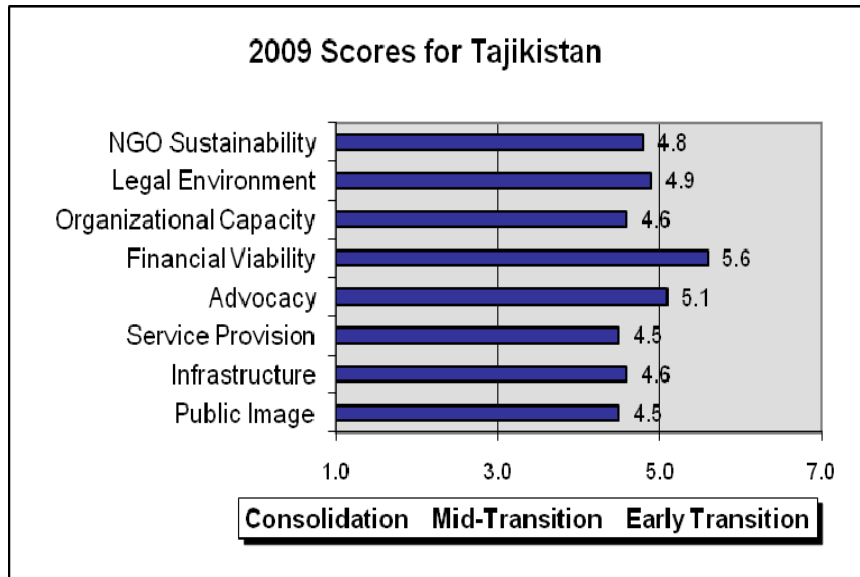


TAJIKISTAN



Capital: Dushanbe

Polity:
Republic

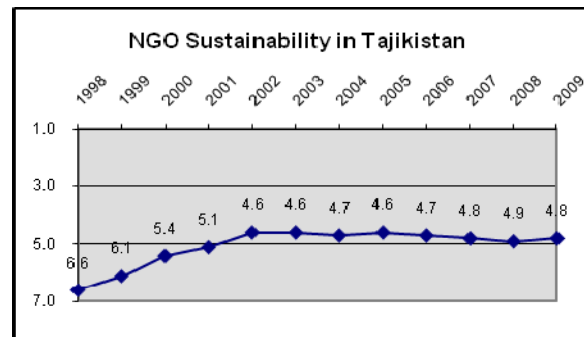
Population:
7,487,489 (July 2010 est.)

GDP per capita (PPP):
\$1,800 (2009 est.)

NGO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.8

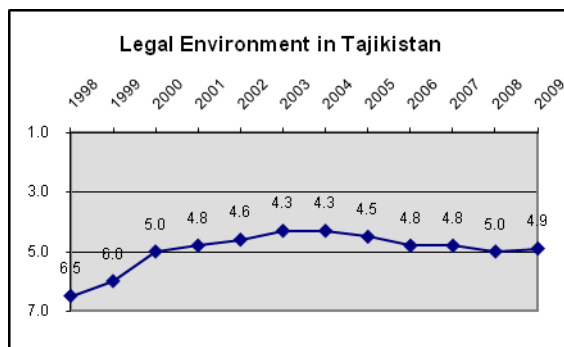
The general situation of NGOs in 2009 slightly improved. The unfavorable economic conditions in Tajikistan, which the global economic crisis worsened, affected the NGO sector negatively. The financial crisis resulted in an approximately 50 percent decrease in remittances from Tajik migrant workers in Russia and Kazakhstan, which had a significant impact on Tajikistan's economy. Moreover, the decreasing number of donor organizations, the main financial drivers of NGO activity, negatively affected the sector. Despite these problems, NGOs continued their activities. The number of NGOs officially registered with the Ministry of Justice increased from 1,700 in 2008 to 2,300 by the end of 2009. NGOs' activity has become much more substantial, transparent and relevant to national needs. They have started to pay attention to the development of employees' qualifications and skills and make better use of domestic funding resources. NGOs' social partnerships with government and other institutions have significantly improved. NGOs' direct participation in improving social and economic conditions has increased.

