

Mongolia

Country Focus Report

2025



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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

-  **Respect and Protection of Fundamental Freedoms**
-  **Supportive Legal and Regulatory Framework**
-  **Accessible and Sustainable Resources**
-  **Open and Responsive State**
-  **Supportive Public Culture and Discourses on Civil Society**
-  **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

Reporting Period covered: 01 January to 15 November 2025.

Civil society operates in a dynamic political and economic context shaped by various laws and regulatory frameworks. Although the 1992 Constitution of Mongolia guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms for all, including freedom of voice, expression, association and assembly, and press, Mongolia's democracy is referred to as "flawed", according to the [Democracy Index 2025](#). Most of the laws necessary to protect and defend civil society have been adopted, but their implementation is weak, with the country ranked 67 on the [Rule of Law Index](#) for 2025, down 20 places since 2015.

Diversified and growing civil society exists in Mongolia, though with insufficient support from the government. There is growing political hostility towards civil society from politicians. For example, the police [raided](#) an independent news outlet, and citizens have been investigated for expressing their views on social media.

Over 70% of the media is [affiliated](#) with and under the control of politically exposed persons and more than half of all defamation cases have been brought against journalists and media outlets, resulting in the country falling to 102nd place on the [World Press Freedom Index](#).

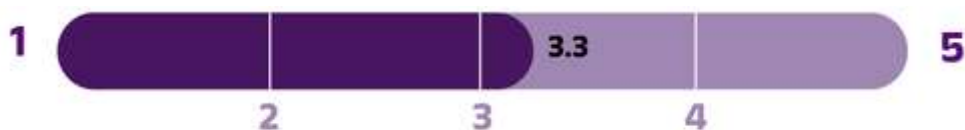
Political stability has been relatively stable in Mongolia for the past five years, but the government was ousted in June 2025, after [notable protest](#) that led to a vote of no confidence and the resignation of the prime minister. There have been tensions between the government and [teachers](#) over budgets, and between the government and [healthcare sector](#) employees demanding better working conditions and an increase in basic salaries, and threatening a nationwide strike. Despite governance challenges, Mongolia performs among the world's [top 25%](#) in terms of Elected Government and Freedom of Movement.

B) Assessment of the Enabling Environment

PRINCIPLE SCORE

1. Respect and Protection of Fundamental Freedoms

Score: ¹



The [Constitution of Mongolia](#) recognises freedom of association, freedom of assembly, and freedom of expression equally to all. It contains a specific chapter, Chapter Two, on Human Rights and Freedoms. Clause 10 of the Constitution of Mongolia says that citizens of Mongolia are guaranteed the right to form a political party or other civic organisation, and are guaranteed freedom of association on the basis of their social and personal interests and views. All political parties and civic organisations shall uphold public order and state security, and abide by the law. Discrimination and persecution of a person for setting up a political party or civil society organisation (CSO) or joining as a member is prohibited.

On paper, all effective laws and regulations developed and adopted are consistent with the Constitution of Mongolia, ensuring rights without any discrimination. In practice, the implementation of laws varies, demonstrating negligence mostly from public officials and government offices, and resulting in double standards and failure to uphold the rule of law.

1.1 Freedom of Association

Mongolian laws recognise and ensure freedom of association. Any citizens can freely associate and set up a CSO based on their joint beliefs, interests, and views voluntarily on a not-for-profit basis. While all CSOs must adhere to the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations upon association, sector-specific requirements must be adhered to pursuant to the [Law on Legal Status of Professional Unions](#) by professional associations, and the [Law on Press Freedom](#) by the media upon foundation.

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

The government attempted to limit freedom of association by proposing a revision to the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations to parliament in 2021 (revised Law on Non-Governmental Organisations). Although the drafts were suspended, CSOs [fear](#) for their safety and security and their impartiality from the state. At the same time, the number of political party-affiliated and politician-affiliated CSOs has increased, further creating conflicts of interest in the procurement of key contracts from public offices.

1.2 Freedom of Assembly

The [Law on Procedures for Organising Protests and Demonstrations](#) regulates key relations that are relevant to the freedom of assembly in the country. The objective of the law is defined in its Article 1 as to ensure people's fundamental rights to organise peaceful demonstrations, assemblies, and protests, to establish procedures, and to ensure the safety and security of organisers. According to Article 3 of the law, citizens of Mongolia, registered political parties, and CSOs are allowed to organise peaceful demonstrations, assemblies, and protests.

Article 9 of the Law on Procedures for Organising Protests and Demonstrations says that organisers must inform the governor of the organising district about their protest, assembly, or demonstration. The law does not require any confirmation or permission from the said governor. However, during the 2020–2022 “No War”, “No Double Standards”, and “No Naadam” protests, the police detained organisers and [forcibly dispersed](#) protesters. During a 2025 demonstration organised between 14 May and 3 June 2025, which demanded the resignation of the government, the police also [arbitrarily detained](#) activists, and in some cases dispersed protesters by force. Police invaded and arrested protesters on the basis that they did not have permission to organise a protest. This phenomenon has been repeated during many protests organised since COVID-19.

1.3 Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression is ensured pursuant to Article 16.16 of the Constitution of Mongolia. It provides that citizens of Mongolia are guaranteed rights to hold beliefs and freely express their views and opinions, and ensures free speech, press, and peaceful assembly.

The main law that regulates press freedom is the Law on Press Freedom, adopted in 1998. On 25 January 2025, the former government [submitted](#) the draft revision to the Law on Press Freedom to parliament. Many concerns regarding the draft law have been continuously raised by the [Media Council](#) of Mongolia and [CSOs](#), and by the [Human Rights Commission](#) on deteriorating media rights and threatening media sources. The government organised a number of discussions with media sector representatives. However, the parties could not reach a common understanding and the discussion of the draft law has been temporarily, though indefinitely, delayed in parliament.

The police have [interrogated](#) citizens and penalised them with fines for posting online memes and posters shaming the President of Mongolia. The police investigation was voluntary, and not based on complaints from anyone. Over 70% of the media is [affiliated](#) with and under the control of politically exposed persons and more than half of all defamation cases are brought against journalists and media outlets.

