



SUPPORTING
AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT
FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Enabling Environment

Snapshot

Ghana

March 2026

Context

Period covered by this report: October 2025 – March 2026

Ghana entered 2025 under a new political administration, highlighted by the historic inauguration of the country's [first female Vice President](#), Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang. The peaceful and orderly transfer of power reaffirmed Ghana's longstanding reputation for democratic resilience in a sub-region marked by political instability. While the transition has generated a renewed public trust in government, [renewed public expectations](#) and [policy adjustments](#) across governance and socio-economic sectors, it has also laid emphasis on the need to uphold [transparency and accountability](#) at every level of governance.

Ghana's economy is showing signs of [gradual stabilisation](#) after a period marked by significant macroeconomic strain, including elevated inflation and high public debt. This change signifies a gradual restoration of [economic credibility](#). Nonetheless, fiscal pressures such as [unemployment](#) persist, eroding household purchasing power and limiting disposable income. As a result, the capacity for local philanthropic giving remains constrained, [narrowing the domestic funding space](#) available to civil society organisations.

The enabling environment for civil society in Ghana is characterised by a broadly democratic and institutionally stable context, while concerns around protest policing, media freedom and digital risks continue. These threats to civic freedoms however have dropped compared to previous years. Ghana continues to be rated "[Free](#)" in Freedom House's Freedom in the World Assessment. The nation has also been classified among [Africa's top performers](#) in Press Freedom 2025 by Africa View Facts. These reflect strong electoral structures and relatively open civic participation. However, civic space concerns persist as Ghana's civic space remains "[Obstructed](#)," according to the CIVICUS Monitor. The [re-introduction of the draconian LGBTQI+ bill](#) for example, which goes against fundamental human rights principles, if adopted, would pose a threat to freedom of association and expression.

Illegal small-scale mining (galamsey) remains one of Ghana's most pressing [environmental challenges](#) with impacts including destruction of forest reserves and water bodies. The government's actions to end galamsey have increasingly been met with violence. In November 2025, suspected [illegal miners attacked](#) officials from the National Anti-Illegal Mining Operations Secretariat (NAIMOS), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and journalists in the Volta and Ahafo Regions, prompting a joint police-military operation. Following the incident, police [arrested 136 suspects](#). This event shows how illegal mining networks are using violence and intimidation to protect their operations.

Overall, Ghana's democratic environment has been characterised by peaceful political transitions, with the economy gradually stabilising and civic participation being relatively open. Civic discourse is shaped by a mix of governance reforms and continuing rights debates, including [illegal mining](#) ("galamsey"), the [LGBTQI+ bill](#) and its governance implications. The environment remains functional for CSO operations despite continued violations of expression and assembly, as well as on financial sustainability.

1. Respect and protection of fundamental freedoms

Ghana's constitution continues to serve as the bedrock for human rights and fundamental freedoms, guaranteeing freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly. Ghana has maintained a 'Free' status, as indicated by the [Freedom in the World 2025 assessment](#). However, there are still some concerns around freedom of expression and assembly.

In some cases, authorities use court orders and injunctions to prevent protests. For example, on 24 February 2026, the High Court in Accra issued a [prohibition order](#) restraining the planned "Stop Galamsey" protest scheduled for 27 February. Following this order, on 26 February, the Greater Accra Regional Police Command [publicly stated](#) that it would [enforce](#) it, citing safety concerns, as the protest date clashed with the State of the Nation Address. This decision reopened public debate, with some Ghanaians [raising concerns](#) over the prohibition.

Journalists have been continuously assaulted, both by state and non-state actors. In November 2025, the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) reported the [arrest](#) of a blogger for allegedly publishing false information, highlighting a trend in arrests of journalists over publication of false news. In January 2026, the Ghana National Fire Service allegedly [attacked](#) a journalist who was reporting on the aftermath of a fire outbreak in the Central Region. In the same month, soldiers in Walewale [assaulted](#) a journalist over where he parked his motorbike. These attacks on journalists, restrictions on protests and [implementation gaps](#) under the Right to Information framework continue to be highlighted by civil society actors, media houses and practitioners.

Following the reintroduction of the [anti-LGBTQ+ bill](#) in January 2025, Ghanaian lawmakers [intensified efforts](#) to pass legislation that would criminalise all transgender and same-sex activities as well as the promotion of the same. This development has significantly undermined the enabling environment for human rights, fostering a climate of fear, discrimination and social exclusion for LGBTQ+ individuals. It not only restricts freedom of expression and association but also weakens civil society's ability to advocate for marginalised communities, eroding protections and support systems that are vital for social cohesion and human rights in the country.