The number of issue-based organizations and coalitions increased, as did access to communication resources and effective collaboration with government institutions at both local and national levels.



The growth of the Tajikistan National NGO Association, the completion of NGO organizational audits in various areas of the country, the launch of websites and portals such as www.cso.tj and www.tajikngo.tj, and the publication of the first NGO directory, as well as a series of books and brochures on civil society in the Tajik language, were important events in the political and social life of the country.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.9



The year 2009 could be considered a favorable year in terms of the NGO legal environment. A number of laws providing a comprehensive framework for NGOs' activities were adopted in 2008–2009: the Law on State Social Orders, the Law on Social Services, the Law on Commissioner on Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan (Law on Ombudsman), the Law on Public Initiative Bodies, and amendments to the Tax Code that allow businesses to reduce their taxable income for charitable contributions up to 10 percent of total taxable income. The new Tax Code provision has had a limited impact, however, because both NGOs and businesses lack awareness of this opportunity and the mutual benefits of cooperation. The new Law on Registration of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs has simplified the registration of some forms of noncommercial organizations as well.

The Law on Public Initiative Bodies and the Law on State Social Orders, both adopted in 2008, have the potential to facilitate civil society development and to encourage an increase in the number of NGOs and community-based initiative groups in rural areas. The laws are largely declarative, however, and lack clear implementation mechanisms. The Law on State

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.6

NGOs' organizational capacity improved during the year. NGOs' objectives and goals have become much more precise, transparent and concrete. NGOs are better at planning their work. Issue-based initiative groups have

Social Orders, for example, calls for wider NGO participation in the implementation of state social programs, but does not specify the mechanisms for this participation.

The current Law on Public Associations is overly general and lacks implementing mechanisms. It does not provide simple procedures for NGOs to register or expand the areas of their activities. The Tajikistan National NGO Association wants to initiate a new law on NGOs in order to organize and regulate NGOs' activities.

Governmental pressure on NGOs has decreased. Special training courses for state employees on civil society institutions, including media, NGOs and political parties, were held at the institution for the advancement of qualifications of state employees.

Tajik legislation allows NGOs to conduct economic activity to advance the purposes outlined in their charters, but local authorities sometimes use practical gaps in the legislation to create obstacles to NGOs' activities, such as requiring that NGOs obtain permission prior to the start of programs. Some officials in the control agencies and tax committees abuse their powers to interfere in NGO activities.

There is a shortage of lawyers who work in the NGO sector and a lack of special training courses for NGO employees to increase their legal knowledge. New legal consulting companies operated by NGOs as commercial entities have emerged and provide legal services to NGOs for affordable fees.

increased. NGOs now pay close attention to strengthening the roles of boards of directors, and make visible efforts to observe principles of transparency and accountability. This can be attributed partly to donors' requirements and

partly to the development of NGOs' professionalism. The number of permanent staff in the NGO sector has increased. Most NGOs submit their annual reports to oversight agencies (Ministry of Justice, Tax Committee, and the Republican Statistical Center) on time, and more NGOs have been publishing their reports in local mass media.

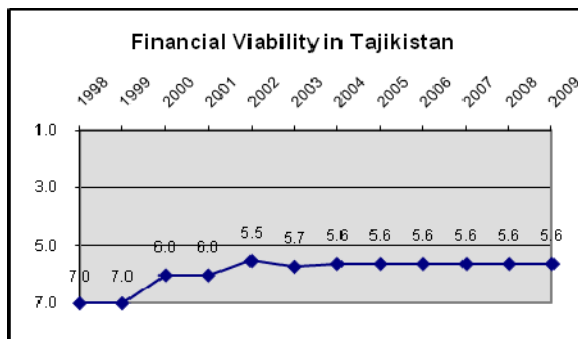
Many of the so-called nongovernmental initiatives established in 2008 continue addressing local needs and the interests of citizens' groups through the implementation of small community-based projects. Some of these initiatives united in new coalitions and associations, like Jamoat Support Centers.