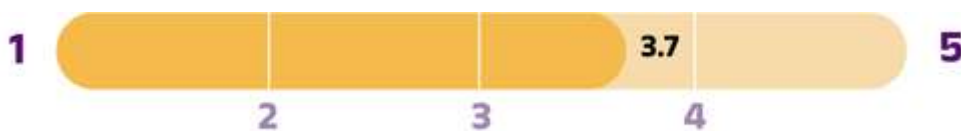
On 24–25 November 2025, the Constitutional Court of Mongolia resolved that Clause 13.14 of the Criminal Code, on “Spreading False Information”, is in violation of the Constitution of Mongolia. Parliament accepted this decision and removed the Clause from the [Criminal Code](#). Cases that were previously handled pursuant to the [Law on Infringement](#) have become criminal cases pursuant to this clause, which was added on 10 January 2020 to restrict people's voices through the Criminal Code. It said that “if intentional false information was spread to defame a person's reputation or social standing or the business reputation of a legal entity, a penalty of 450 units to 1,300 units shall be imposed or 240 to 720 hours of public good service or restriction to travel from 1 to 3 months”. Although the revision and amendment to the Criminal Code was intended to improve the situation in relation to the investigation of reporters, it has been used to intimidate both citizens and the media on their expression of

views on social media platforms. Therefore, while annulment of the Criminal Code clause is laudable, an effective method of resolving issues related to defamation remains outstanding.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

2. Supportive Legal and Regulatory Framework

Score:



CSOs can freely register in Mongolia and operate under the terms defined in their charters. A recent [study](#) conducted by CSOs on the implementation of the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations since 1997 revealed that this law has achieved its defined purpose and objectives to promote civic space and civil participation, but needs to be revised in the light of changes that have occurred in civic engagement and platforms of activities and in the protection of physical and digital civic spaces. Civil Society Week has been organised in the last week of January each year in Mongolia since 2025. In 2026, CSOs [agreed](#) to develop and propose a draft Civil Society Development Concept Paper – State Policy on Civil Society for the President of Mongolia.

2.1. Registration

CSOs, including non-governmental organisations, foundations, associations, and unions, are legal entities, registered at the state registration office and operated in accordance with the [Law on Non-Governmental Organisations](#) and the [Law on State Registration of Legal Entities](#). The Law on Non-Governmental Organisations was adopted in 1997. Although it has been revised nine times since its adoption, all revisions were made following amendments to different laws, neglecting the necessity of making substantial structural changes to ensure the development of CSOs or a civic space.

The government intended to make the main contextual revision [in 2021](#) with the aim of reducing the enabling environment for civil space and increasing state oversight and involvement in CSOs' activities. In particular, the draft laws to revise the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations aimed to monitor funding by demanding that CSOs report it to the state and funding provided from the state council, set up to select and distribute funds for civic activities.

Other key laws – such as the [Law on Legal Status of Human Rights Defenders](#) on the protection of human rights defenders, the [Law on Public Hearing](#) on public consultations, and the [Law on Legislations](#), which ensures mandatory research and public consultations prior to administrative decisions – are in place. The government has set up a [working group](#) on the draft Law on Whistleblowers' Protection and submitted the draft to parliament for discussion and adoption during the 2026 spring session.

The [registration process](#) for CSOs in Mongolia has several steps, according to Chapter Four of the Law on State Registration of Legal Entities. The [procedures and instructions](#) for registering CSOs at the state registration office are available and easy to access. There are no legal restrictions on the registration of any CSOs in Mongolia, including those working in the field of LGBTQIA+ rights, on politically sensitive topics, or on the protection of rights of marginalised groups. Mongolia does not have a list of banned CSOs or extremist organisations.

However, in practice, CSOs face minor bureaucratic issues during registration, such as being unable to choose the desired name of the organisation from the name pool, as it has to comply with all requirements defined in the [Procedure on Legal Entity's Name Validation](#), or the government authority insisting on incorporating certain legal stipulations in a CSO's charter. CSOs are registered using the same form that registers a private sector company, which presents difficulties in filling out some of the information. There are no challenges related to registration costs and stamp duty, and all forms are free of charge. Although CSOs operate in 19 different fields, in practice their field of operation is registered with a single code at the state registration office.

Pursuant to the freshly adopted Law on Legal Status of Professional Unions, [professional unions](#) must be registered at the Supreme Court. This process has created unnecessary burdens in civic engagement in setting up unions, as the requirements and criteria for registration of a professional union at the Supreme Court are relatively difficult and approval takes longer than that for other CSO registrations. While registration of a CSO takes about three days after submitting all relevant documents to the state registration office, registration of a union takes about a month for approval from the Supreme Court. A [dispute](#) to invalidate such registration was filed with the Constitutional Court of Mongolia, with the Constitutional Court resolving that the registration of professional unions with the Supreme Court is in violation of the Constitution of Mongolia, and [resolving](#) to suspend two articles of the Law on Legal Status of Professional Unions.

The [Law on Complaint Resolution of Citizens Made to Government or Public Official](#) clearly ensures an appeal mechanism that can be applied if the CSO's registration is denied by the state registration office. In practice, the state registration office does demand that some CSOs comply with laws, or correct the information supplied. However, there is no record of denial of registration of CSOs by the state registration office.

2.2. Operational Environment

The Constitution of Mongolia ensures key principles of equal rights for all individuals and legal entities, without discrimination. Therefore, laws adopted pursuant to the Constitution of Mongolia adequately ensure rights for CSOs to operate freely, while the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations ensures possibilities to self-identify internal governance, purpose, and activities in CSOs' charters, and prohibits state interference in CSOs' activities.

According to the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations, only the internal control committee of a CSO has the right to control and monitor its activities, funding, and expenditure. Although there are no restrictions or reporting requirements on receiving funding from domestic or international organisations, due to a lack of foreign funding, CSOs are becoming more reliant on state funding.

