



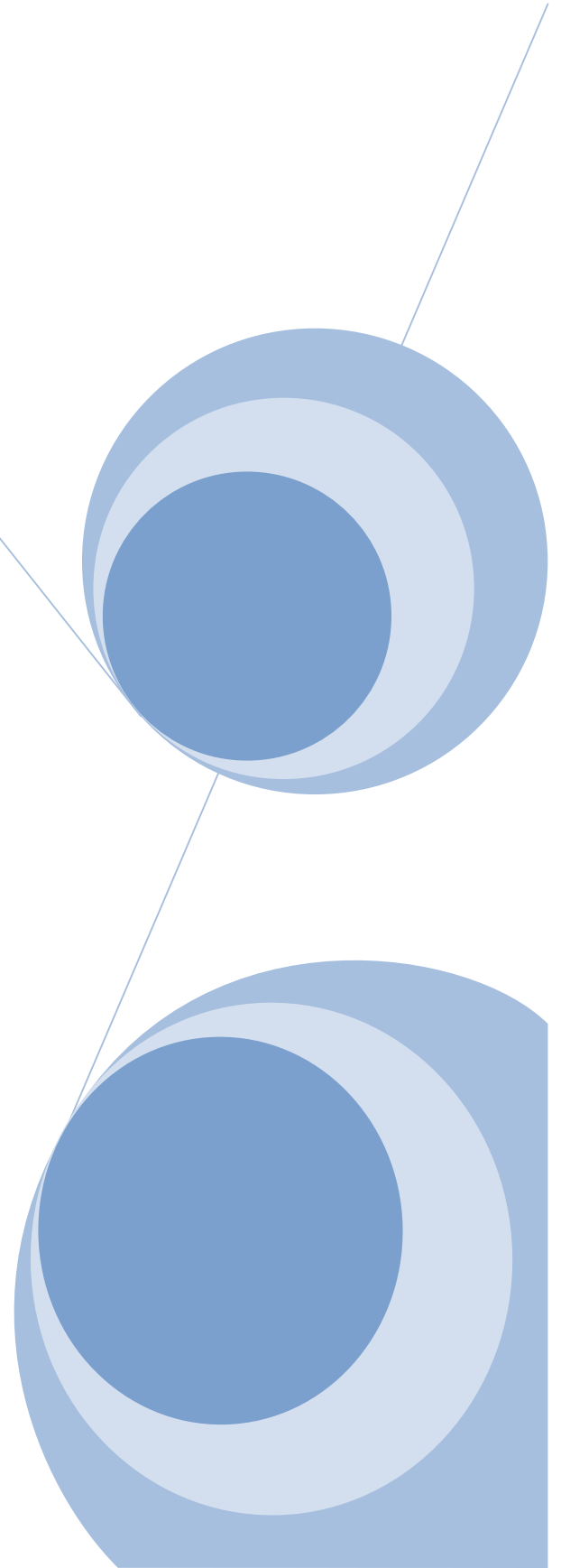
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Projet Fonds Canadien de Développement Social/  
Canadian Fund for Social Development

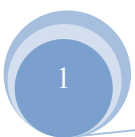


# ASSESSMENT OF CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS OF NGOs IN LEBANON

March 2009



The assessment was developed in partnership with  
The Canadian Fund for Social Development (CFSD)  
Project undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada  
Provided through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organizations
CFSD	Canadian Fund for Social Development
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FG	Focus Group
GA	General Assembly
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
Mol	Ministry of Interior
NGO	Non –Governmental Organization
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
ToR	Terms of Reference

## I. INTRODUCTION

The “NGO Capacity Building Needs Assessment” on which this document reports, was executed by the NGO Resource and Support Unit, which acts within the Capacity Building for Poverty Reduction Project - a joint project between the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) - in partnership with The Canadian Fund for Social Development (CFSD) OXFAM-Québec, and financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The assessment was implemented between November 2008 and March 2009.

The assessment fits into the CFSD’s mission and objectives with respect to:

- Creating opportunities for Lebanese civil society actors to enable them to take on a leadership role;
- Financing and managing small projects, conceived and implemented by Lebanese NGOs and,
- Reinforcing the work carried out by NGOs through its capacity building program.

It also falls within the NGO Resource and Support Unit’s objective of “strengthening the capacities of NGOs to effectively improve their contribution to the development process in Lebanon”. This assessment builds on existing knowledge and previous projects by the NGO Resource and Support Unit, including:

- The results of an NGO survey implemented by CDR in cooperation with MoSA in 2005, which includes data on around 3500 active Lebanese NGOs.
- A recent database of active NGOs in Lebanon being assembled by Lebanon Support in cooperation with the Unit.

The findings and recommendations in this document aim to provide the needed knowledge and information for drawing up and designing capacity building plans and training activities that better respond to the NGOs needs and requirements and that would contribute to increasing the capacities and broadening the knowledge of NGOs and civil society organizations to better contribute to promoting social development in the country. It is hoped to also serve as a useful source of information to improve coordination in the provision of services to NGOs in the country.

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## II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a qualitative study of the capacity building needs of NGOs in Lebanon, commissioned by the NGO Resource and Support Unit in partnership with CFSD/OXFAM-Québec, and implemented by a team of independent consultants. The survey took place from November 2008 to March 2009, and covered local Non-governmental organizations operational in Lebanon. The aim of the study is to assess the training and capacity building needs of NGOs in Lebanon, and guide the development of a tailor-made comprehensive capacity building plan for NGOs and civil society organizations working for social development in Lebanon.

Broadly, the study found three instrumental aspects that impact almost all attributes of capacity within NGO, namely:

- i. Funding, which shapes the whole governance and managerial structure of the NGO.
- ii. Limited democratic governance, and the existence of a “ruling elite” within most NGOs which controls all key aspects of the organisation including its governance, management, and funding structures.
- iii. Tension between the institutionalised professional nature of an NGO, and its voluntary, change driven, membership base.

### Main Findings

Findings on **governance** indicate that although all NGOs have written mission and vision statements, these are mostly too broad & not necessarily committed to or communicated to concerned stakeholders. Implementation that diverges away from the stated mission, for the sake of funding and visibility, is also common. In terms of legal registration, while the majority of NGOs were registered, difficulties were expressed at different time intervals in the actual registration process or for NGOs with a majority of Palestinian members, forcing less democratic legal structures. The role of the general assembly in holding board members was generally misunderstood and undermined, and membership process controlled, and the majority of NGOs covered were led by a small number of individuals, with very limited turnover, despite the commitment to regular elections.

At the level of **management**, key findings indicate an overlap in roles of management and board in and absence of an overall organisational vision and structure, and written management processes in the majority of organizations. Organizations with more than ten staff often had regular reporting, as opposed to smaller NGOs that had little reporting and documentation, although for all NGOs information documented was not adequately shared with concerned stakeholders.

Findings related to **human resources management** reveal that the majority of NGOs do not have set human resource policies, job descriptions for their staff, training and staff development plans, adequate benefits, or clear performance and complaints procedures. A smaller percentage has no employment contracts or a fair recruitment policy. Improved human resource management is noticeable in older NGOs with secure funding, and for project-based employees in organizations with international funding. The potential of volunteerism is found to be poorly exploited, due to the lack of volunteer recruitment and management systems within NGOs.

Regarding **financial resources and their administration**, Lebanese NGOs are found to have access to a variety of sources of funding, though it is estimated that about half of such funding does not requisite accountability. In additions, around half of the above sources are attached to partisan sources and conditional expectations on the part of the donor. Only few organizations implement real financial planning, reporting and auditing, and weaknesses exist in basic day-to-day cash flow management & accounting skills.

In terms of **Program Performance**, NGOs were found to comply with their mission in their overall program design, but several NGOs had broad or vague mission statements, and the majority did not adequately elaborate the strategic linkages between their mission statements, projects they are implementing, and its desired impact. Exceptions to the above were organizations aiming for changes in legislation and policy and who could clearly describe the impact of their work on the broader development process. Almost all non-staffed NGOs and at least half of NGOs with staff had neither systemic needs assessment and planning, nor comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems, and when present, mostly in NGOs with international funding, were project based & implemented to satisfy donor requirements. The above said, at least half of the project beneficiaries interviewed were satisfied with the NGOs performance, and all mentioned that no other options to fulfil the needs provided by the NGOs are available.

Although Lebanese NGOs proved to be generally well networked, their **external relations** varied depending on the type of both NGO and partner. Most were not capable of placing their work within the national development agenda, and in relation with other main stakeholders. Different forms of partnerships amongst NGOs exist, but specific time bound initiatives appear to be more effective, despite that networking between NGOs suffers from competition for funding and visibility as well as personal and political conflicts.

Cooperation with **governmental authorities** is often stifled by ministries' bureaucratic working procedures, and differences between officials' and NGO representatives' understanding of development priorities. At the local level, better cooperation existed, especially between national NGOs and municipalities.

A small number of NGOs with clear strategic media plans seem to be able to create real partnerships with the **media**, while the majority approach the media mainly for advertisement and not as partners in social change.

In relating to **donors**, international funders, especially governmental funding agencies, were criticized for coming with ready-made suggestions, disrupting and obscuring a culturally rooted system of social support, and targeting larger local NGOs. That said, partnership with international donors was found to have some positive impact on NGOs organizational operation. Other sources of funding, including individual donation, though not transparent and often partisan, were favored by larger service based organizations. Non-partisan CBOs appeared to bear the greatest burden in securing neutral funding.

The relationship with the **private sector** continued to be limited to a few NGOs, but showed excellent potential for partnership when NGOs approached the private sector with a partnership proposal that is sensitive to mutual interests of company and NGO.

## **Recommendations**

With the aim of improved NGO contribution to social development in Lebanon, the study recommends that capacity building interventions focus on strengthening structural strategic needs of NGOs, and their improved engagement with the broader social and cultural environment and partnership with a larger array of stakeholders, through the following:

- 1) Facilitate the processes of debate and strategy building on priority development needs and discussion of best approaches to tackle them for improved & synergetic development work.
- 2) Boost spaces and opportunities for information sharing.
- 3) Monitor and participate in the reform of laws and policies that govern the work of Lebanese NGOs.
- 4) Support the adaptation and Lebanization of capacity building opportunities to suit the needs of the Lebanese context.
- 5) Enhance the training efficiency and its impact through improved selection criteria of participants, post training follow-up mechanisms, and better linkages between the needs of specific NGOs and training offered
- 6) Diversify the methods of capacity building implementation, to include opportunities other than training, including mentoring, coaching and development of toolkits and training manuals.
- 7) Reach out to CBOs outside Greater Beirut.



### III. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

The assessment relied on a desk review, and three methods of qualitative data collection, namely focus groups, case studies, and interviews. To guide the whole study, a capacity building framework comprising the backbone of all data gathering tools used.

#### III.A. Desk Review and Development of Capacity Building Framework

The first stage of the consultancy involved going through existing literature about Lebanese civil society, and capacity building more generally, as well as define with the staff of the NGO Support unit and CFSD/Oxfam-Québec, what capacity building comprises.

The first step taken was defining what capacity building meant for the parties involved in this study, and within the Lebanese context in particular. An extensive list of variables and indicators linked to increased capacity of NGOs in Lebanon, were laid out to guide the assessment, forming a “Capacity Building Framework” (see Annex II. Capacity Building Framework).

