

Burma/Myanmar

Country Focus Report

2026



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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: June 2025 to June 2026

Between June 2025 and June 2026, the political landscape in Burma/Myanmar¹ was defined by the sham election, coup leader Sen. Gen. Min Aung Hlaing assuming the presidency, and the convening of the sham parliament. To project a facade of legitimacy, the junta orchestrated a [three-phase “sham election”](#) between December 2025 and January 2026. The process was fundamentally coercive: legitimate political opposition was banned, the [2020 election archives were burned](#), and the junta criminalised non-participation by weaponising a new Election Protection Law, [charging over 400 people by early 2026](#) and handing down sentences of [up to 49 years to three youth](#) activists for simply criticising the polls. This violence culminated in April 2026 when the military-installed, pro-regime parliament [elected](#) Min Aung Hlaing “President”, who then handed military command to [Gen. Ye Win Oo](#), his loyalist and architect of the junta’s torture centres. The resulting parliament and cabinet are [dominated by sanctioned military figures](#), completely erasing state transparency, democratic participation, and accountability.

The physical environment for civil society has been rendered exceptionally hostile through mass violence and draconian legislation. Attempting to crush nationwide resistance, the junta continued [martial law in 60 townships](#) and launched devastating airstrikes. Since the military coup five years ago, an [independent conflict monitor, ACLED](#), reported that there have been [100,114](#) conflict-related fatalities, making the half-decade civil war Asia’s deadliest active conflict. The junta dramatically escalated its war on the civilian population. The junta has adjusted its tactics to deploy specialised groups of [two to five jet fighters](#) to execute sustained, highly lethal airstrikes against single targets, resulting in extensive damage to civilian infrastructure. By April 2026, the junta had bombed [251 schools](#), killing around 300 students and teachers. The junta has burnt down over [125,000 civilian homes](#) since the 2021 coup.

Freedom of movement and association were severely paralysed by a massive forced conscription campaign that abducted [approximately 96,000 men](#) by February 2026. Apart from

¹ This report uses the names 'Myanmar' and 'Burma' interchangeably. 'Myanmar' is used in alignment with constitutional and international standards, while 'Burma' reflects the preference of civil society groups involved in the report’s production, who use the term as a form of resistance to the junta’s claimed legitimacy amid heinous human rights violations.

male conscripts, [women aged 18-27](#) were also specifically targeted for forced conscription. In addition to these abductions, [the junta](#) and [junta-aligned militia](#) extorted [monthly fees from households](#) to fund the military.

The junta also constructed a heavily surveilled digital environment. Utilising Chinese and Russian tech, the junta rolled out a localised [“Great Firewall” to monitor 33.4 million users](#) and deployed biometric tracking and facial recognition ([PSMS](#)) for [50,000 targeted individuals](#) at checkpoints around Burma/Myanmar. The junta routinely weaponised localised internet blackouts to obscure its war crimes; between January and March 2026, nearly [96% of the junta's airstrikes \(406 out of 423\)](#) occurred under localised internet blackouts.

The violence and persecution disproportionately impacted marginalised groups, forcing people to use lethal means of escape. Tragically, in April 2026, a boat carrying [280 Rohingya and Bangladeshi refugees](#) capsized, leaving [only 9 survivors](#). More than [3.9 million](#) people are internally displaced within Burma/Myanmar, and 12.4 million individuals face acute food insecurity. Civil society also faced severe resource starvation driven by US funding cuts under the Trump administration, shifted Swedish development priorities, and WFP funding cuts.

Despite the fully disabling environment created by the junta, democratic forces and civil society demonstrated immense resilience. Recognising the total failure of the junta, 19 resistance groups united to form the [Spring Revolution Alliance \(SRA\)](#) in late 2025, while the National Unity Government ([NUG](#)) [reformed](#) its administrative structures. In resistance-controlled areas in central Burma, entities like [Magway](#) and [Sagaing Federal Units](#) formally approved civilian-led interim governments, actively working to build accountable and responsive state alternatives [from the ground up](#) amid the ongoing conflict. In a major political breakthrough, the pro-democracy movement and ethnic forces successfully consolidated a collective leadership structure. On 30 March 2026, the NUG, the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), and major ethnic resistance organisations, such as the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), the Karen National Union (KNU), the Karenni, and the Chin National Front (CNF), established the Steering Council for the Emergence of a Federal Democratic Union ([SCEF](#)).

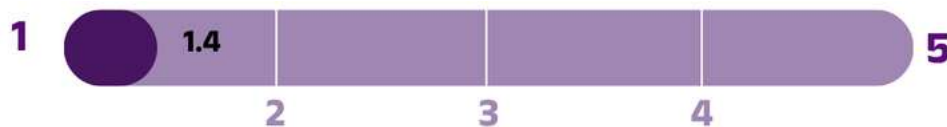
A fundamental tension in contemporary Burma/Myanmar following the 2021 failed coup is that territories are being governed by diverse political entities, mainly divided between the military junta and resistance forces. On one side, diverse resistance forces are characterised by socio-ethnic and political factors. On the other side, these factors are also apparent amongst some forces aligned with the junta. The tensions that arise from such complexity inform every aspect of civil society functioning, as will become evident in the following discussion of the principles for an enabling environment.

B) Assessment of the Enabling Environment

PRINCIPLE SCORE

1. Respect and Protection of Fundamental Freedoms

Score: ²



According to the [CIVICUS Monitor](#), Burma/Myanmar remains categorised as “Closed.” Throughout the June 2025–June 2026 reporting period, fundamental civic freedoms remained completely suffocated. While the quantitative score remains stagnant to reflect the CIVICUS rating (10 out 100, Closed status), empirical conditions on the ground demonstrated a further entrenchment of state terror, legal persecution, and total suppression of civic space. The reporting period was heavily defined by the junta’s three-phase “sham election” (December 2025–January 2026) and the formalisation of “Junta 2.0” under Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. Rather than reopening civic space, the military junta deployed overlapping, draconian statutes—including the July 2025 Election Protection Law, the Military Secrets Law, and the March 2026 Organisation Registration Rules—to systematically criminalise peaceful assembly, independent organising, and online expression. Through extreme retaliatory sentencing (such as 49-year prison terms for anti-election poster campaigns), forced conscription, over 20,000 digital detentions, and the revocation of 97 media licences, the state has ensured that fundamental freedoms remain entirely inaccessible in practice.

1.1 | Freedom of Association

Civil society actors in Myanmar/Burma face ongoing and entrenched suppression of the right to organise. Fresh evidence from the 2025–2026 reporting period confirming this closed environment includes the junta’s [March 2026 Registration Rules](#) under the [Organisation](#)

²This is a rebased score derived from the [CIVICUS Monitor rating](#) published in December 2025.

[Registration Law](#) (ORL 2022), which mandated police background vetting for all CSO executives and prohibitive bank deposits of MMK 50–300 million. Furthermore, the junta demonstrated its zero-tolerance policy toward independent organising through the July 2025 raid, office sealing, and criminal charging of Solidarity Trade Union of Burma/Myanmar (STUM) leaders under recidivism and ORL provisions, alongside the house arrest and deregistration threats against political figures (e.g., PPP) during the sham election.

This decline was not limited to individual arrests or isolated restrictions. Compared with the earlier legal framework, the junta progressively transformed association from a formally recognised right into an activity subject to mandatory registration, police scrutiny, financial surveillance, and criminal punishment. The March [2026 Rules](#) further formalised restrictions already imposed under the [Organisation Registration Law \(ORL\) \(2022\)](#), while repression against trade unions and political actors expanded. If these rules remain in place, independent organisations will face increasing pressure either to be controlled, operate informally, or suspend their activities.

Although [section 354\(c\)](#) of the 2008 Constitution formally guarantees every citizen the right to form associations and organisations, the right may be restricted by laws enacted for Union security, law and order, community peace and tranquillity, public order, or morality. These broad limitations provide limited protection against arbitrary interference, particularly because the junta controls the institutions responsible for interpreting and enforcing them. Also, the guarantee applies only to citizens. Current practice contradicts this constitutional guarantee. The junta requires official approval and state supervision for organisations to exercise their right to association.

The legal framework on freedom of association has become progressively more restrictive since the attempted coup. Under the [2014 Association Registration Law](#), registration was voluntary. The junta's [ORL \(2022\)](#) replaced this system with compulsory registration for domestic and international organisations and introduced criminal penalties for operating without registration. It also limited permissible activities to broadly defined “social tasks,” excluded political, economic, and religious activities, and allowed registration to be suspended or terminated on vague grounds related to sovereignty, security, law and order, and national unity. The junta's new [Rules on Registration of Associations](#), issued on 12 March 2026, further strengthened its control over registered organisations by introducing police scrutiny of executives, extensive reporting and inspection requirements, and broad approval criteria related to state security, national unity, political activities, and alleged connections with unlawful organisations. These requirements make registration dangerous for independent CSOs working on human rights, democracy, humanitarian assistance, and accountability. There was no reliable public data on CSO registration applications, refusals, suspensions, or revocations during the reporting period. No published court decisions were found that interpreted the 2026 Rules or protected CSOs from arbitrary decisions under the 2022 law. However, the lack of public information does not mean that restrictions did not occur.

Trade unions have been among the associations facing severe repression. In July 2025, junta authorities [arrested](#) Solidarity Trade Union of Burma/Myanmar (STUM) leader Myo Myo Aye and nine other union members, including her daughter, and sealed the organisation's offices. They were later charged under the Law Concerning Recidivism and sections 40 and 41 of the [Organisation Registration Law \(2022\)](#). Although they were later released, strict conditions limited their ability to organise, demonstrating how the junta uses arrests and restrictive laws to dismantle independent trade unions. This case was not simply an arrest of individual activists. The junta disrupted the organisation's leadership, operations, and wider network. It

reflects a border pattern of using surveillance, raids, arrests, and restrictive legislation together to weaken trade unions.

During its sham election period, the junta also targeted its own allies. Security forces [raided and placed](#) People's Pioneer Party (PPP) chair Thet Thet Khine, a former junta minister, under house arrest after she criticised the lack of a level playing field. The Union Election Commission (UEC) threatened to [deregister her party](#) and arrested her and a PPP central executive committee member for a "secret" meeting with "individuals from an embassy." Other parties that raised complaints about fraud faced intimidation or legal threats, while the UEC openly warned that criticising the junta's proxy Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) was [a crime](#). Although the PPP is a political party rather than a CSO, the case provides evidence of the broader political conditions affecting freedom of association. The repression of a junta-approved party for limited criticism demonstrated that legal recognition did not protect any association acting independently. The election period therefore served as a catalyst for expanding control over political association and increased the risks faced by CSOs working on democracy, elections, public participation, and accountability.

Panel experts emphasised that fear now shapes even informal gatherings. People may avoid meeting in groups or discussing political issues because neighbours, local administrators, informants, or security forces could report them. One expert explained that people are afraid that gathering together could be interpreted as organising resistance. This fear restricts not only formal CSO activities but also community discussions, mutual-support networks, and ordinary social interaction. This therefore shows a widespread system of preventive control rather than a small number of exceptional incidents. In some conflict-affected areas, the junta even [banned](#) two young men from riding together on motorcycles due to fears of attacks against military checkpoints.

These restrictions do not affect all groups in the same way. Women's and LGBTQI+ rights organisations face [additional risks](#) because the junta and Buddhist nationalist actors portray their advocacy as a threat to religion, national culture, and social stability. They use these narratives to justify restrictive laws, surveillance, online harassment, doxxing, and physical violence, making it more difficult and dangerous for these organisations to operate.

Freedom of association is therefore not meaningfully protected under the junta. The reporting period represents further decline rather than stagnation or simple continuity. The risk is not limited to formal membership in an organisation. Actual or perceived relationships with activists, resistance groups, political organisations, or affected communities may be sufficient to trigger surveillance and punishment. Freedom of association was increasingly denied both legally and in practice in Burma/Myanmar.

1.2 | Freedom of Peaceful Assembly

Physical and peaceful public assembly continues to be systematically criminalised and met with lethal force or severe judicial retaliation. Fresh evidence demonstrating this persistent closure includes the enactment and enforcement of the July 2025 Election Protection Law, which criminalised protests and boycotts (charging at least 404 civilians). This closure was underscored by extreme sentences handed down in September 2025, including 49-year prison terms for youths putting up anti-election posters, and the swift arrest of lone protesters (such as 21-year-old Min Htet at Yangon City Hall in January 2026), forcing assemblies almost exclusively into clandestine flash mobs or rural resistance zones.

The main change was not the complete disappearance of protests, but a shift in where and how people could assemble. Large and visible demonstrations became almost impossible in junta-controlled cities, where protesters risked surveillance, arrest, and lengthy imprisonment. Peaceful actions increasingly took the form of flash mobs, one-person protests, silent actions, and small gatherings, while larger assemblies occurred mainly in resistance-controlled areas. The junta responded to these different forms through a combination of criminal law, surveillance, arrest, and, in conflict-affected areas, lethal military force.