According to the effective Law on Non-Governmental Organisations and the [Law on Income Tax of Legal Entities](#), CSOs file tax and financial reports to the relevant taxation authority and an activity report to the state registration office once a year. Although complying with the reporting requirements for CSOs is not burdensome, an unpublished official document shows that only 366 out of 19,260 registered CSOs in 2018, 406 out of 21,040 registered CSOs in 2019, and 539 out of 24,882 registered CSOs in 2025 filed their activity reports to the state registration office, which equates to 2% of all CSOs. This low percentage of compliance is due

to staff and funding inadequacies. However, the state registration office has never conducted an assessment on reports submitted by CSOs and has not provided any instructions or recommendations on the content, nor raised awareness of the necessity for filing such reports.

In 2021, the government initiated attempts to reduce the enabling environment for civic space by developing a draft Law on Non-Governmental Organisations ([Law on Legal Status of Associations](#), [Law on Legal Status of Unions](#)), limiting funding sources and increasing state control and reporting processes by setting up a committee under the prime minister to resolve funding for selected CSOs, listing permitted activities for unions and associations, abolishing all other CSOs except unions and associations, and demanding additional financial and activity reporting to the committee. The attempt was made using the pretext of implementing the Financial Action Task Force's Recommendation 8 on not-for-profit organisations. The draft law faced strong [opposition](#) and a protest by CSOs and was suspended by the parliament after the first discussion.

Although CSOs have been criticised for receiving and laundering foreign funding, there was only one case in 2025 of account seizure, and an [investigation](#) related to the premises of the independent media outlet Noorog in connection with financial crimes and money laundering. The public suspected that the Noorog investigation was a targeted intervention from the police after Noorog's [announcement](#) about the release of a documentary on the 2024 national election. The case is still under investigation.

Since the adoption of the Law on the Legal Status of Professional Unions in 2024, ministries are increasingly tending to involve professional unions in legislative discussions, showing a subtle push for CSOs to engage in professional unions to have a voice in government decisions.

2.3. Protection from Interference

Legal provisions exist to protect CSOs from arbitrary dissolution. According to the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations, CSOs can be dissolved voluntarily or based on a court decision. Voluntary dissolution can be made by completing activities defined in the CSO's charter or through a resolution by the board to dissolve. A court decision to dissolve a CSO can be delivered if the CSO, such as a union or a foundation, undertakes activities not defined in its charter, has committed serious violations of laws, such as forcefully recruiting a member, distributes dividends from its income, issues a warranty, pays off a third party's liability, undertakes political funding, carries out profit-making activities, spends less than 50% of the foundation's income on activities defined in its charter, or repeatedly violates laws. Violation of the United Nations Security Council's Consolidated List of individuals and entities subject to measures imposed by the Security Council is also grounds for the dissolution of any organisation. In addition, according to the Law on State Registration of Legal Entities, any legal entity can be dissolved if it has not filed its financial reports to the tax authority for eight consecutive quarters.

Currently, according to official documents, there are 24,882 CSOs registered in Mongolia. There have been no cases of dissolution of CSOs based on complaints made by government organisations. However, on 28 July 2025, based on resolution A/1345 of the Head of the State Registration Office, 6,636 CSOs were removed from the state registration as their financial reports had not been filed to the taxation authority for eight or more consecutive quarters.

Laws applicable to the dissolution of CSOs are respected in Mongolia. A CSO that led the litigation against the uranium mining company for operating without legal permission was investigated by the Central Intelligence Agency in 2024. Tax and other inspections by the state on CSOs do not seem to have interfered with the legitimate operation of the CSOs in the past few years.

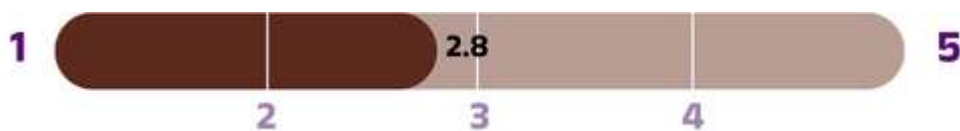
The law requires CSOs to be independent of the state. However, due to the lack of foreign funding, CSOs are becoming more reliant on state funding. As international funding has severely decreased while government funding has become accessible, even the most vocal

CSOs have steadily shifted to relying on government funds. CSOs may be reluctant to criticise the government and deliver constructive judgements if their survival now hinges entirely on the government. The state budget is increased annually and government organisations have increased their funding for the procurement, tendering, and direct contracting for works, goods, and services with CSOs for studies and services. This leaves CSOs working closely with the government while shifting their objectives to be in line with government activities.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

3. Accessible and Sustainable Resources

Score:



CSOs in Mongolia lack core funding and survive based on project funding. Funding from the state for research and analysis has significantly [increased](#) in the past five years. Such increases and the consistent funding of CSOs by the government impose greater risks to the impartiality of CSOs and the overall security of the democratic pillar. Although there are no restrictions on receiving funding information from any sources, CSOs working in rural areas face challenges in participating in tendering processes of foreign donors due to their language barriers and the necessary project-development capabilities.

3.1 Accessibility

All government, private, and civil society organisations, including international donor organisations, post their information freely on both targeted and implemented projects and programmes and on funding opportunities. CSOs strongly rely on donor funding to undertake the activities necessary to address issues in society. However, due to severe reductions in foreign aid and project funding in the past few years, CSOs have faced liquidation risks and reduced scope and activities. Meanwhile, government organisations have increased their funding for studies on all sectors and services provided by CSOs under the contracts, leaving CSOs with no choice but to shift their objectives to be in line with government activities and to work closely with the government.

Article 19 of the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations permits CSOs to collect a membership fee, donations, project funding, and income generated from their lawful activities, and to receive state funds.

According to Clause 21.1.10 of the Law on Income Tax of Legal Entities, the state provides a tax exemption for certain activities of a CSO if those are reflected in the CSO's charter, including in the area of promoting human rights of people with disabilities. Recent [changes](#) in the law allowed legal entities to spend a maximum of 1% of their total annual taxable income on social accountability, which is excluded from income tax. Since 2024, after the adoption of such changes in the Law on Income Tax of Legal Entities, CSOs' funding has not increased. Rather, the number of new CSOs operating under companies has increased. Mongolia has not established a policy to clearly identify the context and outcome of social accountability, and companies therefore tend to set up and promote their own CSOs rather than supporting

existing CSOs. The definition of what activities can be considered to be for a “public good” is limited, allowing the tax authorities to exclude activities from tax at their discretion. Although CSO activities such as promoting human rights, democracy, and the rights of people with disabilities are included in tax exemptions, the state registration office requires a CSO to change or correct the activities in its charter in line with given codes for each type. This is primarily an administrative barrier to align the text of the charter to laws.