Despite the economic crisis and financial problems that NGOs are facing, the number of volunteers engaged in the NGO sector has increased. NGOs remain the best place for workers to gain new experience in a short time.

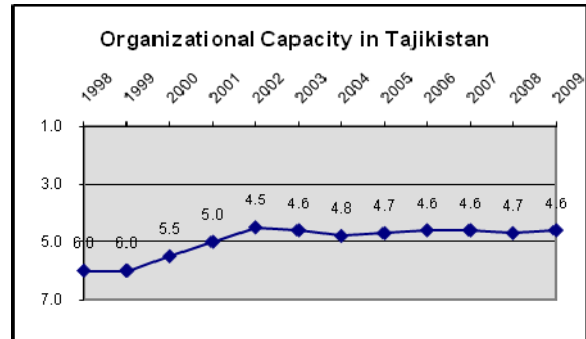
As a result of the growing role of jamoat (self-governance bodies) and initiative groups, the environment has become more supportive of NGO activities at the local level. In some areas of the country, namely in Rasht, Badakhshon, and Khatlon regions, the emergence of community-based organizations like the Social

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.6

Despite the fact that foreign donors are the main source of NGO financing and internal financial resources are limited, the NGO sector has managed to take advantage of available opportunities as much as possible. Now NGOs pay more attention to village social problems and inform local populations how to obtain



Union Development Village Organizations, parents' communities, and other new institutions was a positive trend. Such institutions, which directly deal with the solutions to social and economic issues and poverty in local areas, number about 1,000.



The economic crisis and low standards of living limit NGOs' access to internal resources and popular support. Local authorities are often unable to help NGOs. Though some businesses help finance NGOs' activities, such a practice is not regular or systematic. For the last few years, donor organizations have not been financing NGOs' institutional and professional development. The need for training NGO employees, particularly in new organizations, is acute.

support from local authorities. In many cases, NGOs joined in coalitions to address significant problems. Such an approach enabled NGOs to be more effective in the resolution of social problems. International organizations contributed to the realization of community infrastructure activities, continuing the tendency in recent years for donors to focus on socioeconomic problems in rural areas. For example, NGOs have been involved in building small hydroelectric power stations; repairing, reconstructing and building schools and first-aid posts; and construction of roads, bridges and pipes.

The transition from cash operations to the use of banking services, which has been implemented by NGOs throughout the country, has led to

greater transparency in NGOs' financial activities. All monetary operations are now carried out through banks, which is one of donor organizations' requirements. NGOs are conducting more internal and external audits. NGOs have not only increased their knowledge and abilities in accounting and bookkeeping, but also train and assist newly established initiative groups in organizational and financial management.

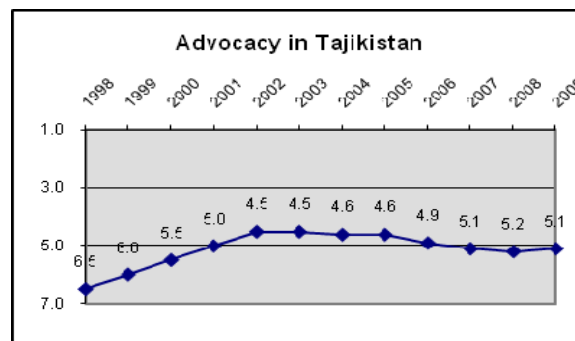
The main problem hindering the improvement of NGOs' financial viability is the absence of a unified national policy or strategy to improve civil society development. The NGO sector has initiated a national social partnership strategy for which it plans to lobby the government. One way to promote NGOs' financial viability could be for NGOs to introduce fees for services, but the public is not yet accustomed to paying fees for services that are provided by NGOs.