Although [Section 354\(b\)](#) of the 2008 Constitution formally guarantees every citizen the right to assemble peacefully without arms and to hold processions, as with freedom of association, this right may be restricted under broadly worded laws concerning Union security, law and order, community peace and tranquillity, public order, and morality. Although the Constitution presents peaceful assembly as a right, these broad limitations allow security considerations to override it without clear tests of necessity or proportionality. Before the coup, the [2016 Peaceful Assembly](#) and Peaceful Procession Law had removed the earlier requirement to obtain official permission and replaced it with 48-hour notification to township police. This represented a limited improvement over the previous authorisation system. However, organisers were still required to disclose the purpose, location, slogans, speakers, and other details of an assembly. The law also retained criminal penalties for failing to provide notification, and imposed broad restrictions on what participants could say or do. In practice, local authorities frequently treated notification as a request for permission, directed protests to designated locations, or arrested participants who did not comply, as documented in an earlier legal assessment.

Since the 2021 coup, the gap between the formal legal guarantee and practice has widened substantially. The junta has not needed to repeal [section 354\(b\)](#) or [the 2016 law](#) because it has used the Penal Code, counterterrorism legislation, emergency measures, local administrative orders, digital surveillance, and direct violence to prevent assemblies. Panel experts stated that people cannot organise peaceful demonstrations in junta-controlled areas without facing arrest, violence, or possible death. The threat extends beyond demonstrations as community meetings, political discussions, commemorative events, and other gatherings may also attract scrutiny from local administrators and security forces. The legal framework has therefore shifted in practice from regulating assemblies to preventing independent public gatherings altogether.

Available monitoring demonstrates that peaceful protest continued. In September 2025, Athan documented [53 peaceful actions](#), including strikes, flash mobs, and public campaigns. Of these, 41 occurred in Sagaing Region, while only three were documented in Yangon Region. These figures should not be treated as a complete national count because they are based on media monitoring and underreporting is likely.

Restrictions became more systematic during the sham election period. The [Law](#) on the Prevention of Obstruction, Disruption, and Sabotage of Multiparty Democratic General Election, enacted on 29 July 2025, criminalised protests, organising, and other activities considered disruptive to the electoral process, with penalties including lengthy imprisonment and, in some circumstances, death. Between September 2025 and 19 January 2026, the junta [charged at least 404 civilians](#) for alleged “election interference.” On 20 September 2025, the junta sentenced two young men to individual prison terms of [49 years](#) each and a 19-year-old woman to 42 years for putting up anti-election posters in Yangon. On 11 January 2026, in Kyauktada Township (Yangon Region), [a brave, lone protester, 21-year-old Min Htet](#), raised

a sign reading “Reject the Illegal Election” outside Yangon City Hall during the junta boss’s visit to “inspect” polling stations. Junta forces swiftly arrested him.

Restrictions affected CSO groups differently. Young people remained highly visible among protest organisers and those receiving extreme sentences, while conscription, arrest, and forced displacement reduced their ability to participate. Rural communities in resistance-controlled areas had more space to gather than residents of junta-controlled cities but faced a higher risk of airstrikes. Urban protesters, in contrast, faced dense surveillance, informant networks, device searches, and rapid arrest, leading them to rely on flash mobs or individual actions. Available evidence was also insufficient to assess systematically the experiences of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), LGBTQI+ people, and other marginalised groups. Their absence from the available data is an evidence gap and may partly reflect the dangers and practical barriers they face in participating in or documenting public assemblies.

The denial of peaceful assembly has eliminated a central means through which civilians can collectively express their concerns and influence public affairs. It also prevents CSOs from mobilising communities and conducting public advocacy, further deepening fear and political exclusion.

1.3 | Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression for civil society deteriorated further during the reporting period. Fresh 2025–2026 evidence entrenching this rating includes the revocation of 97 independent media licences by May 2026, the detention of 226 journalists (with 93 receiving combined sentences of 521 years), and over 20,000 individuals detained for online content under Counter-Terrorism and Electronic Transactions laws. Repression expanded from targeting identifiable journalists, activists, and organised opposition to criminalising everyday expression, including social media posts, reactions, photographs, and private communications. Digital spaces became a primary arena of repression, while arrests, media-licence revocations, internet shutdowns, and restrictions on reporting increasingly formed part of a wider strategy to control information. This was particularly evident during the junta-organised election, when criticism of the process was treated as a threat to state security rather than protected political expression. The junta also criminalised basic political discourse (e.g., sentencing candidates for using words like “revolution”) and weaponised telecommunications blackouts during 96% of early-2026 airstrikes to prevent the documentation and expression of human rights violations.

Whereas [section 354 \(a\)](#) of the 2008 Constitution formally guarantees every citizen the right to express and publish their convictions and opinions, this right may be restricted by laws enacted for Union security, law and order, community peace and tranquillity, public order, or morality. These broad limitations do not require authorities to demonstrate that a restriction is necessary and proportionate. The Constitution does not expressly guarantee media freedom or a general right of access to information. The [2014 Media Law](#) provides more specific protections for journalists. It recognises freedom from prior censorship, the right to investigate and publish information, the right to criticise the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, and limited access to publicly available information. However, access remains subject to security classifications, directives, and regulations issued by authorities. Since the failed coup, the junta has rendered these formal protections almost meaningless by using other laws, administrative controls, and security institutions against independent media.

The legal architecture of repression consists of overlapping laws that allow the same expression of civil society to be characterised as incitement, false information, defamation,

unlawful support, or a national-security threat. [Section 505A](#) of the Penal Code criminalises statements considered likely to cause fear, spread “false news,” or encourage offences against state employees. Sections [124A](#) and 505 of the Penal Code contain broadly worded sedition and public-order offences, while [sections 499 and 500](#) retain criminal defamation. Section [66\(d\)](#) of the Telecommunications Law has been used against online defamation and criticism. Section 38(c) of the [Electronic Transactions Law](#) criminalises online “misinformation or disinformation” considered likely to cause panic, loss of trust, or social division. The [Official Secrets Act](#) restricts reporting concerning government and military information, while the [Counter-Terrorism Law](#) criminalises broadly defined forms of support, financing, communication, or assistance involving organisations designated by the junta. These laws give authorities multiple options to punish the same underlying conduct and make it difficult for individuals to know what expression may result in prosecution.

During the sham election process, the junta arrested civilians for protesting, refusing to vote, or criticising the elections online. Even “liking” a critical social media post could result in prosecution under the election law. On 8 January, People’s Party candidate Lwin Myint was [sentenced](#) to one year’s jail with hard labour for using the words “revolution” and “uprising” on social media.

The junta continued using counterterrorism legislation and other broadly worded laws against journalists, activists, artists, aid workers, and ordinary social media users. By 2025, [nearly 2,000 people had reportedly been detained](#) for online activities supporting the opposition or criticising the junta. This demonstrates that repression targets not only organised political opposition but also individual expressions of disagreement.

The evidence identifies several consistent “red lines” for civil society. Criticism of the sham election, support for NUG or resistance forces, reporting on military operations and human rights violations, communication with organisations designated unlawful or terrorist, and scrutiny of military or state institutions attracted the greatest risks. However, the boundaries remained deliberately unclear. Broad terms such as “false news,” “public panic,” “national security,” and “support” allowed authorities to extend punishment to satire, artistic work, humanitarian communication, and ordinary online engagement. This legal uncertainty was itself a mechanism of repression because people could not predict which words, images, or relationships would trigger action.

Independent journalism also faced systematic repression through arrests, imprisonment, licence revocations, and digital censorship. By December 2025, the junta had [detained 226 journalists](#) from 101 media outlets, while 93 journalists had received combined sentences of 521 years and at least 38 remained imprisoned. By May 2026, the junta had also [revoked the licences of 97 media agencies](#). Restrictions were not limited to junta-controlled areas. Although the [Federal Democracy Charter](#) by the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC) and interim frameworks in [Karenni](#) State, [Sagaing](#), and [Mandalay](#) Regions recognise human rights or freedom of expression, broad terms such as “public security,” “public morality,” and harm to military operations allow local authorities to restrict these rights without clear tests of necessity and proportionality. Across resistance-controlled areas, journalists reported restrictions on news gathering, photography, reporting on military operations, and access to Starlink internet. Some were required to show photographs to authorities before publication or faced demands to remove critical social media posts. Residents and journalists also [practised self-censorship](#) because they feared being accused of leaking information, causing airstrikes, or acting as military informants. Therefore, security concerns have often overridden legal

guarantees, creating a clear gap between the recognition of freedom of expression on paper and its protection in practice.

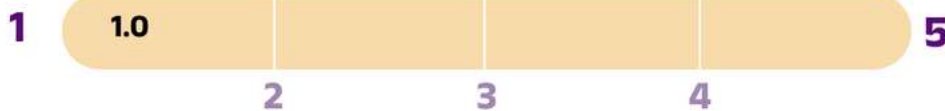
The impact was unequal across different civil society groups. Women journalists and women human rights defenders face the same risks of arrest and prosecution as men, as well as gender-specific risks, including sexualised online harassment, threats, reputational attacks, and sexual violence in detention. Young people are highly dependent on social media for news, political participation, and communication and are therefore particularly exposed to online surveillance and prosecution. Their greater use of digital platforms may increase their visibility to authorities. Ethnic minority, rural, and conflict-affected communities experience the most direct consequences of telecommunications restrictions. For these communities, access to information is not limited to political participation. Internet and telephone services are necessary for airstrike warnings, displacement information, humanitarian coordination, medical referrals, family contact, and documentation of human rights violations. Shutdowns therefore affect freedom of expression together with personal security, health, and access to humanitarian assistance.

The junta's public statements about protecting citizens' rights directly contradict its actions. As panel experts observed, official promises of free expression have not resulted in protection. Instead, the junta has used laws and institutions to make repression appear lawful, leaving journalists, activists, CSOs, and ordinary citizens at constant risk.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

2. Supportive Legal and Regulatory Framework

Score:



The legal framework governing civil society in Burma/Myanmar remains at the absolute lowest tier of the EU SEE methodology (1.0, Fully Disabling). While empirical conditions on the ground deteriorated even further during the June 2025–June 2026 reporting period, the score remains stagnant simply because it cannot drop any lower on the established scale. Civil society actors currently contend with a deeply fractured legal environment characterised by two divergent realities: a weaponised, coercive framework under the military junta, and an ad-hoc, unpredictable regulatory environment in resistance-controlled territories.

The information and analyses provided for Principle 2 require the following preface: none of the experts who participated in the panel discussion work for a CSO registered in Burma. The experts also suggested that it was only pro-junta organisations who register to work in Burma. There is no information in the public domain on the junta's enforcement actions and/or prosecutions relating to CSO registration and operational activities. Civil society actors contend with legal and operational environments which reflect the overall dichotomy in governance characterising contemporary Burma/Myanmar: junta- or resistance-controlled. The junta-imposed legal framework serves to expose CS workers, partners, financials, as well as recipient communities to its surveillance. Non-registration can make an organisation vulnerable to being labelled illegal. Resistance-held territories have multiple and varied processes of registration which promote operational uncertainty. CSOs are placed in a difficult position vis-a-vis registration for donor compliance, community needs, and local authority requirements.

2.1 Registration

The score remains stagnant at the lowest possible tier of fully disabling because the legal registration framework has become entirely coercive and weaponised for state control. While conditions deteriorated further during the reporting period, the score cannot drop below the lowest possible tier. Fresh evidence entrenching this rating includes the junta's March 2026 Registration Rules under the [Organisation Registration Law](#) (ORL 2022), which introduced mandatory minimum bank deposits (MMK 50–100 million for domestic NGOs; MMK 300 million for INGOs) and mandatory police background vetting of all executive members. Furthermore, on 5 June 2026, the military-dominated Pyithu Hluttaw formed special committees to impose maximum regulatory scrutiny over I/NGOs with threats of immediate dissolution, while resistance-held territories continue to lack a unified or published legal registration framework.

CSOs can either register with the junta or apply for registration under local governance authorities in resistance-controlled areas. The junta's [ORL \(2022\)](#) makes it mandatory for domestic organisations with five or more Burma/Myanmar citizens and international organisations operating in Burma/Myanmar to register. It is a lengthy and complicated process which cannot be justified in terms of necessity; it encourages invasive surveillance with the intent of controlling activities of organisations; and levies severe penalties in the form of fines, confiscation of assets, and criminalisation of activities, including humanitarian assistance to 2025 earthquake-affected areas.

An [NGO](#) applying for registration must submit Form-1 to the relevant registration board, with supporting documents and evidence of a bank account held under the names of at least two Responsible Officers. The account must contain at least MMK 100 million (for Union-level registration) or MMK 50 million (for region/state or Union Territory-level registration). Executive profiles must also be submitted to the police for scrutiny against eligibility criteria, including: citizenship, being at least 18 years of age, not being a member of a political party or active civil servant, not holding positions in more than two registered associations, not being clergy, not having criminal charges or convictions, and not being connected to “terrorist” or “unlawful” organisations.