The legal environment exists for CSOs to undertake certain government activities based on contracts. However, the selection process, the transparency of activities, income and expenditure, and accountability are weak, undermining the overall credibility of CSOs. Furthermore, as the [Law on Purchasing Goods, Works and Services by State and Local Government's Budget and Assets](#) states, if the total budget of the contractual work supplied by the CSO to the government exceeds MNT100 million, the CSO must place an assurance amount into the state account as a guarantee. This requirement imposes a burden on CSOs and increases the risk for politically affiliated CSOs to enter government services.

3.2. Effectiveness

While funders openly publish the criteria and project terms of reference for CSOs, not many CSOs meet their requirements on financial reporting, transparency, and human resources. Furthermore, international funders selectively engage CSOs in identifying CSOs' needs, resulting in a narrow scope of objectives. Grassroots organisations lack a voice in determining the action plans and objectives of funders.

Currently, government- and international donor-funded CSOs are dominant in the country, and both government and international donors tend to engage the same organisations for subsequent activities, limiting opportunities for newcomers. The coordination and coherence of activities of different projects, selection processes for CSOs, and the assessment of the outcomes of implemented projects are inadequate.

The Law on Non-Governmental Organisations, Clause 20.2, prohibits CSOs from sharing dividends, issuing warranties, paying off a third party's liabilities, carrying out commercial activities, and giving political funding. All activities of CSOs such as unions and foundations must be for the good of the people and they must carry out only those activities defined in their charters. In 2021, the research organisation SICA conducted a [study](#) examining the civil society environment in Mongolia. This showed that CSOs are successfully reaching all areas that the government is unable to reach, including policy impact, mainstreaming know-how, research and analysis, awareness raising, and service provision. The government action plan for 2024–2028 incorporated several key objectives to collaborate with CSOs in these areas.

CSOs in Mongolia lack core funding and survive based on project funding. CSOs seek funding from donors and make the best efforts to match donors' criteria rather than aiming for their own objectives and capacity building. Donors' funding usually excludes administrative expenses such as rent, tax, salaries, and capacity building of staff, and thus, with the available funding, CSOs hire young, inexperienced staff on low salaries for the period of project implementation. International development organisations implement projects themselves, engaging local CSOs for brainstorming or discussions to extract the necessary information. Especially for CSOs working in local provinces, it is difficult to meet international donor organisations' audit, financial, objective, and language criteria, as well as their checks and balances. Therefore, CSOs working in local provinces are unable to protect the rights of citizens and marginalised groups.

3.3. Sustainability

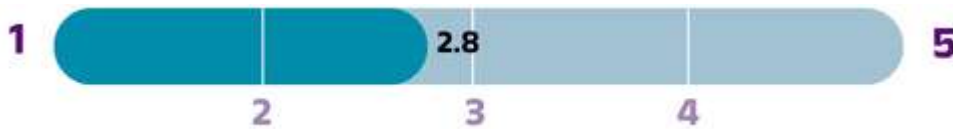
Mongolia has not established a civil society development policy to ensure the protection of civic space and the sustainability and development of CSOs. Therefore, sustainable and multi-source funding for CSOs is not available. The closure of key foreign donors such as the United States Agency for International Development and the Asia Foundation in Mongolia has almost led to the collapse of the entire civil society sector since 2025. As CSOs lack core funding,

they do not make long-term plans, can only work on small projects, lack the ability to build the capacity of their staff or retain talent for a continuous period, and survive on project-based funding. Articles 4, 19, and 20 of the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations prohibits profit-making activities for CSOs. However, CSOs are permitted to carry out cooperative, educational, and library activities that generate income, according to Article 5.1 of the Law on Library, Article 12 of the Law on Cooperative, and Article 37 of the Law on General Education. This shows that there is inconsistency in domestic laws, and it is not clear whether such activities are permitted according to these laws or prohibited according to Articles 4, 19 and 20 of the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations for CSOs. To sustain prolonged activities, CSOs seek other potential funding opportunities, which are only available from the government. However, funding from a single source may affect the independence of CSOs.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

4. Open and Responsive State

Score:



Mongolia has relatively strong legal frameworks requiring public access to government information and public participation in decision-making, including publication of draft laws and consultations with civil society organisations, but these rules are often undermined in practice. Broad and poorly defined state secrecy provisions have been used to conceal major corruption-related agreements and decisions, while governments increasingly pass laws and administrative measures without consultation and often exclude critical CSOs from participation. Although there are formal complaint and consultation mechanisms, accountability remains weak because authorities rarely explain how public input was used, face few consequences for ignoring legal requirements, and often rely on selectively chosen CSOs to create the appearance of consultation.

4.1. Transparency

Mongolia regulates information transparency through several laws, including the [Law on Public Information Transparency](#), the [Law on State and Official Secrecy](#), the [Glass Account Law](#), and the [Law on Personal Information Safety](#). The Law on Public Information Transparency is the main law on transparency, and lists over 81 types of information that must be open to the public, online, within a defined timeframe in an open data format, through the websites of government organisations and state-owned enterprises. While information listed in Article 8 of the Law on Public Information Transparency must be open to the public at all times, immediately after the development, revised information should be open within three business days. However, in 2017 the government adopted a [resolution](#) pursuant to the Law on State and Official Secrecy to adopt the list of state secret information, which contains a general list of information considered secret but not clearly defined. Hence, government organisations started listing as “confidential” some items that they did not want the public to know, and including these in the list of state secret information. For [example](#), agreements related to the procurement of public buses, which involved 25 public officials in corruption cases in 2024 and resulted in a MNT340 billion (around US\$100 million) loss to the budget, and state-owned enterprises’ 4 packages of 104 agreements, most of them signed and concealed during COVID-19 and only revealed in 2024 and allegedly resulting in a loss to the

country of over MNT44 trillion (around US\$13 billion), were concealed under items 14 and 32 of the State Secret Information List.

