

Foreword

PRIP aims to give support to new studies on social and economic issues in order to create a scientific and research base from which future policies can be formulated. This study is the second to deal with Palestinian NGOs that has been supported by PRIP.

During the years of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Palestinian NGOs were very active in attempting to alleviate poverty and improve standards of living and the quality of life for deprived sectors of society. Their role was partly political since their activities enabled Palestinians to remain on their homeland and resist the Israeli policy of driving out the population through economic pressure. Following the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), NGOs today continue to play a very important role in supporting the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and in Palestinian development planning.

The establishment of the PNA raised many questions about the place and importance of NGOs and their role in the new political context, bearing in mind that the PNA now exerted authority over the civil and social life of Palestinians. This study deals with the ways in which NGOs have adapted to the new environment brought about by the change in authority and suggests means to make this process easier.

The study has a theoretical section relating to the concept of NGOs in general and looks at new theories concerning their role in society, particularly the relationship between NGOs and civil society.

On a local level, the study looks at the part played by Palestinian NGOs in the past and offers techniques for adjustment to the new situation on the basis of four in-depth case studies. The field study discusses the problems now faced by Palestinian NGOs and proposes possible solutions to overcome these obstacles and further develop their activities.

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Glossary and Abbreviations

AHLC	The Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee that reports to the steering committee of the multilateral track of the Middle East process
Al-Amal Al-Ahli	Community work
Al-Mu’assasat Al-Ahliya, Al-Munathamat al-Ahliya,& Mu’assasat Al Amal Al Ahli	Community Organizations’ or NGOs
Al-Mujtama’ Al-Madani	Civil society
Al-Nakbah	The catastrophe of 1948
Al-Shu’un Al-Ijtima’ya	The [Ministry of] Social Affairs
A-Sulttah	The PNA/PA
CG	The Consultative Group which is a World Bank mechanism to coordinate donor programs
DOP	The Declaration of Principles or the Oslo I agreement
LACC	Local Aid Coordination Committee
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
PECDAR	The Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction
PNGO	The Palestinian NGO Network
SWGs	The Sectoral Working Groups within LACC
Takamul	Integration
Taqasum Wathify	Functional division
The Protocol	The Economic Protocol signed in Paris in April 1994 by the government of Israel and the PLO
Al-Jumhour	The Arabic word combining both the public and the community
A-Siha	The [Ministry of] Health

Abstract

There are wide-ranging debates among intellectuals and practitioners on the roles of NGOs. Some authors stress their roles as service providers or development agents. Others politicize the roles of NGOs and consider them to be actively involved in defining and sustaining a particular social order such as civil society. A more comprehensive approach to understanding the roles of NGOs has to take into account variances in cultural settings and how they affect the work of these organizations. These organizations generally work in institutionalized environments where they need to respond to specific demands including political, social and economic needs of their communities. This shapes these organizations and their leaders and directs their roles accordingly.

Historically, the Palestinian third sector was influential in Palestinian society as a result of a lack of a national government. Third sector organizations provided part of essential services as well as political and moral support to their communities. Following the establishment of the PNA, these organizations were at a loss. They faced external pressures from the PNA, from donors and even from internal forces to relinquish their previous multiple functions, particularly their political roles. A compromise was reached when the goals of some of the more powerful organizations coincided with moderate voices from the PNA as well as from donors. This compromise was based on a discourse on 'civil society'. NGOs could be supported in building 'civil society' if they accepted the new power divisions in Palestinian society.

This coincidence in goals was not without limits. Tensions sporadically appeared among actors who attempted to appropriate as much capital as they could to appear more legitimate. External and internal impediments stood in the way of NGO attempts to build 'civil society' i.e., to promote either democracy or associationalism. External impediments included

the lack of a sovereign state, financial dependence on donors and inefficiency of the PNA, which hindered efforts to actually build civil society. Internal impediments resulted from lack of cohesion among third sector organizations, which led to the failure to diffuse this discourse to other NGOs and societal sectors. The weaker NGOs with less capital tended to be marginalized and therefore, were not legitimate enough to pursue the discourse of civil society. Finally, during transition a shift occurred in the roles of NGOs resulting from new concentrations of power, which imposed pressures on these organizations to conform to the new order. NGOs needed to adapt their roles to the requirements of the new environment to gain a place. However, this adaptation was not complete because of their historical disposition which impelled them to take larger roles.

Chapter one discusses the research problematic, the conceptual framework and methodology. The conceptual framework of the study combined concepts from civil society theories and institutional theory. The concept of civil society (and NGOs) was introduced to relate the local discussion with global trends and to compare their basic characteristics. The second concept, institutional theory, which included the concepts of the habitus, capital and field, was presented to provide a method for interpretation of the discourses of organizations.

Chapter two focuses on the selected organizations and their surrounding environment. The first section highlights the main stages that these organizations passed through as a result of the political changes, starting from the Intifada and passing through the Gulf war to the Oslo agreements. The second section describes the general context in which the organizations were working following the peace agreement. The third section gives an overview of the organizations under study. This section combines the experience of the staff with the official documents of their organizations. This combination stems from the methodology of the study - the case study approach - explained in chapter one. One advantage of the case study approach is that it combines different types of evidence such as interviews, observations and documents in an attempt to find major trends in

the data. The methodology also suggested that there is a dialectic between subjectivity and material conditions which made it difficult to clearly define the borders between 'objectivity' and 'subjectivity.' The purpose of this chapter is to give a background for chapters three and four, which focus on the issues that preoccupied the organizations during 1997-98. These issues included their role in civil society and in development. They also included the organizations' relationship with the PNA, donors and their communities.

In chapter three, a sample of the data acquired during fieldwork is used to present the dynamics and mechanisms of interaction between the selected organizations and their surroundings. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the relationship between the selected NGOs and key players in their environment to portray how they depicted their position within this environment. The discourses of the NGOs under study will be used as a tool to understand the process of change occurring to these organizations as a result of signing the peace agreements and the introduction of new actors such as a national authority and multilateral donors. Complementing the discourse on the NGOs, there are excerpts from other actors when needed.

Chapter four presents the constraints perceived by the NGOs under study as impediments to their role in developing [civil] society. The description by NGOs of their limitations or weaknesses in terms of Israel, the PNA, donors and even the community gives an understanding of the field of power in which they operate. It is crucial to the understanding of the habitus or mental and social constructed worlds of NGOs to comprehend their positions in respect to the distribution of capital, whether symbolic or economic. NGOs possess the least symbolic power (or violence) of the actors in their field. The PNA owns overt and covert methods of symbolic power, which it has combined as it saw fit to reflect the state of transition and its weaknesses towards Israel and donors. The chapter describes the attitudes of NGOs to actors in their environment and also the views of some of these actors to NGOs.

Chapter five concludes the study by presenting the findings in relation to the conceptual framework. This chapter presents the main themes that emerged from the data. The second section will analyze some of these themes in relation to the conceptual framework. The third section will provide the policy implications of the findings. The last section proposes recommendations to help NGOs to improve their regular activities, performance and management style. It also presents policy recommendations on the changing roles of NGOs and their relationship with the authorities.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overall Structure of Study

The study examines the main strategies devised by Palestinian NGOs to strengthen their roles in society during the years 1994-98 and the impediments that confronted them in implementing these strategies. The study will help organizations to reassess the effectiveness and efficiency of these strategies. It will also clarify how organizations reproduce their internal workings as a result of the interaction between their accumulated history and resources with their environment. The research is conducted using qualitative research methods along with the case study approach. Four third sector organizations were selected as the focus of this study. This chapter discusses the conceptual framework, the research problematic and the methodology.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

Studies on the roles of NGOs in civil society focus on three main functions. These revolve around the contribution of NGOs in: (1) promoting democracy; (2) promoting associationalism; and (3) in acting as a buffer between state and society. For NGOs to be development agents as well as civil society organizations, they need to: (1) provide needed services; (2) represent the poor and disadvantaged; and (3) be partners with the state. For NGOs to carry out these functions they need to operate under conditions that allow them to fulfill these roles. Writers differ on the key conditions that support the roles of NGOs in civil society. The following is a review of the main themes in studies on NGOs and civil society and the conditions that support or hinder them in carrying out these functions. The ability of the organization to practically carry out the functions expected of it depends on its historical background, identity and resources that form the second theme in the conceptual framework. The concepts of habitus, field and capital are used to articulate a frame of

analysis for the findings. These concepts are helpful to understand the interaction between these organizations and different forces in society leading them to be constructive in the process of building civil society.

1.3 NGOs and Civil Society

The most prominent rhetoric currently used to characterize the contribution of NGOs to civil society is that of the liberal or 'neo' liberal school (Bratton 1988; Fowler 1993). The models of 'corporations' and 'associations' described by Hegel and Tocqueville are the most influential on the current use of the term civil society (Tocqueville 1961 (1840)). Some contemporary authors on civil society (Keane 1988; Putnam 1993) have reiterated the impact of civil societies on reforming states and spreading democracy. Notably, the models above originated in the West but were also used beyond it. However, their universality was questioned by several authors (Hann and Dunn 1996) who tried to give a voice to localized forms of distribution of power deviating from the Western concept of civil society. Other authors even questioned the presence of the notions of civil society and good governance within Western societies themselves and whether they were not mere 'myths' (Wood 1997).

Bilateral and multinational organizations incorporated the concept of civil society along with their development approaches. First was the 'new policy agenda' (Edwards and Hulme 1995) which dominated the international aid arena for a considerable period with its emphasis on the role of private institutions. Private institutions, which included nonprofit and for profit organizations, were seen as the appropriate mechanism for development. The most current development paradigm used by international aid organizations stresses both governments as well as 'civil society' in achieving development (World Bank 1998). For instance, in 1999, the World Bank stressed cooperation between the government, civil society and the private sector to speed up the development process (World Bank 1999).

1.4 NGOs and Civil Society in the Middle East

Since the eighties, a large number of writers on the Middle East have discussed the applicability and usefulness of the concept of civil society to the Arab world and the rest of the Middle East (Al-Sayyed 1995; Ghalioun et al. 1993; Ibrahim 1993, 1994, 1995). Most of these intellectuals were mainly interested in civil society as a tool for understanding the political impediments to democracy in Arab societies (Brynen, Korany and Noble 1995; Norton 1996). There were numerous debates among these scholars revolving around the definition of civil society. Generally, these definitions entailed a study of the organizational aspect of civil society meaning non-governmental organizations. Authors perceived NGOs as a 'buffer' between state and citizens (Brynen, Korany and Noble 1995; Norton 1996).

There was also an increase in research on NGOs in the Middle East, which questioned whether they signaled the vibrancy of civil society. Researchers attempted to assess the impact of NGOs on social and political life and to historically examine the roles of NGOs (Kandil 1994). Examples of this interest were conferences held in 1996 and 1997 on Arab NGOs to discuss organizational issues and regional concerns (Al-Bassam 1997; Al-Jabiri 1997; Madani 1997). Some authors have looked more critically at the role of NGOs and concluded that 'excessive politicization' of Arab NGOs forced them to reproduce the same authoritarian structures found in Arab political life (Marzouk 1997).

1.5 NGOs and Civil Society in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Since the signing of the peace accords in 1993, discussions on the changing roles of NGOs have focused on their role in civil society, in development and on their relations with the Palestinian Authority (PNA). Advocates of the 'civil society' role of NGOs and grassroots organizations saw them as an

embodiment of democracy. Some authors assumed that civil society existed by the mere fact of the presence of NGOs and political parties (Abu-Amr 1995). Others thought that Palestinian third sector organizations provided a strong base for building civil society because their interests were not limited to serving their own narrow political interests but rather the interests of society as a whole (Muslih 1995). Others denied that there was a civil society in the Occupied Territories because of the historic absence of a state and considered these discussions mere 'simulation' (Bishara 1995: 135-160). Although Bishara acknowledged the presence of an 'associational life' for a long time in the Palestinians areas, he believed that this presence did not fulfill the conditions for a 'civil society'. The associations had responded to the needs of society in the absence of a state. They did not necessarily arise from the voluntary spirit and free choice of individuals. Some authors objected to applying a 'western' concept to a different environment without thorough analysis of the compatibility of the subject matter and the method (mainly Jarbawi 1995).

Some authors observed that the overlapping in the functions of NGOs as 'development agents' and 'civil society' organizations was an attempt to prevent authoritarianism by the incoming authorities due to the weakness of political factions. With the advent of the PNA, the 'political field' had witnessed new 'images' among which was civil society (Hilal 1998:254). Other authors observed that the adoption of this 'ideology', mainly of civil society, was a result of the weaknesses and eventual defeat of leftist factions (Hammami 1995).

For other authors, the PNA could benefit from the experience of NGOs and use their services since its own resources are insufficient to fulfill all the needs of society (Barghouthi 1994). Barghouti listed the threats that could face NGOs in the future. On the emerging relationship between the PNA and NGOs, Sullivan (1995) noted that the PNA displayed the tendency to 'control' NGOs despite animosity amongst ministries. With regards to differences among social actors and their negative

impact on building civil society, another author (Roy 1996: 255) described the struggle among social groups in Palestinian society as one major obstacle to building civil society in the Gaza Strip.

There have also been discussions on the roles of NGOs in development. Some authors adopted the theory of NGO generations and stressed the advocacy and lobbying roles of NGOs (Abdul-Hadi 1996). Other authors emphasized the role of these organizations in achieving sustainable development by integrating underrepresented and disadvantaged groups into the decision-making process (Nakhleh 1994). There was also an interest by international agencies such as the World Bank to assess changes in the performance and contribution of NGOs to service provision. Several studies on the changing roles of Palestinian NGOs confirm the fact of diminishing funds to NGOs as a result of the arrival of the PNA. These diminishing funds have negatively affected the quantity and quality of services offered in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Clark and Balaj 1996; Claudet 1996).

NGOs themselves have formed coalitions (e.g. PNGO) and publicized their own stance on how they conceived the changes in their roles (PNGO 1995: 2-3). PNGO stressed the need to work in an environment where freedom of association was guaranteed and the independence of NGOs was ensured within a legal framework (PNGO 1995: 2-3). PNGO has issued several policy papers on how its members stipulate their relationship with the PNA with regard to legislation on charitable societies and NGOs (PNGO 1997: 13). PNGO has circulated its proposed version of the law (PNGO 1997: Supplement). One of the main criticisms of PNGO to the initial draft law was that it did not take into consideration the uniqueness of the Palestinian NGO sector as well as its diversity in specialization and development approaches (PNGO 1997: 13).

1.6 Institutional Theory

This theory is helpful in analyzing the impact of institutionalized elements in the environment on the work of NGOs. The impact of the environment on shaping the organization is ‘subtle’ (Powell and DiMaggio 1991). Environments “*penetrate the organization, creating the lenses through which actors view the world and the very categories of structure, action and thought*” (Scott 1992:13). New institutionalism shows “*skepticism [of] rational-actor models of organization*” (Powell and DiMaggio 1991:12). Although it can be argued that there is a space for the action of individuals within organizations, the outcome of their work is not the direct result of actors’ decisions as advocated by this theory.