Registration application fees are determined by geographic scope and can go up to MMK 300,000 for an organisation requiring the right to work anywhere in Burma/Myanmar. A registration certificate is valid for five years, and re-registration must take place 90 days before the existing registration expires for a fee of up to MMK 100,000. This fee is also dependent on geographic scope and must be paid within a time limit stipulated by the registration board. Non-payment of the registration fee, which is in addition to the application fee, renders the registration “null and void.”

An international organisation must provide evidence of a bank account held by at least two responsible officers with a minimum deposit of MMK 300 million. Its application for registration must include recommendations by various government agencies secured in advance. These include: 1. a recommendation by the government department, which is related to the objective of the organisation, 2. recommendations by the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, and 3. recommendations by the Ministry of Immigration and Population, and 4. a letter seeking the opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Section 17). An international organisation must also submit a draft of a memorandum of understanding (Section 17). Finally, the organisation must also present permission from the administration board in the area where it will carry out its activities. The INGO registration fee is [MMK 500,000](#).

The ORL does not ensure the independence and impartiality of the CSO governing authority. Registration boards ([Chapter 3](#) of the ORL), consisting of ministers and existing government officials at the national, district, and township levels, respectively, oversee the registration of organisations. The Union Registration Board has national jurisdiction and its Chair is the Union Minister of the Home Affairs Ministry. Experts suggest that, while not specified in the law, the reasonable assumption is that each registration board will answer to the Ministry of Home Affairs, which in turn answers to the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.

Any government department can trigger an investigation of an organisation by reporting a suspected violation of the ORL to the relevant registration board. The ORL contains many provisions that are overly broad and leave significant discretion to the registration board authority concerned and, given the aforementioned concerns about independence and impartiality, as well as the ongoing crackdown on civil society, there is a reasonable likelihood that registration board discretion will be exercised in bad faith or in an arbitrary manner. If, per the ORL, a registration board decides to nullify an organisation's registration for violations, such as interference in the internal affairs of the state or politics ([Section 28](#)), the organisation's assets become the property of the junta. While an organisation can file an objection letter with the board to reconsider the initial decision, the board's second decision is final and cannot be subjected to judicial appeal. Moreover, individuals considered to be associated with an organisation found to be in violation of the ORL may face arrest, prosecution, and prison sentences, depending on the violation found.

Particularly problematic are Sections 33, 38, 39, 40, 41, and 43 of the ORL. For example, Section 38 and 39 prohibit any organisation from having direct or indirect contact with an organisation or person supporting armed groups or "terrorist organisations." The ORL does not define direct and indirect contact or terrorist organisations. However, the junta has a demonstrable record of labelling anyone [critical of the coup](#) as "terrorists." The ORL potentially criminalises contact between CSOs and large swathes of the population, and this is decided by neither impartial nor independent registration boards. Failure to comply can result in a fine of MMK 5 million or five-year imprisonment or both, while the registration of the organisation will also be nullified, and the money and assets confiscated (Section 43).

Experts say many activities that are legal and specially protected under international human rights law and standards could fall under prohibited activities under the ORL. For instance, under Section 28(e), organisations are not permitted to work "beyond the objective and work process allowed by the relevant registration organisation according to the recommendation of relevant government departments and organisations." Organisations are also not to "be allowed to illegally take, hand over, use and provide money, material or any aid in an illegal way or commit concealment and obstruction of justice by withholding information over an undertaking" (Section 37). These prohibitions appear to infringe on the legitimate conduct of CSOs but none of these provisions contain further definitions or guidance about the specific behaviours or activities covered by the ORL.

Organisations must submit annual reports to the relevant registration board, allow inspection of documents and premises, and submit structural and management changes of the organisation for approval by the registration board (Section 28). CSOs are expected to "coordinate with the concerned government departments and organisations to enable auditing as and where necessary of the organisation's cash and assets as well as the annual financial statements" (Section 6e-f). In cases of travel to a "travel-restricted area" CSOs must cooperate with the relevant administration body and security forces.

On 5 June 2026, the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House/House of Representatives) established special committees [to intensify scrutiny](#) and regulation of I/NGO operations, pushing state administrative control to its highest level. Failure to submit required reports, or any delays in doing so, will result in severe penalties ranging from official warnings to the complete dissolution of the organisation.

In resistance-controlled areas, while the NUG does offer organisation registration, it is inconsistent in its application as the law is unpublished and is not well known as a result. An expert noted that some brigades of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), the armed wing of the Karen National Union (KNU), require CS organisations entering their territory to register in order to operate. Overall, the lack of a common and consistent registration policy that applies across resistance-held territory is a lacuna in the ad-hoc framework covering the work of civil society actors.

2.2 Operational Environment

The operational environment remains fully disabling, as the junta expanded overlapping criminal statutes to completely eliminate operational autonomy. Fresh evidence of worsening operational conditions includes the weaponisation of the Anti-Money Laundering Law, the Cybersecurity Law (2025), and the Election Protection Law, which have driven human rights and documentation organisations entirely underground. Operationally, the junta actively blockaded essential goods and weaponised humanitarian aid as collective punishment—exemplified in 2026 by the ban on transporting female hygiene products across the Sagaing-Mandalay bridge under its "four cuts" strategy. In resistance areas, operational procedures remain ad-hoc, unpredictable, and dependent on informal local security permissions.

CSOs have to be highly adaptable to function in an uncertain and unfriendly regulatory environment. In junta-controlled territory, besides the above discussed registration law, the [Counterterrorism Law](#), [Penal Code Section 505](#), the [Cybersecurity Law](#) (2025), the [Anti-Money Laundering Law](#), and the [Election Protection Law](#) all function to create a dangerous operational environment for CSOs. Organisations documenting atrocities, in particular, constantly grapple with legal and security risks, which have driven these organisations underground. CSOs have reported [restrictions](#) on cash withdrawals, delays in fund transfers, and limited access to banking services which disrupt routine operations, including staff payments and supply procurement. These constraints are particularly severe for CSOs working in humanitarian assistance. As a result, some CSOs rely on informal financial mechanisms, increasing surveillance and other risks.

The junta has exploited counter-terrorism frameworks to remove constitutional protections for human rights. It has placed a moratorium over relevant sections of the constitution, removed the need for a warrant in police arrests and searches, and obtained forced confessions through torture, detention, and threats to life. The junta has misused the broad and ill-defined laws that criminalise freedom of expression, movement, and political belief. Section 505A has become a catch-all provision to imprison anyone accused of causing "fear," spreading "false news," or agitating against government officials, punishable by up to three years in prison. The cybersecurity law grants the military sweeping and unchecked powers under the pretext of national security. These powers enable the junta to censor public discourse, dominate digital platforms, and restrict access to independent information. The [Anti-Money Laundering law](#) expands state authority over monitoring and investigation of financial transactions, significantly strengthening enforcement powers, with potentially heavy impacts on civil society. Finally, the [Election Protection Law](#) was used to silence and intimidate critics ahead of the junta's sham elections.

The reporting period reflects a continued decline in operational autonomy as overlapping legal and administrative controls increasingly constrain the ability of CSOs to function independently. The junta [deliberately blocks aid deliveries](#) through checkpoints, administrative restrictions and violence against aid providers. Essential goods, including food, medicine, fuel, batteries and water equipment, are frequently restricted, leaving communities increasingly dependent on local civil society organisations. The junta's interference in the delivery of aid to victims of the 2025 earthquake had long term impacts which extended to the current reporting period. The [blocking of aid, rescuers](#) and the continuation of airstrikes on affected regions combined with the junta's failure to prioritise earthquake recovery means that communities have not been able to fully recover. The junta's ban on women's hygiene products is yet another instance of a disabling operational environment for humanitarian organisations. The junta [expanded its ban](#) on the distribution of period products in 2026, claiming they are being used to treat wounded resistance fighters. The blockade is part of a broader strategy known as "four cuts," which is designed to deprive insurgents of basic supplies. Transporting pads across the bridge that connects Sagaing and Mandalay regions is completely prohibited. Experts say that by simultaneously creating need and restricting access, the junta has weaponised aid as a form of collective punishment.

The operational challenges facing CSOs are compounded by diminishing humanitarian aid. The [short funding cycles](#) through which most humanitarian aid is provided are insufficient to meet the needs of a population contending with armed conflict, displacement, and economic collapse. The humanitarian response sustained by international funding is becoming less effective due to the junta-imposed difficulties in delivering aid combined with a rising number of people in need, which in turn is causing donors not to expand support in despite the urgent and ongoing need for it. CSOs have developed [diverse coping strategies](#) to combat the junta's restrictions, including locally-led humanitarian responses, adapting livelihood support initiatives, and helping to develop people-led healthcare and education systems to fill critical gaps. However, the needs on the ground continue to outpace assistance.

The operational environment is not fully free, protected, or predictable even in resistance-controlled areas. CSOs must inform or request permission from the Ethnic Resistance Organisation (ERO) authorities, and/or NUG authorities at township- and district-level to conduct trainings, move supplies, or aid. These procedures are not always clear and sometimes depend on personal relationships, local security decisions, or the views of an individual leader, all of which contribute to a challenging operational environment for CSOs.

2.3 Protection From Interference

The score remains stagnant at fully disabling due to the absolute absence of legal safeguards against arbitrary state interference and asset confiscation. Under the ORL (2022), registration boards chaired by the Ministry of Home Affairs possess unconstrained discretion to inspect offices, monitor cash flows, and dissolve organisations without any independent judicial appeal mechanisms. In resistance-held territories, civil society actors similarly lack formalised protections against administrative overreach or interference, frequently being subjected to informal negotiations and mandatory administrative fees or "taxes" of 10–15% of their total operating budgets to function in certain ERO-controlled areas.

The junta's web of laws cited above ensures that protection from interference is non-existent for civil society actors in Burma. The ORL, in particular, establishes a strict monitoring junta with registration boards [mandated](#) to "give directions to the organisations not to cooperate with, assist in and provide support, either directly or indirectly, to money laundering and terrorism financing through cash flow, cash management, and monetary support." CSOs

report [restrictions](#) on activities due to the administrative controls extending from the ORL, with trainings and community engagement frequently restricted, disrupted, or conducted discreetly.

Since the junta [labelled](#) the resistance [terrorists](#), the ORL means to hinder the flow of humanitarian aid to people most in need. Audits, travel authorisations, and strict surveillance of organisations with a humanitarian function under the ORL all increase the security risks for CS workers, ensuring interference is paramount and independent functioning is crushed. The preceding discussion of the ORL underscores that the grounds for dissolution, mechanisms to challenge decisions, and safeguards against junta interference are either opaque or effectively non-existent. CSOs [have reported](#) unannounced visits, document checks, demands for information, and forced suspension or modification of activities. Even when not resulting in formal sanctions, such interference creates uncertainty, discouraging open engagement and reinforcing self-censorship. These challenges are especially acute for CSOs working across multiple regions, or in politically sensitive sectors.

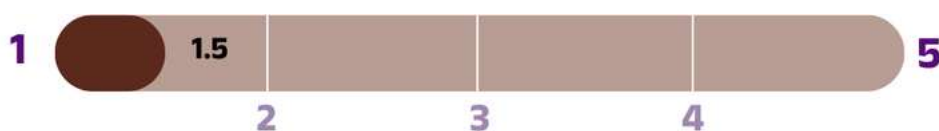
Persistent interference by authorities combined with financial fragility/uncertainties and administrative pressure contribute to limiting the effectiveness and sustainability of CSOs, requiring the balancing of survival with service delivery in an increasingly restrictive environment.

The picture, however, is not entirely favourable in resistance-controlled areas. Experts noted the absence of a transparent mechanism, in Mon State for instance, to protect CSOs from interference if local authorities delay permission, disagree with activities, or raise concerns. Issues are resolved through informal negotiations, meaning outcomes vary without a clear process, compliance mechanisms, and formalised protections for humanitarian workers and their activities. Some ERO administrations may also request the payment of administrative costs for using a particular area or as a contribution for operating in a particular control area. The payment, at best a tax and at worst extortion, is around 10-15% of a CSO's total budget, according to experts. Non-payment leads to serious difficulties such as the inability to work in the area.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

3. Accessible and Sustainable Resources

Score:



Access to sustainable resources for civil society organisations in Burma/Myanmar deteriorated significantly during the June 2025–June 2026 reporting period, causing the overall score for Principle 3 to drop from 1.8 to 1.5. In the previous period, the primary challenge was the announcement of major international donor reductions and the baseline difficulties of operating under military rule. Over the past 12 months, the consequences of those cuts materialised with devastating clarity. Major funding reductions announced by [the US](#), [Sweden](#), [the Netherlands](#), and [the United Kingdom](#) in 2024 and early 2025 were felt most acutely starting in the second half of 2025, forcing [grassroots CSOs](#) to eliminate staff positions, scale back activities, or cease operations entirely. This international funding withdrawal collided with an aggressive escalation in state-engineered financial repression. The junta's March 2026 Registration Rules under the Organisation Registration Law (ORL) and the 2026 Anti-Money Laundering Law introduced severe new bank deposit mandates, invasive transaction reporting requirements, and heightened cross-border scrutiny. Compounded by runaway inflation reaching 24.6% in April 2026, the resource environment has shifted from mere funding scarcity into a systemic crisis that threatens the operational survival and autonomy of independent civil society across both junta- and resistance-held territories.