2. Supportive legal framework for the work of civil society actors

Ghana's legal environment for CSOs is governed by the [Companies Act, 2019 \(Act 992\)](#) that serves as a framework for regulations and compliance of organisations. The state is continuously making efforts to coordinate with CSOs towards promoting accountability and transparency.

In November 2025, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) hosted a high-level policy and [regulatory dialogue](#) around nonprofit oversight and cross-learning. The convening aimed at improving oversight, compliance systems and [inter-agency collaboration](#) in the nonprofit space. While such exchanges can strengthen transparency and confidence, they also raise civil society concerns about ensuring that compliance measures do not become tools for restricting advocacy or imposing excessive administrative burdens on smaller organisations.

Ghana's 2026 national budget includes commitments to [strengthen the regulatory framework](#) governing the media sector, including plans to decentralise the National Media Commission's complaints resolution system and introduce Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms to address media-related disputes more effectively. These measures have the potential to enhance transparency, accountability, and professionalism in the media, positively impacting the enabling environment for free expression and robust public discourse, while reducing delays and barriers that have historically constrained access to justice in media complaints.

However, the reintroduction of the anti LGBTQ+ bill can have a negative impact on the enabling environment for CSOs, especially around advocacy efforts, as it can lead to self-censorship, deter coalition-building and make organisations more cautious about public education, legal reform advocacy, or even broader human-rights work for fear that such activities may be interpreted as unlawful "promotion."

3. Accessible and sustainable resources

Civil society financing in Ghana continues to face sustainability stress following the USAID cuts in January 2025, with heavy dependence on external aid and [constrained tax incentives](#) remaining major structural challenges, with no existing legal or policy framework to incentivise domestic corporate support for the sector. Government funding for CSOs in Ghana is limited, as the government does not provide direct core funding to support their operations. These constraints have continued to spark conversations about sustainability within the civil society sector and the need to leverage alternative financing models.

Ghana's 2026 [VAT reforms](#) have restructured the tax system by removing the COVID-19 levy, an additional tax introduced during the pandemic, and raising the VAT registration threshold from GH¢200,000 to GH¢750,000 (around 18,000 to 69,000 USD), thereby reducing compliance burdens for smaller organisations and enterprises. Previously, any business with an annual turnover of GH¢200,000 (~18,000 USD) or more had to register for VAT. Now, only businesses with GH¢750,000 (~69,000 USD) or more need to register. These changes can ease operational costs and administrative requirements for smaller organisations below the threshold, although broader fiscal pressures and compliance adjustments may still affect organisational budgeting and programme implementation.

As a [middle-income](#) country, Ghana faces [shifting donor priorities](#), which have [reduced traditional grant opportunities](#) for civil society organisations (CSOs). To adapt, CSOs are diversifying their funding sources through membership fees, [crowdfunding](#), social entrepreneurship, private-sector partnerships, and diaspora contributions. However, much of the available funding is short-term and tied to specific projects, which can limit operational stability and make long-term programming more difficult.

In November 2025, discussions during the Ghana Philanthropy Conference emphasised domestic financing and philanthropy. The conference highlighted the need for a [shift](#) from donor financing to more strategic [local fundraising approaches](#), reflecting a growing national conversation on reducing overreliance on foreign aid and expanding local giving, volunteerism and home-grown resource mobilisation. This aligns with broader policy discourse encouraging more [sustainable](#), citizen-centred development financing models.

4. State openness and responsiveness

Ghanaian authorities have continued to demonstrate openness to engagement with civic actors through public dialogue, consultation processes and stakeholder forums aimed at strengthening democratic governance and accountability. In February 2026, the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) presented the '[One-Year Assessment of the Mahama Administration](#)' report at a [multi-stakeholder roundtable](#) involving policymakers, civil society leaders, academics, journalists and citizens, reflecting efforts to foster inclusive policy discussion and evidence-based evaluation of government performance and reform priorities.

The [Right to Information \(RTI\) Act](#), 2019, gives citizens and civil society the legal right to request information from public institutions and promotes accountability in public affairs, though some [implementation challenges](#) such as the delay in or refusal of some institutions to release information persist. In January 2026, the RTI Commission [fined](#) the Ghana Education Service GH¢10,000 (910 USD) for failing to respond to an information request. In May 2026, the Right to Information Commission raised complaints with regard to over 50 court cases against institutions that had [failed to comply](#) with the RTI Act. These events highlight continuing bureaucratic resistance and delays that limit effective access to public information that might also affect the ability of CSOs to get timely information in carrying out their work.