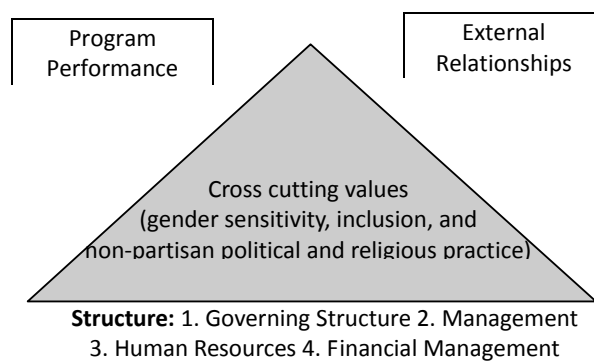
A first draft of the framework was compiled from the existing body of Literature on Capacity building and assessment tools development internationally and within the Arab countries. Use was also made of two studies on Lebanese civil society to contextualize this assessment; the latest CIVICUS “Civil Society Index Report for Lebanon” (2006), and the recent “Scoping Study for Hariri Foundation for Capacity Building of Local NGOs, Youth and Communities” (2008). Both highlighted the breadth of civil society actors, as well as the significance of sensitivity of the political situation (see Annex I. Documents consulted).

This draft was then presented in a consultative meeting with a selected group of NGO representatives, researchers and capacity building providers who have in depth knowledge of Lebanese civil society, with the aim of ensuring it fits the Lebanese context. Input from that meeting and from the NGO unit staff was then incorporated in the framework, and a second draft then finalized and used to guide tools and variables which the assessment will measure.

Making use of the work of Van Geene (2003), capacity building was defined as “the process by which individuals; groups; organisations; institutions; and societies increase their abilities to: (1) perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives; and (2) understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner.” Capacity Building is regarded in that case as “broader than organisational development, since it includes the overall system, the environment or context in which individuals, organisations and societies operate and interact”.

Considering the above definition and in order to incorporate the overall system, the set of indicators chosen to assess an NGO were organised into a triangle model as follows:

1. The Structure of an NGO (with sets of indicators for the following issues: Governing Structure; Management Processes; Human Resources and Financial Resources and Administration) constitutes the largest component and the triangle's base.
2. The Program performance of the NGO (with sets of indicators for Program design and Planning; Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation and Results Achieved) on one side of the triangle model.
3. The External Relationships of the NGO (Social and cultural environment; Partnerships with other NGOs and networks; Relationships with government authorities; the Media and the Private Sector and/or donors) on the second side of the triangle model
4. The Values practiced and/or promoted among Lebanese NGOs (such as gender equity and/or non-partisan political and religious affiliation) are placed at the core of the triangle, as they are considered to be cross cutting values.



### III.B. Assessment Parameters and Sampling Design

To set the criteria for selection of Focus Groups, case studies and their participants, the consultants proceeded with a quantitative data analysis of MOSA's 2004 NGO survey database. Cross tabulations were used to extract representative variables and relevant parameters that characterize NGOs in Lebanon, and resulted in identifying the following parameters:

1. **Number of staff:** The selection based on number of staff and was thought of as the best and most accessible parameter to define NGO size, as other parameters and the data collected on them appeared to be either irrelevant or hard to define (such as the annual budget, number of general assembly members, etc). As such, three benchmarks were decided (given that the median number of staff among staffed NGOs is 5):
  - NGOs with 0 staff: 77% of the NGOs covered by the survey.
  - NGOs with 5 or less staff: 11.2% of the NGOs covered by the Survey and around 50% of staffed NGOs.
  - NGOs with 6 or more staff: 11.7% have NGOs covered by the Survey and around 50% of staffed NGOs.

In the final number of focus groups implemented, 5 only targeted non-staffed NGOs, while 9 targeted NGOs with staff. Although NGOs with no staff comprised the largest percentage of the NGOs listed in the survey, the number included a large number of sports

clubs and familial leagues which needed to be screened out, in addition to sizable number of inaccurately codified non-respondents the survey as 0 staff. The “0 staff” criteria was later amended to “less than 3 staff”, as focus groups revealed that there was not a significant change in the NGO needs if the it had up to two staff, who were predominantly administrative staff (such as a secretary and/or a driver). The existence of middle management staff seemed to constitute in fact the bench mark between a small and a medium NGO.

2. **Number of volunteers**, chosen to reflect the constituency that as set at the benchmark of 25 volunteers, which is the median number of volunteers as indicated by the survey:
  - NGOs with 25 or less volunteers.
  - NGOs with over 25 volunteers.
3. **Geographic working context**, four categories were defined, based on estimated impact of the geographic context on the needs of NGOs, and given that the division based on Governorate and Caza and other data in the survey produced no other possible significant variables related to the area of operation:
  - NGOs working nationally.
  - CBOs working in an urban context.
  - CBOs working in a rural context.
  - NGOs working in Palestinian refugee camps.
4. **Nature of activities, to include:**
  - Change creation based programming, where the NGO has at least one work component that target policy makers and seeks to change legislation or policy.
  - Service delivery based programming.

The consultants chose not to take into account the sector of activity as an additional parameter, since the database indicated that a good percentage of the Lebanese NGOs were not easily categorized into one sector of. Apart from technical thematic needs related to program performance, it was also anticipated that the sector of activity would not impact by necessity the capacity building needs of an NGO, at other levels related to management, governance, and external relations.

### III.C. Research Methods and Data Collection:

#### 1. Focus groups:

Seventeen focus groups were implemented, 14 of which were with NGO representatives divided based on the above-mentioned parameters. Invited representatives varied to reflect needs of different actors within the NGO, including its leadership, staff, members and volunteers. At the time the pilot focus groups were conducted, the design had a distinction between NGO board and management, with separate focus groups for each among staffed NGOs. This later proved difficult to implement, and NGO leadership more broadly was invited, as most invited NGOs did not have a

clear dividing line between board members and staffed management.

In addition, three focus groups were conducted with other civil society actors, including media representatives, capacity building providers, and funding agencies. Table 1 below list all focus groups implemented and the selection method of invitees for each.

Initially three pilot focus groups were conducted with NGO representative, and the focus group design as well as sampling process was refined based on the findings of these pilot groups. The duration of focus group, which was fixed at 2 hours, was also extended to two hours and a half to cover a wider scope of the focus group guide (see Annex III. Focus group Guides).

The Focus groups had quite a good attendance record, which could be explained by the fact that NGOs were invited by MOSA and meetings took place at the conference room of the NGO Resource and Support Unit.

## 2. Case studies

Three case studies that would allow for a deeper understanding of the capacity building needs, and the opportunity to cover with a single NGO all the indicators set in the framework, were implemented. The selection of the NGOs followed some of the parameters set for the research as follows:

- Number of staff: to include one NGO with over 10 staff; one NGO with 3 to 10 staff, and one NGO with no staff.
- Geographic working context: to include at least one NGO working in a rural context, one in an urban context, and one working nationally.
- Nature of activities: to include one case study of an NGO with change creation based programming.

**Table 1 – Focus Groups implemented and selection method**

	Focus Group	Sample selection method
1	Leadership of NGOs with over 10 employees, with more than 25 volunteers	Random sample from the NGO unit's database of NGOs in Lebanon. Sample was screened to exclude sports clubs and family leagues.
2	Leadership of NGOs with 3-10 employees, with more than 25 volunteers	
3	Leadership of NGOs with over 10 employees, with less than 25 volunteers	
4	Leadership of NGOs with 3-10 employees with less than 25 volunteers	
5	Leadership of NGOs with 0-2 staff with more than 25 volunteers urban context	Random sample from the NGO unit's database of NGOs in Lebanon, registered only in greater Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, Tyre, Zahleh, and Baalbeck. Sample was screened to exclude sports clubs and family leagues.
6	Leadership of NGOs with 0-2 staff with less than 25 volunteers urban context	
7	Leadership of NGOs with 0-2 staff with less than 25 volunteers rural context	Random sample from the NGO unit's database of NGOs in Lebanon, excluding those registered in greater Beirut, Tripoli,

## Assessment of Capacity Building Needs of NGOs in Lebanon

8	Leadership of NGO's with 0-2 staff with more than 25 volunteers rural context	Sidon, Tyre, Zahleh, and Baalbeck. Sample was screened to exclude sports clubs and family leagues.
9	Leadership of NGOs with over 10 employees Palestinian refugee camps	Random sample from list of NGOs available in "Non-Governmental Organizations in the Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon" report.
10	Leadership of NGOs with 1-10 employees Palestinian refugee camps	<a href="http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/papers/ajial_center/ngo_lebanon.html">http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/papers/ajial_center/ngo_lebanon.html</a>
11	Members and volunteers of NGOs without Staff	NGOs leaders who attended a previous focus group meeting were asked to nominate one of their volunteers.
12	Members and volunteers of NGOs with over 2 staff	In coordination with three NGO coalitions, one volunteer of General assembly member was invited from 5 of the member NGOs in each coalition.
13	Middle Management Staff (NGOs with 6 staff or more)	Half of the invitees were invited based on random sample from the database of NGOs with over 6 staff; the other half was based on recommendations of consultants and NGO unit staff of specific employees in well-established NGOs.
14	Change creation NGOs	Based on consultants; and NGO unit's staff knowledge of main campaigns implemented in the past 5 years and organizations that implemented them (including civil marriage, rights of people with special needs, combating violence against women, or women's right to nationality, etc.)
15	Media workers covering NGO related work (TV, radio, sections on the environment, education, society, and youth in local papers)	A preliminary list of invitees was developed based on knowledge of consultants, feedback of NGO Unit and recommendations of two NGOs, one UN employee, and one journalist. Final invitees insured that different types and political affiliation of media outlets were represented.
16	Management and program directors of locally based funding agencies (international organizations and/or NGOs, embassies, but also national donors).	Based on the Lebanon Support Directory, and consultation with NGO Unit, a list of invitees was developed to ensure representation of all types of donors (governmental/non-governmental, grant giving/partnership based, and a variety of Arab, European, North American, and other international donors).
17	Capacity Building providers	Based on consultation with NGO Unit staff and trainers, recommendations from NGO representative in previous focus groups, and knowledge of consultants.

Each case study included half a day workshop/brainstorming session with management, program, and administrative staff members (for the two staffed NGOs); at least one focus group with board and general assembly members and volunteers; one focus group with the NGOs beneficiaries as well as interviews with partners, including governmental (municipalities, ministries), private sector actors, and others (see Annex V. Case Study Proposal).

The selection of the particular NGO with whom case studies were finally carried out according to the above considerations was based on consultation with the NGO unit staff, and the willingness and time commitment of the NGO itself (see Annex V. Case Studies).

### 3. Semi Structured Interviews

With the purpose of including a variety of perspectives from other external stakeholders views, three additional semi structured interviews were implemented, two private sector actors involved in NGO work or with corporate responsibility initiatives, and one with a representative of the Afkar Program at the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative (OMSAR). The interviews were based on a semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions that sought the perspective of the respondent on his/her collaborative experiences with NGOs (see Annex IV. Interviews' Guide).

