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A COMPOSITE CHARITY INDEX FOR ASSESSING PHILANTHROPIC ORGANISATIONS UNDER PARTIAL DISCLOSURE: PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE FROM UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract. This article develops and preliminarily applies a composite Charity Index to assess the transparency, openness and reliability of philanthropic organisations in an institutional environment characterised by uneven public disclosure. The index formalises the transparency-rating approach piloted by the civic platform xayriya.info and comprises 17 observable indicators in three weighted dimensions: transparency (40%), openness (30%) and reliability (30%). Scores on a 0–100 scale are translated into five tiers: Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Unrated. A preliminary single-assessor desk review of four Uzbek organisations gave scores of 81.8 (“Vaqf” Charitable Public Fund) and 80.0 (Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan), both Gold, and 58.0 (“Sog’lom avlod uchun” Fund) and 54.3 (“Ezgu Amal” Public Fund), both Bronze; transparency was the weakest dimension for the two Bronze-rated organisations. A hypothetical worked example scored 82.5 and remained Gold under four alternative weighting scenarios. The results are preliminary and have not been verified with the organisations; a published scoring rubric, independent double scoring and further validation are needed before national deployment.
Keywords: charitable organisations; philanthropy; transparency; accountability; composite indicator; nonprofit management; Uzbekistan; donor trust.

Annotatsiya. Maqolada ma’lumotlar ochiqligi notekis bo’lgan institutsional muhitda xayriya tashkilotlarining shaffofligi, ochiqligi va ishonchliligini baholash uchun kompozit Xayriya indeksi ishlab chiqilgan va dastlabki tarzda qo’llanilgan. Indeks fuqarolik platformasi xayriya.info sinovdan o’tkazgan shaffoflik reytingi yondashuvini rasmiylashtiradi va uchta vaznli o’lchov — shaffoflik (40%), ochiqlik (30%) va ishonchlilik (30%) — bo’yicha guruhlangan 17 ta kuzatiladigan ko’rsatkichdan iborat. 0–100 shkalasidagi ballar besh darajaga o’tkaziladi: Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze va Unrated. O’zbekistondagi to’rtta tashkilotning bitta baholovchi tomonidan o’tkazilgan dastlabki kabinet tadqiqoti “Vaqf” xayriya jamoat fondi uchun 81,8 ball va O’zbekiston Qizil Yarim Oy Jamiyati uchun 80,0 ball (ikkalasi ham Gold), “Sog’lom avlod uchun” fondi uchun 58,0 ball va “Ezgu Amal” jamoat fondi uchun 54,3 ball (ikkalasi ham Bronze) natijasini berdi; Bronze darajasidagi ikkala tashkilotda eng zaif o’lchov shaffoflik bo’ldi. Gipotetik hisob-kitob misoli (82,5 ball) vaznlarning to’rtta muqobil ssenariysida ham Gold darajasida qoldi. Natijalar dastlabki xarakterga ega va tashkilotlar bilan tasdiqlanmagan; milliy miqyosda joriy etishdan oldin e’lon qilingan baholash rubrikasi, mustaqil ikki tomonlama baholash va qo’shimcha validatsiya zarur.
Kalit so‘zlar: xayriya tashkilotlari; filantropiya; shaffoflik; hisobdorlik; kompozit indikator; notijorat tashkilotlarni boshqarish; O’zbekiston; donorlar ishonchi.