Each government organisation must respond to the complaints it receives, including freedom of information requests/complaints, within 30 calendar days, with a potential extension of an additional 30 days, as per Article 16 of the [Law on Complaint Resolution of Citizens Made to Government or Public Official](#). However, legislation and government administrative decisions that affect people's lives have passed without public knowledge and engagement, with no accountability from the government authorities.

[Article 6](#) of the Law on Public Information Transparency requires any legal entity that has signed an agreement with a government organisation to post its financial information on the Glass account site, online. The requirements for the information to be posted on the Glass account have been adopted by a government [procedure](#) and, according to the procedure, the Glass account has created a corner for CSOs contracted with government organisations to post their financial information. CSOs do not have a joint platform to post financial or other documents open to the public and lack funding to operate their own websites or online platforms.

The government in Mongolia has paid attention to the transparency of public information. For example, the [first decision](#) of the newly appointed prime minister was on setting up a task group consisting of the Government Cabinet Secretariat, the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, and the General Intelligence Agency on the disclosure of state information to the public. According to Government Decree 64 pursuant to Directive 01 of the Prime Minister of Mongolia, the General Intelligence Agency has conducted investigations on 882 items that have been classified as "state secret information" by 59 government bodies. The task group revealed that 274 items of information were classified as confidential in a breach of applicable laws and considered to be corruption risks through such concealments. Accordingly, in November 2025 the government reviewed the Concept of the revisions to the Law on State and Official Secrecy and the List of State and Official Secret Information. The draft law was submitted to parliament for adoption. Upon adoption, the majority of information that was concealed under the title "state secret" or "official secret" is expected to be released to the public. The draft law is aimed at ending concealment under such titles and has been [posted](#) online on the parliament's legal discussion website, for public discussion.

4.2. Participation

State decision-making processes, including any decisions affecting the public, are legally required to be transparent, and government organisations need to organise public hearings pursuant to Articles 27 and 62 of the General Administrative Law, Chapter Two of the Law on Public Hearing, and Articles 8 and 38 of the Law on Legislations. Administrative decisions that are adopted but are not in compliance with laws can be challenged with higher-level authorities or filed to the administrative court for annulment. Government organisations must organise a public hearing during the legislative drafting process, before passing any legislation or administrative decisions affecting the public, and publish the draft online for a period of not less than 30 days to collect comments and suggestions pursuant to the General Administrative Law, the Law on Public Hearing, and the Law on Legislations. It is mandatory for CSOs to be part of the public consultation, especially those working in the sector. Comments and suggestions from the public and CSOs are taken seriously by the government, and are listed and responded to accordingly. However, government organisations have developed a selective list of organisations to participate in public discussions and hearings on draft legislation. In the majority of cases, the government tends to exclude from discussions key CSOs that are working in the sector, eliminate those who have criticised any actions or activities of the government, and exclude them from tendering, procurement of services, or implementation processes.

The number of pieces of legislation and government administrative decisions that have passed without public knowledge and engagement has significantly increased since COVID-19 with

no accountability. During COVID-19, the government [adopted](#) two laws on economic recovery that allowed the adoption of laws without prior studies or public consultations, in an expedited manner. This process continued even after the annulment of the laws on economic recovery. Accordingly, a [study](#) revealed that out of 254 laws submitted to parliament since 2024, 43 drafts have been adopted in an expedited manner, without public consultation, applicable research, or analysis, and with no information provided to the public.

Although CSOs' rights to participate in decision-making processes are ensured in several laws, the participation method is not defined anywhere. Government organisations selectively choose the CSOs they will fund, engage with in policy discussions, and appoint within the composition of the committee/council/body set up by the government organisation, exacerbating the current ineffective and selective public oversight. As per effective laws, there are 41 different compositions/councils/committees of the government, and each one should comprise at least one CSO. No selection procedure nor criteria have been developed to engage CSOs, and CSOs are selected at the discretion of public officials. Selective CSOs with a "good" standing or a history of amicable collaboration with the state are involved in discussion processes, although it is mandatory to publicly announce the consultation, call all CSOs, and engage the key sectoral CSOs, including professional unions. The CSOs selected for discussions are predominantly affiliated CSOs or those that support the state's ideas without any argument.

4.3. Accountability

Government organisations develop a list of comments provided by the public that contains feedback on whether those comments were accepted or rejected in draft documents, to prove that public consultations were held. However, Mongolia does not have clear regulations on reporting back on how input from CSOs or the public has been used in legislative drafts. Although participatory processes are ensured by several laws, they are not accompanied by systematic feedback mechanisms to report on results or on how citizens' input was incorporated or discarded. Even when the law is breached and public discussions or hearings are not organised, the accountability mechanism is not effectively implemented. In some cases, the government uses CSOs' names to show compliance, though their collected feedback is disregarded.

The standing committee on legislation of the parliament receives complaints from the public in writing or online. Although law makers are cautious about neglecting mandatory studies and public engagement in legislative drafting processes, accountability is completely missing in the event of non-compliance.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

5. Supportive Public Culture and Discourses on Civil Society

Score:



Both the public and the government recognise CSOs and the media as an important part of a society. The rise of economic rationalists, who prioritise economic efficiency above all else, often ignoring the social consequences of policies, has become a cause to dishonour CSOs who disapprove of big infrastructure or mining projects in the countryside, even in the media and on social platforms. It is prohibited to limit citizens' rights to engage in civil society, and discriminate based on their involvement in civic activities..

All effective laws ensure equal rights and opportunities to all, but infrastructure to support and promote the rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals, people with disabilities, and local citizens has not been fully established. In relation to class, ethnicity, gender/identity, language, religion, and sexual orientation, businesses and the government do not discriminate in practice. A group of people online, mostly with hidden identities, spread discriminatory posts from time to time.