### III.D. Limitations and Constraints of the Assessment

- 1) The data of the NGO survey presented some technical and information management constraints, which slowed down the sampling design process and proved to be very time consuming. Problems encountered included:
  - a) The data for the NGOs without staff was inaccurate and the number 0 was used both when the NGO had 0 staff, and when there was no response at the initial time of data collection.
  - b) Constraints were faced while exporting data from SPSS into other version of SPSS or Excel, as all Arabic SPSS data was not readable when exported.
  - c) The geographical regions (Caza) were spelt in different ways in Arabic and were not codified, which complicated the data analysis, especially while sorting the rural and urban NGOs.
  - d) Some of the information in the survey was outdated and inaccurate. The consultants had to call the NGOs to verify the phone numbers, and make sure that the NGO contacted fitted the number of staff criteria. But the consultants also faced difficulties in knowing the exact number of staff or volunteers, as the receptionist/staff member expressed a certain reserve towards giving this information.
- 2) As the survey was the main source for sample selection, representation from unregistered NGOs or NGOs registered in ministries other than the ministry of interior was probably limited. Feedback on the specific needs of such NGOs was obtained from one unregistered NGO and another registered as a not-for-profit company who participated in focus groups for which the sample was obtained through consultation and not from the survey.
- 3) A significant number of NGOs representatives during focus group meeting were coming mainly to list their demands and to complain about their lack of resources, which contributed to misunderstandings sometimes that had to be clarified by the consultants. In some cases, the NGO representative attending did not fit with the criteria and position specified in the invitation, especially when managers sent a junior staff member, who would not always have adequate knowledge of the NGO's work to make significant contributions to the points discussed.
- 4) Obtaining appointments with ministry officials for interviews was delayed or hindered by bureaucratic procedures, while in the private sector it was delayed by the reluctance of

interviewees as the study falls low on their priorities.

- 5) The main challenge faced during the case studies was the desire of NGO representatives, understandably, to portray a positive image of their organization, obscuring by that possible learning on difficulties the NGO is facing.
- 6) Other problems emerged due to time constraints, in particular due to the holiday period in December and January, as well as the Gaza events in January 2009 that delayed the media and Palestinian NGOs focus groups.

The above said it is important to highlight that the support of the NGO unit was invaluable, in providing input into different stages of the assessment, technical support with SPSS, and the space for the focus groups.

## IV. FINDINGS

Broadly, three issues are central to the work on NGOs in Lebanon and appear to impact almost all attributes of capacity within the organisation:

1. **Funding:** funding not only impacts whether projects are implemented or not, but rather shapes the whole governance and managerial structure of the NGO. This applies to local, regional and international funding.
2. **Limited democratic governance:** The majority of NGOs are lead by one or at best a few individuals, who control all key aspects of the organisation including its governance, management, and funding structures. This limits considerably the growth and impact of NGOs.
3. **Difficulty in reconciling the change driven voluntary membership base, with the desired institutionalised professional nature of an NGO:** Few NGOs, if any, have been capable of retaining a strong membership base of a group individuals working together for a common goal, while at the same time constructing professional institutions capable of effective implementation of programs.

### 1. Governing Structure

#### 1.1 Mission, Vision Statements and Guiding Principles

- a) Findings indicate that the majority of NGOs have written mission and mandate statements and also general goals and aims, which are among the required documents for submission to the Mol upon registration. However, these aren't referred to during project selection nor disseminated to staff and volunteers, and in many times they are compromised to suit the requirements of potential donors or to allow for the implementation of activities that will maintain the NGO's presence and visibility. Similarly, the NGOs guiding principles of neutrality and non-partisanship are among the most prone to be compromised in the pursuit of funding from political parties or figures.
- b) The specialisation and focus of the NGO and confinement to its main mandate and goals is often compromised for the sake of access to resources and funding or gain in visibility and maintaining a certain level of activity by implementing popularly noticeable events. This is especially true of CBOs, especially those working in rural areas that operate under broad and elastic mandates like "charity" or "social and cultural development". Rural CBOs speak of their role as one of funnelling aid to the community, which justify their involvement in any type or theme of activity no matter how unfocused or disintegrated it is, as long as it contributes to "improving" or "assisting" the community. A few organizations try to negotiate with donors or tune in donors' preferences to suit their own agendas.



## 1.2 Legal Base

- a) The data collected showed that the NGOs have established internal by-laws and statutes but most date back to when the NGO was founded and haven't been reviewed or modified except in few cases when it was necessary to reduce the number of the Board members to ensure quorum. Again, these bi-laws were mainly established in compliance with registration requirements rather than to provide a framework for decision-making and division of roles. They are rarely referred to except during elections or when there is struggle of power within the NGO.
- b) The legal obligations for NGO registration imposed by the Lebanese Law have influenced the governance structure and its dynamics within the NGOs. For example, the Palestinian NGOs are mostly managed and owned by its Palestinian management staff rather its Lebanese Board members who were "brought in" by the NGOs' staff because the Lebanese Law restricts the percentage of non-Lebanese in the NGO Boards. Eventually, in this case, it is the Management that "recruits" and "employs" the governance and not the opposite. In some case, this set up creates a sort of patronage system of a small number of Lebanese board members, over the larger constituency of Palestinian establishing group. The same sort of legal constraint appears in some NGOs established in the past 10 years, when acquiring legal registration for an NGO was relatively difficult, and have opted for other legal forms like a not-for-profit company, and such only operate now under the guidance of a board without a larger membership base.

## 1.3 General Assembly

- a) The majority of NGO leaders interviewed understand the role of the General Assembly as that implementing activities, participating in sub-committees, carrying on basic administrative tasks of staff who can't be afforded, and contributing financially through membership fees and funding if possible. The role of holding the management and board accountable, and providing strategic guidance and direction were generally not mentioned, nor was its role in electing the board. The degree of the ownership of NGOs by its General Assembly is weakened by the fact that the NGO is "owned" by the ruling core.
- b) The type of funding on which the NGO relies most also affects its governance structure and dynamics. In NGOs where the source of funding is secure (like contracts with ministries) or provided for by one or more individual members, then the role of the General Assembly as the highest authority within the NGO is undermined for the sake of those individual "fund" providers.
- c) Diversification and accessibility to membership is influenced by personal contacts and friendship with existing members where the few newly recruited members are friends or relatives of members who bring them in. Some of the NGOs interviewed, including those with no staff support, are not interested in expanding their membership base for several reasons. Some fear that they would be taken over by political powers dominant in their region through enrolment of a high number of politicised members. Others are interested in maintaining the "homogenous core" which has been collectively running the NGO and is usually composed of individuals with common interests and backgrounds that together founded the NGO. In some NGOs, the "ruling core" fears for its power and hence becomes restrictive in offering membership unless it ensure the newcomer's loyalty. In such case, the new members are

expected and restrained to be followers rather than equal members. All of the above-mentioned scenarios lead to uniformity and a higher level of accord within the general assembly and limits its role in accountability. Another cause for a lack of diversity in the membership base is related to the affiliation of the NGO with a particular political party, which automatically restrains others from enrolling regardless of the NGO cause, efficiency or even impartiality if it exists.

- d) The study didn't indicate any forms of direct discrimination in selection of members for the general assembly. However, some NGOs have their own ways of conserving their homogeneity or exclusiveness. To start with, the mission and values of the NGO itself attract volunteers who are close to these values, and an NGO that is publicly perceived to have a particular political or religious affiliation won't appeal to volunteers opposing these groups or beliefs. Another way is the selective and restricted process of accepting new members where a membership applicant is approved not when the stated membership criteria are met, which are usually simple, but once the NGO Board believes that this person suits an implicit unwritten profile of a member.
- e) The findings indicate that only a few members and volunteers understand how NGOs operate, the governance structures within NGOs, and their roles and responsibilities as members within the general assembly. Most of them do not know the by laws of their own organisations.

#### 1.4 Board

- a) Membership within NGOs is seen by many individuals, especially those who are in middle age and have established careers, as an opportunity to gain social status, accumulate connections, attract visibility or climb the power ladder, rather than a space to contribute to a cause and goals. This lack of commitment to the NGO and exaggerated interest in personal moral gains explains partially the phenomena of multi-membership in more than one NGO. This creates a conflict of interest where some of these individual are capable of diverging funding opportunities and connections from one NGO to another.
- b) The widespread understanding of the main roles of the board members is decision-making, sub-committee membership, execution of activities and fund raising. Few NGO representatives mentioned supervision, setting direction, public relations and ensuring accountability. It was also noted that the fulfillment of these roles is divided among the members according to their power within the board, external relations, and social background. The "ruling core" and key figures within the board are responsible for fulfilling roles that require higher social status and power such as decision making, external relations and fund raising. Others are mainly active in project implementation and sub-committee membership.
- c) The interviews revealed that rotation in leadership and democracy isn't established nor properly understood among most NGOs. The majority of NGOs interviewed have the persons in key posts for several mandates and ratio of turnover in board membership does not exceed 25% at every elections. In one focus group for example, around 70% of board members of NGOs present have been on the board for at least 15 years. In addition, some NGOs still have the same president since the organization was founded. This can be explained not only by the attitude of the "ruling core", but also that of the membership as competitive elections are perceived by many, especially in rural NGOs as an indication of internal division and disagreement. Others justify uncontested election as an indication of approval among members of the performance of those in office. Some fear that competitive election would lead to division, de-motivation or obstruction by the losing camp and their withdrawal from

the NGO.

- d) In NGOs with no staff, members are less likely to run for board membership, as the lack of administrative support means that the burden of such tasks falls on the elected board members. There is also hesitation in running for posts in NGOs that are predominantly run by one individual, usually the president, where a sizeable gap exists between his/her skills and that of other members who are recruited as assistants rather than equal members, and the loyalty of such members is towards the individual(s) and not the NGO.
- e) Findings strongly indicate the lack in separation between management and governance in the majority of NGOs, either due to unawareness of the importance of such a separation, or intentionally to accumulate power or gain benefits. In NGOs that lack managerial structure, this integration is justified as long as decisions are made in transparent and participatory ways. However, in many cases, senior management staff, due to their competence and knowledge, are capable of directing the NGO's governance instead of the other way round. In other cases, board members are being employed by the NGO, while maintaining their position on the board, creating a problem in accountability, especially in issues related to management recruitment, salaries, benefits, and performance evaluation, where the same individuals who should be supervising the performance of the management are themselves the managers. This is not restricted to "powerful" or "ruling" members but also to "close" members who await employment opportunity when the NGO is granted a funded project in which they are offered a paid post.

## 2. Management Processes

- a) The leadership of NGOs is mostly concentrated in one (President or Director) or group of individuals which can be called a "*ruling core*" who are capable of making decisions on behalf of the whole NGO. This ruling core sometimes stems from the NGO's founders, who have been able to maintain power and privileges over other members due to their qualifications, performance, commitment, social status, access to funding, members' personal loyalty, or dictatorship leadership style combined with other members' indifference or obedience. This pattern of personal leadership rather than collective leadership is very common and established among the Lebanese NGOs. This turns many Lebanese NGOs from institutions where decision-making and management systems follow set procedures into entities ran like personal businesses.
- b) The majority of NGOs lack an overall organisational vision and structure that they perceive would be an appropriate structure that could help the NGO achieve its goals. For example, the majority of NGOs don't have an overall organisational chart that clarifies the relationship between programs on the one hand and other support structures like administration and finance on the other. There exists also no vision of the organizational development of the NGO over a set period of time, to ensure that it has the necessary structures and resources to implement the program commitments it has.
- c) Written managerial procedures are often absent in NGOs. Tasks and responsibilities of different departments are not allocated according to clear organisational lines, but rather the majority of NGOs, especially with less than 10 staff, are characterised by a lack of institutionalisation, where decision making is highly centralised and is very much shaped and reflects the leader's individual personality.