Organizations attempt to work rationally in a highly complex arena with a diversity of interests. They are required to take into consideration a large number of variables in order to make decisions. However, they are not totally free in their decision-making since they are governed by their history and resources (habitus), their environments and competing interests within the same field (Bourdieu 1977; Powell and DiMaggio 1991). Bourdieu defines habitus as:

Systems of durable, transposable dispositions ... predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without in any way being the product of obedience to rules (Bourdieu 1977:72).

When applied to organizations, this means that organizations are governed by unwritten systems acquired throughout their history in addition to their formal sets of rules and procedures. These systems regulate the actions of staff without necessarily being spelled out. The organization or the authority of the organization attempts to uncover “*forms of capital which are or can become*

efficient" in the struggle for the appropriation of scarce goods such as distinction, profit, power, and wealth in their respective fields (Calhoun, LiPuma and Postone 1993:69). In this attempt the organization continues to be aware of the restrictions found in its surrounding environment. Times of transition cause a gap between inherited social positions and new objective conditions. This allows some organizations to improve their potential social positions by dictating the modes of classification of social positions. Therefore, there is a potential for NGOs to promote certain strategies and to institutionalize these strategies.

1.7 Research Problematic

The research problematic arose from the previous discussion in relation to Palestinian NGOs which were influential historically in Palestinian society without necessarily claiming to be civil society organizations. These organizations provided social services and moral support to Palestinian society as an attempt to fight the occupying state by non-violent means. Therefore, the problematic that arose was: could Palestinian third sector organizations institutionalized within the framework of an occupying power transform themselves to working alongside a national authority and other societal actors to build a 'civil society'. A second problematic was: how diverse are the expectations of institutional actors in the environment surrounding NGOs, such as the authorities and donors. Therefore, the *first question* was how NGOs or other actors envision the roles of NGOs in building a Palestinian 'civil society.' The *second question* was how NGOs have put into practice these interpretations and the impact of this implementation.

The study argues that civil society exemplifies a vision of society based on idealism of the development of Western societies regardless of the school of thought. However, local, cultural, political and economic conditions cannot necessarily replicate this development. In the Palestinian case, there was a potential

to present a localized version of civil society i.e., in institutionalizing rights and duties (a social contract), democratic behaviors and associationalism. However, these attempts did not strongly influence a process for ‘building civil society’ because of external and internal impediments that hindered NGOs from pursuing this goal. External impediments included lack of a sovereign state, financial dependence on donors and inefficiency of the PNA. Internal impediments resulted from lack of cohesion in the third sector, which led to the failure to diffuse this discourse to other NGOs and societal sectors, and the distance of these organizations from their communities.

1.8 Methodology

1.8.1 Choice of Qualitative Method and Case Study Approach

The previous discussion of the research questions and conceptual framework showed that the most appropriate way to collect the evidence required on the interpretation of concepts, expectations, and value systems was via qualitative methods. This method is adopted by many social scientists.¹ Since the study is of NGOs, the case study method was found to be the more comprehensive method to collect qualitative data, as shown by several authors (Van-Maanen 1979; Yin 1994) because it combines several types of evidence “*documents, artifacts, interviews and observations*” (Yin 1994:8).

Semi-structured interviews, in addition to secondary sources such as annual reports and newspaper clippings, were collected². A second reason for selecting the case study approach was that it looks at a ‘*contemporary phenomenon*’ where it is difficult to separate between the unit of analysis and its surroundings (Yin 1994:13). The use of this approach in this study is best described as an “*instrumental case study*” (Creswell 1994: 250).

¹ For more on interpretive methods please see (Rabinow and Sullivan 1979).

² Please note that this study is part of a larger research and therefore, the data presented here are intended as an overview rather than a comprehensive presentation of the findings.

The instrumental case study focuses on a specific phenomenon rather than on the cases themselves. The cases become a vehicle to better understand the phenomenon under study ((Stake 1995) in Creswell 1994: 250), in this case the role of NGOs in civil society. Therefore, despite presenting a profile of each organization, the study does not dwell on each case and does not explain all aspects of the work of these organizations.

The selection of the NGOs under study from the Gaza Strip rather than the West Bank or other areas where Palestinian NGOs operate was for theoretical and practical considerations. Theoretically, the Gaza Strip can be considered an ‘extreme’ or ‘deviant’ case (from Miles and Huberman 1994: 28). Despite the higher levels of poverty and population density in the Gaza Strip, historically associational life was less intense³ (Muslih 1995; Roy 1996). Therefore, differences in the experiences of NGOs will be more apparent following the arrival of a national authority, especially since this authority established its headquarters in Gaza. Practically, the difficulties of the closure (1997-98) and my acquaintance with the Gaza Strip led to the decision to focus on the Gaza Strip.

1.8.2 Selection Criteria of Organizations

Four NGOs were selected as case study organizations. These organizations were AgriFriends (AF)⁴ established in 1983 in the West Bank and 1987 in Gaza, HealthFriends (HF) established in 1985 in both areas, Mother&ChildFriends (MCF) established in 1991/92 in the Gaza Strip and Rehabfriends (RF) established in 1980 in the Gaza Strip. The study identified three criteria for selecting the organizations, with the aim to have a ‘maximum variety’ of organizational attributes within these criteria. The first criterion for selection was based on Korten’s theory of NGO

³ Although it can be argued that there is lack of data on less formal forms of associational life.

⁴ For the sake of confidentiality the real names of the organizations will not be identified. The organizations are presented alphabetically, which coincided with the volume of information on their activities and therefore, on the understanding of these organizations.

generations (Korten 1990) and Abdul Hadi's classification of Palestinian NGOs. The first organization was selected from the first generation, which used the relief and welfare strategy or, in the Palestinian context, was a charitable society. The second and third organizations were from the second generation that used the community development approach. In the Palestinian context, these organizations were organized as voluntary committees before being institutionalized into NGOs. The fourth organization was chosen according to Abdul Hadi's classification of the third generation. This generation of NGOs was created following the peace process with the objective of providing professional services or providing services for a marginalized segment of the population.

The second criterion was the date of establishment. This was used to differentiate between the organizations within the second generation. The third criterion was their political affiliation. The four organizations had different political or religio-political affiliations. With the progress of the research, additional differences were apparent among the organizations. They had different missions, organizational complexities, and governance structures, among other characteristics as shown in Table (2) in Appendix II. For details on the data collection process during the fieldwork period please refer to Part A of Appendix I. For a list of the interviewees at each organization refer to Part B of Appendix I.

1.8.3 Analysis of Data

1. Preparatory Steps

There was a review of all materials after the collection of the data and the transcription of the tapes. I selected a random sample from the interviews of the first track (the general context) define the main issues (Appendix I for more details). Then I focused on the interviews with the selected organizations and thoroughly coded them. A matrix was used to refine the themes and to compare the organizations. There was a focus on the themes that were the most relevant to the initial questions. Representative quotes within the themes were then aggregated in

sub-groups. Accompanied by this procedure, there was an attempt to locate similarities with general trends found in the first track and in secondary sources. The themes presented in the data chapters were of common interest to the organizations under study and the NGOs interviewed in the first track. The findings on the similarities and differences among the organizations under study were the basis for reaching conclusions.⁵ The next step was to look at the differences between the discourses of organizations and their objective realities and compare them with the conceptual framework.

2. Verification

One way to verify the findings was through extended stay in the field (Creswell 1994) which occurred in 1997-98. A second way was the triangulation of the data. This triangulation occurred by first examining literature on NGOs and civil society in similar contexts. Secondly, it took place by looking at literature on the Palestinian context, especially more recent studies. Thirdly, secondary sources such as annual reports and similar documents were combined with the primary sources. This verification also occurred by the 'thick' description (Creswell 1994: 197) in presenting long quotes from the interviews. There was also a debriefing for the selected organizations on the key findings and comments were integrated into the study. Furthermore, the theoretical perspective was used to interpret the key findings.

1.8.4 Limitations

The organizations varied in the way they exposed themselves and their problems. AF and MCF were more open to discussing sensitive issues like the actual problems that they faced with the PNA, donors or even their own shortcomings. HF was frank in criticizing the PNA but less so when discussing internal issues of the organization. At RF, although the director initially agreed to be interviewed, he demonstrated suspicion of research in general.

5 As mentioned by Yin, the main strength of the case study method is 'generalize findings to theory' rather than attempting to select 'representative' cases (Yin 1994:37).

The meetings with RF staff were shorter than with the other organizations. One reason that was apparent was the intensity of the cases being dealt with at the center, which preoccupied the staff most of the time. Although the design attempted to treat the four organizations equally, there were differences in the openness and willingness of the organizations to participate, with AF being the most open and RF the least open.

1.8.5 Role of Researcher and Confidentiality

Coming from the same culture and knowing some of the informants socially or professionally helped in gaining access to these organizations. This familiarity enhanced understanding of the local culture, social codes and values of the informants and helped in comprehending the broader environment and concerns of the interviewees. It also allowed the interviewer to bypass the stage where interviewees presented their 'public relations' image and instead delved into their real concerns. Language played a major role in understanding these discourses and could have been lost if the interviews had been conducted in another language. Nevertheless, the advantages of this familiarity were double edged. My political and social background might have influenced the responses of the interviewees. In some instances, I felt that interviewees wondered about my real motivation or projected my expectations from their responses and responded accordingly.

The thesis contained issues that were sensitive to interviewees from NGOs and the PNA. The length of most interviews and their content showed that most of the interviewees gave me their trust. Although most interviewees agreed to be cited, pseudonyms were used to indicate the organizations and the positions of staff instead of real names. In the instances where interviewees asked not to be quoted, this was respected and the data were not directly used or quoted.

1.9 Definitions

This study is mainly concerned with third sector organizations. The term third sector organization has been used along with other terms such as nonprofit organizations, independent sector, private voluntary organizations, non-governmental organizations to mean almost the same thing (Salamon and Anheier 1992). The organizations in this study are organizations motivated by a will to satisfy a public good or to respond to the needs of their communities. The terms third sector and NGOs will be used simultaneously to describe these organizations, with the term third sector encompassing organizations such as unions and cooperatives as well. In the Palestinian context, the term is vague because legally most of the currently operating organizations called 'NGOs' or *mu'assasat ahliya* were registered as charitable societies or nonprofit companies in different units of the Israeli civil administration. Registration during occupation was a means to avoid harassment by the Israeli authorities and therefore, when the possibility of registering as a nonprofit company was available, these organizations chose this option. As shown above, the differentiation among these organizations was based on criteria unrelated to the legal status. The term Northern NGOs (NNGOs) is used to identify NGOs that originate in Western countries and either fund or directly run their work in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The terms Palestinian Authority (PA) and Palestinian National Authority (PNA) will be used interchangeably to describe the authorities. The next chapter will give an overview of the organizations under study and the surrounding environment.

2. Overview of the Context and NGOs under Study

2.1 Pre 1993

The selected organizations were established in 1980, 1983, 1985 and 1992. The first organization (RF) was established as a charitable society, which was the most common form of Palestinian third sector organization until the end of the seventies. The first and second organizations (AF) and (HF) were established as voluntary committees, a form of third sector organization which emerged by the mid-seventies and beginning of the eighties. These committees were affiliated with political factions but supported the community indiscriminately. During the Intifada, the number of these committees multiplied and they attempted to fill the gap in governmental services, supported by Palestinian, Arab and international aid.

The Gulf crisis, which started in 1990, had a drastic effect on Palestinians. This was followed by peace negotiations between Israel and the neighboring Arab countries. The Madrid peace conference was convened in 1991 and signaled a shift in the political environment. According to some authors, the peace process led to the emergence of two distinct types of NGOs (AF 1997). One type of NGO was prepared to take over official or semi-official functions, such as the high councils, research centers and unions (Nakhleh 1994b:13). The second type continued to include personnel who were dedicated to voluntary work and committed to the importance of building civil society (Nakhleh 1994b:13). The fourth organization (MCF) was established during this period. The objective of the founders was to create an organization unaffiliated with any particular political faction and specialized in children and women's issues.

2.2 1993 till 1998

The peace negotiations between the PLO and Israel eventually led to the declaration of principles (DOP), known as the Oslo agreement, signed in Washington in September 1993. This declaration was followed by the Gaza-Jericho or the Cairo agreement signed in Egypt in May 1994. This agreement stipulated the withdrawal of Israeli forces from most of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho as well as the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PNA). According to the Interim agreement or Oslo II signed in Washington in September 1995, the details of the elections of the (legislative) council and the presidency of the PNA were set. In February 1996, an elected President and Legislative Council were sworn in, inaugurating limited self-rule. The Council has been unable to act autonomously and only a small number of bills presented by it to the executive committee were approved. The Charitable Societies Law was one of these bills. During fieldwork, interviewees have stated that this law is of great importance. NGOs, under the auspices of PNGO (the Palestinian NGO Network) were lobbying council members to adopt PNGO's version of the law.

The Ottoman law on charitable societies has been in effect since 1907 (PCHR 1995). Any group of people could form an association. During the British Mandate there was an amendment on illegal organizations and penalties imposed on individuals attending these meetings (PCHR 1995). The changes during the Israeli occupation were that registration in the Gaza Strip took place at the unit of interior affairs, directly ruled by Israeli military personnel, and in the West Bank it took place at the social affairs unit of the civil administration⁶. The first reading of the law by the Council on May 30, 1998 changed the registration of NGOs to the Ministry of Justice instead of the Ministries of Interior Affairs or Social Affairs. By the end of 1998, the law had passed the third reading and theoretically just needed

⁶ Interviews with Ministry of Social Affairs personnel May 2, 1998.

approval by the PNA executive committee. The final result of these efforts was undetermined by September 1999 because the executive committee had not ratified the bill and had attempted to make the Council review the bill (PCHR 1999). There was also an attempt to influence the personal status bill in lobbying by NGOs. Women's groups and NGOs working on a project for a women's model parliament lobbied for women's needs and problems to be incorporated into the official bill.