3.1 | Accessibility of Resources

The score was rated as disabling due to a compounding crisis of international donor withdrawal and aggressive new state-imposed financial barriers. Concrete fresh evidence justifying this decline includes the junta's March 2026 Registration Rules, which established prohibitive mandatory minimum bank deposits of MMK 50–100 million for local NGOs and MMK 300 million for INGOs, alongside mandatory quarterly transaction disclosures that expose donors and beneficiaries to military surveillance. Furthermore, the 2026 Anti-Money Laundering Law and Burma/Myanmar's continued FATF blacklisting have intensified scrutiny

on CSO bank accounts, forcing grassroots groups, especially Rohingya-led organisations and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), to rely on risky, informal Hundi networks that expose them to theft and exchange losses.

Funding cuts have significantly reduced the resources available to Burma/Myanmar's CSOs. As funding opportunities have narrowed, competition among CSOs, INGOs, and other organisations has increased. Smaller CSOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) operating in conflict-affected areas are particularly [disadvantaged](#) because they often receive information about funding opportunities late, face short application deadlines, lack sufficient proposal-writing capacity, or cannot meet complex application requirements. Internet restrictions further limit access to funding information. Organisations in areas affected by internet shutdowns must rely on costly Virtual Private Network (VPNs) or satellite (Starlink) internet services. These barriers are especially [difficult for OPDs](#), which often have fewer financial, technical, and human resources than larger organisations. Information inequalities therefore increasingly favour larger and internationally connected organisations that have stable internet access, dedicated fundraising staff, established donor relationships, and earlier access to calls for proposals.

[Donor eligibility requirements](#) present another major challenge. Many international donors continue to require applicants to possess a valid registration certificate and an organisational bank account. Applications may also require detailed proposals, results frameworks, budgets, safeguarding policies, financial records, audits, and reporting systems. English-language applications and short deadlines create additional barriers for organisations without dedicated proposal writers or staff familiar with donor terminology. The complexity of the application process therefore affects not only whether organisations are eligible but also whether they have the time, language skills, and administrative capacity to compete. These conditions exclude numerous grassroots organisations that cannot safely register inside Burma/Myanmar or establish legal status in another country. They also create a localisation paradox: although donors increasingly emphasise supporting local leadership, their compliance requirements often favour INGOs and larger, internationally connected organisations. Resources consequently become concentrated among organisations with established administrative systems, while the local actors closest to affected communities must depend on intermediaries or remain excluded.

The [junta's new Rules on Registration of Associations](#), issued in March 2026, further restrict access to funding by requiring minimum bank deposits of MMK 50-100 million for local NGOs and MMK 300 million for INGOs. They also require detailed donor records and quarterly submission of bank transactions to junta-controlled authorities, [exposing organisations](#), donors, and beneficiaries to financial surveillance. Also, the [2026 Anti-Money Laundering Law](#) increases scrutiny of CSO bank accounts and cross-border transfers through stricter verification, monitoring, and reporting requirements. These developments represent further deterioration because they add new compliance and surveillance requirements at the same time that available funding is declining.

Burma/Myanmar's tax framework formally provides some incentives for charitable giving. Under the [Income Tax Law](#), income received by a religious or charitable institution and used solely for religious or charitable purposes is exempt from income tax. Donations to state-sponsored or officially recognised charitable institutions may also be deducted from a donor's taxable income, up to 25% of total income. However, these benefits depend on official recognition. Non-profit organisations seeking tax exemption and donor deductibility certification must obtain a taxpayer identification number and submit evidence including a

bank account, registration certificate, organisational structure, and financial statement under [Notification 79/2020](#). Tax incentives therefore provide limited benefit to unregistered CSOs and organisations working on human rights, democracy, accountability, or other sensitive issues, because applying for official recognition may expose them to the same registration and surveillance risks described above. Organizations unable to obtain tax-exempt status may also face uncertainty over the treatment of grants and other income. No new tax incentive specifically supporting independent CSOs was identified during the reporting period, while available evidence was insufficient to establish the prevalence of income tax on grants or double taxation. In practice, the main tax-related barrier is therefore unequal access to exemptions rather than the complete absence of exemptions in law.

OPDs face [additional barriers](#) to direct funding. Because many are unable to meet donor eligibility requirements, they must partner with INGOs to apply for grants. The intermediary organisation then retains a portion of the funding, leaving fewer resources for activities and limiting the decision-making autonomy of OPDs and other grassroots groups. This demonstrates that intermediary funding can provide access while simultaneously reducing local control over priorities and resources. [Rohingya-led organisations](#) face even more fundamental barriers. A Rohingya expert explained that Rohingya communities in Arakan State lack meaningful access to legal registration and formal banking services. International funding intended to support Rohingya communities is therefore commonly channelled through UN agencies or INGOs instead of directly through Rohingya-led organisations. This prevents local organisations from controlling resources, setting their own priorities, and developing sustainable institutional capacity.

Women-led organisations also face unequal access. Women's organisations responding to humanitarian needs reported arbitrary funding cuts and emphasised the need for direct, flexible, and gender-sensitive assistance. Many women-led groups operate at the community level and combine humanitarian work with sensitive issues such as gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health, and women's rights. Their smaller organisational structures and security risks can make formal registration and compliance requirements particularly difficult. Youth-led and LGBTQI+ organisations may face similar barriers because many operate informally, have limited funding histories, or work on issues considered politically or socially sensitive. Some women's and LGBTQI+ groups have reportedly concealed the nature of their work or ceased formal operations because of surveillance and prosecution risks. This further limits their ability to demonstrate organisational experience, register legally, or satisfy donor due-diligence requirements.

[Banking restrictions](#) and [surveillance](#) have also become a major obstacle for organisations operating inside Burma/Myanmar. Even before the failed coup, some unregistered CSOs used joint accounts held by two staff members to receive donor funding. Frequent deposits and withdrawals now attract scrutiny, placing account holders at risk of surveillance or investigation by the junta. Organisations using individual accounts also face withdrawal limits and similar risks when transaction volumes appear inconsistent with personal use. Some organisations have opened bank accounts in Thailand to receive international funding, but this creates additional transaction costs, service fees, administrative work, and cross-border transfer difficulties. Thailand-based organisations also reported increasing scrutiny of transactions connected to scam centres. Additionally, Burma/Myanmar's continued classification by the [Financial Action Task Force](#) as a high-risk jurisdiction has further increased scrutiny of financial transfers and contributed to risk aversion among banks and donors.

CSOs transferring funds into conflict-affected areas frequently rely on [informal agents](#) or Hundi. Although these may be the only available channels, they expose organisations to fraud, theft, exchange-rate losses, and security risks. One panel expert reported that agents entrusted with delivering cash had sometimes disappeared with the funds. These barriers mean that funding may technically be available, which is less than before, but remain inaccessible to the organisations closest to affected communities. CSOs facing the greatest risks and responding to the most urgent needs are often the least able to satisfy donors' registration, banking, and reporting requirements.

3.2 | Effectiveness of Resources

The score remains as fully disabling, reflecting ongoing structural friction between donor compliance requirements and high-risk operational realities on the ground. While CSOs continue to deliver frontline aid, the operational effectiveness of available grants was severely constrained during the reporting period. Fresh evidence of stagnation includes rigid donor compliance rules that refuse anonymised reporting, demanding beneficiary real names, national IDs, and photos that create severe protection risks at junta checkpoints. Additionally, rapid economic deterioration and inflation reaching 24.6% year-on-year in April 2026 sharply eroded the purchasing power of fixed grants, while donor funding remained heavily skewed toward short-term emergency relief at the expense of long-term human rights documentation, transitional justice, and mine-risk education.

Even when CSOs obtain funding, junta restrictions, donor requirements, and the security situation limit their ability to use it effectively. Panel experts described donor requirements that do not adequately reflect the risks of operating under the junta. Some donors continue to request beneficiaries' real names, photographs, national identification cards, or other identifying documents. Requests to omit sensitive information from reports are not always accepted. These requirements [create serious protection risks](#). Information identifying beneficiaries, staff members, activity locations, or account holders can be accessed during military raids and at junta checkpoints, during device searches, arrests, or bank investigations. At the same time, some grants do not provide sufficient resources for digital security, emergency relocation, risk mitigation, or contingency measures. CSOs are therefore expected to meet extensive compliance requirements without adequate support to protect the people whose information they collect. The refusal of some donors to accept anonymised beneficiary information is a concrete example of a compliance dispute during the reporting period. It exposes a central tension between donor accountability and protection: documentation intended to demonstrate that activities occurred may become evidence that places beneficiaries and CSO workers at risk. Smaller organisations are particularly affected because they often lack secure data-storage systems, dedicated protection staff, and funds for emergency responses.

Available funding is also poorly aligned with the work CSOs consider necessary. Panel experts observed that some support remains available for short-term humanitarian and emergency responses, while funding for [long-term rights-based programmes](#), transitional justice, truth-seeking, reparations, and human rights documentation is increasingly limited. This forces organisations to shift away from their established missions toward whichever short-term activities remain attractive to funders. Funding may therefore produce immediate outputs without strengthening the organisations and systems required for long-term accountability and democratic transition.

Inflation due to the junta's economic mismanagement has further reduced the value and effectiveness of available grants. Higher prices for fuel, transportation, food, accommodation,

communications, medical supplies, and training venues mean that CSOs can implement fewer activities and reach fewer people with the same budget. The World Bank reported that [inflation increased sharply](#) in Burma/Myanmar from Mar 2026 and reached 24.6% year-on-year in April. As one panel expert summarised: “Even when we receive the same amount of funding, its value is lower than before.” The impact of inflation depends partly on donor flexibility. Grants calculated using earlier exchange rates and prices lose operational value when donors do not allow budget revisions or movement between spending categories. CSOs may then have to reduce the number of participants, shorten activities, use less secure transportation, or cover additional costs from their limited unrestricted funds. Inflation therefore affects not only the quantity of activities but also their safety and quality.

The consequences are particularly visible in [humanitarian responses](#). One expert spoke of malaria outbreaks in displacement areas where organisations lacked the resources to respond promptly. IDPs forced to flee repeatedly require new shelter, food, healthcare, and other basic assistance after each displacement, but available support covers only a fraction of these needs. Repeated displacement also makes fixed project locations, beneficiary lists, and implementation schedules quickly outdated. Panel experts also identified a growing need for mine-risk education as junta forces were increasingly using banned anti-personnel landmines that [indiscriminately kill](#) and injure civilians, yet few organisations have sufficient resources to provide it. This illustrates the widening gap between available resources and rapidly changing community needs.

The effects also differ across organisations and communities. Women-led organisations require flexible funding that covers survivor protection, confidential data management, childcare, safe transportation, and responses to gender-based violence. Identification requirements may be particularly dangerous for survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) and other forms of abuse. Youth-led and LGBTQI+ organisations often operate informally or work on politically and socially sensitive issues, making registration, public reporting, and disclosure of participants unsafe. OPDs face additional costs for accessible transportation, communication, venues, interpretation, assistive devices, and reasonable accommodation. If grants do not recognise these costs, OPDs may receive funding but remain unable to ensure the meaningful participation of PWDs. Ethnic minority and rural organisations face language barriers, higher transportation and communication costs, and security restrictions in conflict-affected areas. Fixed budgets and standardised reporting requirements therefore have unequal effects even when organisations receive grants of similar size. Resource effectiveness therefore cannot be assessed only by whether organisations receive grants. Funding becomes less effective when it is delayed, channelled through multiple intermediaries, reduced by transaction costs, constrained by unsafe documentation requirements, or left unchanged despite inflation and rapidly increasing community needs.

3.3 | Sustainability

The sustainability of resources accessed by civil society was rated as fully disabling as the long-term institutional sustainability of civil society has reached an acute breaking point. Organisations operating along the Thai-Burma border and in conflict zones experienced funding cuts of between 20% and 100%, forcing them into extreme project-to-project survival. Fresh evidence entrenching this rating includes a severe sector-wide brain drain and loss of institutional memory, as CSOs have been forced to eliminate full-time positions, slash salaries, and rely on underpaid hourly labour or unpaid volunteers. Furthermore, independent income-generation (such as social enterprises by OPDs) remains legally blocked by commercial tax barriers, while active aerial bombardments and displacement prevent community-based self-reliance initiatives.