- d) While most organizations with a high number of staff or a large membership base had a system of annual reporting on program performance and budget expenditure, very few of the smaller staffed NGOs, and the majority of non-staffed organizations had a regular reporting system other than basic financial reporting. For example, in the three case studies examined for this assessment, only one had yearly program and financial reports available, which were presented to the membership and discussed in general assembly meetings. Even among NGOs with a regular reporting system, almost all expressed the need for improved documentation systems and skills.
- e) Within staffed organizations, a few of the organizations have regular staff meetings for information sharing or regular systems for information exchange. Also, almost all staff interviewed said that they received no formal induction, and were only given basic introductory documents or even brochures to introduce themselves to the work of their new employer.

### **3. Human Resource Management**

#### **3.1 Staff Management**

- a) The Majority of NGOs does not have a set human resource policy that is written and distributed to staff. Also, the majority of don't have job descriptions for their staff, despite the fact that some recruit large numbers of employees. A few of the small NGOs interviewed which have staff less than 10, also mentioned that they don't have employment contracts with the staff.
- b) Very few NGOs have a systematic annual staff performance appraisal system. Almost none of the NGOs asked had a systematic mechanism of providing regular and comprehensive feedback on staff performance.
- c) Training of staff is not planned but is assigned ad-hoc according to what is offered to the NGO on short notice, and staff interviewed mentioned that among all the training they were offered, very few were requested by the staff themselves. This is attributed to the lack of an annual or semi-annual training program or timetable of offered workshops that allows the NGOs to plan the training of their staff according to themes and time-availability. Add to that, once a training opportunity is available, the selection of which staff or member is to attend can be influenced by either personal favouritism or the availability of the persons regardless of his/her profile suitability to the themes of the workshop.
- d) Many of the focus group participants believe that NGOs offer easier access to a job compared to private or public sector especially after graduation and at the same time offer a good forum to gain essential social and managerial skills. Having the opportunity to serve a greater cause, if they perceive their employer to be contributing positively towards it also motivates few of the junior level employees. Still the life cycle of employment in NGOs is limited by factors that push middle management or specialized staff to quit due to absence of career development opportunities, leadership style, frustration due to lack of participation and transparency in decision making or higher salaries offered in international NGOs. After quitting they tend to start their own NGO, get hired by International NGOs (could be the partner of the local NGO which he/she has quit), or become independent consultants.

- e) The study indicated that only some “mainstream” NGOs that employ more than 10 staff and is project-based funded, have set clear and transparent recruitment procedures. This can be partially related to donors’ requirements. On the other hand, most of rural NGOs or small NGOs with less than 3 staff don’t announce job vacancies or establish a standard recruitment procedure but tend to recruit those acquaintances that might fit the post.
- f) The data gathered suggested that most of the NGOs don’t offer sufficient benefits and insurance. The minority of NGOs which do offer such benefits, mainly NGOs with more than 10 staff or those which run service centres, offer their staff open employment contracts with NSSF subscription and termination benefits. While staff in NGOs with funded projects are offered time-bound contracts with adequate benefits during the contract period (life, accident and medical insurance) but without any termination benefits or pension remuneration.
- g) The focus groups pointed out that the utilization of consultants on short term bases particularly for technical posts prevents knowledge accumulation within the institution. The consultant’s priority is to carry the tasks and not to coach the permanent staff; hence very little expertise is retained within the NGO.
- h) According to the discussions, the internal personnel laws aren’t established or sufficiently elaborated in most of the NGOs. In NGOs that offer open employment contracts, the staff regulations are mainly those dictated by the Lebanese Labour Law. In NGOs working on funded projects basis, the staff regulations are much more tailored and elaborated and sometimes adopted from those of its main international partner.
- i) The study indicated significant disparities in the salaries of senior and junior staff in NGOs with project-funded staff. For example, in a project of 6 core staff (excluding junior posts such as secretary and driver), the highest salary is about seven times the amount of the lowest salary. Such gap is an indication of imbalanced scale and bias towards senior staff who most probably have set the budget.
- j) None of the NGO representatives interviewed stated that there is an established system to report and follow up on complaints of employees and volunteers or an organized structure for staff representation in leadership meetings and in decision making activities related to employment issues. In many participating NGOs, staff do not even know whom to report to in case of a complaint.

### 3.2 Volunteer Management

- a) The study revealed that NGOs **don’t rely much on volunteers** to implement activities and aren’t active in recruiting new ones even those with no staff structure or few volunteers. The NGOs either fail to allocate suitable tasks for the volunteers that match their skills and personal preferences or de-motivate them by keeping them idle and inactive for long periods. Few NGOs, mainly those working in urban contexts, whose programs appeal to youth and university graduates, are utilizing these potentials and skills but the main obstacle is the time availability for such volunteers, who are either studying or searching for a permanent job.
- b) Findings suggest poor **understanding of volunteerism** concepts and its role in Civil Society as a tool for development and community participation. Confusion exists in the distinction between a volunteer and a part-time employee, and several NGOs, especially those working in Palestinian camps provide regular financial rewards to volunteers, but with little alternative forms of rewarding. Vagueness also exists in the boundaries between a volunteer and a

beneficiary within NGOs that have specific target beneficiary groups such as youth and handicapped.

- c) Results showed also that only few NGOs have appropriate volunteer recruitment, motivation, retaining policies and skills. Data gathered indicates that few NGOs carry adequate and efficient recruiting activities. Most rely on word of mouth and members bringing friends. Little or almost no induction and explanation of the NGOs' mission, goals and regulations is provided. There is little understanding, as stated by volunteers themselves of what motivates volunteers to join, and their evolving needs and motives and to continue to serve the NGO over his/her volunteerism life cycle is associated with the group age and career needs, besides the desire to serve the cause of their organization. As such, NGOs are not able to retain qualified trained volunteers that they have invested in.
- d) The study indicated that **volunteerism among Lebanese NGOs is very dynamic and abundant** due to the established freedoms within the Lebanese society and its dynamic civil society. Some of the interviewed volunteers described voluntary work not as a waste of time or a leisure activity, but as an entry point to employment and personal and professional development, and an opportunity to gain social skills and experience which will qualify the volunteer to enter the private sector where he/she can establish a career.
- e) Almost half of the volunteers taking part in the study were engaged in more than one NGO, and expressed that once an individual starts voluntary work, especially if they start at a young age volunteerism becomes part of their regular activities. That said, some of the volunteers mentioned that they previously lead their own community initiative, without even being affiliated with an NGO, indicating a desire to be socially engaged that could be capitalized on by NGOs.
- f) Only about one third of the volunteers interviewed are or have been members of their NGO's general assembly. Some have said they did not want to become members, and feel that it is acceptable to volunteer with an NGO even if they are not hundred percent in agreement with the organization's aims; they have also felt that their membership would mean more commitment to the NGO. That said, at least half of those present (mainly the younger group and the Palestinians) do not know what an NGO is by law and what its governing structure is, and thus do not know what membership really means, and what the role of a general assembly or a board is.
- g) The sectarian and **political partisan NGOs are increasingly attracting youth** among the polarized Lebanese population who are interested in manifesting their position through engagement in such organizations. Youth also seek personal "interest" by applying for partisan NGOs.



## 4. Financial Resources and Administration

### 4.1 Funding

- a) The study pointed out that **funding of Lebanese NGOs** comes from six types of sources or a combination of more than one, as follows:
1. **Members' contribution and social events** and donations from individuals who are concerned with the work of the NGO which funds CBOs or small NGOs without managerial structure. The amount of funding made available by this type is small compared to other types of funding.
  2. Contracting with one or more of the **ministries**. It was interesting to note that NGOs interviewed which are paid by one or more ministries are usually NGOs that have a service centre.
  3. **Diaspora and rich community members** are main source of funding for rural CBOs. This source is almost exhausted or controlled by the dominant political parties within their area.
  4. **Political figures/parties** that funds mainly NGOs with homogenous politically affiliated members and geographical-based NGOs in both rural and urban areas. It is to gain political allegiance from the NGO members and the community it serves regardless of the nature of the NGO's activities
  5. **Religious-duties funding** either locally or from the Arabic States and is benefiting mainly religious welfare institutions or service centres. It is more based on personal contacts and individual credibility combined by religious "brotherhood" sympathy.
  6. **Project-based funding** especially from western donors (whether governmental or non-governmental) and is mainly focusing on "mainstream" NGOs that can abide by professional standards of program management and already have a history of working relation with these type of donors.
  7. Membership fees, income generating activities, and revenue of services: This source is limited in amount, but the most instrumental in guaranteeing an organization's independence. The extent to which NGO leadership is accountable for its expenditure depends on the governance structure within the NGO.
- b) According to these types of funding, the grant can be classified into two types based on easiness to access and report back:
- **Easy money** that **doesn't require adequate proposal and justification nor reporting and follow-up.**
  - **Difficult money** that requires **project proposal** and strict mechanism of monitoring and reporting to the donors according to the donors' established procedures which could be very slow and complicated hence restricting access to these funds to few mainstream NGOs. Examples of difficult money are funds granted by western donors.
- c) Another classification is related to conditional "**expectations**" of the donor in exchange of **granting** and could be labelled as **partisan money** which compromises the NGO neutrality and independence. A clear example of partisan money is funds granted by political figures (type 4).

A possible example can be the funds donated for religious purposes (type 5) and also granted by western governmental donors (type 6) if the donating government is actively involved within the Lebanese politics.

- d) The **level of political polarization** and division has pushed the political parties to resort also to the NGO sector as a means in their struggle. Hence the **NGO sector has become a target for the political parties** to demonstrate power and mobilize followers while their main tool to “control” the NGOs has been through political pressure, funding of existing NGOs, or establishing their own NGOs that actually competes with the existing NGOs on accessing the beneficiaries.
- e) The interviews underscored that the **type of funding of the NGO strongly influences its leadership structure**, governance and membership base. For example members with close contacts to the funding source such as political religious donors are elected and even allowed to “control” the NGO for the sake of bringing funds intentionally disregarding the democratic practices of governance.

#### 4.2 Financial Management

- a) According to interviews, **those who carry external auditing are few** and mainly due to the donors request.
- b) The results showed that the NGOs in general are capable of submitting the adequate financial and taxation documents as requested by law. In small and rural NGOs that don't have dedicated financial staff, the preparation of needed accounting official documents is outsourced to freelance accountants.
- c) **The financial planning** in most small NGOs is done for the sake of form and **only to meet the legal obligation** of submitting an annual budget to Ministry of Interior at the beginning of each year. The set budget doesn't reflect any actual financial planning.
- d) Some of the donors interviewed complained about the quality of reporting of some NGOs in terms of proper expense justifications and the quality of invoices and receipts presented as well as the delay in submitting the reports and financial justification. These complaints are not confined only to NGOs with no or small accounting staff support but also to some mainstream (established) NGOs.
- e) The results indicate that little differentiation exists between the member's and the NGO's assets. Expenses covered by individual members on behalf of the NGO are not understood whether they are donations or loans. This ambiguity, which is mainly observed in rural and small NGOs, is also accompanied in many instances with the lack of financial transparency towards the General Assembly.
- f) Some NGOs are more **interested in acquiring assets** than in how to maintain them, utilize them efficiently and sustain their running cost. Eventually, NGOs end up with large buildings with empty floors or equipment packed that can't operate or utilize. This is mainly due to a strong and **widespread understanding** within NGO leadership that **organizational development of an NGO is mainly expansion of its assets**. An example that reflects this as well as NGOs tendency to favour acquisition of assets, is the plan of one NGO senior representative to purchase a truck which the NGO needs only five times a year rather than renting when needed. The representative was totally unaware of the running, maintenance and depreciation costs of the asset.