A fairly complicated scheme has been introduced to follow up funding to the PNA. There was first the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), which was responsible for the overall policies of aid to the Palestinians and consisted of the United States, Russia, the European Union, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia and Norway, along with the PNA, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and the UN as associate members (Brynen 1997a; JMCC 1997a :7). In November 1996, the AHLC established a Local Aid Coordination Committee (LACC) (Brynen 1997a; JMCC 1997a :7). The members of LACC divided themselves into twelve Sectoral Working Groups (SWGs): agriculture, education, employment creation, environment, health, infrastructure and housing, institution building, police, private sector, public finance, tourism and transport and communication. However, "*Palestinian NGOs are, for the most part, excluded from the SWGs, despite their substantial contributions.*" The reason, as a UN official put it, was the lack of a "*satisfactory mechanism*" to include them (JMCC 1997b:11). It was only in 1997 that the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) presented a 'development plan' to the annual donors' meeting in Paris. According to a MOPIC official in 1997:

*"We wanted to be more accurate and so needed to prepare a development plan up to 2000, despite the fact that [such planning] needs greater effort and donors fund for only one year."*⁷

The official added that for that reason, 45 governmental and non-

⁷ An interview with the former head of the Palestinian development plan unit, Ministry of Planning & International Co-operation, October 29, 1997.

governmental organizations contributed to the plan. Previously, a list of projects was presented to these meetings that, according to a PNA official, “*was prepared in a matter of hours by [...] the head of UNSCO*” and two PNA officials from PECДАР and MOPIC (JMCC 1997b: 39). There has been criticism about the prioritization of development needs of Palestinian society by both the PNA and donors due to (1) the multiplicity of donors and mechanisms eventually leads to lack of ‘real’ coordination (JMCC 1997b); (2) The political agendas of donors has heavily influenced the development agenda (e.g. neglect of the agricultural sector although it employs 30% of the population to avoid confrontation with Israel on issues of land and water) (JMCC 1997b); (3) The lack of technical abilities and vision of PNA officials; (4) The lack of dependable data (Taraki in JMCC 1997b). Despite the improvement in prioritizing development needs in 1997, there was much criticism of the current development plan, principally that not all governmental and non-governmental organizations were included in the preparation of the plan. PNA officials, including Legislative Council members, voiced these criticisms. The only organizations that referred to the development plan were those that worked in the health sector and said that they had been invited to a workshop organized by the Ministry of Health in the Gaza Strip.

As a result of the decrease in funding and the shift of attention away from NGOs to the PNA, in 1996 the World Bank introduced an NGO Trust Fund with an allocated budget of \$14 million. The plan was to establish a committee that consisted of NGO representatives and PNA officials to supervise the project. The issue of NGO representation caused widespread controversy. New NGO unions were created and claimed to represent NGOs. Eventually, the World Bank recruited a professional manager for the project without involving NGOs in the decision-making process.

There has been a large number of third sector organizations that have closed down. According to the initial findings of a 1998 unpublished survey on the health sector carried out by the Health

and Development Information Project, 95 of 523 NGOs and 4 of the 488 charitable societies closed down between 1993 and 1997 in the West Bank (HDIP 1998). One reason was the decline in funding, which according to some sources fell from \$220 million to \$90 million a year.⁸ A second reason was the closure of a number of NGOs by the Ministry of Interior on the grounds of lack of accountability and misuse of public funds.⁹

2.3 Overview of the Selected Organizations

This section will give an overview of the organizations under study. The first two organizations were branches of NGOs based in the West Bank or Jerusalem. However, most attention in this study was given to the Gaza Strip branches. As a result of the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip, relations between the West Bank headquarters and Gaza offices have altered but differently in the cases of AF and HF, as will be shown. Moreover, for the sake of confidentiality, the real names of the organizations will not be identified. The organizations are presented alphabetically, which coincided with the volume of information provided by these organizations on their activities and therefore, the understanding of these organizations (Appendix II, Table (2) for more points of comparison).

2.3.1 *AgriFriends (AF)*

AF started in the form of voluntary committees comprised of agricultural engineers associated with a leftist political party. The voluntary committees were dedicated to defending the issues of Palestinian land and water. They addressed these issues by supporting rural and remote areas that were neglected by the Israeli government. The engineers established an office in Jerusalem in 1983 and then in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1987. During the Intifada, they became quite active, especially

⁸ World Bank July 1997. "The Palestinian NGO Project", a public discussion paper.

⁹ Head of NGO unit, Ministry of Interior, May 21, 1998.

in the camps and remote rural areas as the administrative director explained:

Our organization was established in 1983. Until 1986, all staff members were volunteers. No one used to take a salary. [...] We started as a group of agricultural engineers, young graduates. At that time voluntary committees were active. [The volunteers] used to go during their days off to do voluntary work during the olive season or harvesting season. They would build a school, paint or clean a street. The idea started with how to make use of people according to their capabilities. Here at AF a group of agricultural engineers started on their day off to give guidance to farmers for free. At that time all guidance at the [Israeli] department of agriculture stopped. Farmers needed to develop their products and to be acquainted with new types of techniques and new knowledge (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998).

AF stressed the voluntary spirit of its founders. As will be clear throughout this and the following chapter, this aspect was strongly embedded in the ethos of the organization despite the emphasis of some members on professionalism. The manager also stressed the technical aspect of the work of the committees and the importance of the services they provided to farmers as 'gap-filling' to make up for the services that ought to be delivered by government.

AF tried to advocate a philosophy of self-reliance and home production. The generation of political activists who emerged in the eighties attempted to overcome dependency on the Israeli economy by advocating self-reliance and boycott of Israeli products. The voluntary committees that evolved into NGOs such as AF also attempted to incorporate this approach. This philosophy proved ineffective according to AF interviewees. Therefore, the organization abandoned it and joined other

organizations in lending small loans to women to establish micro enterprises. The granting of loans to women has been separated as a distinct project funded by an NNGO in Gaza. During the fieldwork period, AF established an institutional development unit, which was previously called the training unit and was divided among different units. The goal of the new unit was to support local groups in institutionalization i.e., in formally organizing themselves, especially those in remote rural areas. According to the head of the unit, the idea resulted from the interaction with NNGOs. AF also established a company for the export of processed foods such as marmalade and pickles, which had separate accounts from the NGO.

In 1996, AF identified three main goals as its focus. The first goal was

“to implement emergency programs that contribute to placement of unemployed people as a result of the unemployment of around 100,000 residents [who were] working in Israel” (AF 1997: 8).

The second goal was to protect Palestinian land from confiscation and to prevent the building of Israeli settlements by land reclamation. The third goal was to achieve Palestinian food sufficiency by encouraging food processing and household production. In the report on its strategic plan for the years 1998-2008, AF widened its goals and stressed the general goal of

“sustainable development to build strong agriculture for the future” (AF 1998b: 9).

It included three sub-elements within this goal. These elements were ‘sustainable development for the agricultural sector’; ‘sustainable development for Palestinian society’; and ‘sustainable development for AF’ (AF 1998b: 9). Its main philosophy was to work with people towards development, with a subsidiary objective to strengthen local institutions to ‘build democracy and civil society’ and a special focus on providing

women with opportunities (AF 1998b: 9). It is clear that the goals of AF have been shifting towards more social roles under the presence of the PNA, discussed further in the following chapter. The mission of AF in 1998 was:

We are a progressive not-for-profit, non-government organization working on rural development, environmental protection and strengthening women's position in society. We provide extension, awareness, and support and quality consultancy services to individuals, groups and organizations working in similar fields. We are committed to encouraging the active and wide participation of our target groups and developing and improving the capacity and level of expertise of our staff to build towards the development of a democratic Palestinian society (AF 1998b: 6).¹⁰

AF boasts of its flexibility and its mission statement has changed with time to reflect the latest interests in the development arena. AF's first objective, rural development, remained consistent. However, its second and third objectives, environmental protection and strengthening the role of women, match the global emphasis of a large number of NNGOs and some donors. Moreover, AF emphasized 'wide participation of the target groups' and the development of democracy in a similar manner to HF, as discussed later.

AF has created three different associations in Jerusalem as a way to find an appropriate legal formula for its work. In 1996, another legal form comprising these three associations was needed and a union was formed, along with a general assembly that consisted of the Board of Trustees of the three associations. This general assembly elected a board to oversee the work of the three associations. According to its annual report, the main programs of AF in 1997 were: (1) agricultural roads; (2) land

¹⁰ The mission statement is in English.

reclamation; (3) job creation project; (4) cultivation of trees; (5) water projects; (7) bee distribution; (8) distribution of desalination equipment; and (9) the women's loans project (AF 1997a: 8-13). The women's unit took on this project as a result of a study on the informal sector which showed that women were actively involved in agricultural work and in productive household economy (AF 1997b: 1). In another study issued in 1994, the main obstacle to the development of women's skills was the lack of capital (AF 1997b: 1). Therefore, AF implemented the loan project in 1994 with the support of European NGOs.

In 1992, AF prepared a five-year plan and a donor consortium was formed. Funding of the core program of AF was discussed among the donor consortium members. The purpose of establishing this consortium according to AF interviewees was to "secure funding for the programs of AF as well as for technical support" (AF-Head-Public-Relations February 25, 1998).

For the past five years, we have been working with this method. We present a comprehensive plan, not a specific project. We make a plan for five or three years, which includes all the programs of AF projects, and different activities, specific budgets. We discuss with them in more than one meeting. We discuss the details. At the end they decide if they want to support this budget (Head-Public-Relations February 25, 1998).

The number of full time employees in the core program of AF was 95 in 1998, with an average number of employees contracted for projects of 150 employees (AF 1998a). AF had eight branches, seven in the West Bank and one branch in the Gaza Strip. The Gaza Strip office had a different set up from the other branches in that all the departments in the headquarters had links with the Gaza branch (AF 1998a), while the other branches were linked with headquarters through the Administrative and Regional Affairs Department. The main departments of AF in

1998 were: (1) administrative and regional affairs; (2) rural female development; (3) extension and land development; (4) environment, irrigation and technology transfer; (5) institutional building and grassroots relations; (6) training and support activities; (7) the financial department; and (8) the investment services department (AF 1998a).

2.3.2 HealthFriends (HF)

Its history dates from the beginning of the 1980s when physicians and paramedical professionals affiliated with a leftist political faction different than that of AF, formed voluntary committees to support the community in the field of health similar to the organization of AF committees. In 1985, the committees were formally organized into a non-governmental organization in Jerusalem. Afterwards, the committees expanded and set up branches in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The principles of the founders, as reflected in the 1998 document on the philosophy of the organization, were:

Since 1985 when a group of medical and paramedical professionals established the HF, there were principles and foundations that governed the philosophy of the organization. These principles depended on political, national, social, economic, and professional considerations. Sometimes, some considerations overruled others (HF 1998).

The hierarchy of principles showed the precedence granted to political and national goals and this has persisted in the ethos of the organization. In 1990, HF started to establish health centers all over the Gaza Strip. Following the Oslo agreement, the members of the original political party were divided on how to respond to the political developments. The official line was to oppose the Oslo agreement. There were also divisions for reasons other than politics e.g., the closures imposed on the Gaza Strip and West Bank which accompanied the Oslo agreement. These divisions led to the semi-autonomy of the Gaza offices from the headquarters in Jerusalem. Following the Cairo

agreement (Oslo II) signed in 1996, HF Gaza issued its new direction and philosophy as follows:

*HF is a community health non-profit organization. It is a non-governmental, community, health service provider which carries out its role in building Palestinian **civil society** and its institutions on the basis of **democracy and accountability**.¹¹ But this all comes under the auspices of a political vision that says that the Palestinian people is still in a **national liberation** phase and has to continue its struggle to achieve its national goals. The organization is biased in a clear way towards the more impoverished classes and the disadvantaged and weakened in society. This requires the organization to direct its services primarily to the more impoverished sectors, women and children (HF 1998b).*

HF formulated its main role as an NGO trying to 'build civil society' on the basis of 'democracy and accountability'. Although the concepts of civil society and democracy are generally referred to in a context where there is a sovereign state, HF associated the concept with 'national liberation'. The HF director also reiterated this notion. Therefore, some NGOs perceived their role in building civil society as compatible with national liberation.

HF focused on providing primary health care, mainly mother and child services. It also tried to raise health awareness among women in remote and neglected areas. It provided training courses for these women to give them better opportunities to find work. The reason for initiating the women leaders project, as explained by an HF doctor, was the need to focus on females because of their vital role in the family and consequently, in society. This project has been supported by international donors,

¹¹ The exact translation is surveillance but the word also implies accountability.

especially European NGOs, because it coincided with a goal of both international donors and the PNA to create job opportunities.

The number of full time HF employees in the Gaza Strip mentioned in the 1997 annual report was 86, with 65 part time employees and 265 volunteers (HF 1998a). The main units were: (1) the health awareness unit; (2) the health centers (four in the Gaza Strip); (3) the children's library; and (4) the hospital. Other HF activities were research and scientific activities, developing a patient support fund and job creation projects. Within the health awareness unit there were three programs: (1) environmental health; (2) women leaders; and (3) public health awareness.

Lack of services also persuaded HF to establish a hospital instead of building another health center. A HF staff member described how the shift took place:

The idea of the hospital started [by the need to] develop the northern area [of the Gaza Strip] during the Intifada. It was the result of an accident. A woman delivered on the road to the center and so the [founders] thought that there has to be a hospital there (HF-Head-of-Laboratory May 24, 1998).

A patient's fund was established to help the organization in fundraising, especially for the hospital since HF stresses the importance of providing services free of charge to disadvantaged patients (HF 1998a). The fund included people from different affiliations and types of work in an attempt by HF to diversify its membership and to include individuals from other political affiliations.

2.3.3 Mother & ChildFriends (MCF)

This organization was established at the beginning of the nineties

when the Intifada was fading in most areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The founders were women affiliated with the dominant secular factions active at the time in the Palestinian areas. The initiative of this group of women coincided with the willingness of an NNGO to support a local NGO in the area of children. In 1998, MCF's mission was:

*The organization is a community, non-government organization, which was created in 1992 ...in the Gaza Strip with the efforts of women cadres¹² and the partnership of a French organization [...]. The organization aims to activate cultural, educational, social, and health conditions through the efforts of local society for the achievement of a **civil society**, in which prevails **democracy, justice and equality**. Through the preservation of the Palestinian **cultural identity**; the strengthening of the role of the **individual in society**; contribution in alleviation of educational, social and cultural problems; the strengthening of the role of women in society and support of social development with focus on women and children (MCF 1998).*

Similar to AF and HF, MCF stressed the concepts of 'civil society' and 'democracy' in its mission statement. However, it has included justice and equality, which did not clearly appear in the mission statements of AF and HF. MCF did not mention 'national liberation' as HF did but emphasized instead cultural identity. The focus on justice and equality can be explained by the fact that the founders were women who attempted to change the position of women in political factions and in the wider society. This notion was also related to emphasizing the 'role of the individual' in society, which was described in studies as one of the elements strengthening civil society.

The women founders had actively participated in the political struggle during the Intifada. However, they were frustrated with the prevailing social norms at that time. They were concerned

¹² Meaning political factions.

about the dominance of political factionalism, which increased as a result of the decline of the Intifada. The group of women tried to work for a broader goal than that provided by their political groups. The director elucidated on her experience in initiating the organization:

I organized a seminar on personal status in 1992 or the end of 1991. We said that something has to be done about social conditions. When I organized the seminar I found out that political liberation depends on social liberation. [...] I invited five women from different factions. The women came and they felt the importance of these meetings. After a while there were problems between Hamas and Fatah and there were clashes. People thought that this would destroy society. As women we thought that we needed to sit down together [...] and we wanted to show the men a good example (MCF-Director May 19, 1998).