Аннотация. В статье разработан и предварительно апробирован композитный Индекс благотворительности для оценки прозрачности, открытости и надёжности филантропических организаций в институциональной среде с неравномерным раскрытием информации. Индекс формализует подход к рейтингованию прозрачности, апробированный гражданской платформой xayriya.info, и включает 17 наблюдаемых индикаторов, сгруппированных в три взвешенных измерения: прозрачность (40%), открытость (30%) и надёжность (30%). Баллы по шкале 0–100 переводятся в пять уровней: Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze и Unrated. Предварительный кабинетный обзор четырёх узбекских организаций, выполненный одним оценщиком, дал 81,8 балла (Благотворительный общественный фонд «Vaqf») и 80,0 балла (Общество Красного Полумесяца Узбекистана), оба — Gold, а также 58,0 балла (Фонд «Sog’lom avlod uchun») и 54,3 балла (Общественный фонд «Ezgu Amal»), оба — Bronze; у двух организаций уровня Bronze наиболее слабым измерением оказалась прозрачность. Гипотетический расчётный пример (82,5 балла) сохранил уровень Gold при четырёх альтернативных схемах весов. Результаты носят предварительный характер и не согласованы с организациями; перед национальным внедрением необходимы опубликованная методика оценки, независимое двойное оценивание и дальнейшая валидация.
Ключевые слова: благотворительные организации; филантропия; прозрачность; подотчётность; композитный индикатор; менеджмент некоммерческих организаций; Узбекистан; доверие доноров.

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INTRODUCTION

Charitable giving is an important component of social protection and community welfare, particularly where households, civic associations and religious or community networks respond to needs that are not fully met by formal public provision. Yet the volume of resources mobilised through philanthropy is only one part of the development question. The social value of giving also depends on how resources are collected, managed, allocated and reported. Donors must be able to assess whether an organisation is legally established, whether its activities are visible, whether funds are used for stated purposes and whether reported beneficiaries and projects can be independently examined. These concerns place organisational accountability at the centre of effective philanthropic management.

Research on charitable behaviour identifies multiple mechanisms that influence giving, including awareness of need, solicitation, values, efficacy, trust and the costs of donating [1]. Trust is especially important where donors cannot directly observe how an intermediary use contributed resources. Agency theory highlights the information asymmetry between principals and agents, while contract-failure theory explains why nonprofit organisations may be relied upon in settings where consumers or donors cannot easily verify service quality [2,3]. Stakeholder and legitimacy perspectives further suggest that organisations maintain support by responding to the information and accountability expectations of donors, beneficiaries, regulators and the wider public [4,5].

These issues are particularly relevant to Uzbekistan. The dissertation research motivating this article identifies a context in which charitable activity is socially significant, while a substantial share of assistance is channelled through interpersonal, neighbourhood and religious networks. A survey of 348 respondents in Tashkent city and Sirdarya region found that giving was associated with income, age and happiness, while personal moral norms were negatively associated with formal giving, a pattern consistent with substitution towards parallel giving channels [6]. Such channels can be trusted by participants but may be difficult to observe through conventional organisational reporting. Formal charitable organisations, by contrast, may have websites, social-media accounts, Telegram channels, public announcements and other forms of digital communication, but their financial and project-level disclosure can be incomplete or uneven. The resulting problem is not simply the absence of information; it is the absence of a consistent mechanism for comparing the information that is publicly available.

Established charity-evaluation systems provide important models of accountability, but their data environments and institutional assumptions are not automatically transferable. Charity Navigator's current Encompass approach evaluates eligible United States public charities through multiple performance areas and relies, in part, on IRS Form 990 filings and other organisational information [7]. Candid's Seals of Transparency reward the progressive disclosure of organisational, programme, financial and impact information [8].

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These approaches illustrate the value of structured disclosure, but their eligibility rules, reporting infrastructure and data availability differ from those found in many transitional and emerging institutional settings. The proposed index therefore does not seek to reproduce their scores or claim equivalence with their validation systems.

The article develops a context-adapted Charity Index that formalises the transparency-rating approach piloted by the civic platform xayriya.info. It evaluates organisations through three dimensions: transparency, openness and reliability. Transparency captures the availability of financial, audit, project, cost and legal information. Openness captures the organisation's public-facing communication, including websites, social media, Telegram, press releases, public events and beneficiary information. Reliability concerns registration, project completion, beneficiary reach, partners and donors, and media reputation. The inclusion of digital communication channels reflects the actual communication environment in which organisations seek public support in Uzbekistan.