The sustainability of Burma/Myanmar's civil society has reached a critical point. Many CSOs now survive from one short-term project to another without predictable core funding for salaries, office rent, security, administration, or staff development. Panel experts reported funding reductions among organisations operating in border areas ranging from 20% to 100%. In some cases, organisations continued to exist in name but had no operational budget. The funding pool is neither sufficiently diverse nor reliable. Many CSOs depend on a small number of international donors because domestic philanthropy and income-generating opportunities remain extremely limited. The suspension or withdrawal of one major donor can therefore affect several programmes simultaneously.

The absence of multi-year and flexible funding has created a serious staff-retention crisis. CSOs have responded by eliminating positions, reducing salaries, relying on unpaid labour, or hiring interpreters and other essential workers on an hourly basis. An expert reported that organisations had eliminated full-time interpreter positions and replaced them with very low hourly payments that could not cover workers' living expenses. These pressures have accelerated a wider brain drain from civil society. Experienced activists and professionals are leaving the sector for safer or better-paid employment after years of insecurity, financial pressure, and burnout. Their departure represents more than a loss of personnel. As one expert explained: "We lose not only staff, but also community trust, institutional memory, language skills, and [documentation experience](#)."

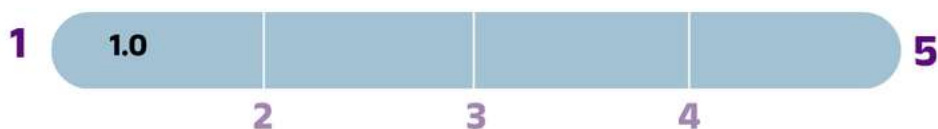
CSOs must then invest their limited resources in training replacements, while knowledge and relationships developed over many years are not easily recovered. The loss of experienced staff weakens programme quality, organisational credibility, and the ability to operate safely in high-risk environments. It also reduces an organisation's ability to prepare strong proposals and comply with donor requirements, potentially creating a cycle in which funding losses lead to capacity losses that make future funding even harder to secure. Project-based funding also limits strategic planning. Organisations may prepare multi-year strategies, but they cannot commit staff or resources when funding is approved only for short periods and is restricted to predetermined activities. Management time is increasingly spent applying for grants, revising budgets, finding replacement funding, and responding to immediate crises. Programming consequently becomes reactive and donor-driven rather than guided by long-term organisational priorities. CSOs may select activities according to available calls for proposals rather than community needs.

Efforts to develop independent income sources are also extremely difficult. Some OPDs have explored social enterprises or the sale of handicrafts, but commercial registration and tax requirements create significant legal and administrative barriers. Conflict, airstrikes, drone attacks, displacement, and landmines also undermine community livelihood activities intended to reduce dependence on international aid. CSOs continue to demonstrate resilience through informal networks and collaboration. Panel experts warned that without stronger coordination, resource sharing, and predictable long-term support, more grassroots organisations will disappear. Surviving [without adequate funding](#) may preserve an organisation temporarily, but it does not allow it to retain skilled staff, protect communities, maintain institutional knowledge, or plan for long-term social change.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

4. Open and Responsive State

Score:



The overall score for Principle 4 remains stagnant at fully disabling (1.0). While empirical governance conditions further deteriorated during the June 2025–June 2026 reporting period, the score remains unchanged at 1.0 as it represents the lowest possible baseline. The state environment in Burma/Myanmar is defined by an acute institutional dichotomy: an entirely closed, coercive, and opaque military dictatorship operating at the central level, contrasted with nascent, highly fragmented, and contested attempts at participatory governance within resistance-held territories.

Under the military junta, the central state apparatus has eradicated every dimension of an open and responsive state. The consolidation of "Junta 2.0," exemplified by coup leader Min Aung Hlaing unilaterally declaring himself "President," elevating torture centre architect Gen. Ye Win Oo to military chief, and packing the sham parliament with sanctioned generals, has permanently sealed the state from civilian engagement and public oversight. Rather than facilitating democratic consent, the junta violently coerced participation in its December 2025–January 2026 sham elections, criminalised peaceful non-participation through the Election Protection Law, and physically destroyed institutional memory by burning the legitimate 2020 election archives. Conversely, while civil society organisations (CSOs) actively collaborate with the National Unity Government (NUG), Ethnic Resistance Organisations (EROs), and the newly formed Steering Council for the Emergence of a Federal Democratic Union (SCEF) to build alternative federal structures, these emerging bodies face significant institutional growing pains. Resistance governance continues to grapple with top-down ministerial bottlenecks, a lack of institutionalised feedback mechanisms, and tokenistic inclusion, most notably illustrated by last-minute gender quotas and the continued structural exclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), LGBTQ+ networks, and the Rohingya community.

4.1 | Transparency

Government transparency towards civil society remains stagnant at fully disabling due to the complete absence of a legal right to information, combined with an institutional shift from passive non-disclosure to the active destruction of state records. Throughout the reporting period, Burma/Myanmar maintained a total legal and procedural void regarding Access to Information (ATI), lacking statutory request procedures, appeals, or independent oversight. Rather than demonstrating any progress toward open governance, the junta entrenched budget opacity, boosting military spending without public audit, and systematically burned the 2020 election archives in early 2026 to erase democratic records.

Under military rule, transparency and the right to information do not exist in either law or practice in Burma/Myanmar. Rather than simply withholding public data, the junta has [systematically engineered](#) the total absence of access-to-information mechanisms, extreme fiscal secrecy, and the active destruction of institutional memory.

Burma/Myanmar possesses no dedicated Access to Information (ATI) or Right to Information (RTI) legislation, consistently placing the country near the bottom of international RTI benchmarks. The [2008 Constitution](#) provides no explicit, justiciable right for citizens to access state-held information, and post-coup governance has entirely eliminated previous civil society efforts to draft an RTI framework. Instead, the legal environment is governed by aggressive secrecy and criminalisation statutes, including the colonial-era [Official Secrets Act](#) (1923) and the junta's July 2025 "[Military Secrets Law](#)". These laws legally mandate bureaucratic concealment, establishing harsh criminal penalties—including the [death penalty](#) in aggravated cases—for leaking, receiving, or publishing state information, [effectively criminalising](#) the very concept of open governance.

The junta enforces no statutory requirements for public institutions to proactively publish essential governance data, such as public procurement contracts, executive decrees, legislative records, or [external audit findings](#). While the junta operates an [official gazette](#), it is used exclusively to broadcast repressive edicts, military appointments, and deregistration orders rather than public interest disclosures. Formal access-to-information procedures are entirely [non-existent](#). There are no standardised administrative mechanisms for citizens, journalists, or CSOs to request public information, no statutory timelines requiring government response, and no independent information commissioners or judicial bodies to review denials. Any attempt by civil society actors or investigative journalists to request public data or scrutinize government operations is treated with [immediate suspicion](#), exposing the requester to surveillance, [arbitrary detention](#), or prosecution under counter-terrorism, [cybersecurity law](#), and [state secrets legislation](#).

State fiscal management is completely [shielded from public scrutiny](#). National and regional [budget allocations](#) are determined unilaterally by the [military leadership](#) without legislative debate, public hearings, or published financial audits. In 2024, the junta used [USD 4.65 billion](#), which is a 62% increase from USD 2.87 billion in 2023. In 2025, while [government expenditure](#) is 30.3% of GDP, military expenditure is estimated to be [3.9% of GDP](#). While the junta expands the military budget year by year, they have implemented drastic, unpublished budget cuts to public healthcare and education. Inflation-adjusted spending on public health is estimated to have [declined by 38 percent](#) between Financial Year 2019-2020 and Financial Year 2026-2027, while education has seen a 26 percent real decline over the same period. Independent audit institutions, such as the [Union Auditor General's Office](#), have been thoroughly militarised, operating without civilian oversight and failing to publish verifiable reports on public expenditures, extractive revenues, or military procurement.

The reporting period marks a qualitative deterioration in state transparency, transitioning from simple non-disclosure to the deliberate physical erasure of institutional history. In January and February 2026, the junta systematically burned the legitimate [2020 election records](#) and [erased state archives](#) relating to the civilian-led NLD-era parliament. This organised destruction of archives represents a deliberate strategy to eliminate paper trails, rewrite democratic history, and prevent future legal scrutiny.

This destruction of transparency directly cripples state accountability. By centralising power exclusively within the military elite, the junta has eliminated every external check on state authority. In the absence of transparency, state institutions operate exclusively as instruments of military compliance rather than public service.

4.2 | Participation

Civil society participation and inclusion in government decision making platforms remains rated as fully disabling because genuine public participation has been completely eradicated by the state, resulting in an increasingly bifurcated governance landscape. Throughout the reporting period, the junta eliminated democratic contestation by banning legitimate opposition parties and criminalising boycotts under the Election Protection Law (charging 404 people, with sentences of up to 49 years). While resistance-controlled areas in Sagaing and Magway demonstrated emerging grassroots consultation, these processes remain legally non-binding, and high-level resistance structures (such as the SCEF) continue to treat inclusion as a top-down, tokenistic exercise without structural representation for marginalised groups.

Public participation in Burma/Myanmar has evolved into an increasingly bifurcated landscape characterised by two divergent governance realities: near-total, coercive civic exclusion under the military junta, and nascent, highly uneven participatory experimentation across resistance-controlled areas. Across both spheres, however, the operating environment lacks a formalised, statutory legal framework that guarantees early, institutionalised civil society consultation, leaving civic engagement largely informal, reactive, or heavily suppressed.

Under the military junta, genuine civic participation in public decision-making has been entirely outlawed. The junta structurally eliminated democratic choice by amending electoral laws to permanently dissolve and [ban legitimate political parties](#) that won over 90% of parliamentary seats in the 2020 general elections. Consequently, during the three-phase sham polls held between December 2025 and January 2026, the military-proxy Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) secured at least [28 uncontested seats](#) nationwide, demonstrating an absolute absence of democratic contestation.

Rather than serving as an instrument of public consent, the electoral process functioned as a violent mechanism of state coercion. In Yangon Region, municipal authorities in Mingalartaungnyunt Township ordered [market vendors](#) to vote under direct threats of shop closures and licence revocations. Similarly, in Hlaingtharya Township, [factory managers](#) were mandated to force migrant workers and labourers to the polls under threat of dismissal. When the public attempted to exercise peaceful non-participation, such as the December 2025 [Silent Strike](#), the junta aggressively criminalised dissent. By early 2026, authorities had charged at least [404 civilians](#) under the draconian Election Protection Law, sentencing young activists to up to [49 years in prison](#) simply for criticising the electoral framework or calling for boycotts.

In sharp contrast to the junta's authoritarianism, resistance-controlled territories in [central Burma](#) (such as Magway and Sagaing Regions) have experimented with participatory governance. Local CSOs were actively engaged in drafting [interim administrative](#)

[arrangements](#) for emerging federal units. In Magway, civil society facilitated public consultations, town halls, and youth forums to solicit community input on local administrative bylaws. However, an important analytical distinction exists between information-sharing/consultation and actual policy influence. While local authorities in resistance-controlled areas frequently consult CSOs for [service delivery](#) and community mobilisation, these engagements remain ad-hoc and personality-dependent. There are no institutionalised advisory bodies, formal statutory consultation requirements, or administrative appeal mechanisms to guarantee that [CSO recommendations](#) are legally binding or adopted into final executive decrees. Consequently, CSOs frequently attend consultative dialogues [without possessing structural power](#) to alter policy outcomes when military or security priorities take precedence.

At the apex of resistance governance, meaningful inclusion is often undermined by top-down decision-making and tokenism. Following the establishment of the Steering Council for the Emergence of a Federal Democratic Union (SCEF) on 30 March 2026 by the NUG, CRPH, and major Ethnic Resistance Organisations (EROs), a [one-third participation quota](#) for women was formally announced. While progressive on paper, expert panellists strongly criticised this move as a last-minute, reactive measure. Resistance leadership failed to engage in early, meaningful consultations with grassroots women's organisations, and several senior leaders initially resisted establishing a dedicated women's pillar entirely. This reflects a broader trend within transitional bodies where civic representation is treated as a superficial check-box exercise rather than a deeply embedded power-sharing mechanism.

Structural barriers to participation are acute across marginalised groups, including Rohingya, LGBTQ+, persons with disabilities (PWDs), rural, and ethnic minorities. The Rohingya community remains [entirely disenfranchised and excluded](#) from all governance frameworks. Both the military junta and the [Arakan Army \(AA\)](#) enforce strict administrative and physical [movement bans](#) on Rohingya civilians in Arakan State, denying them any participatory space, advisory roles, or administrative grievance mechanisms. On the other hand, PWDs and LGBTQ+ individuals lack structural representation within resistance legislative and administrative bodies. While some LGBTQ+ advocacy networks initiated localised policy agreements regarding Transitional Justice (TJ) principles, broader governance planning excludes their institutional input. Furthermore, PWDs face severe physical barriers to attending community assemblies and town halls in conflict-affected areas. Moreover, a sharp rural-urban and linguistic divide persists; grassroots, non-Burman minority organisations outside major regional centres face significant logistical, security, and language barriers that prevent them from accessing centralised NUG and ERO consultative platforms.