The main purpose of the organizers was to protect new generations from the social and political problems inflicted on society. These problems were both internal, expressed by the in-fighting among factions, particularly following the decline of the Intifada, and by the position of women in society. Externally, the problems were exasperated by the practices of the Israeli occupation, as expressed by the director:

There were no resources to help us to work together but we were aware of the danger to children from the occupation. That's why we started with kindergartens. All kindergartens used to employ women. We felt that we have to play a role in reducing pressure on children (MCF-Director May 19, 1998).

At the start of its work, MCF identified several objectives, some of which were maintained while others were abandoned. As shown below, the emphasis on education and children remained

a priority for the organization. However, health activities were not included in the initial mission and were added as a result of the presence of funding, as a board member said:

The women's [health] center was not envisaged by the center. It came from the donors and the donors' focus on strong organizations (MCF-Board-member May 13, 1998).

Donors played a role in strengthening organizations such as MCF while other organizations such as RF complained of neglect by donors. This point will be discussed further in relation to the discourse on civil society. The initial objectives of MCF were as follows:

(1) To improve local potential and resources; (2) to improve protection of the child; (3) to compensate for the collapse of the educational system; (4) To prepare adolescents to structure their lives; (5) to facilitate and improve gender inter-relationships; (6) to involve the community; (7) to enhance the role of culture in the community; and (8) to revitalize Palestinian heritage and culture (MCF 1992/3).

The first initiative was a 'pedagogical leisure center' for children between the ages of 6-12 as an experiment to provide children with a center for informal education. A 'cultural club' for teenagers followed with similar objectives but caused controversy in the community because it was mixed sexes. This practice is not common, especially in the town where MCF worked in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, MCF had to separate the boys from the girls. In 1994, MCF established a 'community cultural center' aimed at the community in general to provide a space for people to express themselves.

In 1995, MCF started new partnerships with international NGOs. The first initiative was a loan program for women in cooperation with an NNGO. The loans were on a long-term basis and were

granted to women to set up small-scale enterprises. The project was to be transferred to the administration of MCF after one year but some problems in actualizing this transfer manifested themselves during the period that the fieldwork was being carried out. In 1995, the MCF health center was also set up. The center boasted of being one of the first centers in Gaza that looked holistically at women's reproductive health from a social, psychological, medical and legal point of view. One of the center's main functions was to map women of reproductive age in a refugee camp. The center was supported by a United Nations agency. In 1997-98, MCF had 52 employees and included the following programs and projects: (1) recreational center for children; (2) a cultural recreational center for teenagers run by the young people themselves; (3) a community cultural center; (4) a women's loan project; and (5) a women's health center. MCF had also expanded its board of directors.

2.3.4 RehabFriends (RF)

RF was registered in 1980 but started its actual operations in 1982. The idea was initiated by two social workers at the department of social affairs of the civil administration, with the help of a rich religious benefactor. The purpose of the founders - who were known to have religious inclinations - was to establish a residence home for the aged since there was an increasing number of homeless aged people in Gaza at that time.

The organization was established in 1980 ... to provide comprehensive services for free (social-health-living-entertainment) for poor old people who have no children to take care of them. It is also to help them interact with, society solve their social problems and shelter them in the RF home (RF 1998).

The director emphasized the lack of services, neglect of a special segment of the population and the benevolence of founders as the main elements in the formation of the identity of the

organization:

We started in [the center of Gaza] with three old men. At the beginning of the eighties, there was a phenomenon of old men begging in the streets. The idea started from the department of social affairs. There were cases of elderly people who did not have children. Then the founder was detained in 1984 for carrying out a military act. There were two other men who shared the same convictions. [...] Other people continued and some left. [...] In 1983, the [founders] moved to another house where they opened a women's section. During that period, we bought this building and when half of it was prepared, [the main founder and founder] died (RF-Director April 29, 1998).

In 1993, the National Rehabilitation Committee conducted a study that showed that 65% of the disabled population in Gaza had a physical disability. The study also showed that 35% of those were not rehabilitated because of lack of specialized centers in Gaza and the difficulty of referrals to the West Bank (RF-Director April 29, 1998). The board thought of expanding the home in 1995 to include the needed rehabilitation center. A second reason for establishing the specialized clinic was to secure additional sources of funding for the home. As a result of the Gulf crisis (1990/91) a large proportion of the funding that charitable societies depended on from the Arab Gulf states, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia ceased. Moreover, it was anticipated that the presence of the PNA would redirect funding away from third sector organizations, according to interviewees from the organization (RF-Director April 29, 1998). The principles of the philosophy of the organization in 1998 entailed the following:

That each human being has rights to live, work, for welfare, and to receive all the services needed for him. The association provides its different services

to the human being as a human being regardless of his religion, race, color or age. The association believes in exceptional specialized work and the investment of every effort and energy in vertical expansion, shunning multiplicity of specializations that might disperse efforts and waste energies and interests. [...] And the organization offers its hands and opens its heart to all governmental, Ahliya (non-governmental), and international organizations working for the service of the human being in general and the sons of our Palestinian people, especially by cooperation, and Al-Takamul among each other to achieve its objectives and noble goals (RF 1998).

The mission statement of the organization focused on the service role of the organization and its emphasis on the 'human being.' It stressed as well the notion of collaboration, cooperation and integration (Al-Takamul) with other organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, in contrast to the three previous organizations. The role of the organization in society was described as being to support disadvantaged 'human beings' by providing the mechanisms to achieve this goal. The organization did not elaborate on its political role.

The organization was based in Gaza in 1997-98 in one location, unlike the other three organizations which had several branches. It was similar to MCF in that it operated only in the Gaza Strip. RF had 90 employees (RF-Director April 5, 1999) and included the following sections: (1) a physiotherapy section; (2) occupational therapy; (3) rehabilitation of the disabled; (3) a medical center; and (4) a home for the elderly. By the end of 1998, the medical center had expanded to become a hospital with 30 beds. The center became almost self-sufficient by that date since it depended largely on referrals of cases through the Ministry of Health and insurance companies. The home for the elderly continued to offer services free of charge to homeless aged people. (Refer to Appendix II, Table (2) for more points of

comparison).

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of the NGOs under study. There were some similarities between AF and HF in their establishment since they both began as voluntary committees affiliated with political factions. However, the development of these organizations differed as a result of the particularity of each organization and the sector in which it worked. HF built a hospital upon the arrival of the PNA, which corresponded with the priorities found in the first national health plan. Although it hoped to become a partner with the Ministry of Health, this did not materialize. MCF was initiated as an attempt to overcome the predominance of political factionalism on development. However, at the beginning it could not avoid falling under the influence of this political mentality. RF represented a class of charitable societies created purely for welfare and serving a limited segment of the population, the elderly, until the arrival of the PNA. Following the arrival of the PNA, it established a medical center as a result of decreasing funds and the need to find a source of self-finance to cover the expenses of the home for the aged. The following chapter will discuss the different strategies that the organizations adopted upon the arrival of the PNA.

3. New Strategies and Ideals

The first section of this chapter will give an overview of the strategies used by the selected organizations to build a relationship with the PNA. The second section will focus on strategies identified by the organizations as 'building civil society'. The third section will present strategies used by the organizations to promote development. These three strategies were given priority from the rest of the fieldwork data due to their identification as key factors in understanding changes within these organizations. Strategies with the PNA were selected because the organizations have been operating in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under occupation. This meant that they could appear legitimate in the eyes of the community for moderate efforts exerted to assist these communities. The arrival of a 'national' authority meant that they needed to fight adamantly to acquire legitimacy. The first issue was to protect this legitimacy from the new source of legitimacy i.e., the Palestinian Authority. The second and third strategies of civil society and development were directed towards two other actors owning part of the legitimacy: donors and the community. These strategies presented here and in the next chapter will constitute the basis for the observations presented in the last chapter.

3.1 Building a relationship with the PNA

The relationship between the selected NGOs and the PNA has passed through several stages, as expressed by the organizations. For instance, AF passed through a difficult period following the arrival of the PNA. This period was characterized by internal disorganization, lack of funding and hostile relations with the Ministry of Agriculture. Currently, the organization views the relationship more positively. The relationship has also matured in the signing a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry and the NGO in May 1998. As an AF staff member explained:

At the beginning there was apprehension that the countries that give to the Palestinians will channel all their resources to A-Sulttah so as not to scatter funding to many organizations. This perspective has changed for two reasons (1) European NGOs only give to NGOs; and (2) the poor indicators in managing work at A-Sulttah (AF-Head-of-institution-building-unit, December 6, 1998).

One reason for the apprehension was the issue of financial resources and the fear of NGOs that these would be shifted to the PNA. This concern was common to other organizations, as shown in the case of RF. On the other hand, HF received support for its emergency program from the Ministry of Health at the start of the PNA (HF-Branch-Manager May 24, 1998). However, this support stopped after a year, resumed for a six-month period, then stopped entirely. The organization faced financial problems during 1997-98 and one cause mentioned by interviewees was the breaching of promises by the Ministry of Health. RF complained of a similar phenomenon in its relationship with the Ministry of Health. However, it has received attention from some PNA officials or affiliated personnel who have visited the center and praised its work. For MCF, there were no clear stages in its relationship with the PNA. It can even be deduced that the relationship has improved with time. In 1998, MCF entered into partnership with the Ministry of Culture for a project of cultural activities for children and teenagers funded by an international aid organization.

The goodwill and attempts of all the selected NGOs to build better relations with the PNA were evident with interviewees explaining that *“beginnings are always difficult”* (AF-Head-of-institution-building-unit February 23, 1998). This was also reflected in the creation of workshops by the organizations, especially AF and MCF, upon the arrival of the PNA to improve coordination and recognize the legitimacy of the PNA.

We could withdraw from some locations for the Ministry of Agriculture. We are ready to follow a general Palestinian strategic plan. We know that nongovernmental work is not a substitute for the work of government. We are ready to get a license, and we are ready to give our annual reports (AF-Head-of-institution-building-unit December 6, 1997).

One of the opportunities that the selected NGOs saw in their relationship with the authorities was integration (*Takamul*) or 'functional division' (*Taqasum Wathify*). These terms were continuously used by the organizations to describe their expectations of their relationship with the PNA. The NGOs stressed that their objective was to 'complement governmental services and not to compete with them'.

I assume that A-Sulttah - the ministries in specific - have to be the leaders of the development process and nobody is competing with them from the organizations of Al-Amal Al-Ahli (AF-Head-of-office December 12, 1997).

The director of MCF elaborated a similar concept of the relationship between civil society and the state. She said:

Building civil society cannot take place except with Al-Takamul with governmental agencies so that we can make a civil society (MCF-Director May 19, 1998).

On the other hand, a PNA official who is also a board member of HF mentioned that in some areas like health, education, emergency services, or women's health, the Ministry does not play a role so it had to utilize NGOs (Head-of-NGO-unit November 3, 1997). The Health Minister reiterated this statement. Another consequence of the emphasis on *Takamul* was that HF and RF aspired to be treated as private service

providers. These NGOs emphasized their need to have a steady relationship with the Ministry of Health where their services were permanently sold to the Ministry.

The NGOs under study were also willing to compromise their principles and behave like other members of society who use their personal connections to get things done. For instance, although RF complained about its exclusion as an 'opposition NGO,' it utilized the opportunity to improve its relations with the Ministry of Health by asking a key personality to intervene on its behalf. HF interviewees reiterated the same story. For instance, the director of HF said bitterly:

Once we went to Abu Ammar and we got from him 100,000 shekels, not because it is [our] right but because it is the work of Mukhtars. This is reality (HF-Director November 11, 1997).

This has also occurred in the issue of registration. The director of HF said:

The registration at Al-Dakhliya got us into problems with the other authorities, except for some connections [we managed to get away with it] (HF-Director November 11, 1997).

A related opportunity seen by the NGOs under study was the strengthening of ties with sympathetic officials. HF has managed to utilize a minister in its fundraising efforts for its hospital. It has appointed a PNA official from the Ministry of Finance to sit on its patient's support committee to help in fundraising. A board member of HF said:

The relationship [between the organization and the minister] is very good because the minister has worked with Al-Mu'assasat and he would like to strengthen their positions (Head-of-NGO-unit November 3, 1997).

Similarly the director of RF said:

My experience with [the minister] indicates that he has ambitions, tries to improve standards of health organizations and is aware. [...] In more than one meeting he tried to gather Al-Mu'assasat Al-Ahliya"
(RF-Director April 29, 1998).

Some ministries and PNA agencies have contributed to NGOs. For example, the Ministry of Housing has granted pieces of land to some NGOs. The Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR) also extended its job creation program to support temporary employment at HF and MCF. PECDAR also helped MCF to build a center. A unit associated with PECDAR but funded through UNDP by the Swiss government, also helped MCF to carry out its program of home visits for the purpose of surveying the whole area (MCF-Legal-advisor June 13, 1998).

It was obvious that during 1997 and 1998 the relationship between NGOs and PNA ministries was in the process of being developed. As shown, this relationship greatly depended on personal ties and initiatives. This characteristic placed a challenge on less advantaged NGOs, which lacked such skills. Although there was a tendency by NGOs to show legitimacy to the PNA, there was a lack of cohesive response from PNA ministries, discouraging some organizations and leading them to criticize the PNA. Later meetings with the organizations during April 1999 showed the organizations tended to be less critical of the PNA (e.g., HF-Director April 4, 1999; RF-Director April 5, 1999). One interpretation of this is that there was an improvement in the PNA response towards these organizations. A second interpretation is that these organizations have internalized the strategies that they 'rationally' adopted towards the PNA (i.e., giving it legitimacy). This internalization means that they have overcome the confusion of the transitional period and there is better adjustment between the changing objective conditions surrounding them and their 'ought to change'

subjective conditions. The themes evolving from this section will be further discussed in the section on observations.

3.2 Building ‘Civil Society’

The second strategy stressed by most NGOs under study was their role as civil society organizations, a new role for Palestinian NGOs despite their many years of operation prior to the arrival of the PNA. It was also part of a global phenomenon highlighting civil society by intellectuals, NNGOs and aid organizations. This strategy represented a 'rational' policy choice by some organizations, intended to help them to defend their threatened or questionable legitimacy and to acquire a larger space during the confusion of the transitional period. As will be shown, this strategy coincided with the policies of some international aid organizations. Some NGOs managed to pursue this strategy, facilitated by elements in their identity or habitus as discussed in chapter five.