- g) The interviews underlined weakness among some NGOs in cash flow planning and liquidity management. For example, very few NGOs forecast the cash flow and hence plan their payments accordingly, which in many cases leads to suspension of activities or delay in cash transfers. The same applies for their ability of making sound financial choices.

## 5. Program Performance

### 5.1 Program Design and Planning

- a) Most participating NGOs do not go through a strategic program planning process and have no set systems for assessing needs and developing programs accordingly. Exceptions to this exist, among older well-established charities, and relatively newer organizations, that follow a strict professional system and have board membership from academia or the private sector.
- b) The work of most organisations interviewed was closely tied to their mission, and overall program design was derived from there. As such, the value and clarity of programs implemented today was dependant on the clarity by which the mission was laid out at time of NGO establishment, and several had broad or vague mission statements (like “helping the most deprived in Lebanon”) in which any program could fit. An exception this are change NGOs, which appeared to be more focused on what they actually wan to achieve, and can see the accumulation of their programs’ impact over the years.
- c) New programs are mostly initiated in one of three ways:
  1. Board initiated: Idea is mainly motivated by the urge to cover a certain geographical area where the NGO has no presence, and trying to find an issue to work on. This is usually initiated by the board and already has funding secured for it from individual donors. One NGO for example said it has started to construct a centre for people with special needs in Tyre, but realized half way through that another NGO has a centre for the same target group, so changed its project to target the elderly.
  2. Staff initiated: middle management or program staff in branches (who possibly live in the community they serve) usually initiate the idea and suggest it to upper management and then the board. The recommendation of the staff is based on an overall perception of a need (of a certain area or target group) and on a basic scoping if the same sort of project is available, but is not followed at all by a more thorough needs assessment.
  3. Donor initiated: This is the case of NGOs that are mostly dependent on international funding (mostly west European and North American), where the NGO management is approached by a funding agency that already has its own set agenda or plan and looking for a partner to implement it. Alternatively, an NGO's management would scope the funding priorities and design a program that bridges these priorities and its own mission or area or expertise.
- d) In all three cases above, NGO representative mentioned no systemic consultation with program beneficiaries and stake holders outside of the NGO. That said, At least half of the beneficiaries interviewed said they have made suggestions to the NGOs which were taken into consideration, and that details of implementation, like the timing, were negotiated with them. They also mentioned that the comments and suggestions given in evaluation forms are heard, and that staff are approachable for suggestions and feedback.
- e) The shape of the project itself usually follows traditional design of other programs already

being implemented in same NGO or other similar NGOs.

- f) Smaller NGOs in rural areas, described little need for planning and prioritisation, and claim that whatever service they provide to the community is positive because the need is there at all levels and for all themes.
- g) That said, the organic process of developing a project that is staff initiated (option 2 above), has the greatest potential to produce relevant projects despite the fact that it is not systematic, if the mission of the NGO is well focused and adequate dialogue takes place. Within this process, and when a good project does come up, its actual implementation is dependant on the availability of funding.
- h) A more systemic planning process does exist within organisations that receive international funding (mostly west European and North American), but remains limited to the project itself, and little space exists for synergy between projects especially if these projects are funded by different donors. Absent synergy is also evident in that projects within one organization could have different planning, monitoring and evaluation modules that follow the requirements of each donor, and are mainly implemented for that sake, and not by necessity to improve project performance.

## 5.2 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

- a) The source of funding for NGOs is crucial to deciding what projects an NGO actually implements, and how, as well as the way it assesses it. Service based and charitable NGOs, which rely on individual donors in Lebanon and on Arab or religious funding for example tend to think more of reaching out to a larger number of beneficiaries and seem not to be questioned about the value or the quality of the work they are providing. NGOs that depend on international funding, follow project-based implementation, and are encouraged to follow systemic planning, implementation and M&E.
- b) Most NGOs mentioned that they have no set systemic monitoring and evaluation methods. Most do not have set indicators and do not measure their progress regularly. This is especially true for NGOs with up to 2 staff, where none of the NGOs asked in two focus groups said they implement any monitoring and evaluation.
- c) Although without set M&E systems, many NGOs (mostly operational ones with no staff as well as change NGOs) do question informally their programs and the impact it has achieved and incorporate the learning from that questioning into their future work.
- d) NGOs that have systemic M&E usually implement it based on the request of their funding agency, and though it is implemented the value of it on the organization's internal learning is mixed, and a good part of M&E is invested in measuring outputs rather than outcomes. While a few NGOs have mentioned the value of going through that process, for several other NGOs this has remained a time consuming exercises, and the process of which does not spill over to other projects nor is it broadened to include the overall NGO implementation process and achievement.
- e) Beneficiaries were divided as to their evaluation of their organizations' implementation strategy. While beneficiaries interviewed from two NGOs were generally satisfied, and felt the design and implementation suited their needs. Beneficiaries from a third organization had many complaints about the quality of the service they receive. Unsatisfied beneficiaries

blamed the deficiency in the service they receive to the lack of financial resources in the organization, and excused that to an extent, as this was the only organization to provide such a service for free.

### 5.3 Results Achieved

- a) Few participating NGOs could clearly describe the impact of the work they are doing. Most of them described their work as one continuous set of programs that deliver services to a certain number of beneficiaries. Little reflection is given to the added value of the NGOs contribution in terms of priorities in Lebanon, or to the systemic changes needed to ensure the sustainability of the impact of their work. Sustainability is rather thought of as the sustainability of the NGO itself and the continuous implementation of services, rather than dealing with the root causes of the problems that cause these needs, or holding state institution accountable for improved services.
- b) Change driven NGOs, had the clearest view of their impact, describing over the life span of their projects concrete results including achieving changes in law and policy (relating to people with special needs for example) and putting the issues they are advocating for on the agenda (like violence against women). These NGOs were clear on their mission and on how their programs over the years are closely tied to that mission (their theory of change), though they do not by necessity have good program specific evaluation and impact assessment procedures.
- c) Service based NGOs and NGOs working in the Palestinian camps, especially those with a larger number of staff described their impact in terms of the number of people reached, claiming that by their work they have minimised possible damage on most vulnerable groups. In the case of Palestinian NGOs, most didn't see value or possible impact in an advocacy approach towards the Lebanese Government or in achieving any real developmental impact in their communities, given the harsh reality within the camp and the inability to change a broader context that continues to recreate the needs.
- d) None of the NGOs saw the possible negative impact of their work (like aid dependency and disempowering local structures).
- e) The impact varies when seen from the perspective of beneficiaries interviewed. Five beneficiaries interviewed from two different organizations were generally satisfied with the programs which responded to their priorities. They feel they have personally benefited and were empowered through their involvement in the work. This is not by necessity an indicator of quality programming, as their answers to other questions give a general impression that they are relatively easy to satisfy, or are willing to accept what is offered to them due to lack of other options. Beneficiaries interviewed from another organization were less satisfied, mainly due to the logistics of implementation. They mentioned other policy related issues that would be instrumental in empowering them, but that no NGO is working on.

## 6. External Relations

### 6.1 Social and Cultural Environment

- a) Generally NGOs did not mention development priorities in Lebanon or MDGs for example as key factors that influence their strategic planning. NGOs rather appeared limited to their own sector.
- b) Participants in one focus group described the scarcity of quality research on social issues as an obstacle that makes prioritizing their work more difficult. When research is available, they said, it is often politicized or altered to fit political positions.
- c) Some NGOs described being pressured by groups within or related to the social context that impede the implementation of their programs. One women's rights organization for example mentioned the opposition from some religious authorities on certain aspects of their work.
- d) The relationship between the Palestinian NGOs and their surroundings is one that merits a more thorough look. NGOs in the camps are major employers for Palestinian refugees, and as such are central to the economic life of the camps, as well as a way of channeling funds and improving the living conditions in the camps through providing employment opportunities, regardless of the impact of their work. The security situation also adds its toll; some NGOs are questioned and feel pressured by political factions, especially in camps that are controlled by one faction, and to a lesser extent in camps where there are several military/political players. Another problematic relationship is with the army in Nahr el-Bared camp, where security measures have hindered relief and development efforts.

### 6.2 Partnership with other NGOs and Networks

- a) In general cooperation and networking between NGOs is plagued by competition for funding and visibility as well as personal and political conflicts.
- b) Two factors seemed to increase the success of cooperation between NGOs: i) the cooperation between NGOs on specific time bound initiatives and ii) the existence of strong personal relationship between the leaders of the cooperating NGOs
- c) Participating NGOs spoke of four different types of networking activities:
  1. Membership of international networks working on the themes that the NGO covers, especially for NGOs with specialization of international interest like the environment, corruption, etc.
  2. Membership of set registered NGO networks, Like the "Collectif des ONG au Liban" , the "Lebanese NGO forum", and the "Palestinian NGO Forum" nationally, and the NGO forum of Sidon locally. Membership in the national level these networks appear to be reserved to larger well-established NGOs, whereas membership in the local forums is more diverse in terms of size but restricted geographically. Successful cooperation within these networks has been highlighted at times of crisis (like the summer 2006 war on Lebanon), but less evident in terms of longer-term cooperation for a specific cause in times of stability. In addition, competition exists at times between these networks.

3. Partnership and networking on a specific theme or campaign. This has been mostly described in change focused NGOs, and appears to be most successful where the cooperation is quite focused on a specific project and theme, and no competition exists between participating NGOs on funding. Examples of this is the cooperation of NGOs working on the rights of people with disability, or the cooperation that brings NGOs working on Violence against Women on one side and violence against children on the other.
  4. Limited activity specific support, where an organization lends its premises for example to another NGO for a one-time activity. Examples of this also exist between CBOs and national organizations, where the larger national organization provides funding but uses the CBO for direct implementation; an agreement that the CBO approves to enter since it provides it with visibility and the opportunity to implement projects within the community.
- d) Cooperation varies also based on the type of organization. Palestinian organizations seem to have more sophisticated networking strategies among them, though they felt that they were somewhat excluded from Lebanese networks. Rural NGOs are less likely to be members of networks, although they are eager to know more about other NGOs working within their sectors in other areas.
  - e) The contribution of networking to improve impact varied; while partnership in campaigning has provided relatively good results, service based organizations for example mentioned that many NGOs work in the same geographical areas on similar issues with little coordination, while at the same time many people in need, especially in distant rural areas are not targeted by any NGO.