5.1 Public Discourse and Constructive Dialogue on Civil Society

A culture to cooperate with and recognise the importance of CSOs is building in Mongolia. For example, human rights CSOs founded a Human Rights Forum in 2025 and organised a [monthly meeting](#) with the human rights sub-committee of parliament to discuss the Universal Periodic Review and its implementation and to participate in discussions on draft legislation. This is a dramatic change since 2021, when the government [initiated](#) a law to reduce the enabling environment for civic space and CSOs in Mongolia, announcing that CSOs were corrupt and that they laundered money. During the discussion of the revised draft Law on Non-Governmental Organisations in 2023, a member of parliament, the former state secretary of the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, [attempted to discredit](#) CSOs by referring to them as “foreign agents” and “money launderers”. The reference to all CSOs as having harmful impacts on national security has negatively impacted the operational environment of civic society. The [Long-term Development Policy](#) of Mongolia, Vision 2030, recognises, in its Goal 5 on Governance, the development of public–private–civil society cooperation at all levels to ensure human rights and justice within systems and to eradicate corruption.

It is noted that politicians and public offices engage CSOs with the primary purpose of reducing CSOs' criticism of them. There are a number of cases in which politicians have attempted to use CSOs as part of a political coup. From March to May 2025 the Freedom Coalition Party organised the "[Resign](#)" protest against the former government, while the "Bosoo Khukh Mongol" NGO [organised](#) a counter-protest. Later, in mid-2025, during the protest to demand the resignation of the former prime minister due to the unexplained [luxury lifestyle](#) of his son on his social media, a CSO also organised a "Take back the Ukhaa-Khudag mine" [protest](#) at the same place. Counter-protests to divert attention from the initial purpose of political protests have increased since 2021.

Mongolia's international assessments – such as the Corruption Perception Index, Rule of Law Index, World Governance Index, Freedom of Press, and Competitiveness ranking – have been continuously deteriorating since 2015. After the announcement of the index, a senior official and a spokesperson of the Independent Agency Against Corruption openly [criticised](#) Transparency International on his social media account for conducting a false assessment of corruption by reducing the scores and ranking of the country, and questioned the ethics and integrity of international organisations and the consultants working for them.

5.2 Perception of Civil Society and Civic Engagement

According to Article 16 of the Constitution of Mongolia, it is prohibited to limit citizens' rights to engage in civil society and to discriminate based on their involvement in civic activities. Except for the definition of a non-governmental organisation, the laws of Mongolia do not have clear definitions of the not-for-profit sector or CSOs. Although the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations was adopted in 1997 and is required to be assessed every five years, implementation of this law, the impact on society of CSOs, and its outcomes have never been assessed by the government. Furthermore, the government has neglected to adopt a state policy on civil society, leaving this sector with no policy and with the old, unclear, and inconsistent legal environment.

Even so, according to a 2021 civil society environment [report](#), people's perceptions of civil society are generally positive and the positive contribution of CSOs is considered significant. It is recognised that many CSOs address social and human rights issues neglected by the state. Citizens may freely engage in civic activities and CSOs without any restrictions. New CSOs are emerging in society with a vocal stance on political processes, including CSOs on minority rights. Engagement in political activities and in protests has [significantly increased](#), reaching 200,000 people in a single day during the 21-day protest "It is easy to resign" in 2025. Citizens have also increased their cyber engagement and coordination for organising various groups for both social activities and political engagement.

High school curricula include certain civil education content on governance, human rights, and social norms, while the General Election Committee is mandated to develop awareness-raising content on elections, political rights, and civic engagement pursuant to Article 7 of the [Law on General Election Committee](#). According to Articles 4, 9, 24, 26, and 34 of the new [Law on Political Parties](#), a political party is obligated to promote the civil and political education of its party members as well as citizens. Furthermore, not less than 20% of the state subsidy allocated to the political party must be spent on promoting the political engagement of women, elders, youth, and people with disabilities; not less than 15% must be spent on promoting party members' and citizens' political rights and engagement, democracy education, and human rights education; and not less than 15% must be spent on research, projects, and internal activities of the political party.

Due to a lack of accountability in public offices, the general public have raised various issues relating to public officials' accountability and expect all CSOs to be vocal on the issue. If they are not vocal, CSOs are criticised as being affiliated to the government or politicians. However, CSOs have project-based funding that cannot reach all social issues. Multi-stakeholder engagement is emphasised in every law, without exception. In practice, legal stipulations are symbolic and implementation is vague, neglecting the key purpose of the engagement of CSOs.

5.3 Civic Equality and Inclusion

The Constitution of Mongolia ensures equal rights for all, without discrimination, and lists fundamental rights in its Article 16. All effective laws also ensure equal rights and opportunities without discrimination, but implementation is inadequate.

The Constitution refers to CSOs as “public organisations”. Out of a total of 860 effective [laws](#) of Mongolia, 144 [contain](#) 514 clauses involving CSOs’ rights, duties, or accountabilities, and CSOs are required to be part of the 41 different compositions established under state ministries or agencies, such as councils or committees. The 1992 [Constitution of Mongolia](#) guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms, including freedom of voice, expression, association and assembly, and press. The Law on Non-Governmental Organisations prohibits the illegal restriction of one’s rights, discrimination against association in CSOs, and the constraining of civic liberty.

Several laws have ensured the involvement of CSOs in public discussions on legislative drafts. It is mandatory under Articles 8 and 38 of the Law on Legislations to publicly announce the consultation on and discussions of draft legislations by calling all CSOs and compulsorily engaging the key sectoral CSOs, including the professional unions. However, since the adoption of the Law on Legal Status of Professional Unions, some government organisations have tended to consider inviting only professional unions, or inviting affiliated CSOs while excluding others. The government has imposed requirements on some CSOs to be members of a professional union when signing a contract to provide services to government organisations. Although not all government institutions normalise this process, legal clarity needs to be developed as soon as possible.

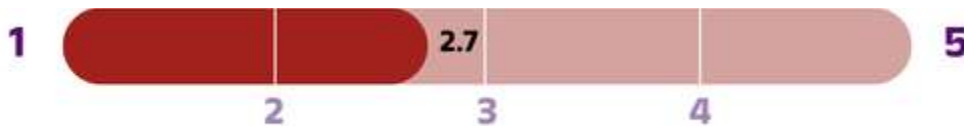
There is no information on the economic status of people by class, vulnerabilities, ethnicity, language, religion, and sexual orientation. As of the end of 2024, a total of 1.1 million people out of 3.7 million were living in [poverty](#), with earnings of less than the minimum monthly labour wage. The 2020 statistics showed that almost 90% of the 105,000 people with disabilities were in poverty. In theory, the government cooperates with CSOs working on the protection of the rights of marginalised groups, such as people with disabilities, women and children, elders, herders, and minorities. In reality, the voices and concerns of these groups are still neglected and are not incorporated into legislation and decisions. The government lacks Braille information and documentation; sign language interpreters are not available within committees and working groups set up by government bodies; and engagement of people with disabilities in working groups and committees has become a routine showcase. Citizens from isolated rural areas still face difficulties in accessing information and engaging in meaningful discussions with government bodies due to their inability to travel to centralised areas where discussions are held, or to the lack of infrastructure to enable them to use the internet.