3.2.1 Key Elements of Civil Society

The first three NGOs (AF, HF and MCF) emphasized the term 'civil society' in their mission statements. For HF, the importance of NGOs arose out of being key elements in 'civil society'. For AF, not all NGOs qualified to be part of civil society; NGOs first had to prove their transparency, professionalism and democracy. NGOs had to:

Believe in the principles by which they worked (e.g., transparency). Before we ask society for democracy or professionalism, we have to apply it ourselves. Laws and systems, we have to apply them to ourselves (AF-Director June 8, 1998).

For AF, NGOs have to be exemplary and show how democracy and transparency are implemented in practice. HF also highlighted democracy, accountability and transparency as part of its efforts to build civil society. The director of HF explained:

We have laid down the elements of our philosophy. We are a community nonprofit organization. We have a role in building civil society based on democracy, accountability and transparency (HF-Director November 11, 1997).

The director of MCF also stressed transparency and the possibility of the PNA monitoring NGOs on the precondition that it did not interfere with the autonomy of these organizations. She said:

It is the right of A-Sulttah to monitor the financial affairs of NGOs but we have to have a statutory status and [the PNA's] interference must not be at the expense of [the NGO's] programs (MCF-Director May 19, 1998).

The concepts of 'democracy' and 'community participation' were also related with civil society, as emphasized by HF, MCF and AF. These organizations considered themselves to be actively pursuing these goals. The director of HF explained what he meant by community participation:

We also talk about democracy and the participation of people in choosing programs, in implementing them and funding them. This is one of the goals [...] which we have implemented to a considerable degree [...]. We wanted to start a women's health center and to do this program we did a study on 1000 women. [...] We got the results and according to that we found what we would do at the center. [...] According to the study we laid down the priorities (HF-Director November 11, 1997).

For HF, community participation was achieved by the community's responses to questionnaires distributed by the NGO. The director of MCF stressed that the presence of NGOs was endangered if they did not involve their beneficiaries but she

did not explain how beneficiaries actually altered the policies of the organization:

For any organization there is no need for it [except for its relation with the local community]. The survival of organizations is associated with the extent it shares with the local society in making its plans. We cannot make plans without gathering the beneficiaries (MCF-Director May 19, 1998).

The Gaza manager of AF explained how the publication of reports and budgets in newspapers involved the public in the evaluation but not the actual determination of the project:

We have revised our priorities and strategic plans up to 2000 so that they will be appropriate to the [new] circumstances and also with respect to our relationship with Al-Jumhour [the people]. That is, by publishing our administrative reports and budgets. This is the second consecutive year in which we have published our projects and budgets in detail in the local newspapers. [...] We ask the beneficiaries about their opinions and if there are complaints or incorrect information. [...] We sit with the beneficiaries, listen and discuss with them so we can formulate the letter of evaluation. This happens continuously. It is within the power of the administration to evaluate the final project and include the beneficiaries and other sectors of Al-Jumhour in the evaluation of the work that we do in the projects (AF-Head-of-office December 12, 1997).

The Head of the Gaza office added that financial contributions from the public were methods of community participation:

We do not implement any project without the participation of society. People have to participate

with 25-50%. For example, in making an agricultural road and land reclamation, the people involved have to share in the costs of the project. For agricultural roads, people share 25%. We plant trees, like palm trees, they share 50% of the costs. Therefore, community participation reduces dependence on foreign funding by 50% (AF-Head-of-office December 12, 1997).

The director of HF explained how the organization had acquired credibility in the community, especially since PNA officials use HF services:

In reality, we are able to weave a relationship with [the public] and our credibility is reasonable. A lot of people ...for example, the other day [a high-ranking PNA official] let his wife stay at the hospital and he contributed NIS 500 (HF-Director November 11, 1997).

AF went a step further and showed how, despite its achievements in involving the community, there were still shortcomings:

[On needs of people] We still have a deficiency in this area. We don't claim that we work 100%. We see that we work properly. For example, in our plan for the coming year, we started with a workshop in the territories where we involved the target group (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998).

Community participation varied from one organization to another. The highest level of participation was in people giving opinions on the work of the organizations. Some donors have also taken on this rhetoric. Workshops were the main mechanism used for this type of community participation. Community participation was also used by NGOs to raise funds from beneficiaries and reduce dependence on donors. Thus, the

concept could be used to present a progressive image of the organization to donors and also to reduce donor influence.

3.2.1.1 De-Politicization

At AF, the public relations officer explained how the decision to keep a distance from politics was taken by the majority of the staff who felt the negative implications of factional politics on the organization's work. He also saw this as a move towards democracy and the building of civil society. Here there was juxtaposition between working in politics and building civil society. At this point, the issue of democracy was intertwined with civil society. Civil society was perceived as a step towards democracy while politics was not:

Seven years ago, we started to endure the political character that was clinging to AF because we had a relationship with political factions. This was one of the impediments for the development of the organization in a natural way. We as staff and administration at AF started to think of how to address this problem. There was a strong feeling by the staff that the political dimension or relationship between AF and any political faction had to have limits of one sort or another. [We wanted also] to give attention to the social dimensions and development dimension and to [...] lay down the first blocks of a civil society (AF-Head-Public-Relations February 25, 1998).

The attempt to de-politicize the role of NGOs was also apparent in the World Bank approach to the issue. A World Bank official in charge of the World Bank Trust Fund in the West Bank and Gaza Strip said:

NGOs played a strong role during the occupation [however, now they have to act as] public service providers (Coordinator May 7, 1998).

Both HF and MCF reiterated the negative implications of politics and contrasted 'politics' with development. RF showed its detachment from political affiliations and its focus on the role of service provider. According to these organizations, de-politicization was needed in order to succeed in building civil society or, in the case of RF, to provide services. For the first three organizations, previous involvement in politics meant that the organizations had been unable to build a democratic society - 'the first blocks of a civil society'. Accountability and transparency have a better chance to be developed when politics are put aside. Therefore, these organizations were clearly saying to the PNA and donors that they had historical shortcomings which they were willing to correct for the sake of improving their position in the new environment.

3.2.1.2 Lobbying

Some NGOs adopted a policy or rhetoric of 'lobbying' or influencing policies. The strongest or better-established NGOs tended to focus on 'influencing policies' despite the fact that a large number of them acknowledged the lack of clear policies by the PNA. The emphasis on lobbying was highlighted by the work of PNGO (the Palestinian NGO Network). AF, HF and MCF were members of PNGO. In the first issue of its newsletter issued in October 1994, PNGO wrote:

Palestinian NGOs are presumed to play an important role during the coming period as 'lobbying groups' watching continuously the activities of A-Sulttah and following its adherence to democratic values and human rights. [NGOs] also have to strengthen societal sectors and increase their participation in the direction of greater democracy in general in national and private developmental decision-making (PNGO 1994).

AF can be considered the most vocal and sophisticated as regards lobbying among the organizations under study. The

interviewees in this organization mentioned the word ‘lobbying’ (in English) several times.

We have to influence policies and this is the main role for Al-Mu’assasat Al-Ahliya which are Mu’assasat Al-Mujtama’ Al-Madani. This is the core idea of civil society, to be able to change policies (AF-Head-of-office December 12, 1997).

A second area in which the term lobbying was used was in describing the roles of NGOs with PNGO in lobbying Legislative Council members to change the draft law to the version advocated by PNGO. The administrative director of AF explained:

One level is to be able to lobby on legislation. For example, instead of waiting until a law is put into effect, we made a legal study comparing working systems and laws governing the work of Al-Mu’assasat Al-Ahliya in other parts of the world. Accordingly, we suggested the proposed law for the relationship (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998).

A third area in which the term ‘lobbying’ was used was in relation to institution building. The director of AF stressed the role of the organization in ‘training’ the target group on lobbying. He elaborated:

Teaching him [the farmer] how to run a farm, how to deal with people and how to lobby (AF-Director June 8, 1998).

Lobbying was seen as a means to change policies and therefore, to build ‘civil society’. However, there was no clear explanation of how this lobbying would build civil society. Looking at lobbying broadly, MCF could be seen to implement this by convening public meetings with PNA officials, attended mainly

by women and children. During these meetings, issues of concern to local residents were raised. However, these meetings were less effective because they solved individual cases rather than found a systematic approach to problems within the PNA. An MCF board member explained

"problems were raised and some of them were solved on an individual basis [... what persists is] the problem of Al-Wasta" (MCF-Board-member May 13, 1998).

The administrative director of AF talked of a strategy that could be considered as an indirect attempt to influence the state. The method entails putting into practice the ideals advocated by NGOs like 'transparency and accountability' to show the PNA their dedication to civil society ideals (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998). Therefore, one of the reasons for AF to reform itself is to show other organizations and the PNA the possibility of being accountable. The general director of the same organization criticized NGOs that claimed to be working or advocating civil society:

We started with ourselves. That is why there are some points of disagreement with the other NGOs, they request these things without applying them to themselves (AF-Director June 8, 1998).

3.2.2 Definition of Civil Society

For the director of MCF, civil society meant that NGOs should have a good working relationship with the PNA. The PNA was required to acknowledge the importance and the need for the work of NGOs. Therefore, it was assumed that it would coordinate better with them and utilize them to achieve the overall goals of society. Civil society also included peace. With the Israeli army so close, it became difficult for MCF to advocate the concept of civil society. Although MCF stressed the concept of civil society, further discussions with its director showed that she tried to use the theoretical definition of the concept but felt that it

was not convincing. An AF respondent on civil society under occupation made similar comments. The discourse of the three NGOs under study (AF, HF and MCF) exemplified an act of reconstruction and weaving of identity. The organizations highlighted the notion of civil society. Because it was a ‘rational’ alternative, it needed to be supported by evidence. The evidence in the case of AF was compelling because the organization took it on itself, in its actions. In the case of MCF, it was not very convincing because the evidence depended on the external environment, which was not clearly defined.

At AF, the term was used to mean ‘*the strengthening of grassroots associations*’ or ‘*institutionalization of societal work*’. The strengthening of grassroots associations by AF was meant to replace the one-to-one relationship between the organization and the target group. Instead of intervention at individual farmer level, intervention targeted at groups of farmers will have ripple effects. The staff member mentioned an example of his collaboration with another board member in helping to form a community center that focused on the social and psychological problems found in a particular community known for its familial fights. At the beginning of the fieldwork, there were attempts by the staff member and the board member to create a governance structure with by-laws and to re-focus the goals of the center. However, at the end of the fieldwork, none of the board members could reform the work of the center and had to withdraw. This example lowered the expectations of staff members in the endeavor to build civil society.

3.2.3 Donor Emphasis on Policy Making

The goal of influencing ‘governmental policies’ has been emphasized by international donors. These donors, USAID in particular, considered influencing policies to be one of the main functions of NGOs in order to be considered part of ‘civil society.’ One of the programs for which USAID offered support to NGOs or nonprofit organizations was “*interested in or working on development and strengthening of Palestinian civil*

society for the realization of a just, transparent and responsible governance system.”¹³

USAID identified four goals with regards to its governance program. One goal specified for civil society organizations was to participate more in public policy and ‘government oversight.’ The other goals targeted the different PNA institutions, especially legislative functions:

USAID has focused on four major inter-related intermediate results: [1] increasing the participation of civil society organizations in public-decision making and government oversight; [2] enhancing the capability of the Palestinian Legislative Council to perform functions of a legislative body; [3] supporting more effective Executive Authority legislative and public policy-making; and [4] putting in place the foundation for decentralized local government (USAID 1999).

USAID did not consider all NGOs to be part of civil society. Most Palestinian NGOs were ‘service providers’. There were only some professional and research institutes that had a public interest or were ‘civic organizations.’ Among the projects within civil society was a program to support the training of civil society leaders in policy analysis, strategic planning and communications skills (UNSCO 1999). USAID differentiated among NGOs along the following lines:

Although there are a large number of Palestinian NGOs (estimated at over 1,200) in the West Bank and Gaza, there are few organizations that fall into the category of public interest organizations. The majority of NGOs are service providers that were established in the absence of a Palestinian government during the past thirty years. [...]

¹³ Al-Ayyam, 7/2/1998.

Palestinian NGOs encompass a broad spectrum of Palestinian society including charitable associations, professional and research institutes (which most resemble public interest or civic organizations), developmental organizations, cooperatives and voluntary societies. There is a unique opportunity with the creation of the new Palestinian Authority (PNA) for Palestinian civil society organizations to develop the capacity to promote participation in the formulation of public policy and to influence the democratic process (USAID 1999).

According to this statement, the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority meant that some NGOs could become active in influencing policies. The interest of USAID in encouraging NGOs to influence policies and lobbying was most similar to the views of AF interviewees more than the other organizations under study. One similarity was that not all NGOs were eligible to be called civil society organizations. Only specific research institutes in the case of USAID and ‘transparent’ organizations in the case of AF were credible to come under the umbrella of civil society. A second similarity was that both USAID and AF supported efforts to lobby Legislative Council members to include PNGOs version of the law in the draft bill. This point will be discussed further in the last chapter.

3.2.4 Views of PNA officials on the Roles of NGOs

A number of officials, especially at the Ministry of Interior, agreed with NGOs that they were part of civil society:

Associations are part of civil society. Civil society is where democracy and freedom of expression are ensured with the separation of powers and the law applied to associations without the use of coercion and subjugation. It is also very far from the military society, settler and industrial societies (NGO-unit May 21, 1998).

Civil society was contrasted to 'military,' 'industrial' or 'settler' societies. The meaning denoted the state of being 'civil' rather than the concept of civil society versus the state. The official tried to incorporate all the terms needed to express the openness of the PNA to NGOs. A second PNA official, who was also a HF board member, included democracy and transparency in the concept of civil society:

Transparency is required of NGOs. But Al-Sulttah should not interfere in their internal programs. There should be respect based on democracy (Head-of-NGO-unit November 3,1997).

However, there was no consensus among PNA officials on the positive implications of the concept. The coordinator for NGOs at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation rejected the whole discourse on civil society. Although she had participated in the organization of workshops related to the women's model parliament mentioned above, she said:

Discussions of civil society were a big lie and they believed it. The issue is about volunteerism and helping society or the neighborhood. It is also one of my rights to express myself. All of this became distorted because there are vested interests. The [prevailing] philosophy around volunteerism no longer supports volunteerism. In the days of the Intifada, there was a higher goal and clearer objectives. This has disappeared and there is no more a relationship with the community to strengthen people (Head-of-NGO-unit October 29, 1997).

For this official, the use of the term did not have any meaning. The real significance of the concept was the volunteerism that resulted from it. She commented on the disappearance of volunteerism and the lack of strong relations between NGOs and the public.

RF did not use the term civil society or other terms like democracy or accountability. Possible reasons for this are included in the observations' section. Therefore, some organizations associated the concept of civil society with democracy, transparency and policy making. Some PNA officials agreed on the importance of transparency to the work of NGOs. Policymaking was emphasized as well by international aid agencies such as USAID. Most organizations attempted to distance their organizations from 'politics'; policy making was different from 'politics.' As will be seen below, development concepts were tightly linked with a 'civil' role in society and these were affirmed by all the organizations under study.

