office with resources for rapid assistance to CSOs (hotline, DPIA templates) and publish an annual report on state-access requests to data.

1.6 Make consultation meaningful

- Institutionalise early, inclusive consultation (incl. smaller/grassroots and rights-focused groups) via the NSIF and line ministries: publish forward calendars, minimum comment periods, and consultation summaries showing which CSO inputs were adopted or rejected (and why).

1.7 Media freedom and expression

- Stabilise the media environment. Align ICT content offences with international standards (repeal vague “annoyance/humiliation” clauses), adopt statutory source-protection and public-broadcaster independence safeguards, and track progress against RSF/Freedom House indicators.

2.0 Recommendations to Civil Society Actors

2.1 Compliance and resilience, at low cost

- Create a shared “CSO Compliance Toolkit.” Pool templates (governance, accounts, AML/KYC packs for banks, DPA privacy notices), registration guides, and appeal letter models; host in English/Kreol on a public microsite. Align to the Registration of Associations Act, FIAMLA, and DPA 2017.
- Establish a pooled legal & digital safety help desk. Maintain a roster of pro bono counsel for assembly/defamation/ICT issues and vetted trainers for device hardening, secure communications, and incident response.
- Adopt baseline data-protection practices. Nominate a privacy lead, map personal data, implement breach response within 72 hours, and use DPIA templates for sensitive programmes.

2.2 Funding diversification and bankability

- Standardise “bank-ready” files. Maintain a live dossier (registration certificate, governance chart, audited statements, donor letters, programme M&E) to expedite onboarding or enhanced due diligence with banks. Use the FIU/BOM guidance once issued.
- Pilot small earned-income streams (e.g., training, fee-for-service) within legal objects; document controls to satisfy AML/CFT and DPA requirements.

2.3 Evidence-based advocacy and consultation readiness

- Engage predictably in policy cycles. Track the Assembly’s Bills page and the NSIF calendar; prepare rapid-response briefs that cite concrete clauses and propose redlines/alternatives; publish your submissions and “what changed” notes.
- Media hygiene in a polarised environment. Adopt source verification and right-of-reply practices; build relationships with multiple outlets to avoid over-reliance; use RSF and Freedom House trends to frame systemic issues.

2.4 Peaceful assembly practice

- Professionalise protest planning. Use the PGA notification form, route-planning and stewarding guides, and post-event debriefs; document interactions with police and escalate to IPCC where needed.

3.0 Recommendations to Donors and International Community

3.1 Finance what enables, not only what delivers

- Increase multi-year, core and semi-restricted funding (overheads, compliance, digital security, legal defence), with light-touch reporting aligned to CSO capacity; track impact via organisational-capacity benchmarks, not only project outputs.
- Stand up pooled facilities for public-interest litigation and rapid response (for unlawful assembly restrictions, seizure of equipment, or platform takedowns), administered locally with international backstopping.

3.2 Reduce compliance drag

- Harmonise due-diligence and reporting. Use common templates and accept audited accounts + management letters as primary assurance; fund external audits for small grantees; embed proportionate AML/CFT controls consistent with Mauritius’s risk-based regime.
- Digital safety by default. Budget for security tooling, privacy-by-design, and DPIAs, and require grantees to adopt minimum DPA-aligned safeguards without over-engineering.

3.3 Support systemic reforms and public goods

- Back the ATI law process and open government assets. Provide technical drafting help, model ATI implementation plans, and fund an interim “Requests Tracker” portal inside government.

- Invest in rural connectivity and skills. Co-finance last-mile connectivity pilots with clear cost-recovery models and fund advanced ICT/data literacy for CSOs (analytics, cybersecurity, responsible AI).



D) Research Process

Each principle encompasses various dimensions which are assessed and aggregated to provide quantitative scores per principle. These scores reflect the degree to which the environment within the country enables or disables the work of civil society. Scores are on a five-category scale defined as: fully disabling (1), disabling (2), partially enabling (3), enabling (4), and fully enabling (5). To complement the scores, this report provides a narrative analysis of the enabling or disabling environment for civil society, identifying strengths and weaknesses as well as offering recommendations. The process of drafting the analysis is led by Network Members; the consortium provides quality control and editorial oversight before publication.

For Principle 1 - which evaluates respect for and protection of freedom of association and peaceful assembly - the score integrates data from the [CIVICUS Monitor](#). However, for Principles 2–6, the availability of yearly updated external quantitative indicators for the 86 countries part of the EUSEE programme are either limited or non-existent. To address this, Network Members convene a panel of representatives of civil society and experts once a year. This panel uses a set of guiding questions to assess the status of each principle and its dimensions within the country. The panel for this report took place in December 2025. The discussions are supported by secondary sources, such as [V-Dem](#), the [Bertelsmann Stiftung Governance Index](#), the [RTI Rating from the Centre for Law and Democracy](#), and other trusted resources. These sources provide benchmarks for measuring similar dimensions and are complemented by primary data collection and other secondary sources of information available for the country. Guided by these deliberations, the panel assigns scores for each dimension, which the Network Members submit to the Consortium, accompanied by detailed justifications that reflect the country's specific context. To determine a single score per principle, the scores assigned to each dimension are aggregated using a weighted average, reflecting the relative importance of each dimension within the principle. This approach balances diverse perspectives while maintaining a structured and objective evaluation framework.

This publication was funded/co-funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

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