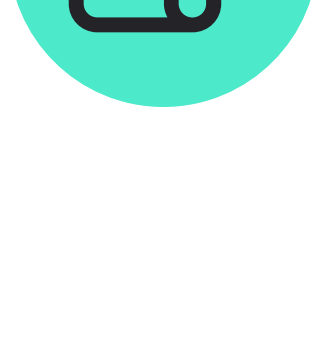


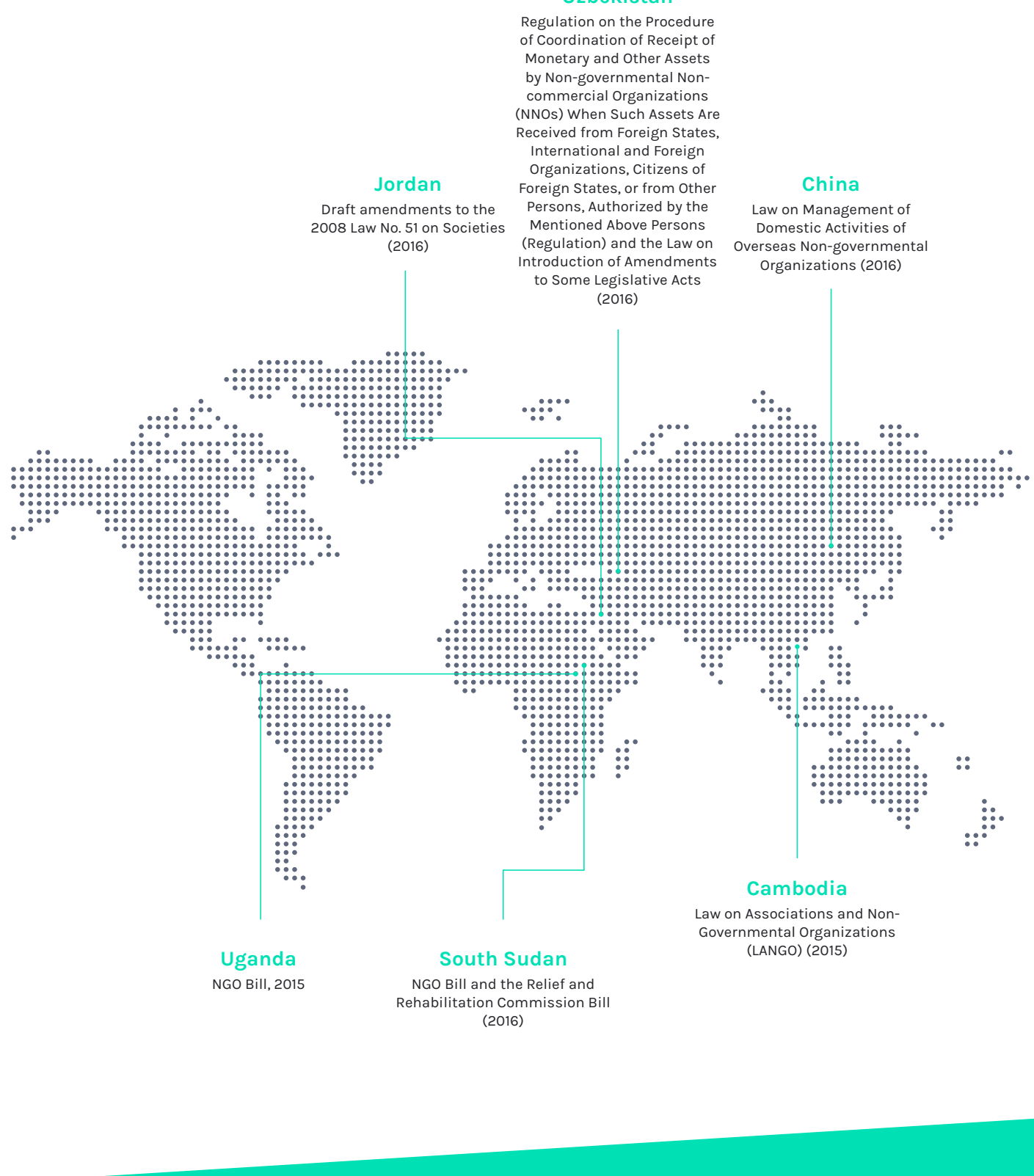
## Distract, Divide, Detach: Using Transparency and Accountability to Justify Regulation of CSOs



### Increasingly, governments are invoking CSO transparency and accountability to further close down civic space.



Since 2012, 70 governments have enacted over 120 legal initiatives restricting civil society and targeting the freedoms of association and assembly. 42 countries are currently considering new laws to restrict civil society.<sup>1</sup>



### Governments usually put forward three types of regulation:

<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>Transparency of (especially foreign) funding</b></p> <p><small>EXAMPLE</small> <b>'Foreign Agent' Law – Russia</b></p> <p>Organizations receiving foreign funding are labeled as “foreign agents”. To date, 158 organizations are on the official list; 30 organizations decided to dissolve than submit to the “foreign agent” designation.<sup>2</sup></p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Income and assets declaration of NGO leaders</b></p> <p><small>EXAMPLE</small> <b>Amendments to the Law on the Prevention of Corruption – Ukraine</b></p> <p>In March 2017, the Poroshenko administration passed a law requiring leaders of anti-corruption groups to declare their income and assets through the same e-declaration system used by public servants.</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>Democratic accountability and governance</b></p> <p><small>EXAMPLE</small> <b>Law 70 of 2017 on Associations and Other Foundations Working in the Field of Civil Work – Egypt</b></p> <p>The National Authority for the Regulation of Foreign NGOs oversees all aspects of NGOs' existence, administration and activities such as registration, leadership, funding and programs.<sup>3</sup></p>
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While the regulations can appear reasonable at face value, governments regularly attach intrusive requirements and punitive enforcement mechanisms.

### CSOs are negatively framed as "representing foreign interests", "unrepresentative" and its leadership as "privileged elite".

### How can the transparency community respond?

<p><b>Short Term:</b> PREPARE FOR ROLLBACK</p> <p><b>Audit and proof vulnerabilities</b> <b>Train for debates</b> <b>Awareness of legal resources</b> <b>Flexible public relations support</b> <b>Test assistance packages</b></p>	<p><b>Medium and long-term:</b> DEVELOP RESILIENCY</p> <p><b>Advocate for replicable approaches</b> <b>Flexible funding mechanisms</b> <b>Providing tools and facilities</b> <b>Support hybrid advocacy and engagement</b> <b>Develop assessment framework and exercises</b> <b>Nudge towards transparency</b></p>	<p><b>Long-term:</b> EXPAND THE BASE</p> <p><b>Connect to grassroots</b> <b>Reach across political divides</b></p>
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### Download the report for more analysis and the detailed recommendations.