3.3 Empowerment of Women – Combining Development with Civil Society

The empowerment of women was significant to AF, HF and MCF in relation to both development and civil society. Gender does not have an Arabic synonym but it was mainly used to describe the position of women. In some instances, the focus was on women as a marginalized group requiring special attention, as in the case of HF:

It is not necessary that the disadvantaged be based on economic need. I see that women [form] a marginalized and weak sector and need protection and support (HF-Director May 17, 1998).

For another interviewee at HF, women were the focus of attention because they reflected the health and well-being of the population. There were also attempts to help women to become engaged in income generation programs or given the opportunity to work so that they could help their families. Moreover, there were attempts to involve women in local affairs:

I concentrated on women because women are 54% [of the population]. Children follow women. If you

reach women at home you have transmitted your message. Therefore, the focus is on females because they can reach everywhere except for workshops. Here the idea of [the women] leaders started. We have graduated 1320 women leaders in the Gaza Strip. They took a six-month course. We negotiated with the Ministry and it accredited them (HF-Head-of-Pediatrics-section May 24, 1998).

AF and MCF adopted a similar stance towards the inclusion of women in economic activities. There was a tendency for these three NGOs to give priority to the economic aspect, either to improve the status of women or to improve the status of the family. As explained by an AF field worker:

The budget of [the loans program] is allocated for women's loans only. We give money for agricultural production, for food processing, handicrafts and animal production. We go along with them step by step. The first course is leadership; the second is economic feasibility and the third is technical ability (AF-Field-worker March 5, 1998).

A board member at MCF elaborated on how these economic activities had implications for the women themselves:

Any income for a woman gives her strength at home and in respect to her husband. At the beginning, there were problems facing women when they got out of the house, or were helped in any economic or social improvement. Whether the husband works or not, it gives confidence to her children (MCF-Board-member May 13, 1998).

An AF staff member believed that the maintenance of patriarchy and a society based on male authority will not lead to either civil society nor democracy. He also related looking at gender with different schools of development thought. For instance, he raised

the question that faced PNA officials when founding ministries of whether to set up a separate ministry for women or to integrate gender within all ministries to avoid marginalization of the issue.

Although at RF the issue of gender was not raised, and despite using a more traditional word to describe the women's section, the female nurses were quite active and appreciated for their efficiency and managerial abilities. There were also female students engaged in internships at the center. The director of RF emphasized that there was no discrimination in favor of male applicants for jobs:

There are no preferences [for men or women] according to the type of work and the type of referral, if the section is for women or [there are needed] women cleaners, or if the elderly are men or women. Not all types of specialization are found, some types are not available. It is not necessary to take men only (RF-Director April 29, 1998).

3.4 Comprehensive Development

Comprehensive development was an issue raised by all organizations whether they advocated civil society or not. For some organizations like AF and HF, 'development' was a tool to 'enlighten' the community and achieve civil society. The end purpose of development intervention was to withdraw after educating the community. However, this did not take place. An interviewee from AF elaborated:

Through the interaction with farmers, I don't deny that there is some kind of intervention by us. This is developmentally sound but is surrounded with dangers because interventions have to be determined and your withdrawal has to be determined. Until now we cannot claim that our intervention has

fulfilled its goals 100%. Until this moment we have not withdrawn totally. [...] We are still working on this function and I cannot say that we have made a great achievement (AF-Head-of-institution-building-unit December 6, 1997).

An interviewee at RH spoke in a similar way when describing the work of the organization with respect to disabled people. He saw the lack of coordination among NGOs as an impediment to the achievement of goals:

Here at the organization, it is development with respect to the disabled and the local community. The problems that NGOs are experiencing stand in the way of achieving this vision. Where does the vision go when one sees that there are some people who do not understand our role? (RF-Head-of-physiotherapy-unit April 29, 1998).

Comprehensive development was seen as a lack of specialization by some organizations and therefore a hindrance to the growth of the organization. The main requirement for any successful NGO was to focus on one target group. In the case of AF this target group was initially started with farmers and now included women investing in small enterprises:

The problem we discover is that whenever we branch off in something it serves the initial objectives. If an organization works in one area only it experiences a lot of problems. However, it has to work with comprehensive development – each section supporting the other section or department (AF-Director June 8, 1998).

Comprehensive development was introduced as a response to previous failures. Previously, social and economic conditions were neglected. AF now devoted more attention to these issues. There was a clear consensus among AF interviewees of the importance of widening interests in the community:

Now, we want to move from traditional guidance, not only to spread new technology but also to be development agents since the farmer faces not only technical problems, but also social and economic problems. He is linked with merchants, with the decisions made by Al-Sulttah, with the social conditions prevailing in the area. We are thinking of what is called a 'development agent' and how to deal with the farmer and try to introduce modifications to his life and thinking, not only regarding agriculture and fertilizer but with resources in general (AF-Head-of-institution-building-unit February 23, 1998).

The broadening of the concept of development has also led to the introduction of business practices into the work of NGOs. AF considered investment opportunities as a way to sustain itself and reduce dependence on donors:

We also have income generation projects. For instance, in Jericho we have 300 dunums that we cultivate and export its products . . . this is an investment direction. In the future, part of this amount will help sustain the organization in the long run (AF-Head-Public-Relations February 25, 1998).

HF advocated combining environmental awareness with health as part of comprehensive development. As mentioned, there was a trend in Gaza by international donors to work with local government on developing neighborhood committees to support the development of infrastructure. A HF doctor implemented a similar practice, as he explained:

We are trying to combine infrastructure with health awareness. I trained 40 women from Khan Younis to introduce them to neighborhood committees through the women leaders. They need to transform health information to behavior (HF-Head-of-Pediatrics-section May 24, 1998).

Comprehensive development was also echoed by MCF's women's health center. The approach was implemented within the organization first and second within the community. The legal counselor at MCF clarified:

The doctor can refer cases to [the lawyer]. The doctor's job is not only to examine ultrasound scans. She also wants to know about the woman's circumstances. How are her children? The doctor is supposed to spend time and talk to the patient. It could be that her [the patient] husband is pushing her and that she is tired and her health is suffering. Or she may be treated badly at home. It could be that her husband does not bring her food. Some people are in poor health and say that the husband cannot afford to spend money on them (MCF-Legal-advisor June 13, 1998).

HF suggested a strategy which can be considered a middle path between their previous high level of politicization and current de-politicization with emphasis on development. HF stressed that Palestinian society was in a process of liberation which had to occur in the form of development. The dilemma of the role of factional politics and incomplete liberation continued:

We see that this comes from a political vision that the Palestinian people are still in the phase of national liberation. Therefore, our role is to help people to stand steadfastly. We have a role through development (HF-Director November 11, 1997).

3.5 Other Ideals

The RF director pointed out another value that RF was proud of. Despite the low wages of the employees at RF, they were 'committed':

The quality of the men was [special]. They were committed. This is our secret of success despite the low salaries. There was another interest (RF-Director April 29, 1998).

A staff member of RF implied the same concept:

If one wants to do something so people will compliment them, there is no point in this work (RF-Head-of-nursing-staff May 17, 1998).

The head nurse at RF highlighted the care they devote to their work and that the nurses respond to all the needs of the patients: "We like to work correctly. There are no companions or helpers with the patients, the nurse does everything" (RF-Head-of-nurses May 17, 1998). She also pointed out the uniqueness of the center in the Gaza Strip. A mother of a patient reiterated that nursing staff were very committed, efficient and worked well together:

The service is of a very high level [of efficiency]... Here they do everything. They don't let the patient do anything. Maybe they lack specialized doctors but they have the spirit of coordination. They care about each other and help each other. The head of the nursing staff is carrying out the work of all doctors. [The head of the women nurses] is from the few dedicated ones, unlike the other hospitals. I wish [a governmental hospital] could be like this. With all their equipment and doctors, there is no nursing (Mother-of-patient May 17, 1998).

RF interviewees emphasized their commitment and special care for their patients and presented these attributes as their uniqueness. RF interviewees did not use the term civil society but they stressed the importance of the role of NGOs to society and in complementing the services offered by governmental organizations.

3.6 Conclusion

The selected NGOs conveyed through their values how they perceived their role in society, their relations with the PNA, donors and the community. The chapter highlighted some of the issues that preoccupied the NGOs under study with regard to their broader role in society. Most of these organizations adopted the discourse on civil society to varying degrees. Some of the views of these organizations coincided with those of donors, highlighting the closer match between the organizations' habitus and the new objective conditions. Some organizations did not use the term civil society at all, revealing their distance from both the habitus of other NGOs and from the priorities of some donors. Development was highlighted as an ideal. Development represented a more concrete set of activities and objectives that the discourse on civil society could not capture. One explanation could be that development has lasted longer as a concept than civil society. Community participation was stressed by most organizations but there was no evidence of how the beneficiaries were actually included in the decision making process of the organizations. Some of these themes will be discussed further in the final chapter.

4. Impediments to the Work of NGOs

4.1 External Political Constraints

The limitations of the peace agreement on Palestinian society included the continued dependency of the Palestinian economy on that of Israel. Many writers questioned the possibilities for equal reciprocity and independence between an economy of \$63-64 billion GNP (Israel) and one with \$2-2.5 billion (Aruri 1995). As seen in the previous chapter, the difficult economic conditions have led NGOs to diversify their work and to try to counter the problems resulting from the economic situation. Diversification occurred by engaging in job creation activities (e.g., AF, HF and MCF) as the main response of key donors to the economic problems. A second external factor that affected the work of NGOs was the postponement to the final status talks of the vital issues of land, water and the right of return of refugees. The ability of the PNA during the transitional period to alleviate structural problems relating to the development of Palestinian society was thus severely restricted and this was reflected on NGOs working in the same environment. The NGOs most affected were those working in areas B and C. These organizations could be thought to play a more influential role since the outside world and donors had the impression that all areas were 'liberated.' This lack of understanding made it difficult for NGOs to assist the communities in these areas. As the director of AF explained:

Our problem is that the population is under A-Sulttah but land and water are not under [the control of] A-Sulttah. The elements of agricultural work are people, land and water. The population is with A-Sulttah but the land and water are with the Israelis. 98% of the land is in Area B and only a small proportion of Gaza and Jericho [are under the PNA which has no authority in Areas B and C]. That is why our role has been expanded (AF-Director June 8, 1998).

Although the PNA appears to be in control and exerts pressure on NGOs, it has no control over areas B and C. Therefore, NGOs carry out this role without acknowledgment from other actors. A third limitation resulting from external factors was that the *“border remained closed for Palestinian exports to Israel”* as well as for Palestinian workers trying to work in Israel (Brynen 1997b: 3). The closures *“have reduced by over 20 percent the total number of days [in 1997] during which normal economic interactions between Israel and WBGS could take place”* (UNSCO 1997: iii). As seen in chapter two, organizations such as AF, HF and MCF were involved in job creation programs supported by donors. These organizations received a small amount of funds for job creation with the aim of compensating for the restrictions imposed by Israel. This highlights the connection between NGOs and their surrounding environment and the manner in which directions in policy priorities are set by donors and the PA. NGOs justify these changes in direction e.g., the mission statement of AF on unemployment, the HF program for female leaders, and the loan programs of both AF and MCF. These examples illustrate how NGOs embody objective conditions consciously and attempt to internalize them.

Although the DOP included a clause on a ‘safe passage’ between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, this was not implemented until the fieldwork period 1997-98. Closures of these areas affected all aspects of life since the Gaza Strip depended heavily on the West Bank, Jerusalem and Israel. It also affected the work of most organizations, whether their headquarters were in the West Bank or Jerusalem or whether they needed to network with similar organizations. Most interviewees emphasized a number of problems due to the closures. These include the weakening of ties among branches of the same organization and the isolation of NGOs in the Gaza Strip from their counterparts in the West Bank. This could lead to different organizational directions and approaches, with a narrower and more limited understanding of the problems of each specific area. One basic component of the civil society theory is that it guarantees equal rights for individuals, including the right of association. Therefore, the

closure and lack of communication between sections of Palestinian society objectively impedes any attempt to build civil society.

4.2 Problems Related with the PNA

4.2.1 Lack of Legal Codes

Lack of unified legal codes was one of the main problems cited by NGOs during fieldwork. NGOs blamed this on the unwillingness of the PNA to legislate one common law relating to NGOs. NGOs also complained about the lack of legislation governing the relationship between opposition parties and the PNA and they believed that this compounded the weaknesses of the PNA in Palestinian society with respect to Israel:

My feeling is that in all countries there is an opposition and a government. As much as the government tries to pressure the opposition, they have the law. In our case, we have no law that controls the parties and nobody can deny that A-Sultah is under pressure... Sometimes it is for the purpose of putting the opposition in a special situation. Everybody will blame A-Sulttah but it is from Israel. I as an authority cannot refuse to give a license to an organization but I can put laws and borders which happens in all the world [. . .]. Sometimes there are nuisances to the opposition and A-Sulttah has got nothing to do with it (RF-Director April 29, 1998).

Lack of legislation has led to an overlap in functions among PNA ministries and departments. HF experienced these differences:

The multiplicity of security forces under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior that deal with us, who run after us [is enormous]. The Ministry of Health deals

with us, the security forces deal with us, the intelligence services deal with us, and also Force 17 (HF-Director May 17, 1998).

A related issue of contention is that of registration. This issue gave rise to tension, especially between the Ministries of Interior and Social Affairs, as explained by RF director:

There are problems among the ministries about which should register NGOs. At the beginning, it was given to Al-Dakhliya since Al-Dakhliya is responsible for security and Al-Dakhliya prepared a bill on the basic law. Then Abu Ammar pleased everybody and appointed two referential points for Al-Jamiyat, Al-Dakhliya and Al-Shu'un Al-Ijtima'ya. It is good to have specialization and the role of Al-Shu'un Al-Ijtima'ya is practically suspended (RF-Director April 29, 1998).

The HF director also elaborated on the ambiguity of the place of registration:

We registered at Al-Dakhliya and this became problematic and has got us into trouble with the other authorities (HF-Director May 17, 1998).

According to some interviewees, the lack of legislation has induced a number of PNA officials to abuse their powers. They gave the example of the closure of charitable societies by the security forces on the pretext that they were affiliated with Islamic factions. During the fieldwork period, this occurred to organizations affiliated with Hamas and Jihad. The Israeli government pressed the PNA to clamp down on Islamic activists and the PNA closed down institutions related to these factions. Human rights organizations continuously issued releases criticizing the PNA for violating the rights of these individuals and organizations (e.g., LAW, PHRC, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights). All the NGOs under study also raised the issue of the lack of independence of the judicial system.