These developments suggest that while institutional mechanisms for transparency and engagement exist, gaps in compliance and administrative practice continue to constrain the full realisation of collaborative and responsive governance.

5. Political Culture and Public Discourses on Civil Society

CSOs and media have remained vibrant, continuing to shape national conversations, especially on issues of governance, the environment and public welfare. However, [structural challenges](#), including political polarisation, resource constraints and occasional tensions between state institutions and advocacy groups, persist.

In November 2025, three CSOs collaborated to launch the [Civil Society Platform on Constitutional Reform](#). The platform aims at coordinating civic actors, media and citizens towards [strengthening governance and accountability](#) in ensuring effective implementation of the 1992 Constitution. This initiative illustrates the central role of civil society in Ghana's democratic dialogue and provides an opportunity for CSOs to advance a [more inclusive, people-centred governance](#) system.

In December 2025, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs convened a two-day [stakeholder workshop](#) that brought together government officials, academics and civil society representatives to discuss issues related to Ghana's foreign policy, security and technology. These collectively affirm the commitment of Ghanaian authorities to remain open to meaningful dialogue and engagement with civic actors.

6. Access to a Secure Digital Environment

Ghana's digital environment remains relatively open in terms of access and the absence of systematic internet shutdowns, but cyber insecurity and fraud risks continue to affect citizens, CSOs, and public institutions. Analysis from the Freedom on the Net index showed that Ghana recorded a score of 64/100 in 2025, indicating a state of ['partly free'](#), a slight drop from 65/100 in 2024. However, Ghana recorded a relatively [high score above 50%](#) in the Digital Policy and Regulatory Index (DPRI), emerging as [Africa's highest improving digital economy](#) in 2025, indicating an improvement in [enabling digital policy frameworks](#).

Ghana also stands out as one of the [top performers](#) in the 2025 Mobile Money Regulatory Index (MMRI), according to the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA). However, its extensive mobile money ecosystem has become a major target for cybercriminals, who engage in scams such as fake mobile money reversals and impersonation. At the same time, ransomware and other [cyber-attacks](#) are increasingly targeting critical sectors such as banking, healthcare, energy and government services, highlighting the need for stronger cybersecurity awareness, institutional capacity and digital protection measures to safeguard users and national infrastructure.

Ghana's Cyber Security Authority (CSA) recorded a [loss of over 19 million Ghana cedis](#) (approximately 1.730.500 USD) to cybercrime between January and September 2025, with significant financial losses attributed to online fraud, online blackmail and cyberbullying.

Following the public consultation on the draft [Cybersecurity \(Amendment\) Bill](#) in October 2025, critics have [raised concerns](#) regarding the vague definitions and penalties outlined in the document. The Media Foundation for West Africa also highlighted key concerns such as granting powers to police without safeguards, broad definitions and reversal of the burden of proof onto the accused that could pose a [significant threat](#) to constitutional rights.

Challenges and Opportunities

The peaceful political transition from the National Patriotic Party (NPP) to the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in January 2025 and ongoing policy dialogue between government and civil society create space for more inclusive policymaking and public accountability. In addition, reforms such as the 2026 VAT adjustments, the improving digital economy and growing national conversations around domestic philanthropy and alternative financing models may gradually improve the sustainability of civil society organisations and reduce administrative burdens for smaller actors. These developments, together with Ghana's relatively strong democratic institutions and open civic participation, provide opportunities for CSOs to play a greater role in shaping governance debates on key national issues such as illegal mining, economic recovery and constitutional reforms.

However, several challenges are likely to shape CSOs' operating environment. According to recent political analyses of Ghana's 2026 outlook, the new administration faces multiple governance challenges, including managing economic recovery, addressing corruption and illegal mining challenges and responding to growing public expectations for reforms. These pressures could place civic actors at the centre of contentious debates, particularly with sensitive issues such as environmental governance. At the same time, concerns around restrictions on protests, the re-introduction of the anti LGBTQ+ Bill, implementation gaps in the Right to Information framework, declining donor funding and rising cybercrime risks may constrain civic space and CSOs' operational capacity.

The use of violence by illegal mining networks poses a serious threat by weakening the rule of law and creating insecurity for state officials, journalists and communities. Such attacks can also discourage civic action, media reporting and environmental advocacy. At the same time, heavy-handed state security responses may blur the line between legitimate law enforcement and human rights violations, creating further tensions around accountability, civic freedoms and public trust in state institutions.

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