4.3 | Accountability

The extent to which government is accountable to civil society was rated as fully disabling during the reporting period because institutional accountability mechanisms are completely non-existent under the military junta and remain informal, nascent, and contested within resistance governance. Under the junta, the state treats any demand for accountability as treason, criminalising oversight through counter-terrorism laws, surveillance, and arbitrary detention. While resistance and interim authorities demonstrate greater openness to civil society, accountability operates almost entirely through informal negotiations and personal relationships rather than formalised review bodies, publicly documented feedback loops, or statutory complaint procedures.

State [accountability](#) in Burma/Myanmar represents a fundamental governance void. A rigorous assessment of the enabling environment requires distinguishing between

consultation (the act of gathering input) and accountability (the institutional obligation of authorities to be answerable, provide justification, and submit to oversight). Under the military junta, accountability has been entirely eradicated and replaced with [total impunity](#) and [state terror](#). Conversely, while emerging resistance authorities and the [National Unity Government](#) (NUG) collaborate with [civil society organisations](#), accountability structures remain fragile, informal, and largely dependent on interpersonal relationships rather than institutionalised mechanisms.

Under the military junta, all formal and informal avenues for [civic oversight](#) have been eliminated. The junta operates with complete [institutional opacity](#), treating any demand for public accountability, independent monitoring, or administrative redress as an act of subversion or treason. CSOs attempting to [document atrocity crimes](#), corruption, or human rights violations are forced entirely underground due to the threat of prosecution under [Section 505A](#) of the Penal Code, the [Counter-Terrorism Law](#), or the [Military Secrets Law](#). The state provides zero mechanisms for public administrative review, ombudsman oversight, independent judicial remedies, or statutory performance reporting. Rather than responding to public grievances, the junta actively shields state actors from accountability, utilising [mass arrests](#), [biometric surveillance \(PSMS\)](#), and severe [retaliatory sentencing](#) against critics to enforce total obedience.

In resistance-controlled areas and transitional bodies, the relationship between governing authorities and civil society is more open but remains structurally underdeveloped. Resistance [administrative bodies](#) and NUG ministries rarely provide formal, written explanations detailing how civic recommendations or public consultation inputs were utilised in policy formulation. Feedback, meeting minutes, policy submissions, and consultative outcomes are almost never [publicly documented or published](#) in official registers, leaving communities uninformed about how final governance decisions are reached. When CSO policy initiatives or [community recommendations](#) are proposed, decision-makers are not bound by any statutory obligation to provide formal justifications or administrative reasons for their rejection.

Accountability in [resistance-controlled territories](#) operates predominantly through informal negotiations and personal trust rather than formalised governance systems. Senior leaders within some Ethnic Resistance Organisations (EROs) and revolutionary bodies remain highly sensitive to public scrutiny and institutional oversight, frequently viewing [CSO monitoring](#) as an impediment to military efficiency or administrative authority rather than a cornerstone of democratic governance. Consequently, CSOs frequently engage in service delivery as a [substitute for governance accountability](#). By taking the lead on frontline healthcare, emergency education, and humanitarian relief, [CSOs compensate](#) for absent state infrastructure. Through these operational collaborations, civil society groups actively "lead by example," gradually demonstrating the efficacy of transparent, [community-centred governance](#) to hesitant local authorities and carving out informal space for dialogue. A notable success of collaborative oversight occurred in Karen State, as explained by the expert panellist, where the [Karen National Union](#) (KNU) partnered with local CSOs and community leaders to investigate and initiate crackdowns against transnational [cyber-scam syndicates](#).

The trajectory of accountability across Burma/Myanmar is increasingly bifurcated. Under the junta, accountability is actively deteriorating as it entrenches militarised control. In resistance territories, accountability is in a phase of nascent experimentation, exemplified by the formation of the [SCEF](#) in late 2025 and interim federal unit drafting in [Sagaing](#) and [Magway](#). However, independent [CSO monitoring](#) remains severely constrained. [Civil society actors](#) lack

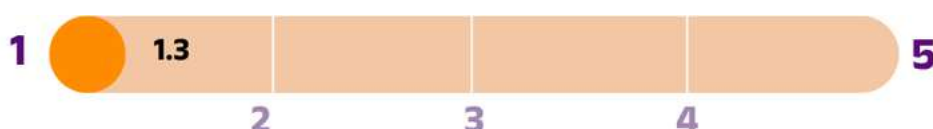
formalised monitoring rights, access to administrative records, or institutional protection when exposing local governance abuses or arbitrary administrative taxes in conflict zones.

Furthermore, the grievance and accountability mechanisms are [profoundly unequal](#) across marginalised demographics, such as Rohingya, women, HRDs, PWDs, and LGBTQ+ networks. The Rohingya community is entirely denied access to grievance, legal, or administrative accountability mechanisms. Both the junta and the [Arakan Army](#) (AA) enforce movement bans and administrative blackouts on Rohingya communities, offering zero channels for [civilian complaint or justice](#). While women make up a significant portion of frontline humanitarian responders, they lack structural access to high-level oversight forums. Furthermore, there are no institutionalised reporting or redress mechanisms to address technology-facilitated gender-based violence ([TFGBV](#)) or deepfakes harassment [targeting female activists](#). [PWDs](#) face physical and informational barriers that prevent them from participating in local administrative review forums. For the [LGBTQ+ community](#), formal complaint and redress channels for gender-diverse populations remain absent within broader resistance governance.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

5. Supportive Public Culture and Discourses on Civil Society

Score:



The overall score for Principle 5 remains stagnant, rated as disabling 1.3. During the June 2025–June 2026 reporting period, the public culture and operating environment for civil society were defined by aggressive state-sponsored propaganda, deep societal trauma, and a catastrophic collapse in civic equality. Independent civil society organisations (CSOs) are absolutely not tolerated in junta-controlled areas. The military junta actively poisons public discourse, utilising a sophisticated, multi-layered information warfare architecture to paint civic actors, humanitarian workers, and independent media as "foreign-influenced terrorists" and enemies of the state. While CSOs are viewed much more favourably in resistance-held territories, where communities recognise them as vital first responders to junta airstrikes and humanitarian crises, their actual influence on public discourse remains heavily marginalised. Worsening armed conflict and funding shortages have forced governing authorities to prioritise military operations over civic engagement, limiting meaningful public dialogue. Most alarmingly, civic equality and inclusion plummeted to the lowest possible tier this year. The junta's massive forced conscription campaign, the weaponisation of gender-based violence (including AI-driven deepfakes and blockades on female health products), and the continued genocidal alienation of the Rohingya community have violently stripped marginalised groups of any remaining civic agency.

5.1 Public Discourse and Constructive Dialogue on Civil Society

The state of public discourse and dialogue on civil society remains fully disabling because the central state has entrenched its institutional information warfare to delegitimise civil society. Fresh evidence of this stagnation includes the operationalisation of the Burma/Myanmar Narrative Think Tank (MNTT) in 2025, which the junta actively uses alongside coordinated Telegram and TikTok networks to label CSOs as "terrorists" and justify violent house searches. In resistance-held areas, public discourse also remains restricted; the intensification

of the junta's military campaign to retake lost territory has forced local governance actors to prioritise armed conflict, further marginalising CSOs from decision-making dialogue.

The perception and public framing of civil society (CS) actors shifts from more positive in resistance-held areas to more negative in the areas under the junta's control. The [junta's information operation](#) has several distinct layers, each addressing a different audience. At the formal end sit the Global New Light of Burma/Myanmar, the civilian state newspaper and Myawaddy Daily, run by the junta's Directorate of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare. The Burma/Myanmar Narrative Think Tank (MNTT) was established under the Ministry of Information in January 2025. Staffed by academics, technocrats, and former military, MNTT covers specific narrative domains, such as economic credibility, security framing, ethnic reconciliation, and technocratic legitimacy. MNTT generates junta "legitimising" narratives and narratives which delegitimise criticism of the junta, which are then distributed through Yangon-based news agency CNI Burma/Myanmar with a veneer of editorial independence.

The key information battlefield is on social media, by far the most important news source for the people of Burma/Myanmar. The junta is active on TikTok, Telegram, and Facebook. Telegram, in particular, has become the military's main artery to pump out disinformation and keep its own supporters updated on official messaging through entertainment and games. The junta and its backers are using creative new keywords, constantly shifting platforms, creating multiple assets and coordinated distribution to avoid being restricted by content moderators or algorithms.

This sophisticated propaganda architecture is used against CSOs in junta-controlled areas. Civil society groups are labelled as being "under foreign influence/terrorists" and/or linked to resistance groups and dismissed as legitimate actors. Perceived links to resistance groups compound safety concerns for CS actors, as the junta uses the accusation as justification to arrest and torture, intimidate, and conduct house searches. This has the knock-on effect of making community members too afraid to speak to CSO actors in case their names, places of residence, and photos are exposed to junta authorities. The experts said the only possible way to counter state propaganda, both insidious and blatant, is through support to independent media, strengthening fact-checking capacities, and public education, all of which are impacted by funding cuts.

In the states and regions with active resistance against the junta, CS actors are viewed as more positive but remain marginalised from decision-making due to a lack of trust between civil society and the de facto political authorities: the armed groups and administrative/governance actors. Experts admitted that the current context of armed conflict, interruptions to service delivery, and the perception that CSOs were unduly influenced by donor demands were impacting both their authority to represent broader social needs in their interactions with the governing authorities, as well as their legitimacy, an aspect always informed by context, time, and stakeholders. The expert's discussion appeared to reinforce the understanding of CSO legitimacy as subject to continuous contestation and redefinition.

This tension translated into limited inclusion in terms of public dialogue and consultation in resistance-held areas, a characteristic of areas even with more advanced local governance and good relationships between the authorities and civil society actors. Experts noted the importance of perception in building and maintaining trust between CSOs and their constituencies, which in turn impacted trust among key stakeholders in building towards a federal union of Burma, and reiterated that its lack only benefitted the junta, who weaponised information gaps to spread disinformation. The experts suggested that since the current

context (conflict, interruptions to services) was unlikely to change in the short- to medium-term, more dialogue could help to build a positive perception, which in turn would impact whether CSOs are consulted and able to influence decision-making in resistance-held areas.

However, the intensification in fighting since the junta launched its campaign to [retake lost territory](#) means there is even less of an enabling environment in resistance-controlled areas. Armed actors and governance authorities are preoccupied with fighting the junta instead of public discourse and civic engagement, which contributes to a more disabling environment for both.

5.2 Perception of Civil Society and Civic Engagement

Public perception of civil society and civic engagement was rated as stagnant with a “disabling” score. While frontline CSOs maintain community trust as vital first responders following junta airstrikes, state-controlled media actively target and censor independent reporting. Fresh evidence of stagnation includes the severe limitations placed on civic education and engagement; because the junta deliberately conducts airstrikes during localised internet blackouts, online civic engagement has become highly dangerous, forcing CSOs to quietly fold life-saving civic education (such as LGBTQI+ awareness and war crime documentation) into basic humanitarian aid delivery just to survive.

[Junta-controlled media](#) have helped to shape a negative public perception of CSOs, rarely reporting on their verifiable, tangible impacts and instead portraying CSOs as political enemies or security threats. Independent ethnic media, in contrast, take a more pro-civil society stance in their reporting, but face [junta-imposed censorship](#), pressure, arrest and other security threats due to this work. Despite the attempts at control and censorship, narratives at the community level, particularly in conflict zones, recognise the [importance of CSO workers](#) as first responders after an airstrike, as those who support displaced families, [document abuse](#), and transmit information about the junta’s atrocity crimes to the outside world. However, the moral, ethical, and ideological fault lines delineating Burma’s media landscape mean that balanced public discussion is limited and dialogue is not based on respect, inclusion, or evidence.

The junta has imposed widespread [restrictions on civic engagement](#), including curbs on communication tools and internet blackouts, partially to prevent marginalised groups, especially ethnic minorities, from participating in public affairs. The [1982 Citizenship Law](#), which rendered Rohingya stateless, severely limits civic freedoms of minorities and excludes them from political and social participation. Successive governments and military junta have advanced a Buddhist nationalist agenda at the expense of ethnic and religious minorities in the country. Most official communications are available only in Burmese, and the limited materials translated into ethnic languages are typically instrumental.

Civic education by CSO actors can be a life-saving initiative with respect to LGBTIQ people, specifically trans women, in the more remote parts of Burma. In conflict zones, the distribution of humanitarian aid is often coupled with awareness raising about gender and sexuality, as well as teach-ins about war crimes and crimes against humanity. Since the coup, some CSO civic engagement activities have shifted to online platforms. However, online spaces have limited reach, particularly in the conflict zones where digital accessibility is moderate, severely constrained by frequent blackouts and restrictions. Affordability, digital literacy, and the documented fact that the junta conducts airstrikes during [localised internet shutdowns](#) are barriers to greater civic engagement. It is of note that there is neither widespread civic education for migrants and refugees living along the Thai-Burma border nor much interest in

such education given the socioeconomic difficulties confronting people fleeing the violence and repression at home. As one expert put it: people would rather work to survive.