### 6.3 Relationship with Government authorities

- a) Only a few NGOs, mostly advocacy oriented, have up to date knowledge about policy relating to their work. In addition, few have dynamic dialogue based working relationship with the government authorities, as opposed to a confrontational critical one.
- b) Some of the obstacles in working with some policy and lawmakers as well as ministry staff, are in their attitude towards and knowledge of development issues, which some NGOs, especially change driven NGOs saw as contradictory with their development vision (in issues like inclusion, or institutional care). Disorganized institutional structures of ministries, bureaucratic working procedures, and limited coordination between ministries impose another difficulty in cooperation with ministries. In addition, a few NGOs mentioned that their demands to governmental institutions are seen as personal ones, or are granted only because of electoral or political gains.
- c) In terms of the relationship with the Ministry of Social affairs, only few of the participating NGOs from rural areas knew about the activities of the ministry and the NGO support unit, although they were eager to cooperate with it. The majority of change based and smaller organizations criticized the system through which the Ministry partners with NGOs, saying that it is reserved for a privileged few. One of the larger service based organizations criticized MoSA by saying it lacks a social strategy. ,.
- d) At the local level, national NGOs seem to be relatively capable of partnering with

municipalities to implement projects. Surprisingly, partnership between CBOs and municipalities do not operate as smoothly, especially in rural areas where the municipalities have recently been established, and there rather exists some competition on funding between CBOs and municipalities, or variation in priorities where Municipalities prioritize infrastructure and construction needs over social needs.

- e) While all NGOs working in Palestinian camps discussed discrimination in laws governing Palestinian refugees' civil rights, few seem to have attempted to cooperate with the Lebanese authorities on the work they are doing. A few reflected on the possibility of cooperation with the municipalities for infrastructure issues, especially where the percentage of Lebanese within the camps is higher. Some positive examples of cooperation are highlighted, though seen as exceptions; one is the cooperation with the Higher Council for Childhood on children's rights, the other is with the initiation of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), though felt at the strategic level, this is not present at the popular level within the camps.

#### **6.4 Relationship with the Media**

- a) In general, problems of cooperation between NGOs and the media are a reflection of the problems of the NGOs themselves and their working context, including the lack of strategic thinking, poor networking between the NGOs, political polarization, and the marginalization of rural NGOs.
- b) A main problem is that NGOs deal with media mainly as advertisement and not as partners in social change. NGOs sometimes want to promote the NGO itself more than it seeks to advocate or educate on the theme it is working on, or only want media coverage to fulfill donor requirements. Media on the other hand is interested in better cooperation with NGOs, and has several needs that can be fulfilled by them, specifically for credible information, reports, statistics on social issues they are covering, and also for contact with interviewees or ordinary people from the ground (them being closely networked on the ground). Some issues are specifically appealing, though sometimes with differentials, as to the type of media (for example an issue like citizenship would be appealing to the print media and not to TV).
- c) A related problem is the absence of coordination between the NGOs, especially those working on a common theme, which could help them to push for real awareness raising and advocacy on a certain topic in partnership with the media. Rivalry between NGOs to appear on the media, forces journalists to tread a fine line when they want to work on a certain topic, and who to approach and how in order not to upset one NGO or the other. In addition, NGOs do not always provide accurate and credible information in a form that is easily understood by media representatives. When looking for specific data on an issue, international NGOs are more likely to have the information than the local NGOs, and even when an NGO is known to have information in a specific period, that information is not followed through on.
- d) In terms of the political affiliation of either the NGO or the media institution; some NGOs have some sort of long term partnership with one or another media organization that guarantee the publication of their stories, which in turn limits the interest of other media organizations in the same story. Some NGOs or individuals within them would hesitate to take part in a program if the media is known to be affiliated to one political group.
- e) There exist, as media personnel have discussed, a group of "elite NGOs", that are trusted by the media, each in their own theme, because of a history of relationship with the media and a



track record of trust established through their work and funding sources. These are the NGOs that have clear strategic plans, several donors, staff and a budget that is no less than 100,000 US dollars a year. Their relationship with the media is professional, their media invitation are sent at least two weeks ahead, and personal follow-up with contact people in the media institution is established (and possibly with a media coordinator). While the attention given to these NGOs is well deserved, sometimes this group of “elite NGOs” gain monopoly over what comes of the NGOs to the media, and possible smaller emerging NGOs, especially from rural areas, do not manage to gain voice. These elite NGOs usually work with donors and have the skills of attractively advertising their work.

- f) Some NGOs, especially those with funding from a ministry, are ambivalent about responding to media requests and often view the information requests from media as a “threat” as if the media organization aims solely at scrutinizing their work. The impression they give is that they prefer to be kept alone, and feel no value of media coverage (especially those that are service oriented).

### 6.5 Relationship with donors

- a) A good percentage of NGO funding is “easy money” which means funding that the NGO is not held accountable as to how it spends it. While it is hard to determine the share of that from the overall NGO funding, we estimate it to be no less than 50% of NGO funding. In one focus group with NGOs working nationally that have over 10 staff, four out of the six organizations present had between 75 and 95 percent of their funding from individual donations, and three others had 50-90 percent of their funding from the revenue of services they provide. While 4 out of the six did receive international grants, this amounted to no more than 5-30 percent of their budget, and only two received Lebanese governmental funding which accounted to 22-27 percent of their budget. “Easy money” also appears to constitute the majority of CBOs funding, in both rural and urban settings, especially for organizations that have up to 2 staff. That said, even with international funding, which is the source from which change and Palestinian organizations received most of their funding, accountability is limited to the interest of the donor, creating the dichotomy for the NGO between being accountable to its membership base on the one hand and the donors on the other.
- b) NGOs have suggested that funding agencies come with ready-made suggestions, and it is really hard to negotiate with them the value of these projects in terms of social impact. They claim that there is funding, but it is one that doesn't suit the needs on the ground, which, according to NGO representatives, are also hard to properly assess given the lack in studies and credible needs assessments. Attempts to initiate dialogue between NGOs and donors are not prevalent and happen only with international non-governmental donor foundations.
- c) Some NGOs claim that they do not receive (by way of principle) any external funding, and feel that international funding comes with its own agenda, and rather disrupts and obscures a culturally rooted system of social support. One participant in particular actually felt offended by international funding that comes with a top down modernization agenda, and claiming that the equivalent of huge amounts of highly advertised funds by international NGOs, are regularly and easily contributed by individual Lebanese donors to charity work in Lebanon.
- d) International donors target larger local NGOs, or alternatively work with locally based international NGOs that work as a mediator between the smaller NGOs and the donors. Newly

emerging consultancy firms, that are registered as for or not-for profit companies also compete for their funds.

- e) CBOs are left with little neutral funding opportunities, where the easiest access they have is to funding from local political groups, with which comes political allegiance to the donor's political agenda. Some CBOs found no problem in taking such money, as they already adhere to the politics of that group, a practice more commonly found in NGOs that have one-person leadership. Others claim that they could take the money and find gaps through which they could retain their neutrality, though many others thought such a process is only possible for larger NGOs who have more credit to their name and can take funding from competing political sources and retain their middle position. Still, for a good part of the CBOs, they described a process of exclusion for any CBO that does not adhere with one of the dominant political groups and takes its funding, and that their projects are actually attacked, and funding from other sources is obstructed, as any activity implemented by this CBO is perceived as a challenge to the political parties' mobilization. That said, some CBOs have mentioned other sources of funding, such as membership fees and donations from richer community members in the diaspora.
- f) NGOs of varying sizes and funding sources stressed the importance, of personal relations in attracting and securing funding. As such, many members of CBOs saw that fundraising was mainly done by approaching social/political figures.
- g) Palestinian NGOs appeared to have less of a problem in securing funds and had better skills in establishing relations with foreign donors (either foundations or informal grouping of activists).

## 6.6 Relationship with the private sector

- a) The type or association between the companies and NGOs is of three main categories: sponsorship of the NGOs' events, donation mostly in kind of what the company produces, or an established partnership to implement a community-based project or product-related campaign.
- b) The interviews showed that the companies have interest in partnering with NGOs in community-based projects for several reasons:
  1. Matching interest, where most missions of the companies include a component of "developing and improving the communities" through their products which match with the main theme of all NGOs' missions.
  2. NGOs have accessibility and better knowledge of the beneficiaries and communities.
  3. NGOs can implement these projects more efficiently than the companies since they already have the expertise and know how.
  4. Due to increased competition among companies, they have to resort to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a marketing tool.
  5. If the company carried out CSR activities independently, the public will perceive its initiative, as a pure act of marketing while partnering with NGOs in implementing such projects will give an impression of genuine interest of the company in improving the community.



- c) National coverage, capability of efficient implementation, non-partisan and non-political image, and existing association between the NGO specialty/cause and the company's products (for example garbage bags and environmental NGOs or stationary providers and educational NGOs) are among the main attributes which companies are interested in when selecting potential partnering NGOs.
- d) Personal relations and contacts between companies' manager/owners and NGOs personnel influence the decision whether to support an NGO or not and to what extent. Usually such support is a donation in kind or cash and not partnership over a project.
- e) The results revealed that most NGOs approach the companies with a mindset of "what can you contribute" instead of a clear proposal of "what we want and this is how we divide the tasks/inputs between us." This "shopping list" attitude doesn't promote a long-term partnership relation between the NGOs and companies and produces short-term benefits. Moreover, NGOs approach the companies often unprepared and with little understanding of the company's mission, values and corporate social responsibility objectives, minimizing as such the prospects of building partnership.
- f) The private sector representatives interviewed highlighted their need to be informed about which NGO is doing what. Similarly, the participating NGO representatives also indicated their need for information about and access to private companies that they can partner with.

#### **Feedback on Available Capacity Building Opportunities for NGOs**

Data gathered from NGOs and Capacity-building providers interviewed suggests that there is no scarcity of training opportunities for NGOs, and the need is rather for:

- Information on available training opportunities reaching NGOs that need it most, including CBOs especially in rural areas.
- More specialized customized training agendas that provide deeper knowledge of the theme being trained on and practical tools for its implementation. Many of the training opportunities are redundant, too general or not customized to fit the particular needs of NGOs in Lebanon.
- Ensuring post workshop follow-up and provision of on the job support if needed, as most training opportunities are available as one off activities with no follow-up.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below are divided into two sections; a set of seven general recommendations on the overall approach to capacity building that we suggest the NGO unit follows, and a longer more specific set of recommended topics for capacity building activities, target audience and suggested methodology of implementation.

- 1) **Facilitate a nation wide debate on priority development needs in Lebanon and discuss best approaches to tackle them** for improved and synergetic development work: the NGOs unit can play an instrumental role work in ensuring the collective work of NGO achieves more strategic impact through:
  - a) Suggesting priority development themes and areas in Lebanon.
  - b) Commissioning research pieces, or making available existing research on priority development issues, that would allow NGOs to make more informed decisions on strategic goals and target audiences.
  - c) Creating dialogue opportunities between key players, including local NGOs, International NGOs and donor agencies, governmental bodies including ministries, councils and municipalities, and capacity building providers. These could be implemented through regular seminars, newsletters, or consultative workshop.
  - d) Collating strategy papers, based on the above research and dialogue that serves as a theoretical reference for active NGOs, allows for synergetic implementation of development projects and better match between donors priorities, NGO activities, and priority needs.
- 2) **Boost spaces and opportunities for information sharing:** The database of NGOs working in Lebanon was seen as a needed resource by several NGOs, the NGO unit can extend its role in collecting and disseminating information, through web based as well as print methods, independently or in partnership with existing initiatives, on the following:
  - a) Information about local NGOs (which is already available).
  - b) Information about the work of International NGOs, donors, their funding interests, calls for proposals and deadlines.
  - c) Contacts of capacity building providers, and schedule of upcoming training opportunities.
  - d) Resources, research, manuals and toolkits available, especially resources in Arabic or ones adapted to suit the Lebanese context.
- 3) Monitor and **participate in the reform of laws and policies** that govern the work of NGOs: As findings indicated the impact of the laws that govern the work of NGOs in Lebanon on their internal governance and management structures, the unit can engage with the Ministry of Interior, NGOs, and other interested stakeholders on improved laws and policies regarding NGO registration and supervision, to ensure that their structures are more democratic and better suited to address development needs.
- 4) Support the **adaptation of capacity building opportunities to suit the needs of the Lebanese context:** A good part of capacity building opportunities available are based on international models that do not by necessity suit the needs of a Lebanese context. The Unit should engage in dialogue and development of improved models that include issues that are of

particular relevance to NGOs in Lebanon, including politicization of civil society activities, crisis prone areas, and imbalanced rural development.