The study has four objectives: (1) to specify a replicable composite index for assessing philanthropic organisations under partial disclosure; (2) to operationalise its three dimensions through 17 observable indicators and explicit weights; (3) to demonstrate the calculation and conduct a preliminary desk-review application to four Uzbek organisations; and (4) to identify the governance, validation and implementation requirements for using the index in donor decision-making. The contribution is methodological and managerial. It is not an evaluation of the causal impact of charitable organisations on poverty or a claim that the proposed index has already achieved national validation.

Theoretical Framework.

Theoretical foundations.

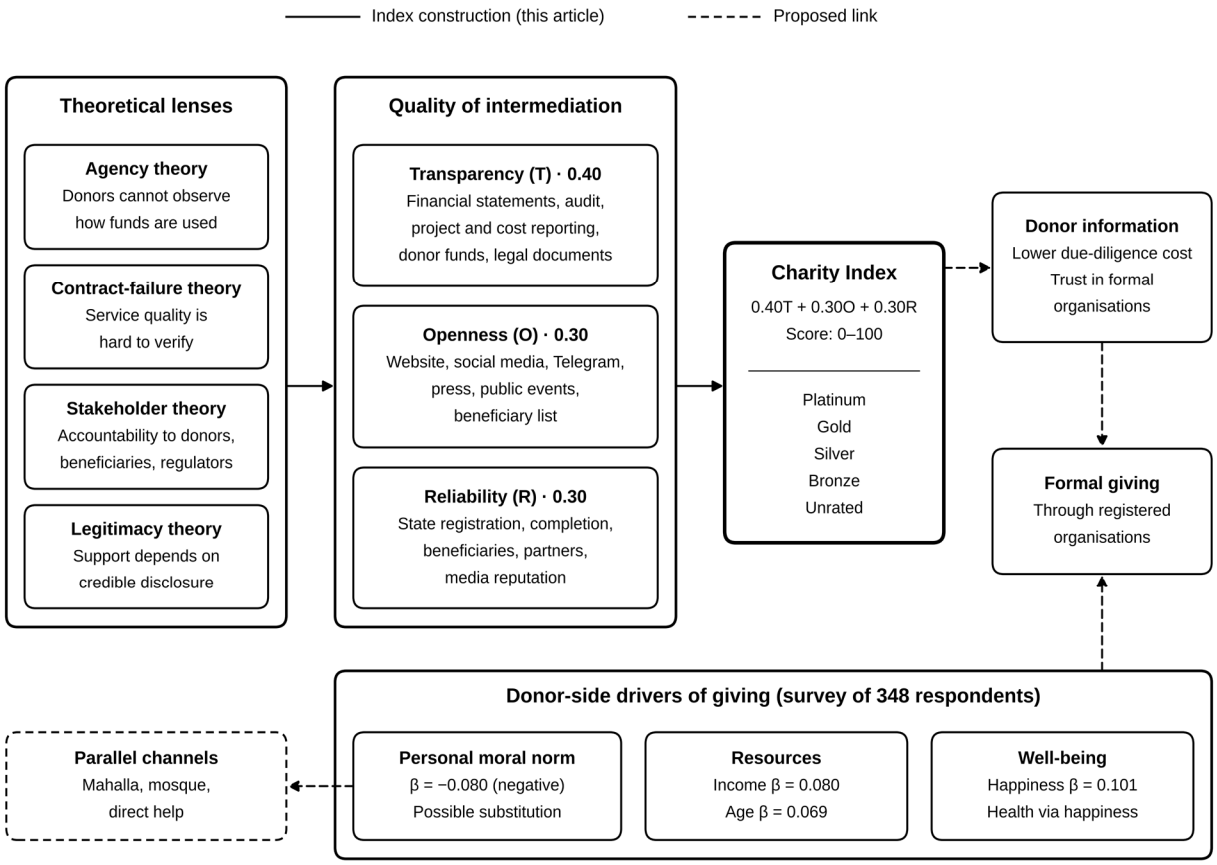
The index rests on the proposition that the social value of giving depends on the quality of the organisations that intermediate it. Four theoretical perspectives explain why this quality must be made observable. Agency theory treats donors as principals who cannot directly observe how managers use contributed resources, which creates information asymmetry and a demand for monitoring[2]. Contract-failure theory explains why donors turn to nonprofit organisations when the quality of a service is hard to verify, and why that trust remains fragile when verification is impossible [3]. Stakeholder theory extends accountability beyond donors to beneficiaries, regulators and the wider public[4], while legitimacy theory holds that organisations sustain support by meeting those constituencies' expectations of credible conduct and disclosure [5].