ADVOCACY: 5.1

Current legislation does not prohibit the implementation of programs related to advocacy and human rights, and the state has supported many NGO projects designed to address the population's social and economic problems at the national as well as local level. Certain issues related to the advancement of political and civil rights, in particular election rights, remain out of the government-supported framework.

advocate for improved NGO legislation and to defend the interests of their beneficiaries.

Some NGOs have been involved in the process of developing and adopting significant policy documents. For example, NGO Mairam participated in the effort by the government of Kulob to adopt developmental programs. Ten NGO experts in gender issues and women's rights served as part of the working group of the government's Committee on Women's Affairs.

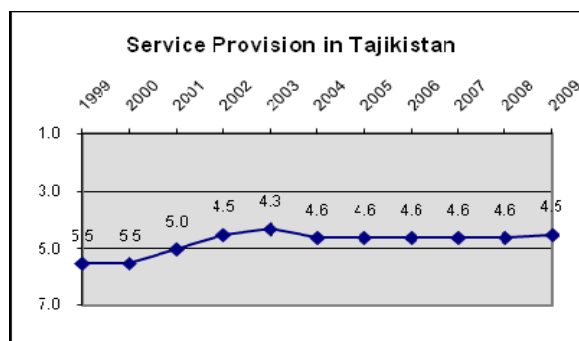


Adoption of the Law on Moratorium of Inspections of Small and Average Businesses' Activity and the Law on Commissioner on Human Rights (Law on Ombudsman) strengthened the legal environment and protection of the public interest. Many NGO representatives' suggestions were considered in the course of developing and adopting some laws, including the Law on State Social Orders and amendments to the Tax Code. For example, NGOs worked in cooperation with the National Association of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to achieve the provision enabling businesses to reduce taxable income for charitable donations up to 10 percent of total taxable income. Greater legal and professional knowledge could improve NGOs' abilities to

NGOs have formed associations focused on the protection and support of rights and interests of citizens, like the Tajikistan National NGO Association, which promotes the professional improvement of NGOs in Tajikistan. The Dushanbe Club of NGOs, however, became less active due to financial difficulties. On December 10, the second Tajikistan National NGO Forum was conducted. Representatives of the parliament, government, businesses, media outlets, international organizations, and the public participated. Two documents were developed and adopted during the forum, "Resolution of the Forum" and "Address to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan." These documents addressed a number of issues, including assistance to NGOs, public participation, political participation in the February 2010 elections, and professional development and strengthening of NGOs.

SERVICE PROVISION: 4.5

The environment for NGO service provision has improved, and NGOs extended their scope of activities. Local authorities in rural areas have adopted a more positive attitude towards NGOs and consider them to be a socially valuable tool and resource in dealing with social problems. On the other hand, NGOs themselves are becoming more professional in providing services and tailoring services to market needs.



NGOs provide services not only in the areas of education, public health, youth issues, and sports, but also in other spheres. For example, NGOs' activity on labor migration has been

INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.6

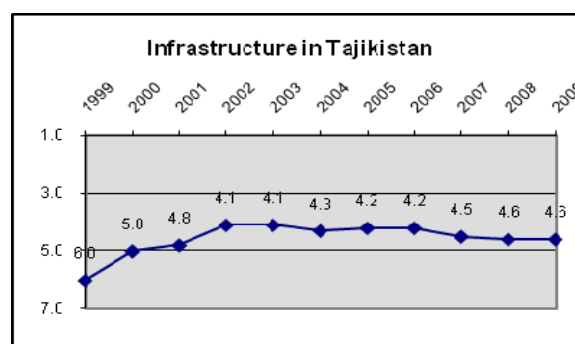
In addition to the seven active civil society support centers, which benefitted from the infusion of support from international donors and local resources, new associations and networks have emerged. UNDP established over 100 resource centers in local communities. These centers include specialized centers for women's and children's rights and centers for support of labor migrants. New coalitions have formed, such as From Legal Equality to Actual Equality, which consists of ninety-one NGOs; Khatlon Children with seven NGO members; NGOs' Association on Children's Rights, made up of fourteen NGOs; and the Association on Adult Training, with twenty-one NGOs.