4.2.2 Funding

This was one of the main issues of tension between the PNA and NGOs, according to the majority of interviewees. Starting with the Gulf war, funding to NGOs has decreased. The peace agreement meant that traditional donors to NGOs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including European governments, USAID and similar governmental agencies, largely substituted the PNA for NGOs. Accordingly, charitable societies faced financial problems.

The Gulf crisis and the occupation of Kuwait affected us because all of the Gulf was affected materially and therefore, people were affected in a detrimental way. Moreover, the arrival of A-Sulttah as an emerging authority will take a share away from Al-Jamiyat Al-Ahliya (RF-Director April 29, 1998).

The dependence of NGOs on foreign funding endangered their existence, as stressed by a member of AF:

The concept that threatens all Al-Amal Al-Ahli is the total dependence on outside sources of funding, which is being directed in a political way (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998).

Both the PNA and most well-functioning NGOs received foreign funding. However, there were attempts by the PNA to control all sources of funding to NGOs. As clarified in the previous section, the lack of legal restrictions permitted this type of action to take place.

4.2.3 Impact of Funding on Competition

The decrease in funding opportunities for NGOs stimulated competition for resources and reduced cooperation between these organizations, according to a RF employee. Donors were seen to play a negative role in the development of 'good' NGOs and in encouraging good relations among the NGOs:

Maybe funders are the reason behind that [the lack of coordination among NGOs] as a result of the conditions they impose on NGOs (RF-Head-of-physiotherapy-unit April 29, 1998).

The AF administrative director stated that donors restricted NGOs from working on a national agenda under the pretext that issues not mentioned in the peace agreement should be left until the final status talks:

Sometimes, donors might be instruments in the hands of states. For instance, USAID put the issue of human rights on top of the agenda. In a number of Palestinian organizations this is becoming fashionable because it gets funding. Human rights in the American understanding [did not include] house demolition. [It] had no relation with human rights and the confiscation of land. Human rights only mean if A-Sulttah arrested somebody and hit him. This is correct, it is a human right, but there are other rights [...]. A perceptive NGO has to be aware not to become an instrument [...] There are some organizations that used to refuse to reform lands because of settlements and the [postponement of the] issue of settlements for the final talks (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998).

An AF employee explained that the role of donors has been historically influential in the development of the NGO sector in Palestine. Many problems, including the duplication of activities by NGOs, was caused by the large amounts of funds channeled into Palestinian NGOs:

During the middle and the end of the Intifada, there was a lot of competition among political factions to establish the most organizations since there was funding for them. There were emergency funding programs from governmental and non-governmental

organizations from Europe. These programs came to a country where there was no government and no one to deal with except the existing NGOs. This was the main reason for the tremendous increase in the number of organizations. At some point their appearance was quite random. Up to the present, we still face the problem that there is duplication in the work of Al-Munatham Al-Ahliya and there is a lack of clear coordination among these organizations (AF-Head-Public-Relations February 25, 1998).

External factors, therefore, stimulated internal impediments to the work of NGOs. Funding was one of the main problems facing NGOs but instead of this leading to better cooperation among organizations, it led to isolation. This, in turn, hindered work on developing society or building civil society.

4.2.4 Control of Communication Media

Prior to 1993, censorship over the local press was in the hands of Israeli officers. Since the arrival of the PNA, this censorship has been shared between PNA and Israeli officials. Palestinian TV and radio channels were created but these new media were not beneficial to a large number of NGOs. As the director of HF explained:

At the beginning, the media covered the hospital as the first established under A-Sulttah.,It was mainly to cover [... a key PNA official] (HF-Director May 17, 1998).

Things changed later. Three members of the HF board were quite bitter and complained during May 1998 of neglect by the Palestinian TV in broadcasting their news (HF-Board-members May 17, 1998). This took place during clashes between Palestinians and Israelis on the day when Palestinians were commemorating the 50th anniversary of *Al Nakbah*. The director also complained that two major daily newspapers did not

mention the name of the organization when they reported a visit by a Ministry of Culture official to their youth library. However, another board member commented that because they had a good relationship with the presenter of a children's program, the library was mentioned in that program.

AF also discussed the control of the media by the PNA. It was only during February 1998 that the first item of news appeared about the AF on Palestinian TV. The administrative director said:

They have attacked us by name. We sent them a letter, [...] a council member who is supposed to be rational [did that]. The problem is that [the presenter of the program represents] legislative authority, executive authority, and the fourth authority, journalism. They need to make him a judge [to have the four authorities combined in one] (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998).

The other two NGOs (MCF and RF) did not pay much attention to this issue. It was only recently that RF participated in a TV program on health.

4.2.5 Inefficiency of PNA departments

Another constraint on the work of NGOs was the inefficiency of PNA ministries. According to interviewees, this inefficiency results from the lack of resources and internal mismanagement. Criticism of PNA ministries was widespread. It was justified initially as the authority was new but three or four years later, in 1997 and 1998, it was difficult to understand:

In the first and second years of the arrival of A-Sulttah, there was an excuse for [their] inexperience because they came from the trenches, but after four years it cannot be justified (RF-Director April 29, 1998).

The director of HF reiterated that these deficiencies negatively reflected on the work of NGOs:

A-Sulttah and [in general] its performance in the technical sense is confusing to us. We tell them, for instance, that we want to open a women's health center and we obtain their approval. They say we will not do it [open a clinic in the same area] but after six months, they do [open one]. Another example is we tell them we want to build a hospital for the North [area] within the health plan and accordingly they will buy services from us [but] they do not buy, or only partially buy (HF-Director November 11, 1997).

In May 1998, HF and RF complained that the Ministry of Health failed to fulfill promises when approvals for referrals were transferred to lower levels of the administration. These organizations, especially RF, noted that there were contradictions within the same ministry. The director of RF cited an example of discrepancy between action and rhetoric by PNA ministries. He referred to the official in charge of economic planning at the ministry who explained the benefits accruing to the ministry by utilizing the services of the medical center (RF-Director April 29, 1998). As mentioned earlier, the minister has showed the same interest, even the departments in charge for referrals reiterated this point. The conclusion reached by the RF director was that no one in the ministry could actually make a decision and that the minister was easily manipulated (RF-Director April 29, 1998).

Criticism has also been directed towards municipalities. For instance, MCF worked and coordinated with the municipalities in the southern part of the Gaza Strip. However, employees at the women's health center complained that these municipalities failed to act on complaints about hygiene problems discovered by employees during home visits.

HF criticized the Gaza Strip municipality for involving itself in areas assumed to be the field of NGOs. The municipality was activating or creating neighborhood committees to promote environmental awareness campaigns in their communities. A doctor from HF also criticized the Ministry of Health for opening up a governmental health center which has taken patients away from them because they opened 24 hours and served the same functions as HF (HF-Branch-Manager May 24, 1998).

There were also criticisms of the Legislative Council for not facing up to sensitive social issues. A lawyer working at MCF commented on the issue of the Personal Affairs Bill that was the focus of the Women's Model Parliament:

The Legislative Council pushes it to the religious court and the court in turn pushes it back to the Legislative Council. Nobody has the courage to open this door because the issues touch on the family, religion and society (MCF-Legal-advisor June 13, 1998).

It is clear that there was some confusion on the respective roles of NGO and the PNA. Some NGOs felt that they were replaced by donor-funded projects implemented by the local authority or by other governmental agencies. It needs to be determined whether there was a widespread trend in substituting NGOs with other bodies and if this trend was due to political policy, the inefficiency of NGOs or dependent on the relations of donors with PNA agencies.

4.2.6 Negative PNA views of NGOs

A number of PNA officials made criticisms of NGOs in general but the NGOs under study felt that these negative views stood in the way of better relations between NGOs and the PNA. The PNA, particularly the Ministry of Interior, had several criticisms of NGOs. One concept was that NGOs had been without any control for a long period and eventually needed some outside authority since a large number of them had misused the funds

received from international donors. Both AF and MCF refuted this accusation. The AF director clarified:

There was an idea at some period that NGOs were thieves and this problem faced us in dealing with A-Sulttah [MCF-Board-member, June 8, 1998 #23].

A second area of criticism was that NGOs were supported by 'outside' forces and therefore, their loyalty lay with funders:

The problems are not with the Ministry of Agriculture, they are with the views of A-Sulttah of Al-Amal Al-Ahli [NGO work]. There are two sides. One view assumes that as long as there is a national government there is no need for any foreign bodies [NGOs]. They justify this [view] by the relations [of NGOs] with foreigners, [their] funding and political lobbying. The other view is aware that this is our country and everybody has to contribute in building it (AF-Head-of-institution-building-unit December 6, 1997).

According to a PNA official quoted in a daily newspaper, there was:

Great danger in the dependence of NGOs on foreign funding because this exposes them to external penetration.¹⁴

In the same article, the official stated that a large number of NGOs refused to show their accounts and that many NGOs offered no services to Palestinian society. He added that a Palestinian law governing NGOs would clarify all these matters.¹⁵ The same official was quoted on January 18 1998, following a conference organized by ESCWA (Economic and Social Committee for West Asia) as being sympathetic to NGOs.

¹⁴ Al Hayat Al Jadida, 3/2/1998.

¹⁵ Ibid.

The official explained that the general shift of direction by donors to fund infrastructure had taken away funds from NGOs and therefore, the Ministry (MOPIC) offered to help NGOs provided they abided by their own by-laws.

A third criticism by the PNA was that NGOs were usually run by one person, were undemocratic and tended to ignore their governing bodies. The NGOs interviewed denied this, citing their community participation, as described previously. A fourth area of tension was the affiliation of NGOs with factions opposing the peace process. They were therefore considered a threat to peace and order and criticisms of this type were circulating in the local press prior to 1993. During that period, the boom in funding for NGOs and lack of democratic practices triggered several writers to warn of the misuse of resources by NGO administrators. After 1993, these criticisms were repeated by PNA officials to belittle the role of NGOs. According to several NGOs, the main reason for PNA criticisms was their fear of political factions who were either opposed to Oslo or outside the umbrella of the PLO. It was clear that there was confusion in the relationship between the PNA and NGOs. At times, there was cooperation and at other times there were accusations and criticisms.

4.3 Problems Related with the Community

4.3.1 Decrease in 'Social Capital'

NGO criticism has also targeted the community as a whole. The position of NGOs in society did not look bright in terms of social relations or ties with the community. The decrease in economic capital from a large number of NGOs was accompanied by a decrease in social capital or informal networks and ties within the community. In some instances, the community was limited to the 'beneficiaries'. In other instances, it was the public in general.

4.3.2 Criticism of other NGOs

Almost all of the organizations studied criticized other NGOs, not with specific names but in an abstract sense. One criticism was the lack of principles and accountability of some NGOs. This was intolerable to NGOs with a high opinion of their own methods and they tried to distance themselves from such behavior. According to the director of AF:

We have a problem. It is the reputation and mistakes of other NGOs. Some NGOs have a poor performance and this affects our work. [...] We are trying to change this picture. There are some good NGOs and some bad. This does not mean that we will defend the ones that are wrong. We are asking NGOs to try to be transparent and to change this picture (AF-Director June 8, 1998).

The real damage came from organizations that claimed to represent universal rights while in their everyday interactions they were authoritarian. Undemocratic behavior by some NGOs reflected negatively and tarnished the image of all NGOs. The director of AF added:

I cannot imagine a human rights organization that is undemocratic and does not hold elections. I cannot imagine a person who theorizes on transparency and professionalism for 24 hours yet does not implement it. That is why we try to apply it here and then ask others [to do the same] (AF-Director June 8, 1998).

A second criticism of other NGOs was that they did not move beyond immediate ties into actual 'civil' relations. However, in most of the NGOs under study, examples of familial connections existed without mention of them as a problem affecting work. These connections were even effective in maintaining relations between the organizations and some PNA departments. A third criticism of NGOs was the misuse of funds for personal goals. According to the administrative director of AF, such

organizations did not give consideration to their 'image' in society. It could be understood from this last criticism that NGOs should at least portray an image of modesty and simplicity:

We have to ask NGOs to be transparent and democratic, to have participation. There are some organizations that are familial, others are somewhat closed, some have programs with high expenditure which upset people and society. We have to be sensitive to public issues (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998).

A RF employee mentioned another criticism of NGOs, which was lack of coordination. As described above, one reason for this is the increased competition for funding. However, lack of funding does not explain lack of coordination among organizations that are financially secure. Although there are examples of some coordination by NGOs of different political outlooks, a number of interviewees felt isolated:

As I understand it, there is weakness or no coordination among Al-Mu'assasat, even on a technical level. Everyone wants to be on his own. My analysis is that maybe there is competition for voluntary contributions (RF-Head-of-physiotherapy-unit April 29, 1998).

The staff member also raised the issue of the World Bank and the formation of several unions as an example of the high competition among NGOs for funds. Despite the theoretical bond that should exist between NGOs, these criticisms reveal the suspicion underlying their relationship and raises the issue of whether a common feeling of being an NGO can actually be assumed to exist. The habitus or social construction of these organizations involves suspicion of other NGOs that could be explained by the historical competition for legitimacy in Palestinian society.

4.3.3 Lack of Volunteerism

Voluntary participation has generally decreased since the beginning of the nineties, and particularly after the arrival of the PNA. As explained by interviewees, people seemed less interested in participating in the activities of NGOs. A MCF board member explained:

[After the PNA] A lot of things changed in dealing with society. Volunteerism was much higher at the beginning, as well as participation in our events (MCF-Board-member May 13, 1998).

There were four interpretations of the diminishing willingness to volunteer. One interpretation was that it was a reflection of the general conditions within Palestinian society and stagnation in the political scene. A second interpretation was that people had shifted their interest from NGOs to the PNA or local authorities. A third interpretation was that interest had moved towards more immediate needs and interests rather than national goals. A fourth interpretation, which was not stated by NGOs, could be the failure of NGOs to raise alternative discourses and to keep pace with the needs of the community.

A HF board member described the despair engulfing people as a result of PNA corruption. He explained that people thought that if the PNA, the representative of national interests, puts aside national interests for personal gain, then why would the smaller, less effective NGOs not do the same:

The spirit of community volunteerism has been killed because of the general situation. It is reflected [on people]. People gave up on Al-Sulttah. Despair is due to corruption. There is social antagonism. It is misery and need. There was a national goal that helped to encourage people. We are harvesting the result of defeat (HF-Board-members November 6, 1997).

The lack of volunteers was also reflected in financial donations by the community. Studies¹⁶ show that the level of poverty has increased since the arrival of the PNA, especially in the Gaza Strip. Poverty has further reduced donations to NGOs, as the director of HF declared:

The thing that really hurts me and affects our programs is the attitude of people towards volunteering, either by paying a shekel or by effort (HF-Director November 11, 1997).