The [Law on Parliament Election](#) provide a 30% quota for one gender and aim to increase this to 40% by 2030. As the Constitution of Mongolia acknowledges only “man” and “woman”, there are no opportunities for LGBTQIA+ communities. In general, society does not openly discriminate against anyone, including LGBTQIA+ individuals and those from ethnic and social minorities. People mostly treat elders with respect, as is the tradition. However, an infrastructure to support and promote rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals, people from ethnic minorities, and those with disabilities has not been fully founded. In some cases, LGBTQIA+ citizens have been physically abused. In December 2025, an individual from the LGBTQIA+ community was [found](#) injured and lifeless in the capital city. The case is under investigation, but the initial finding suggested that the man was attacked by several people and injured before his death. LGBTQIA+ communities are not active in the local provinces at all and operate in the capital city only.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

6. Access to a Secure Digital Environment

Score:



In general, people use the internet widely in both the capital city and rural areas, but in some places in the countryside, internet and phone connections are unavailable. Social communication tools such as Facebook and Messenger are widely used for discussions, connections, advertisements, and coordination. Due to a lack of funding, CSOs usually run Facebook pages rather than websites. Capable information technology (IT) experts are also in short supply in the civil society sector due to a shortage of core funding to hire professionals. According to the [Digital Quality of Life Index](#) in December 2025, Mongolia's ranking has increased substantially from its 2024 rating. While in 2024 Mongolia ranked in 89th place globally, it has improved its standing to 86th place. A significant improvement was visible in the area of Cybersecurity, while Digital Security remained "very low".

6.1 Digital Rights and Freedoms

Mongolia has relatively good internet services, provided by private sector companies. Except for an isolated rural area, all populated areas have access to a fast, uninterrupted internet service. So far, the government has not shut down or set a limit on timing for the service. Cases of connection blockage occurred in specific demonstration locations during the protest against the government during the pandemic. The police have [interrogated](#) citizens and penalised them with fines for posting online memes and posters that [shamed](#) the President of Mongolia. The police investigation was voluntary, not based on any complaints.

A [Law on Human Rights Protection in Cyber Environment](#) was adopted in 2023 in an expedited manner to censor political content on the internet and social media, including filtering websites, deleting posts, and surveilling political activities. Although the President of Mongolia [vetoed](#) the law after strong condemnation by citizens, there is no guarantee of complete safety for freedom of speech and the expression of personal opinions on social media. Politicians and politically exposed persons often file false news complaints or defamation complaints against citizens for posting negative information. On the other side, troll accounts that intentionally defame people cannot be found by the police due to lack of international cooperation and agreement with service providers' platforms, such as social media companies.

In 2025 police [arrested](#) a reporter and a team that operated the [Noorog](#) site for making a documentary on the 2024 parliamentary election, and seized all their equipment for inspection. Noorog was famous for disclosing state actors' illegal activities. Although the police released the individuals and equipment, the incident demonstrated the intimidation of all reporters, producers, the media, CSOs, and individuals, and showed that law enforcement lacks human rights awareness and due process.

6.2 Digital Security and Privacy

A substantial portion of the budget has been used by the government and the Governor's Office of the capital city to procure IT programs and technological tools, and for cyber infrastructure building. However, no precautions for the safety of individuals' sensitive information have been taken, prompting criticism from both CSOs and private sector companies working in this field. For example, the capital city launched a Hotula application that allowed the collection of people's sensitive information for "green scoring", which would later allow individuals to travel free of charge on public transport. There have been no consultations or public hearings on related research, nor procedures applied thereto.

According to the [Law on Individual Person's Data Protection](#), the government was required to obtain a Human Rights Commission assessment and a review of applicable procedures, and to identify associated risks; these steps were missing. As the development, operation, and maintenance costs of the IT program are high, CSOs believe that such expensive procurements by the government without a public hearing and proper tendering and assessments have become another route to corruption, as the efficiency of previous programs and tools have not been assessed and the protection of personal data is unclear.

There is no evidence that government or relevant domestic actors have carried out cyber-attacks on CSOs. However, the government and the private sector have been [attacked](#) several times by foreign hackers and cyber-attacks: 70% of cyber-attacks have been aimed at the government and its agencies, 11% at institutions under parliament, 14% at healthcare organisations, and 1% at law enforcement agencies.

In [2024](#), over 128 million suspicious access attempts had been made from Russia, over 65 million from the United States, and over 50 million from China. The [Cybersecurity Law](#) was adopted in 2021, putting the Intelligence Office in charge of the safety and security of the national cyber space, including digital data and information. The [Law on Covert Operations](#) prohibits the use of penetration testing and vulnerability assessment tools. In 2021, citizens challenge this clause at the Constitutional Court and in 2023 the Constitutional Court resolved that the clause is in violation of the Constitution of Mongolia, Article 16, Clause 13, which says "...citizens have right to personal liberty and safety. Privacy of citizens, their families, correspondence, and homes are protected by law", and Article 19, Clause 1, which says "The State is responsible to the citizens for the creation of economic, social, legal, and other guarantees ensuring human rights and freedoms, for the prevention of violations of human rights and freedoms, and restoration of infringed rights". However, the [parliament resolved](#) not to accept the decision of the Constitutional Court. This restriction limits the possibilities for citizens and legal entities to protect themselves from personal information breaches and creates a loophole that allows the authorities to carry out covert operations and illegal investigations on individuals.