NGOs' professional development has also improved due to the establishment of the Tajikistan National NGO Association, the launch of its website, and the publication of

improving in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. NGOs also work with farmers and implement various social orders for services they are licensed to provide. NGO activities such as decreasing poverty, creating new jobs, training and retraining of state employees, developing and conducting special courses on computers, language training, and training of adults in cooperation with relevant ministries are some of the examples of successful social partnerships.

New NGO centers for legal consulting provide high quality services for low fees in comparison to government services. Some centers have already found clients.

The service market is not yet ready to support other kinds of services beyond NGOs' "traditional" activities. Fees are rarely paid for services because of the low income of the population as well as a lack of knowledge about the market-oriented economy.



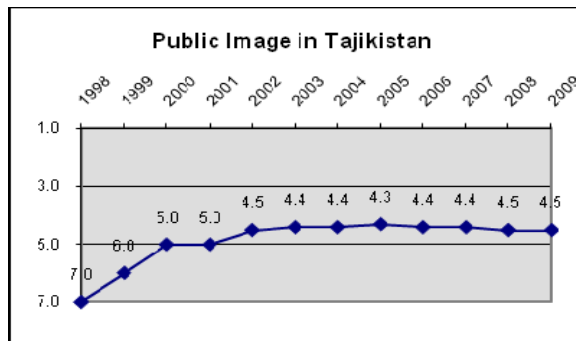
literature under the title "NGO Library." Tajik NGOs have more access to information about civil society available in Tajik and other languages. Some organizations promoted NGOs' development at the district level by allocating their own grants. For example, in 2009 the NGO Oshtii Milli allocated forty-eight grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,000, and NGO Fidokor allocated more than ten grants ranging from

\$2,000 to \$10,000 to organizations in the Rasht Valley and Khatlon region.

Because of the commercial nature of the independent media and a lack of cooperation by the state-run media, the situation with NGO partnerships with media outlets did not change. Roundtables conducted in the main cities of the country by the Tajikistan Development

Foundation and the Academy of Mass Communication showed that the Tajik media is not yet socially oriented. As for businesses, they still conceal their actual income to avoid harassment and are not interested in any partnerships. The new provision on charitable contributions in the Tax Code needs to be explained fully and promoted among both NGOs and businesses.

PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.5



NGOs' public image in comparison to last year has not undergone substantive changes. NGOs' role in the country's political sphere has not improved, but the government recognizes that NGOs have contributed to and realized social and economic programs that have helped to reduce poverty and overcome social problems. In fact, NGOs began to actively participate in the realization of governmental programs. For the first time an NGO representative was awarded the state award Sharaf (Glory). Many representatives of the parliament and other high-ranking policymakers have been involved in the realization of NGO programs. The Commission

on NGO Public Certification, for instance, included two presidential advisers, two members of parliament and a representative of the Ministry of Justice.

The second Tajikistan National NGO Forum held in December 2009 focused on the status of NGOs in the country as well as a number of other issues. The growth of the Tajikistan National NGO Association and the nationwide NGO portal www.cso.tj and specialized websites such as www.tajikngo.tj, as well as publication of a series of books and brochures on civil society and NGOs in the Tajik language, are considerable contributions to the coordination of NGOs' activity, and help to provide conditions for effective collaboration between the government and NGOs.

It remains difficult for NGOs to attract support for their activities from businesses. Despite business support for a number of films, reports, and TV spots about NGOs' activity, cooperation between NGOs and businesses is not regular or systematic.