Evidence from Uzbekistan adds a donor-side perspective. In a PLS-SEM analysis of 348 respondents in Tashkent city and Sirdarya region, giving was positively associated with income ($\beta = 0.080$), age ($\beta = 0.069$) and happiness ($\beta = 0.101$), and health was associated with giving through happiness [6]. Attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control were not supported, and donor due diligence was not significant. Personal moral norms were negatively associated with giving ($\beta = -0.080$), which the study interpreted as possible

substitution towards parallel channels such as the mahalla, the mosque and direct help [6]. If the donors who feel the strongest obligation bypass formal organisations, institutional trust becomes the binding constraint on formal giving.

Conceptual model.

Figure 1 combines these perspectives into the conceptual model that underpins the index. The theoretical lenses identify what donors need to know about an organisation; the three dimensions translate those needs into observable attributes; and the composite index summarises them in a form donors can use. Transparency addresses the agency and contract-failure problems by documenting how resources are used. Openness reflects stakeholder and legitimacy expectations by making information available through the channels that donors and beneficiaries actually use. Reliability captures signals of formal status and delivery record. The three dimensions are aggregated according to composite-indicator guidance [9], and the treatment of charitable organisations as intermediaries between the state, the market and the community follows the nonprofit-sector literature [10].



Source: author's elaboration.

Figure 1. Theoretical framework of the Charity Index. Solid arrows show the construction of the index; dashed arrows show proposed relationships. T, O and R denote the Transparency, Openness and Reliability sub-indices; weights are shown beside each dimension. β values are standardised path coefficients from a PLS-SEM analysis of 348 respondents [6].

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The right-hand side of the model consists of propositions rather than tested results. A published rating is expected to lower donors' due-diligence costs and strengthen trust in formal organisations, which donor-behaviour research identifies as a determinant of giving [11]; this may, in turn, draw some giving from parallel into formal channels. Testing these links requires data on giving channels and on donor responses to ratings, and lies beyond the scope of the present article.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design.

The study uses a methodological-development design combining conceptual specification, weighted aggregation, a worked numerical example, sensitivity analysis and a preliminary desk review of publicly accessible information. The index is designed as an organisational assessment instrument rather than a survey scale or an econometric model. The unit of analysis is the charitable organisation. The preliminary application covers four organisations in Uzbekistan and is based on a desk review of public sources undertaken in October 2026, as reported in the revised dissertation materials. The four-organisation exercise is treated as an initial application, not as a representative sample of the national charitable sector.

The article distinguishes three evidence layers. First, the index design and weights are specified by the dissertation's Chapter III presentation. Second, Fund A is a hypothetical example used to demonstrate the arithmetic and sensitivity of the weighting scheme. Third, four real organisations were subsequently assessed through a single-assessor desk review. These layers are reported separately because the hypothetical example and the preliminary organisational scores have different evidential status.

Conceptual dimensions and indicator selection.

The index is based on four design principles. Observability requires indicators to be assessed through evidence that can be located and checked. Theoretical correspondence requires each indicator to represent a relevant aspect of transparency, openness or reliability. Replicability requires fixed definitions, explicit weights and documented sources. Interpretability requires the resulting score and rating tier to be understandable to donors, managers, researchers and policymakers. These principles are consistent with the broader composite-indicator literature, which stresses the importance of a clear theoretical framework, transparent indicator selection, normalisation, weighting, aggregation and sensitivity analysis [9].