- 5) **Enhance the training efficiency and its impact**, through
  - a) Refine the pre-training selection process of both the participating NGO and its representative(s) through interviewing and screening the seconded candidates or requesting a pre-test questionnaire to assess the actual level of need and interest within the NGO or/and its representative(s) in the topic offered, and possibly a letter of commitment by participating NGOs to facilitate and implement a preset follow-up action plan manifesting the utilization of learning from the training.
  - b) Establish follow up mechanisms of the trainings provided to assess and encourage the participating NGOs utilization of the skills and knowledge gained. Such follow up could be in the form of follow-up workshops, post-training in-house visits or interviews. The follow up of the participant's utilization of the training should be joint process involving both the Unit and the NGO leadership (direct supervisor of the trainee)
  - c) Continue with the cost sharing policy for training workshops offered by the unit and divide it proportionally among the Unit, the NGO and possibly the participant him/herself.
  - d) Link the topics and themes of training services offered by the Unit with a need or interest within the NGOs to facilitate application of knowledge and skills gained. For example, to provide the budgeting training in December, one month before the month when the Lebanese NGOs are supposed to submit their annual budgets to the Ministry of Interior.
- 6) **Diversify the methods of capacity building implementation**, to include opportunities other than training including:
  - a) Twinning or mentoring between a developed NGO and a developing NGO, including joint planning, fund raising, implementation, evaluation and reporting. Another possible form of such mentoring is to encourage internships for staff of smaller NGOs at larger, better established. The Unit could set the ToRs of such twinning, bridge the two parties and follow-up on its implementation.
  - b) Similar to the legal advice service being currently offered by the Unit - which needs to be better, disseminated – other one to one consultations and in-house coaching, on specific topics would be very useful, especially on organizational development, and for the adaptation of certain models or implementation of skills NGOs have been trained on. This can be outsourced to external consultants or to a qualified staff from an NGO that has the relevant expertise.
  - c) Development of toolkits and training manuals.
- 7) **Reach out to CBOs outside Greater Beirut**. The study showed that most of the NGOs, particularly rural CBOs, are unaware of the Unit and its services, which they found relevant and essential. This outreach approach can be achieved without enlarging the unit's existing structure, through a more rigorous communication strategy, the MoSA social development centres, and centres of national Lebanese NGOs in rural areas.



**Table 2 – Suggested Training Topics**

	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
<b>Governing Structure</b>	NGO governance and role and responsibilities of board and General Assembly members	NGO Board and General Assembly members	Seminars Strategy papers
	Laws governing the work of NGOs and their membership	General Assembly members Volunteers	Training Seminars Pamphlets
	Sustaining inclusive values within the organization (Gender sensitivity, inclusion, non-partisan political and religious practice) and conflict transformation skills	All	Seminars Strategy Papers Public debates
	Building organizational commitment and staff motivation	Board members NGO Management	Training
	Models for organizational development that combines institutional work with its representational role.	Board and GA members of NGOs with Staff	Publications and seminars of case studies and models of organizations structures Seminars Public debates
<b>Management Processes</b>	Managerial skills: meeting facilitation, leadership skills, conflict resolution and efficient communication	NGO Management	Training Workshops
	Basic administrative, communication, and organizational skills	Board members of CBOs	Training Workshops
	Organizational development and restructuring	NGO Management	Organizational development consultancy service, similar to the legal advice available, to provide one on one support in organizational restructuring and management.
	Documentation and reporting skills	NGO Management Program staff	Training
<b>Human Resources</b>	Volunteerism: what is volunteerism and how to recruit, retain and motivate volunteers	Board members Program staff	Training
	Human resource and performance management	NGO Management	Training

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		Human resource managers	
	Restructuring and establishing Job descriptions	NGO managers Human resource managers	Training Hands on Support
<b>Financial Resources and Administration</b>	Basic financial and accounting practices	Finance and administration staff	Training
	Annual budgeting, financial planning and management	Board members NGO management Finance staff	Training Seminars
	Design and management of income generation projects	Board members NGO management Finance staff	Seminars Training
	Financial analysis, reporting and audit.	Finance and administration staff Management staff	Training Hands on Support (for smaller NGOs)
<b>Program Performance</b>	Needs assessment techniques and tools, including problem tree analysis	Management staff Program staff	Training Coaching Toolkits
	Strategic planning and “theory of change” tools	NGO Boards of all NGOs Program staff	Training Toolkits
	Project design and proposal writing		Training
	Monitoring and evaluation	Board members Management staff Program staff	Toolkits Training
	Thematic topics related to the specialisation of the NGOs such as working with people with special needs, children’s rights, primary health care	Program staff	Bridge between NGOs requesting training with available training opportunities

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<p><b>External Relationships</b></p>	<p>Key development concepts</p>	<p>Board members of larger NGOs Staff of corporate social responsibilities in the private sector</p>	<p>Seminars</p>
	<p>Improved communication with the media</p>	<p>NGO management and program staff</p>	<p>Manual/toolkit on communicating with the media, developed by media personnel, and includes best practices as well as contact details of media outlets</p>
	<p>NGO networking, creating long and short term partnerships and coalitions,</p>	<p>NGO management and program staff Board members</p>	<p>Documentation/publication of cases of best practices in cooperation and networking. Seminars Public debates Strategy papers</p>
	<p>Creating communication bridges between NGOs and Funding agencies</p>	<p>NGO Management and senior staff NGO Members of Board</p>	<p>1. NGO Fair 2. Website to include data on funding agencies and their call for proposals</p>

## ANNEX I - DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

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## ANNEX II - FRAMEWORK

The “capacity building framework” was developed to guide the assessment of capacity building needs of NGOs in Lebanon. It details suggested variables and indicators linked to increased capacity of NGOs in Lebanon. The framework was developed based on consultation with Arab & international resources and adapted to the Lebanese context based on feedback from NGO activists, local experts & researchers and field testing through a variety of qualitative methods during a field assessment of capacity building needs of NGOs in Lebanon in January – March 2009. The Framework is a guidance tool, and in not a quantitative measurement tool<sup>1</sup>, and might need adaptation for every type of organization’s specific needs.

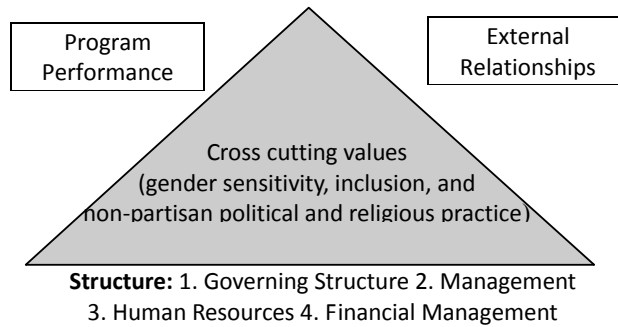
### What is Capacity building?

For this framework, we are adopting the definition presented by Van Geene<sup>2</sup>:

Capacity is defined as the ability of individuals and organisations to perform functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably. Capacity is the power of something (a system, an organisation, a person) to perform or to produce. (...) Non-governmental organisations need capacity to achieve their planned objectives, to have an impact and to fulfil their organisational purpose. **Capacity building is broader than organisational development**, since it includes the overall system, environment or context in which individuals, organisations and societies operate and interact. It is the process by which individuals, groups, organisations, institutions and societies increase their abilities to: (1) perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives; and (2) understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner.”

To include the overall system, we have chosen to organise the sets of indicators we have into a triangle with values at the core of the triangle and cross cutting different aspects of the organisation and equally important sides as follows:

- a) Structure, the largest of our components and the triangle's base, with sets of indicators for the following issues:  
governing structure (1),  
management processes (2),  
human resources (3) and,  
financial management and resources (4).
- b) Program performance (5)
- c) External Relationships (6)



This understanding of the interrelatedness of the different facades of an NGO, benefits from the overlapping circles model developed by the “Council for International development”<sup>3</sup> and the Civil Society Diamond of CIVICUS<sup>4</sup>:

- 1 See for example UNDP’s “Participatory Organizational Evaluation Tool (POET)”, 1998 <http://www.reflectlearn.org/mod/resource/view.php?id=98> & The *Organizational Assessment Tool*, designed and developed by the NGO Service Center (Egypt) in 2000.
- 2 “Participatory Capacity Building: A Facilitator’s Toolbox for Assessment and Strategic Planning of NGO Capacity” by Jouwert van Geene, <http://tinyurl.com/677vp7> - available on [www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org](http://www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org)
- 3 “Council for International development Resource Kit” - p18 <http://www.cid.org.nz/training/resource-kit/>
- 4 “Lebanese Civil society: A Long History of Achievement Facing Decisive Challenges Ahead of an Uncertain Future – CIVICUS Civil society Index Report for the Republic of Lebanon” (2006), by Khaldoun Abou Assi

## NGO Assessment Tool <sup>5</sup>

1. Governing Structure	
1.1 Mission, Vision Statements and guiding principals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The mission, vision statements and guiding principals are available in writing and communicated to all staff and members</li> <li>b) The mission, vision statements and guiding principals reflect non-discriminatory values (in terms of gender, disability, religion and sex, and other vulnerable groups)</li> <li>c) The mission, vision statements and guiding principals guide the design of the organisation's strategic aims, objectives, and programs</li> <li>d) Mission of NGO is not to provide services that substitute those that are legally the state's or other stakeholders responsibility (provides complementary services, or campaigns for the change in laws, policy, or state practice).</li> </ul>
1.2 Legal base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The organisation is registered according to law.</li> <li>b) Internal by laws and regulations (النظام الداخلي) have been adopted.</li> <li>c) Statues and by-laws provide the necessary framework that allows the organisation to achieve its goals and mission.</li> </ul>
1.3 General Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The general assembly membership is diversified with representation across political, gender, religious lines.</li> <li>b) The general assembly takes on its role as the main NGO stakeholder actively:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensures NGO activities are geared towards achieving its missions and objectives, participate in strategic planning, propose ideas, advocates for the objectives of the NGO, etc..</li> <li>- Elects board members, ensures board is called to account, reviews yearly plans, fundraising procedures and financial reports.</li> <li>- Pays annual membership fees, attends GA meetings at least once a year, participates in committees, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) Selection of members is non-discriminatory (in terms of gender, disability, religion and sex, and other vulnerable groups)</li> </ul>
1.4 Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Board members are representatives of stakeholders, and are able to represent a wide range of interests held by stakeholders.</li> <li>b) Board elections take place at least every two years</li> <li>c) No member serves on the board for over three election cycles</li> <li>d) At least 30% of board membership changes over two election cycles.</li> <li>e) The board fulfils its role in giving guidance, defining policies, fundraising, advocacy and public relations.</li> <li>f) The respective roles and responsibilities of the board directors and senior management are clearly defined.</li> </ul>