As already discussed, the trust that CSOs have built up in their communities is impacted by their effectiveness, i.e., the ability to provide collective goods or the ability consistently to address the humanitarian needs of the communities in which they operate. Experts acknowledged that the throughline of funding shortfalls, coupled with the unavoidable reality of donor dependence, impacted the quality and type of service delivery which in turn impacted trust and credibility. Experts suggested that navigating the intricate power dynamics at the local level requires a participatory approach that builds public trust and encourages [sustained engagement with CSOs](#), and reiterated that effective governance in liberated areas strengthened the stability and resilience of the governed communities.

As already stated, while community members may have a positive perception of CSOs, the repression and the propaganda war carried out by the junta coupled with the practical factors described above, as well as the insecurity and fear induced by years of war, tend to hinder people from participating, even in local community development activities. Based on the expert panel's discussion, it is to be noted here that civic education activities undertaken by CSOs are not high profile and are rather folded into the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The experts reiterated that surviving airstrikes, food insecurity, displacement, the destruction of homes and livelihoods, while attempting to meet a bare minimum of needs, were the priorities for conflict-affected communities in Burma/Myanmar.

5.3 Civic Equality and Inclusion

The rating for civic equality and inclusion dropped to the lowest possible tier of fully disabling due to a catastrophic deterioration in civic equality and inclusion during this reporting period. Fresh evidence justifying this drop includes the junta's massive forced conscription campaign (abducting young men, boys, and women across 26 intake batches), and the horrific April 2026 maritime tragedy where a capsized boat left 271 Rohingya refugees dead. Furthermore, the junta actively weaponised gender and health as tools of repression, deliberately expanding its blockade of female hygiene products to central regions in 2026 under its "four cuts" strategy, while marginalised women faced unchecked AI-generated sexual violence.

Violence against ethnic and other minority groups living in Burma/Myanmar has marked the country's history over the past several decades, impacting civic equality and inclusion. The country's military junta has made common practice of targeting ethnic communities for forced labour, sexual violence, and other serious crimes. Violence against marginalised groups escalated to an unprecedented level in 2017 when the military led a [genocidal campaign](#) against the Rohingya.

Across Burma/Myanmar, during the reporting period, civic equality and inclusion were severely undermined by the relentless military attacks and related impacts from violence and repression. At least [1,241 civilians were killed](#) during the reporting period, including 382 women and 255 children. Airstrikes remained the main cause of civilian deaths with open sources recording at least [2,592 attacks](#), 17 percent more than in the preceding 12 months.

Forced conscription was a key driver in the deterioration of civic equality and inclusion. While exact figures for the reporting period are not available, the junta has begun training its 26th batch of recruits since enacting the [People's Military Service Law](#) in February 2024. Each intake trains around 5,000 forced conscripts. The junta has carried out conscription through abusive tactics such as abducting young men and boys and detaining family members of

missing conscripts. The junta as well as non-state armed actors have also [recruited and used child soldiers](#). Children when unaccompanied, displaced, or working, are abducted and sent to the front lines and used as guides, porters, and human shields. The number of child soldiers recruited during the reporting period is unavailable.

The civic equality and inclusion of women, youth, and LGBTIQ+ people is impacted by several factors, including the threat of [sexual and gender-based violence](#). Junta forces have perpetuated decades-old patterns of conflict-related sexual violence fostered by an environment of widespread impunity, enabled by the junta's control of law enforcement and the judiciary. Survivors have also [struggled to secure justice](#) through emerging governance structures. Women also face job loss, displacement, food insecurity, and the collapse of the health system, particularly since they are the primary caregivers in precarious and violent environments. Meanwhile, the junta deliberately targets CSOs providing support to women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ people, increasing their vulnerability to violence, trafficking, and exploitation, all of which limit civic equality and inclusion.

The junta has also encouraged the use of hate speech to limit the civic equality and inclusion of LGBTIQ+ people, who face legal and extra-legal violence. [Burmese law](#) criminalises same-sex relations, which are punished by up to 10 years in prison under Penal Code 1860, Section 377, Carnal Intercourse Against the Order of Nature. Military control over law enforcement, post-coup and in a situation of violent conflict, has led to increased harassment, arbitrary detention, and abuse of LGBTIQ+ persons, severely impacting access to health, food, relief assistance, work, employment, and education.

Burma's [Rohingya](#) remain completely alienated from any form of civic equality and inclusion. Denied citizenship, a fundamental condition of existence, as well as access to basic rights such as health and education, there are no legal, social, or economic systems to ensure equal rights and opportunities for Rohingya. Rohingya men, women, and children suffered [systematic discrimination](#) by all parties, with absolute impunity. The Arakan Army continued to subject Rohingya to abuses, while mirroring the military policy of denying Rohingya identity, referring to them as "Bengali." Across northern Arakan, there are arbitrary arrests, torture, sexual and gender-based violence, instances of enforced disappearance, forced labour and recruitment, unlawful confiscation of land and residential property, and the destruction of villages, religious and cultural sites, forcing renewed Rohingya displacement.

Since the activation of its conscription process, the junta has subjected Rohingya men and youth to [forced military service](#), under a rotational system that repeatedly called up trained Rohingya to serve at bases, fight on frontlines, and perform forced labour. According to local sources, 1,981 Rohingya from Sittwe, Arakan State, had been forcibly conscripted by the military with reports of high levels of desertion amid abusive conditions, including forced alcohol consumption, denial of rest, and physical abuse.

Junta forces [intercepted boats](#) transporting Rohingya from Bangladesh and northern Arakan, detaining large numbers of passengers, including 513 on a boat in November 2025, 233 in December 2025, and 476 in January 2026. On 24 May 2026, the military shot and killed at least four members of one Rohingya family, including a three-year-old as they boarded a boat to leave Sittwe.

Civic equality and inclusion also fail in relation to [persons with disabilities](#) who are often treated, including by CSO actors, as beneficiaries in need of charity rather than as people with agency and self-determination. PWD-related issues require an intersectional approach which

considers dimensions such as gender, region, and ethnicity, to ensure meaningful participation for persons with disabilities. The ORL hinders the operation of local CSOs that support people with disabilities, impacting their level of assistance. The number of people with disabilities, which stood at 5.9 million (13 percent of the population) in the 2019 census, continues to rise due to the ongoing conflict. Exact figures are unavailable. In regions with strong resistance, those [disabled by the war](#) face even harsher conditions, often lacking adequate medical care for injuries caused by landmines and heavy weaponry. For the nearly 3.5 million Burma/Myanmar [women and girls with disabilities](#), gender inequality compounds these challenges. They may face double prejudice when accessing reproductive health information and services, for instance, as stigma due to gender norms combines with biased attitudes regarding their ability to exercise bodily autonomy.

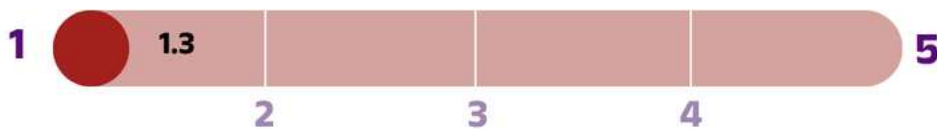
Sagaing and the central regions are confirmed as the [most dangerous areas](#) for civilians, with credible sources reporting at least 388 verified deaths, followed by Magway with 135. The estimated total number of IDPs within Burma/Myanmar is [3,772,700](#), covering every state and region. The civic equality and inclusion of IDPs is [severely undermined](#) by attacks, torture, and arbitrary arrests by the junta. IDPs are forced to live in makeshift shelters or open areas, with limited access to essential services such as food, healthcare, and clean water. Their living conditions worsen when the junta blocks humanitarian assistance (examples of which have already been discussed) as a method of collective punishment against the civilian population. IDP camps are among the junta's frequent targets for aerial attacks. At least 22 displaced people [were killed](#) on 11 July 2026 by military airstrikes on a monastery in Lin Ta Lu village, Sagaing Region, where over 150 people were sheltering.

Civic equality and inclusion is restricted via the [Counter-Terrorism Law](#), ostensibly designed to address security threats, but increasingly being exploited to criminalise dissent that challenges the religious and political status quo. The extensively discussed [ORL](#) deployed as part of the junta's "four cuts" strategy, impacts civic equality and inclusion by restricting access to humanitarian aid to citizens of liberated areas by targeting CSOs that facilitate such aid. Several provisions in the [Penal Code](#) (1861) impact civic equality and inclusion, such as Sections 295, 295A (blasphemy), Section 505, and 505A, which suppress critiques of religious authority. The [Ward and Village Tract Administration Law](#) is used as a mechanism of surveillance and intimidation, with reinstated and expanded requirements for households to [report overnight guests](#) to local authorities, which impacts the safety and security of IDPS, while simultaneously weakening safeguards against arbitrary detention and warrantless searches.

PRINCIPLE SCORE

6. Access to a Secure Digital Environment

Score:



In Burma/Myanmar, access to a secure digital environment is virtually non-existent in areas under the military junta. The state has weaponised the internet, enforcing mass surveillance, criminalising Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), and utilising targeted telecommunications blackouts as a weapon of war. While civil society and marginalised groups attempt to utilise workaround technologies, such as satellite internet, in non-state-controlled areas, these solutions are fraught with severe privacy risks, physical barriers, and targeted internet shutdowns, leaving human rights defenders deeply vulnerable to digital and physical retaliation. The overall principle score has dropped from 1.7 to 1.3 due to the severe deterioration across all three underlying dimensions during the reporting period.

6.1 | Digital Rights and Freedoms

The rating on the state of digital rights and freedoms dropped to fully disabling because the junta has structurally shifted from arbitrary censorship to systematic, military-grade digital control. Fresh evidence from the reporting period driving this change includes data showing that between January and March 2026, 96% of junta airstrikes occurred under localised internet blackouts. Additionally, the baseline severely worsened with the September 2025 deployment of the Geedge Networks "Great Firewall" (tracking 33.4 million users) and the escalation of extreme retaliatory sentencing, such as youths receiving 49-year sentences for online posts.

The junta's approach to the digital environment functions as a comprehensive military strategy rather than a mere censorship tool. To control civic space, the junta utilises three distinct but overlapping pillars: denial of access (internet shutdowns), control of content (censorship and legal frameworks), and deterrence through monitoring (surveillance).

The junta systematically uses telecommunications blackouts to obscure state-sponsored violence and prevent civilians from sharing early warnings about impending attacks. [Internet shutdowns](#), telecommunications restrictions, device searches, and digital surveillance particularly affected conflict-affected communities, which depend on online communication for security warnings, documentation of human rights violations, humanitarian coordination, and contact with family members.

According to the Burma/Myanmar Internet Project, between January and March 2026, [nearly 96% of the junta's airstrikes](#) occurred under localised internet blackouts. Beyond the immediate physical danger, these nationwide and localised internet shutdowns drastically delay humanitarian assistance. Civil society organisations (CSOs) rely heavily on digital communication to navigate conflict zones. When lines are severed, it becomes nearly impossible for local actors to coordinate the delivery of essential supplies to displaced and besieged communities. Furthermore, "disguised targeting" of [transnational cyber-scam operations](#) in Karen State by [junta authorities](#) has largely failed to curb criminal activity; instead, the resulting area-wide [Starlink and telecommunications shutdowns](#) predominantly isolate local communities and disrupt legitimate civil society operations, turning populations into [collateral damage](#).

The junta enforces digital compliance through a [draconian legal framework](#) and the weaponisation of [private platforms](#). While specific provisions of the [Cybersecurity Law](#) and the [Election Protection Law](#) grant authorities sweeping powers to criminalise online expression, private platforms have also become battlegrounds. Telecommunications companies have been strong-armed into cooperating with the junta's intelligence apparatus, and [pro-junta Telegram channels](#) are routinely utilised to coordinate harassment and doxxing campaigns against activists. Conversely, platforms like Meta have had to actively intervene, deleting [over 100 Facebook accounts](#) and groups linked to junta-owned businesses and propaganda networks to curb state-sponsored misinformation.

The junta has sought to engineer total, systemic control over digital infrastructure. In September 2025, reports revealed the junta partnered with Chinese government-linked Geedge Networks to establish a [localised "Great Firewall,"](#) enabling authorities to unilaterally trace internet traffic and track the online activities of [33.4 million users](#) across 13 domestic telecom operators. This enhanced surveillance does not simply suppress free speech; it fundamentally weakens organisational capacity, donor engagement, and community trust (directly impacting the resource environments outlined in Sections 3.1 and 3.2). Activists operate under the constant threat of a "dox-to-arrest" pipeline. The military's own data indicates that [over 20,000 individuals](#) have been detained for [online content](#) since the coup. Recent examples include youths sentenced to up to [49 years in prison](#) for criticizing the sham elections online, and an [elderly delivery driver](#) sentenced to [13 years in prison](#) after being targeted by a pro-junta Telegram channel. Consequently, civil society actors, even those strictly involved in humanitarian work, are forced into extreme self-censorship, erasing their digital footprints and cutting themselves off from international support.