Seventeen indicators are grouped into three sub-indices. The weights within each sub-index sum to 100%, and the three external weights also sum to 100%. Indicators are intended to be observable in public organisational records, official websites, social-media and messaging channels, project announcements, public reports and other credible sources. Public visibility is not treated as proof of performance: for example, an active social-media account may demonstrate

communication activity but cannot by itself establish that a project was completed or that funds were properly accounted for.

Dimension	Indicator	Internal weight
Transparency (T)	Financial statements	25%
	Independent audit	20%
	Project-level reporting	20%
	Cost-structure disclosure	15%
	Donor-fund accounting	10%
	Legal documents	10%
Openness (O)	Official website	20%
	Social media	20%
	Telegram reporting	20%
	News and press releases	15%
	Public events	15%
	Beneficiary list	10%
Reliability (R)	State registration	25%
	Project completion	25%
	Number of beneficiaries	20%
	Partners and donors	15%
	Media reputation	15%

Index specification and aggregation.

The overall score for organisation j is calculated as:

$Charity_j = 0.40T_j + 0.30O_j + 0.30R_j$

where $Charity_j$ is the organisation's overall score on a 0–100 scale; T_j is its Transparency score; O_j is its Openness score; and R_j is its Reliability score. Transparency receives the largest external weight (0.40) because the index is intended to address donor uncertainty concerning the use and management of charitable resources. Openness and Reliability each receive a weight of 0.30.

The sub-indices are calculated using the following weighted sums:

$T_j = 0.25F_j + 0.20A_j + 0.20P_j + 0.15C_j + 0.10D_j + 0.10L_j$

$O_j = 0.20W_j + 0.20S_j + 0.20G_j + 0.15N_j + 0.15E_j + 0.10B_j$

$R_j = 0.25Q_j + 0.25K_j + 0.20H_j + 0.15V_j + 0.15M_j$

In the Transparency equation, F denotes financial statements, A independent audit, P project-level reporting, C cost-structure disclosure, D donor-fund accounting and L legal documents. In the Openness equation, W denotes the official website, S social media, G Telegram reporting, N news and press releases, E public events and B beneficiary-list disclosure. In the Reliability equation, Q denotes state registration, K project completion, H the number of beneficiaries, V partners and donors, and M media reputation. Each indicator score must be expressed on a common 0–100 scale before aggregation.

The presentation specifies the indicator set and weights but does not provide, in the material available for this article, the complete item-by-item scoring anchors used to translate raw evidence into each 0–100 indicator score. This is a material reproducibility requirement. The final submission should therefore include the full scoring rubric as an appendix or supplementary file, including evidence thresholds, treatment of missing information, recency

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requirements and rules for contradictory sources. The present article does not invent those anchors or imply that a complete scoring manual is already documented.

Rating classification

Rating tier	Score interval	Interpretation
Platinum	90–100	Very high level of publicly observable organisational quality
Gold	75–89	Relatively strong disclosure and organisational evidence
Silver	60–74	Intermediate performance with identifiable improvement needs
Bronze	45–59	Material weaknesses in one or more assessed dimensions
Unrated	0–44	Insufficient score under the proposed classification

The tiers are designed to make the composite score accessible to donors and other users. They should be interpreted as classifications within this proposed instrument, not as legal accreditation, as well as a guarantee of programme effectiveness or a certification that an organisation is free from governance risk. A low score may reflect limited disclosure rather than proven misconduct; conversely, a high score cannot rule out risks that are not visible in public sources.

Worked example and sensitivity analysis.