5 The framework follows, though with major adaptations, the Kirschbaum, Marco. "Organisational Assessment Tool (OAT)", NGO manager (2004) - <http://www.ngomanager.org/tools.htm>

<b>2. Management Processes</b>	
<p>2.1 Organisational chart, lines of responsibility, and effective work procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The NGO has an organisational chart accessible to all staff, members and stakeholders, which defines tasks and responsibilities of different departments, lines of communication between them, as well as staff's individual responsibilities &amp; ensures no duplication occurs.</li> <li>b) Operational and managerial procedures exist, are known and followed.</li> <li>c) Managers and staff have access to information and adequate decision-making power pertaining to their work and responsibilities (budget, distribution of tasks, key stakeholders, etc.)</li> <li>d) Decision-making is decentralised and is delegated when &amp; where necessary</li> <li>e) Tasks allocated to staff are appropriate to their time, capacity, and responsibility.</li> <li>f) Managers are easily accessible to their staff.</li> <li>g) Periodical organisational self assessments take place including reviews of management practices</li> </ul>
<p>2.2 Planning, reporting, &amp; knowledge management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Important knowledge is collected, appropriately stored (on paper or electronically), shared in an appropriate way to all concerned stakeholders, and used to achieve organisational objectives.</li> <li>b) Periodic meetings on each level of the organisation (department, division) take place for (1) information exchange, (2) debate and brainstorming of specific themes, (3) decision-making</li> <li>c) Meetings have set agenda, duration, minutes that are properly communicated, and are followed up on if needed.</li> <li>d) External resources and competencies are known and appropriately used (no over dependency on consultants, ability to recruit specialized support where needed, etc.).</li> <li>e) Management is accountable to the board and reports regularly on program performance, overall NGO administration, and budget.</li> <li>f) Overall organizational planning sessions take place, and include all the work on an NGO, including its program, administrative and financial departments. Plans are shared and followed.</li> <li>g) The organisation regularly provides factual reports (annually/periodically) to stakeholders adapted to their needs.</li> </ul>

<b>3. Human Resources</b>	
3.1 Human resources policy	<p>a) The organisation has a human resources policy, a training and development plan, staffing policies and regulations, which respect national labour legislation These policies and regulations are recorded in a manual and made accessible to the staff.</p> <p>b) Selection criteria for staff and volunteers and the recruitment process are fair and non-discriminatory: they are based on the candidate's qualifications, correspond to the requirements of the job and are in accordance with the organisations' values and beliefs. They are transparent and well communicated.</p> <p>c) For each employee has a clear &amp; signed work contract, a job description that accurately describes the tasks and skills required, and updated whenever necessary, and a personnel file (containing personal data, work history, information on salary development, promotions, etc.).</p>
3.2 Staff numbers, Salaries and Benefits	<p>a) An adequate budget is available for staff salaries to ensure job security during terms of contract.</p> <p>b) There are adequate human resources for the successful completion of programs and projects.</p> <p>c) Salaries and benefits correspond at least to those of comparable NGO's in the country/region, or are better.</p> <p>d) A compensation package is guided by a policy and guidelines (salary scale, NSSF registration, annual leave and holidays, maternity leave provided, transportation allowance, bonus, rewards and benefits ,etc).</p>
3.3 Staff performance, promotion and development	<p>a) Staff's performance is annually evaluated, and procedures for complaints and performance problems are available and known by all staff members and volunteers, and effectively employed</p> <p>b) All employees have a fair opportunity for promotion. Promotional opportunities are advertised and clearly identify the work and skills required.</p> <p>c) The organisation actively supports skill development for all of its staff and volunteers (on-going training opportunities, allocated time and budget, etc.)</p>
3.4 Personnel satisfaction and commitment	<p>a) Staff and volunteers are satisfied with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Salaries, benefits and other services to staff</li> <li>- Policy and administrative issues</li> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Recognition of individuals and teams</li> <li>- Empowerment and equal opportunities policies and their implementation</li> <li>- Training opportunities and career development</li> </ul> <p>b) Staff are motivated (check quality and quantity of improvements suggested, absenteeism, sickness and accidents levels, grievances, staff turnover).</p> <p>c) Staff satisfaction of organisation's role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- for main stakeholders and other civil society actors</li> <li>- in the community and society</li> </ul>
3.5 Volunteer management	<p>a) Organisation encourages the contribution of volunteers and has recruitment and training plan for new volunteers.</p> <p>b) Volunteers recruited understand the organisation's mission &amp; vision, support its cause, &amp; are able to integrate into its work.</p> <p>c) The skills of volunteers are adequately utilised.</p> <p>d) Interested volunteers have the opportunity to join the NGOs general assembly membership.</p>

<b>4. Financial resources &amp; administration</b>	
4.1 financial Management & accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The organisation respects laws, policies and regulations that are applicable to NGOs, including submission of yearly financial report, and staff registration in the NSSF, etc.</li> <li>b) Organization has a financial and fundraising plan, and services, projects and programs are defined with relevant financial requirements.</li> <li>c) Financial targets and budgets are met (no deficiency or surplus). Procedure for management of deficit or surplus is in place.</li> <li>d) The financial resources unit is led by a person with the adequate skills for the purpose.</li> <li>e) Offices are adequately equipped with furniture, lighting, sanitary installations, information technology (telephones, fax, computers, software, etc.) and others.</li> <li>f) Budgets are included in project management and can be adjusted when necessary.</li> <li>g) There is an administrative &amp; financial manual, with staff access to it, which is updated whenever there are changes (internal procedures, forms, filing, purchases, stock keeping, etc.). Manual contains guidelines and procedures for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Authorising and controlling expenditures.</li> <li>- Recording and reporting of financial information.</li> </ul> </li> <li>h) Purchases are carried out through competitive pricing and transparent comparison of several offers.</li> </ul>
4.2 funding and fiscal environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The organisation has access to resources and funding (allocations) provided by the government authorities, funding agencies and civil society stakeholders.</li> <li>b) The organisation is granted financial and fiscal benefits that are relevant to its legal status.</li> <li>c) There are multiple sources of funding which help to diversify the organisation's agenda over longer periods of time.</li> <li>d) The organisation has income generation activities.</li> <li>e) There is continuity in funding and no disruptions or gross disparities in funding level exist.</li> </ul>
4.3 Financial reporting & Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Regular internal and external financial reporting is carried out (eg. monthly, quarterly, annual, as appropriate).</li> <li>b) Financial reports are used to review budget plans.</li> <li>c) Financial reports can be made easily available to senior management and donors.</li> <li>d) Annual internal and external audits are carried out.</li> <li>e) Results of audits are made available to all concerned, taken into consideration and incorporated into future plans.</li> </ul>

<b>5. Program Performance</b>	
<p>5.1 Program design and Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The development of strategy and objectives are derived from the organisation's mission context.</li> <li>b) Programs are designed based on key priorities/needs in Lebanon and added value of NGO contribution.</li> <li>c) Design seeks to ensure synergy between different programs and clear about the theory of change behind the choice of programs and their contribution to NGOs mission.</li> <li>d) Programs are designed based on actual need assessment, existing studies, and field evidence.</li> <li>e) Program plans are established that contain:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Long, medium and short term objectives.</li> <li>- Impact and process indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of the objectives.</li> <li>- Timeline, human and financial resources needed.</li> <li>- Risk assessment and procedure to deal with it if it arises.</li> <li>- Is a realistic work plan of what is to be done, how, when and by whom.</li> </ul> </li> <li>f) Planning process is participatory including, management staff, target group, &amp; other key stockholders</li> <li>g) Planning process ensures that program design is gender sensitive and inclusive of different vulnerable groups</li> </ul>
<p>5.2 Implementation, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Programs are generally implemented as planned, and adequate resources are available.</li> <li>b) Implementation is cost effective and adheres to budget.</li> <li>c) Implementation process allows for co-ordination, experience sharing between different programs.</li> <li>d) Implementation procedures ensure participation of target groups through out program cycle.</li> <li>e) Problems arising during implementation are effectively and promptly dealt with.</li> <li>f) A monitoring and evaluation system exists of overall impact of organization's impact and an adequate set of indicators is in place:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are clear procedures for monitoring (which data is to be collected, how, by whom, for whom).</li> <li>- Progress achieved against stated objectives is routinely checked and reported to the appropriate level of the hierarchy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>g) M&amp;E system includes indicators on impact of the project on men/women; ethnic minorities; disabled people; other excluded groups.</li> <li>h) Results of the monitoring process are analysed, shared and discussed with managers and staff members concerned and are integrated in future programming to improve services, products and performance.</li> <li>i) Results of monitoring and evaluation are shared with other stakeholders, including beneficiaries, other NGOs, donors, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>5.3 Results Achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Main stakeholders are satisfied with the organisation's services, projects, programs &amp; financial results.</li> <li>b) NGO programs have a positive impact on society at large (change in related governmental policies, resource management and programs, etc.)</li> <li>c) Program results correspond to annual or project objectives.</li> <li>d) Results are sustainable.</li> </ul>

<b>6. External Relationships</b>	
6.1 Social & cultural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Organisation capable of defining the key priorities/needs in Lebanon and the possible contribution of its interventions.</li> <li>b) NGO identifies main stakeholders within sector/area (eg. beneficiaries, clients, employees, donor community, other organisations, research institutes, the private sector, government agencies, media, general public, etc.).</li> <li>c) NGO communicates with major stakeholders to promote debate on policy issues, advocacy, needs assessment, funding, project design, implementation, monitoring and impact assessment.</li> <li>d) Information on the organisation's activities and results are shared with stakeholders through the media, newsletters, annual reports, particular events.</li> </ul>
6.2 Partnerships with other NGOs & networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Partnerships are sought and promoted, e.g. through sharing certain resources, learning from others, developing synergies.</li> <li>b) NGO partners with other bodies working for the same cause, in the same area, or with the same set of beneficiaries, through                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Member of NGO networks/ involved in long term partnership with other NGOs or Civil society actors.</li> <li>2. Involved in short term partnerships for specific objectives or activity</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) Partnerships, and their contribution to NGO goals and overall impact on broader cause are regularly assessed.</li> </ul>
6.3 Relationships with government authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) NGO has information about governmental actors, laws, and policy pertaining to the work that it is involved in.</li> <li>b) NGO seeks to participate in the government's decision-making process.</li> <li>c) NGO is capable of building at least working relationship with concerned governmental authorities, irrespective of the political/sectarian affiliation of its members/staff.</li> <li>d) NGO monitors the governmental performance in sector area it is working on and advocates for improved performance.</li> </ul>
6.4 relationship with the Media and the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) NGO seeks to involve private sector, through resource contribution, change in policy, etc.</li> <li>b) NGO seeks to involve media in their work, for the sake of                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sharing information of the work of the NGO and ensuring transparency</li> <li>2. Advocating for and raising awareness on the goals the NGO strives for.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6.5 Relationship with donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) NGO negotiates with funding partners on funding policy and priorities.</li> <li>b) NGO does not receive more than 60% of its financial resources from one source.</li> <li>c) NGO designs programs primarily based on its values &amp; strategic goals, and needs in its sector – It does not compromise its objectives for the sake of funding, nor prioritise projects based on their funding attractiveness</li> </ul>