The [Law on Individual Person's Data Protection](#) was adopted to also ensure the safety and security of information obtained by public organisations from individuals. However, the law has limited the possibility of scrubbing the information to identify the beneficial ownership of a legal entity, unless it has permission from the information owner.

Government and social information is usually distributed faster through online social platforms (mainly Facebook) than through government websites. Therefore, marginalised groups such as herders and nomads have been left out of the digital transformation due to their lack of connections. Many government organisations use Facebook Messenger, and the safety and

security of personal information is in question. As a result of a lack of funding for human resource development and consistent information and knowledge, CSOs are considered vulnerable in terms of cyber security. Public offices use Viber groups on a daily basis to exchange information related to their work.

The proliferation of online disinformation increased during the 2024 election, and 65.8% of [all reported crimes](#) during the election period related to fake news. The number of troll accounts increased on Facebook, Instagram, and X during the election campaign period, posing a risk to freedom of expression, stifling dissent, affecting civic participation, and creating a hostile environment for CSOs.

6.3 Digital Accessibility

The total population of Mongolia is 3.3 million people and almost 83% of them actively [use the internet](#). Except in isolated countryside areas, all populated areas have access to fast, uninterrupted internet services provided by private sector companies. In some rural areas, herders and nomads are isolated from information as access to the internet is limited in some areas, and they lack the knowledge required to use social platforms or do not have smart phones. There are few CSOs focused on the protection of the rights of nomads and herders, and it is difficult for this small number of CSOs to reach all 365 soums (the smallest administrative units) of 21 provinces. Thus, herders' rights in relation to the impacts of mining and infrastructure development projects are mostly neglected.

Both rural- and urban-based CSOs use the internet widely to access and share information while creating online groups (mainly on Facebook). Although CSOs' skills to use information and communication technology are sufficient to access, receive, assess, and monitor public information and to communicate and share information, government information such as budget documents is not user-friendly, creating barriers for researchers and analysts to examine this in a prompt manner. After COVID-19, social engagement significantly increased in terms of the organisation of events, protests, and demonstrations, and for training and awareness-raising activities.

CSOs' use of the internet and social media to promote their activities depends on their projects: if the CSO has a project, information about the project is actively distributed. However, when a CSO does not have a project, information sharing on social media is paused, making the use of digital communication project-based and unsustainable. The percentage of CSOs with their own websites is limited due to a lack of funding. Experts have indicated that public engagement on the news changed dramatically in 2025, so CSOs have shifted their method of public engagement and information sharing. Rather than using reels or text information, CSOs are using posters with short key messages to the public. This shows that CSOs use technologies to their advantage, considering social engagement, activity, and outreach.

There are no studies available that assess the access to and use of information and communication technology by vulnerable groups such as disabled people, elders, and social minorities. The 2020 [statistics](#) show that there were 105,000 people with disabilities, 90% of them in poverty. However, the government lacks inclusive policy, decisions, and targeted objectives to address issues for people with disabilities and increase their income, further exacerbating their current living conditions.

C) Recommendations

Recommendations to the government

- Develop and adopt a Civil Society Policy Document that defines the consolidated long-term development concept with the engagement of stakeholders to address the issues of CSOs, such as weak, unclear, and incoherent regulations, and address the needs and social development stages of CSOs. Furthermore, the policy document must ensure measures to diversify funding sources to regulate an appropriate ratio of international and government funding, as the increase in government funding for CSOs seriously affects their independence and the impartiality of their voice and activities.
- Adopt the revised Law on Non-Governmental Organisations based on the implementation assessment of this law conducted by the CSOs by making conceptual amendments and revisions considering current social, economic changes as well as the engagement environment. Furthermore, different definitions in laws need to be aligned, and weak and symbolic regulations on collaborations with CSOs need to be strengthened.
- Ensure the impartiality of the state in procurement, tendering, and contracting with CSOs and conduct transparent due diligence and assessment to constrain the involvement and influence of politically exposed persons.
- Create a CSOs' consolidated platform where CSOs can post and disclose financial, activity, and other reports that are open to the government and the public to ensure the implementation of the law, given CSOs' lack of financial and human resource capacity to create a website. The requirement to use the platform can be modified in the future.
- Adopt the revised Law on Press Freedom by refining the study of the law and ensuring the engagement of stakeholders.
- Develop an effective civil defamation method to address issues related to defamation following the Constitutional Court case based on an efficient study to improve the situation related to the investigation of reporters and to limit the abuse directed at journalists.
- Raise the awareness of law enforcement officials on civil rights and respect for lawful assembly.
- Adopt the proposed amendments to state secrecy laws, ensuring the amendments eliminate the practice of classifying information as secret to avoid releasing it to the public, and narrow secrecy exceptions so that they are in line with international standards.
- Clarify legal requirements around membership of professional unions so that this is not a prerequisite for engaging in government consultations or for being awarded government service contracts.
- Develop and implement a due diligence method to verify beneficial ownership for engaging in government consultations or for being awarded government service contracts.
- Provide guidance on what income-generating activities are allowed for non-profits under existing law.
- Assess the Civil Code and define the not-for-profit sector

Recommendations to civil society actors

- Ensure the Civil Society Policy Document is adopted by the government, or adopt the document through a general forum of CSOs without delay and announce this to stakeholders.
- Strengthen the internal supervision council's activities, governance, ethics, transparency, and accountability mechanisms and increase the reporting in compliance with applicable laws.
- Train and develop staff, particularly on data analysis, data protection, IT, and cybersecurity in connection with human rights.

Recommendations to the international community

- Increase multi-year, core funding for CSOs, prioritising specialised and consistent knowledge and capacity building in each area, including IT, digital safety and security, personal information, disclosure and transparency of personal information, compliance, strategic advocacy, and data analysis.
- Support CSOs' initiatives under due diligence, verifying the involvement of politically exposed persons and beneficiaries and reviewing the efficiency of the work conducted and their ability to coordinate well with stakeholders.
- Adapt grant opportunities for CSOs of varying sizes and capacities, with tailored reporting expectations that match the capacities of each CSO and that provide support for reporting and compliance issues for grassroots and rural CSOs.
- Support legal reforms in Mongolia, propped up by efficient studies and development of competent curricula for a systematic awareness-raising programme for law enforcement officials.



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 was convened in November 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.

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