To demonstrate the calculation, the dissertation uses a hypothetical organisation (Fund A) with Transparency of 84.5, Openness of 78.5 and Reliability of 83.75. Its overall score is:

$0.40(84.5) + 0.30(78.5) + 0.30(83.75) = 82.475 \approx 82.5$

The hypothetical organisation is therefore classified as Gold. The lower Openness score indicates a relative weakness in beneficiary-list disclosure and press releases.

Weighting scenario	T / O / R	Score	Tier
Baseline	0.40 / 0.30 / 0.30	82.5	Gold
Equal style	0.34 / 0.33 / 0.33	82.3	Gold
Reliability-heavy	0.30 / 0.30 / 0.40	82.4	Gold
Transparency-heavy	0.50 / 0.25 / 0.25	82.8	Gold

The sensitivity exercise indicates that the hypothetical organisation remains in the Gold tier under the four specified weighting scenarios. The result is illustrative rather than conclusive: the three sub-index values are already relatively close and all lie within the same broad tier. Exercise does not establish robustness across the sector, across different organisation types or under alternative indicator definitions.

Preliminary desk-review application.

The revised dissertation materials report a desk-review application to four Uzbek organisations in October 2026. The assessments were based on public sources and were undertaken by one assessor. The organisations were not asked to verify the indicator-level scores, and the results are explicitly treated as preliminary. The available materials provide the overall scores and tiers, but do not provide the complete indicator-level dataset or all three sub-index scores for

each organisation. The article therefore reports only the results that can be substantiated from the material supplied.

Organisation	Overall score	Tier	Evidence status
“Vaqf” Charitable Public Fund	81.8	Gold	Preliminary single-assessor desk review
Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan	80.0	Gold	Preliminary single-assessor desk review
“Sog’lom avlod uchun” Fund	58.0	Bronze	Transparency weakest; exact sub-score allocation to verify
“Ezgu Amal” Public Fund	54.3	Bronze	Transparency weakest; exact sub-score allocation to verify

These four organisations should not be interpreted as a representative sample of Uzbekistan's charitable sector. Their scores are preliminary descriptive assessments. Because the indicator scores have not been independently verified with the organisations and only one assessor conducted the desk review, the results cannot establish inter-rater reliability, predictive validity or the effect of ratings on donor behaviour.

International benchmarking and methodological assessment.

The proposed index is informed by, but distinct from, established international approaches. Charity Navigator currently evaluates eligible US public charities through four Encompass areas and uses public and organisation-reported information, including IRS filings [7]. Candid's Seals of Transparency provide progressive recognition for information shared about an organisation's identity, programmes, finances, leadership and impact [8]. The proposed Charity Index differs in purpose and context: it combines organisational disclosure, communication visibility and selected reliability signals into a single weighted score for use where disclosure is partial and communication may occur through Telegram and social media.

CAF is included in the dissertation's international comparison as a reference point for charity-sector accountability and assessment. However, CAF's work spans different national contexts and programmes; it should not be represented as a single directly equivalent global composite rating unless a specific CAF methodology and version are identified. Accordingly, this article treats the comparison as conceptual rather than as a claim that all systems measure the same constructs.

Against the OECD–JRC composite-indicator guidance, the index has an explicit conceptual framework, a defined indicator set, common 0–100 indicator scaling, pre-specified weights, a transparent additive aggregation rule and an initial sensitivity exercise [9]. Nevertheless, further work is needed to assess data quality, missingness, correlation among indicators, alternative normalisation procedures, uncertainty, weighting sensitivity and the consequences of compensability. The index should therefore be described as aligned with selected composite-indicator principles, not as fully validated under the OECD–JRC framework.

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RESULTS

Structure of the index.

The resulting instrument consists of 17 indicators distributed across three dimensions. Transparency is the largest dimension, accounting for 40% of the final score; Openness and Reliability each account for 30%. Within Transparency, financial statements and independent audits carry the largest internal weights. Within Openness, website, social-media and Telegram reporting each receive 20%. Within Reliability, state registration and project completion each receive 25%. The structure gives greater weight to verifiable financial and operational information while recognising the communication channels through which organisations make themselves visible to the public.