The digital crackdown has created severe structural inequalities within civil society. While larger international organisations can partially mitigate restrictions by purchasing costly Starlink terminals, premium VPNs, or utilising cross-border communications, smaller grassroots groups are entirely cut off. This digital divide disproportionately impacts marginalised communities. [Persons with Disabilities \(PWDs\)](#) face severe physical barriers to accessing the crowded, centralised Starlink hubs in liberated areas. Women face [compounded economic barriers](#) to accessing paid connections, and female journalists and

activists are relentlessly targeted by unregulated [digital violence](#). Members of the Rohingya Maiyafuinor Collaborative Network (RCMN), including refugees living abroad in Malaysia, are actively targeted with [AI-generated sexual violence](#) and deepfakes, specifically by men from within their own community. The complete lack of platform moderation in marginalised languages leaves these vulnerable groups with no protective mechanisms online.

6.2 | Digital Security and Privacy

The rating for digital security and privacy decreased to fully disabling in the reporting period due to the complete institutional collapse of corporate and state data privacy protections, alongside a new level of physical-digital surveillance integration. Fresh concrete evidence justifying this drop includes the unprecedented April 2026 revelation that Telenor transferred over 1,200 users' data directly to the junta. Furthermore, the environment deteriorated from last year with the active deployment of the PSMS database tracking 50,000 individuals via biometrics, and the April 2026 economic exploitation of over 500 Sagaing villagers forced to sell their biometric data to scam networks.

Burma/Myanmar's digital environment is defined by pervasive state surveillance and the complete institutional collapse of data privacy. The crisis stems not merely from the junta's monitoring capabilities, but from the absolute absence of independent institutions capable of protecting data rights, enabling the junta to weaponise the digital sphere as a tool for behavioural modification and physical control.

The legal and regulatory framework for [data protection in Burma/Myanmar](#) is non-existent. There are no privacy regulations or legal safeguards to protect citizens' data, and consequently, absolutely no redress mechanisms, such as complaint procedures, independent privacy regulators, judicial remedies, or compensation frameworks, for victims of digital exploitation. The only existing [cybersecurity law](#) is being weaponised by the junta targeting civilians and civil society actors.

Corporate digital security has similarly collapsed under this pressure, leaving citizens with no institutional protection. Telecommunications companies have been strong-armed into becoming extensions of the junta's intelligence apparatus. This was most visibly evidenced by an [April 2026 lawsuit](#) revealing that [Norway's Telenor](#) transferred over 1,200 users' data directly to the military junta—a catastrophic breach of digital privacy that handed the junta the [identities of activists](#) and resistance members. This governance void is exacerbated by severe economic hardship, which has spawned a deeply exploitative market for personal data. In April 2026, over 500 impoverished villagers in Sagaing Region were forced to [sell their biometric data](#) and national ID cards to online scam networks for a mere MMK 50,000 (around USD 12). Scam brokers then used this data to open mobile bank accounts, exposing these vulnerable citizens to massive legal liabilities and leaving their digital identities permanently compromised.

The junta's surveillance apparatus operates primarily as a [deterrence mechanism](#) designed for behavioural modification rather than simple information collection. While evidence of highly sophisticated spyware or targeted malware intrusions against local CSOs remains difficult to verify systematically due to the collapse of independent tech auditing, the environment is saturated with [state-sponsored monitoring](#) and [coordinated disinformation](#).

Several clear trends emerged during the reporting period: [deepening digital surveillance](#), the worsening erosion of privacy, and the dangerous integration of digital and physical control, including [AI technology](#). The junta has merged these spheres by deploying a sophisticated

[Person Scrutinisatation and Monitoring System \(PSMS\)](#). Utilising [biometric](#) and facial recognition technology sourced from Chinese and Russian tech firms, the database holds information on approximately [50,000 targeted individuals](#). This allows the junta to seamlessly identify, intercept, and detain civil society actors at city gates, checkpoints, and airports, effectively turning the digital sphere into a physical trap. Furthermore, the trend of monitoring is expanding beyond Burma/Myanmar; panellists emphasised that [human rights defenders \(HRDs\)](#) face cross-border ISP monitoring in Thailand and Malaysia.

The digital security crisis has created severe structural inequalities, where access to secure communications increasingly depends on geography, resources, and organisational capacity. While well-funded groups might access digital security training and encryption tools, grassroots actors are left profoundly vulnerable. Even in resistance-held territories where [satellite internet \(Starlink\)](#) is utilised, HRDs face severe privacy constraints. Because communities are forced to use shared, centralised Starlink shops to bypass junta blackouts, the panel noted there is "no privacy at all," making it [exceptionally dangerous for HRDs](#) to conduct confidential interviews with victims of human rights abuses.

This digital inequality disproportionately harms marginalised groups. Disability-rights organisations face severe physical barriers to accessing these secure hubs. [Women HRDs](#), [LGBTQ+ activists](#), and youth organisers are specifically targeted by unregulated online harassment and [state-backed doxxing campaigns](#), often without access to institutional digital security training. Furthermore, ethnic minority media and Rohingya organisations are systematically deprived of the secure infrastructure and encryption tools necessary to document atrocities safely, effectively silencing the most vulnerable voices in the conflict.

6.3 | Digital Accessibility

Digital accessibility in Myanmar/Burma remains disabling, notably due to the introduction of aggressive state-imposed economic barriers and a documented collapse in infrastructure quality compared to the previous year. Fresh evidence includes the April 2026 implementation of the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) system, which imposes a 37% tax on mobile devices, artificially pricing out grassroots CSOs. Furthermore, DataReportal statistics show a 78% year-on-year plummet in mobile download speeds, while marginalised communities, specifically the Rohingya Maïyafuïnor Collaborative Network (RMCN), face severe new barriers to safe access through AI-generated sexual violence (deepfakes) explicitly targeting them.

Digital accessibility in Burma/Myanmar is not just a technical challenge; it is a critical civic space battleground shaped by state policy, conflict, infrastructure limitations, and intersecting inequalities. The overall trend for the reporting period is one of clear deterioration. While DataReportal indicates that basic internet penetration stood at approximately [61.1% in early 2025](#), this figure masks a catastrophic collapse in connection quality, reliability, and affordability; median mobile download speeds plummeted by [over 78% year-on-year](#).

The junta actively engineers digital exclusion through exorbitant taxation. In April 2026, the junta implemented a [Central Equipment Identity Register \(CEIR\) system](#), slapping a [massive 37% tax](#) on the value of mobile devices. This policy artificially inflates prices, deliberately putting secure communication tools out of reach of ordinary citizens. This creates a severe inequality in how civil society can adapt to technological restrictions. While wealthier, international, or large domestic organisations can adapt by purchasing [satellite internet \(Starlink\)](#) or maintaining cross-border communications, grassroots groups lack this [institutional capacity](#). Furthermore, there is a massive deficit in basic ICT and [digital literacy](#).

Smaller organisations report urgent, unmet training needs in digital skills, cybersecurity awareness, and secure technology adoption. Without this knowledge or equipment, the ability of grassroots CSOs to publish content safely, sustain online outreach, and maintain basic platform access has been critically degraded.

Crucially, physical access to digital tools does not equate to safe civic participation. A human rights defender may technically have an internet connection while still being effectively excluded from public life through the threat of surveillance or [state-sponsored harassment](#). Even in resistance-controlled areas, such as KIO territories in [Kachin State](#) where satellite internet is freer, CSOs operate precariously. Recently, the [potential restriction of Starlink](#) internet makes it exceedingly difficult for local communities to [operate in areas](#) where the junta has shut down local telecommunications. Consequently, the overlap between digital access, freedom of expression, and digital security is absolute: when access is compromised or heavily monitored, CSOs are forced into self-censorship, restricting their right to information and assembly.

Burma/Myanmar's digital divide intersects sharply with existing social vulnerabilities, cutting across geographic, gender, age, language, and physical lines. [Persons with Disabilities \(PWDs\)](#) face severe physical barriers to accessing the crowded, centralised [Starlink hubs](#) required to bypass junta blackouts. Similarly, rural populations suffer from significantly poorer connection reliability and fewer adaptation options compared to urban centres. [Economic hardship](#) disproportionately restricts women's and youth activists' access to paid, secure connections, widening the [gender and generational digital divide](#). [Language exclusion](#) prevents non-Burmese speaking ethnic minorities from accessing essential digital security training, platform support, or navigating complex technical workarounds, effectively silencing the most vulnerable demographics.

C) Recommendations

To the Burmese Military junta

- Immediately cease all violations of international humanitarian law, particularly aerial bombardments on civilian infrastructure (schools, hospitals, IDP camps) and the scorched-earth arson policy targeting civilian homes.
- Repeal the Organisation Registration Law (ORL 2022) and its March 2026 implementing Rules. Specifically, remove mandatory registration requirements, eliminate excessive bank deposit mandates (MMK 50–300 million), end police scrutiny of executives, strip authorities of arbitrary dissolution powers, and establish independent appeal mechanisms for CSOs.
- Unconditionally release all political prisoners, journalists, and human rights defenders (HRDs). Repeal the laws used to criminalise civic space, including the Election Protection Law, Counter-Terrorism Law, and Military Secrets Law.
- End all forms of digital repression, specifically decommissioning the localised "Great Firewall" and the Person Scrutiny and Monitoring System (PSMS) biometric database currently used to target and arbitrarily detain 50,000 individuals at checkpoints.
- Remove the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) system and its prohibitive 37% tax on mobile devices. Permanently end the weaponisation of localised and nationwide internet and telecommunications blackouts.
- Proactively publish state budgets, external audits, laws, and public policies. Immediately cease the deliberate physical destruction of state archives, parliamentary records, and legitimate electoral registries.

To the NUG, SCEF, Federal Units, and Resistance Organisations

- Replace ad-hoc township/brigade-level operating permits and arbitrary administrative levies with a unified, published, and voluntary civil society registration framework across resistance-controlled areas that protects operational autonomy.
- Move beyond informal negotiations by establishing formal CSO feedback systems and administrative grievance mechanisms. Systematically publish consultation outcomes and provide formal written justifications when CSO policy recommendations are rejected.
- Ensure meaningful participation by moving beyond tokenistic quotas. Establish permanent, structural advisory mechanisms for women, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), LGBTQ+ individuals, and ethnic minorities in interim governance, transitional justice, and policy drafting.

- Lift all discriminatory physical and administrative movement restrictions on Rohingya civilians in resistance-held and contested areas, ensuring their unhindered access to humanitarian aid, civic participation, and judicial accountability.
- Protect community internet access by ensuring that military security protocols do not lead to unilateral Starlink or telecommunications restrictions. Collaborate with CSOs to establish secure, wheelchair-accessible community digital hubs that provide private, encrypted spaces for HRDs to conduct confidential documentation.

To the International Community

- Categorically refuse to legitimise the sham elections, the newly installed "President," and the militarised parliament. Continue to treat the NUG and the SCEF as the legitimate representatives of the people of Burma/Myanmar.
- Provide direct, flexible, and long-term core funding to local CSOs. Explicitly prioritise direct funding channels to Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and Rohingya-led organisations rather than relying exclusively on INGO intermediaries.
- Alleviate the severe administrative burdens placed on grassroots organisations. Specifically, remove mandatory donor disclosure prerequisites, ease strict banking/registration requirements, and eliminate deanonymised reporting rules that expose CSOs to junta Anti-Money Laundering (AML) scrutiny and physical surveillance.
- Provide emergency digital-security funds for HRDs. Expand secure communications training, subsidise connectivity workarounds, and establish dedicated protections and rapid-response mechanisms against AI-enabled gender-based abuse and deepfakes.
- Impose targeted sanctions on junta leadership, military-owned businesses, and foreign technology firms supplying biometric or surveillance infrastructure. Enforce a global arms and aviation fuel embargo, and support international accountability mechanisms to prosecute atrocity crimes.

To Civil Society in Burma/Myanmar and the Diaspora

- Move beyond general dialogue by officially adopting and enforcing minimum inclusion standards within CSO governance structures, ensuring equitable power-sharing and decision-making roles for women, PWDs, LGBTQ+ communities, and ethnic minorities.
- Deepen coordination and resource-sharing across ethnic, geographic, and political divides to build a collective, resilient front against state repression.
- Expand community-level secure communications training, digital security, and ICT literacy programmes to adapt to the increasingly repressive digital environment and mitigate surveillance risks.
- Build alliances with regional tech-rights networks to pressure private social media and telecom platforms to aggressively moderate doxxing, state-sponsored disinformation, and AI-generated gender-based violence.
- Continue to securely document and share evidence of human rights violations, digital repression, and atrocity crimes to support international advocacy and future transitional justice efforts.

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 June 2026.** 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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