The index therefore produces both an overall classification and a diagnostic profile. Two organisations with similar overall scores may have different sub-index patterns, and those patterns can indicate different management priorities. For example, an organisation may have a strong digital presence but weak financial reporting; another may publish audited accounts but provide little information about beneficiaries or project completion. A single total score would conceal these differences unless the sub-index results are also published.

Preliminary ratings of four organisations.

The preliminary desk review classified two organisations in the Gold tier and two in the Bronze tier. The “Vaqf” Charitable Public Fund received 81.8, while the Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan received 80.0. The “Sog’lom avlod uchun” Fund received 58.0 and the “Ezgu Amal” Public Fund received 54.3. The two Bronze-rated organisations had comparatively low Transparency scores of 32.5 and 25.0, respectively, according to the revised dissertation record. This suggests that financial and documentary disclosure may be a priority for improvement in those two cases.

The results should be read as a demonstration of how the index can organise publicly available evidence, not as a definitive league table. The scores do not establish that Gold-rated organisations produce greater social impact than Bronze-rated organisations. Nor do they establish that the latter organisations are less effective or less trustworthy in all respects. They indicate differences under the selected indicators and the evidence available to the assessor at the time of review.

Worked example and weighting sensitivity.

The hypothetical Fund A achieved an overall score of 82.5 and a Gold classification. The lowest sub-index was Openness (78.5), compared with Transparency (84.5) and Reliability (83.75). Its diagnostic profile therefore points to beneficiary-list disclosure and press-release practices as potential improvement areas. Under equal-style, reliability-heavy and transparency-heavy weighting scenarios, the score varied only from 82.3 to 82.8 and the tier remained Gold. This is a useful illustration of the calculation but does not replace sector-wide sensitivity analysis.

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DISCUSSION

A context-sensitive reconstruction rather than a direct transfer.

The central methodological argument is that charity evaluation should be adapted to the information environment in which organisations operate. A framework that depends heavily on standardised audited accounts and tax filings may be difficult to apply where those documents are not consistently published or accessible. At the same time, excluding digital communication channels would ignore a significant part of the public-facing information environment. The Charity Index responds by retaining financial accountability indicators while adding website, social-media, Telegram, press and event-related indicators.

This adaptation should not be mistaken for lowering the meaning of accountability. Rather, it recognises that different sources provide different kinds of evidence. A Telegram post may demonstrate that an organisation communicated about a project; it does not independently verify expenditure, project completion or beneficiary outcomes. A legal registration document may establish formal status; it does not prove sound governance. The index's value depends on preserving these distinctions in its scoring rubric and in the interpretation of each dimension.

Theoretical implications: quality of intermediation.

The index operationalises the dissertation's broader proposition that the social value of giving is mediated by the quality of the organisation receiving and distributing resources. Agency theory explains why donors require information about the use of funds; stakeholder theory emphasises the organisation's accountability to multiple constituencies; and legitimacy theory highlights the importance of publicly credible conduct and disclosure [2,4,5]. The three dimensions translate these theoretical concerns into observable organisational attributes.

Transparency addresses the information asymmetry between donors and organisations. Openness concerns whether the organisation makes information accessible through channels that potential donors and beneficiaries use. Reliability captures selected signals of formal status, delivery experience and external relationships. Together, these dimensions frame organisational quality as a management issue rather than treating donor trust as an attitude that can be improved only through fundraising communication.

Managerial implications.

Four practical directions follow from the index design. First, an independent rating body should administer the instrument and publish its methodology, indicator definitions, weights, source records and revision history. Second, ratings should be displayed where donors make decisions, including giving platforms, fund websites and messaging channels. Third, charitable organisations should be encouraged to publish audited financial statements and project-level reports, since these forms of evidence directly strengthen the Transparency dimension. Fourth, digital fundraising appeals should be linked to an identifiable

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organisational profile and current rating so that donors can distinguish documented organisations from unverified appeals.

These recommendations are proposals, not evaluated interventions. The current evidence does not show that publication of a rating will increase donations, reduce fraud or improve poverty outcomes. Those effects require separate evaluation, ideally through longitudinal data, donor experiments or a phased implementation design. The immediate contribution is to provide a structured information tool that may reduce the cost of donor due diligence and give organisations a practical disclosure-improvement agenda.

Governance of the rating institution.

The credibility of the index depends on the credibility of the body that applies it. The proposed scoring body should itself meet the Platinum standard by publishing its governance arrangements, methodology, weights, evidence sources, assessor qualifications, conflicts-of-interest policy and appeals procedure. A data-collection protocol should specify the review date, source hierarchy, archiving procedures, treatment of inaccessible pages, evidence freshness and correction process. Organisations should have an opportunity to respond to factual errors without being able to negotiate or purchase a higher score.

An appeals process is especially important where missing public information may be mistaken for poor performance. The rating body should distinguish 'not disclosed', 'not applicable', 'not verified' and 'negative evidence'. These categories should not automatically receive identical treatment. The final scoring protocol should explain whether missing information is scored as zero, treated as unavailable or handled through a separate coverage rule. This decision can materially affect the rankings and must be fixed before the index is used for consequential decisions.

Limitations and future validation.

Several limitations constrain the conclusions. First, the weights are normative and reflect the author’s conceptual judgement; they have not been statistically optimised or elicited through a documented multi-stakeholder weighting exercise. Second, the weighted-additive method is compensatory: a high score in one dimension can offset a low score in another. This may be undesirable where a minimum level of legal compliance or financial accountability should be non-negotiable. A future version could test minimum threshold or non-compensatory rules alongside the additive baseline.

Third, the four-organisation desk review is small and non-representative. It was completed by one assessor, and the organisations did not verify the indicator-level scores. Inter-rater reliability is therefore unknown. Fourth, the detailed indicator scoring anchors and full evidence register must be published to make the assessment fully replicable. Fifth, the current instrument measures observable disclosure and selected organisational signals, not direct social impact, cost-effectiveness or beneficiary outcomes. A high rating should not be interpreted as proof of programme effectiveness.

Further research should apply the index to a larger and more diverse group of organisations, use at least two independent assessors, calculate inter-rater agreement, document source-level evidence and test the stability of scores under alternative weights and normalisation rules. The predictive validity of the index should also be examined: for example, whether higher-rated organisations demonstrate stronger donor retention, greater fundraising success, more complete project reporting or better beneficiary feedback. Such tests would move the index from a structured disclosure tool towards a validated organisational assessment instrument.

CONCLUSIONS

This article has developed and preliminarily applied a Charity Index designed for philanthropic organisations operating under conditions of partial disclosure in Uzbekistan. The index combines 17 indicators across Transparency, Openness and Reliability, with external weights of 0.40, 0.30 and 0.30. Its five-tier classification translates the overall 0–100 score into a format intended to be accessible to donors, managers and policymakers. The methodology formalises the xayriya.info transparency-rating approach while adapting the accountability logic of established charity-evaluation systems to the local information environment.

The preliminary desk review of four organisations produced two Gold and two Bronze ratings. The two Bronze-rate organisations had low Transparency sub-index scores, indicating a potential priority for improving financial and documentary disclosure. The hypothetical Fund A example demonstrated the weighted calculation and showed an unchanged Gold classification under four illustrative weighting scenarios. Neither the worked example nor the four-organisation review constitutes full validation.

The index's main contribution is to make organisational intermediation more observable. It offers a common structure for assessing what organisations disclose, how they communicate and what evidence is available about their formal status and delivery record. Its practical value will depend on transparent scoring anchors, independent double scoring, an appeals process and validation across a broader set of organisations. The index should therefore be treated as a pilot-ready methodology and a basis for further testing, rather than as a definitive national ranking system.

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