The drop in voluntary participation was also reflected on an individual level on NGO staff. Staff members of some organizations complained of the lack of enthusiasm for voluntary work. A RH worker explained that material interests dominated spiritual and moral interests and drove people away from helping each other. He felt that only crises brought people together:

One is engaged in a job and cannot do other voluntary work. During the Intifada, there was a beautiful spirit. Now things have changed. There was a spiritual atmosphere. Now there is material interest. Problems bring people together (RF-Head-of-physiotherapy-unit April 29, 1998).

As a member of AF summed it up, the peace agreement accentuated the distortion of values in Palestinian society, which started to disintegrate at the beginning of the nineties. These new attitudes have been transmitted to different sectors of society and it is difficult to stand up for older values:

After the peace agreement and Oslo, all values were shaken. People are no longer ready to make sacrifices like before. New consumerism started to enter society and affected all of society. It affected political factions and people working in public work. [...] This actually started when the Intifada started

¹⁶ For instance: (MAS 1997).

to erode. Values also started to wear away. This society that we are in is not the same as the one we were in ten or eight years ago. This refers to people's enthusiasm and zealously. Now, whoever has a cause, it is not easy to defend it and to have principles (AF-Administrative-Director March 5, 1998).

4.3.4 Society Rejecting 'Development'

An added problem for NGOs in pursuing development goals was that sometimes the public did not understand that some changes are for their own good and did not respond. According to some NGOs, people were unwilling to be 'educated'. People preferred to follow traditional values and familiar ways of doing things. These people only became engaged when they saw economic benefits accruing to them, as a HF doctor illustrated:

We found problems with the people. The target group is not interested. We need an incentive for people. I organized a seminar and people did not come because there was a wedding. We need to have general environmental health awareness or [awareness of] water issues. When people see an economic opportunity [they get interested] (HF-Head-of-Pediatrics-section and Administrative-official May 7, 1998).

In other instances, some sectors of society misjudged the work of NGOs and accused them of aiming to destroy traditional values. This happened to the women organizing the women's model parliament. The director of MCF explained:

Society is rejecting renewal. Women cannot agree on the dissolution of [morals]. They want to guarantee justice. The regressive currents say that women import ideas and they are not aware of reality (MCF-Director May 19, 1998).

There was criticism of specific social trends that were

antagonistic to the values of some non-governmental groupings such as the women's model parliament. These indicate the sharpening of differences in values among NGOs and other social groups. Previously, different points of views, especially on the role of women in society, were low-key because of the greater danger of the occupation. Opposition was also less confrontational.

The legal counselor at MCF health center criticized women for being passive and therefore heightening differences between NGOs and the community:

There are a lot of women who are passive. This is our problem with them. When we tell them in the lecture you have to do this and that, she tells us 'go tell the men.' It is also that she does not want to make the effort. After all I say she does not want to make any effort. She does not even want to communicate [to the man] our discussion. Maybe she does not have the courage to tell him what we say. So why doesn't she move and do something? God doesn't listen to someone who is silent (MCF-Legal-advisor June 13, 1998).

According to the MCF staff member, the passivity of women was due to fear of society. These women may want to react but feel restricted by men and society in general. An observation implied from the staff member's statement was that, although women in NGOs still had ties with their communities, their positions at work have affected their proximity and understanding of the problems of other women. Another observation is that the general atmosphere has also affected some women and caused them to lose confidence in themselves. A group of women 'beneficiaries' of HF said, when asked why they did not attend the health seminars more often:

Going to the center of town is too much. We have

children and also what would people say if they see one of us going every day? It is also a question of money [for transportation]. Or actually, it is the feeling that nobody really wants to help us (May 7, 1998, Beach camp).

Both NGOs and the community were critical of each other. Women beneficiaries felt neglected by NGOs while NGOs felt abandoned by the community. There were also rifts in the value systems between the two. According to NGO interviewees, there were some conservative tendencies in the community following the arrival of the PNA and therefore the community, and even some staff members, experienced low levels of voluntary spirit or progressive social understanding.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to show the limitations or impediments considered by NGOs to hinder their role either in developing society or delivering services to society. These problems were both external and internal and varied from one organization to another. Even within the same organization, views of staff members differed on some points. The problems ranged from areas where the organization had no control, like economic conditions or closed borders, to areas where some NGOs attempted to bring about change, as in legislation. A major concern to all organizations studied was the indifference of the community to existing problems and the inability of the community to act progressively to try to solve these problems. It can be deduced from this chapter that NGOs are aware of the restrictions on their work and attempt to find means to overcome these restrictions. The greater the capital owned by the organization, both financial and social, the more it attempted to provide solutions to these problems, as described in the following chapter.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Main Themes in the Data

The main themes that emerged from the data were: (1) the elements of civil society; (2) the elements of socio-economic development; (3) tensions in relations with the PNA; (4) constraints in financial resources; (5) disappointment with the community and lack of social capital; and (6) self-reflection. Please refer to Appendix II, Table (3) for a comparison between the selected organizations.

5.1.1 *Elements of civil society*

AF stressed the concept of civil society and its elements the most. AF, HF and MCF associated the term with democracy. However, all of the organizations gave priority to their social roles while they detached themselves from politics and political activity. AF related the concept of civil society to influencing policies and lobbying the PNA to a greater extent than the other organizations. All of the organizations affirmed their belief in justice and tried to implement it. AF, HF and MCF advocated justice in relation to women. MCF also dealt with children. RF emphasized justice in relation to the elderly and disabled people. Most of the organizations, especially HF, associated the process of building civil society with national liberation. AF, HF and MCF highlighted the importance of accountability and transparency in building civil society. Although the classification of NGOs described in the first chapter defines AF and HF to be of a similar nature, there were differences between them regarding the emphasis on civil society. Despite the fact that MCF did use the term frequently, it tried to implement elements of the concept second to AF. RF did not refer to the term at all yet underlined elements that other organizations referred to as civil society. As shown in the table, AF mentioned problems it encountered during the institutionalization of the concept the most and RF the least. This can be explained by the fact that RF did not try to implement the concept while AF did. It also

showed that AF was more willing to admit its shortcomings than HF and MCF, which might be explained by its greater stability and security.

5.1.2 Elements of socio-economic development

There were differences between the organizations with regard to their roles in development and the socio-economic approaches that they advocated. There was no consensus on any of these approaches. HF stressed concepts related with development the most. There were similarities between AF, HF and MCF in that they gave special attention to women in their activities. Both HF and MCF operated health centers especially for women. AF, HF and MCF and to a lesser degree RF, pointed out their educational role in the community. It was only MCF that gave priority to cultural activities. Each organization had a specific target group on which it focused. Both AF and MCF carried out income generation projects specifically for women as part of their strategy in this area. This was one reason that could explain why they made fewer complaints about diminishing aid. As shown in Table (3), both HF and RF tried to offer services free of charge, not in their hospitals but in the regular activities of the NGO such as health centers. Most of the organizations pointed to community participation as a priority. RF had distinct features from the others in that it aspired to be a professional, efficient, service provider with committed staff. RF also sought collaboration with other NGOs but was disappointed. RF had encountered greater problems to achieve its developmental goals than other organizations. It was apparent that the set up of RF required other organizations to complement its services, as emphasized in its mission statement. AF could not withdraw from the communities that it served, nor eliminate dependency on its services, although withdrawal was a theoretical aim.

5.1.3 Tensions in relations with the PNA

Relations with the PNA were a major concern to all organizations. It was obvious that the four organizations shared a similar experience and opinions regarding the PNA (Table 3).

From the discussions with the organizations, they thought that their political affiliations (previous or current) affected the PNA's perceptions of them. All of the organizations under study criticized the PNA for failing to enforce the law relating to charitable societies and NGOs. They all also complained about actions taken by the authorities to limit their powers, in particular over funding issues and the use of the media against NGOs. Some NGOs, especially AF and HF, were aware of the media as a tool in the hands of the PNA to dictate their public image. A third, albeit unintentional, method of control was the lack of consistent policies by the PNA. All the organizations criticized some PNA agencies or ministries for inefficiency or lack of clear policies, and the consequent negative effects on the work of NGOs due to increased dependency. All the organizations believed that Israeli pressures on the PNA also affected them. These restrictions were mostly reflected in communication difficulties between the West Bank and Gaza Strip and in the intensification of economic problems in the Gaza Strip, increasing pressure on NGOs. AF and HF were the most critical of the PNA.

The organizations, RF and HF for the greater part, aspired to be permanent subcontractors to the PNA. Both of them worked in the health sector and therefore needed to ensure that the PNA sent referrals to them. They considered PNA referrals to be the main source of income for their health services. AF, and to a lesser degree MCF, looked to lobbying as a strategy to influence the PNA and AF interviewees considered lobbying to be part of civil society. All the organizations benefited from informal contacts with PNA officials and it was apparent during the fieldwork that NGOs had better chances to carry out their work if they knew PNA officials.

5.1.4 Financial constraints

HF and RF complained the most of diminishing aid opportunities. HF said that it used to receive more funds while both HF and RF complained that they were discriminated against in terms of funding. HF cited one reason for its diminishing financial resources as the increase in its operating costs as a

result of new activities. Both AF and HF were bitter about the decrease in community help, although they both received contributions from the community. RF did not experience or express this problem because it received contributions from the community, especially at religious occasions. However, RF had had negative experiences in its relations with other NGOs and believed that third sector organizations should support each other.

Strategies adopted by AF, HF and RF to overcome dependence on donors included the establishment of income generation projects. AF entered into real estate through its land reclamation activities and also established a for-profit company. HF and RF established hospitals in the hopes of securing additional funding through contracting with governmental agencies. HF devised methods to encourage local fundraising and also used informal contacts with PNA officials to raise funds. MCF and AF entered into partnerships with the PNA and donors as local subcontractors, which provides them with a secure source of income. Accountability was used as an indirect strategy to acquire funds by most of the organizations. NGOs were aware of the need to defend themselves from accusations from the PNA and sometimes from donors of mishandling public funds.

5.1.5 Disappointment with the community and lack of social capital

Relations with the community was the fifth issue where NGOs showed strong feelings of disappointment. All organizations felt that the community around them was becoming indifferent and volunteered less. Some interviewees interpreted this indifference as political disappointment with the peace process and the conduct of the PNA. MCF interviewees observed that this disappointment was reflected in gender relations and the role of women in society. These interviewees explained that, during the Intifada, women could leave their homes to contribute to the national struggle. In 1997-98, there were no longer justifications for going out of the home. MCF interviewees stated that women were passive and unwilling to help themselves. This raised the

issue of self-help in the community. According to AF and HF interviewees, people refused to be educated and did not want to change. AF interviewees thought that there was no democracy either in NGOs or in society as a whole.

There were no suggestions offered to solve these problems. I could not identify strategies implied by NGOs to solve the problems in the community. It was suggested only that NGOs will continue to educate the community and help it to establish its own organizations (AF). One interpretation of the lack of suggested solutions could be that NGOs feel helpless in a similar way to the rest of society and were unable to put forward any way out of this indifference. A second interpretation could be that as NGOs did not experience this phenomenon as an immediate threat like lack of resources or bad relations with the PNA, they did not try to offer solutions or immediate strategies.

5.1.6 Self-Reflection

The sixth issue addressed by the organizations under study was their own historical shortcomings. As mentioned in chapter one, the organizations varied in expressing their shortcomings. AF, HF and MCF strongly criticized the power of factional politics on the affairs of their organizations. Although the establishment of MCF aimed to eradicate this influence, it initially had to abide by political lines. HF interviewees thought that one advantage of the presence of the PNA was that it freed their organization from politics to focus on development work. AF interviewees thought that politics had made the organization less democratic and expansion and diversification of their governing body would encourage greater democracy. All the organizations needed to carry out internal changes as a result of the arrival of the PNA. They needed to expand their boards and establish some kind of formal by-laws.

5.2 Linking Themes with Hypotheses

To return to the initial assumptions summarized in the selection criteria of the cases in chapter one, the first assumption was that,

theoretically, the emphasis of Palestinian NGOs on civil society should increase with the passage of time. On this basis, MCF should have espoused the concept of civil society the most vigorously because it was the most recently established while RF should have espoused it the least. In fact, AF (of the community development generation, the second established and affiliated with a leftist political faction) stressed the concept the most with MCF (of the professional organizations generation, the most recently established and with a combination of affiliations) following (Table 4). Therefore, the hypothesis was not completely accurate with regard to a positive correlation between the date of establishment and adherence to civil society ideals. It was true that RF stressed the concept the least but did refer to elements of it in a similar way to other NGOs. Charitable societies had less tendency to use the term civil society but these organizations shared with NGOs the emphasis on local social values or values attributed to third sector organizations worldwide, such as justice and commitment.

In terms of community development, HF (a community development organization) stressed this concept the most while RF (charitable society) stressed it the least (Table 4). The two community development organizations (AF and HF) were the most critical of the PNA while the most recently-established (MCF) criticized the PNA the least. HF complained the most of financial problems while the professional organization and most recently established (MCF) complained the least. It was also AF (community development generation) which was the most disappointed with the community, while HF (community development generation) and RF (charitable society) were the least disappointed. Both community development organizations reflected the most on their previous shortcomings, especially the predominance of political affiliations.

It can be observed that organizations of the community development generation of leftist origins criticized the PNA the most and shared self-assessment of their previous experiences. Charitable societies with religious affiliations emphasized the

concepts of civil society and development the least. They also expected less from the community at large and reflected less on their previous shortcomings. It was also apparent that organizations of the professional generation criticized the PNA the least and complained less of financial problems.

5.3 Some Conclusions

Looking at Palestinian society historically, it is difficult to ignore the number of abrupt disruptions that it has absorbed. These disruptions have definitely left their mark on the development of this social space. Institutions, both social and formal, have accordingly been dislocated. These disruptions have resulted in the vulnerability of this space in deciphering and distinguishing between its own weaknesses and intentional efforts to demoralize it. The impact of these influences varies from touching merely the surface to penetrating these institutions. It is difficult to judge the level of distortion that has resulted from these shocks. However, these circumstances left gaps that could be manipulated by particular social groups to strengthen their positions guided by preconditions.

In the absence of political institutions endowed with an effective monopoly of legitimate violence, political action proper can be exercised only by the effect of officialization [i.e., to transmute "egoistic", private, particular interests [...] into disinterested, collective, publicly avowable, legitimate interests] and thus presupposes the competence [...] required in order to manipulate the collective definition of the situation [...] and thereby to win the means of mobilizing the largest possible group (Said 1994).

This strategy could be said to have been utilized by some of the key third sector organizations to strengthen their positions in Palestinian society under the occupation. It could be supported by the fact that key Palestinian political figures have generally

worked through third sector organizations. Political factions have utilized the same method with some variations in the mechanism of application. For instance, voices such as women's voices appeared to be private (i.e., lacking an official voice). The PNA, despite its limitations and problems, partially possessed the monopoly of 'legitimate violence' due to its relations with the Israeli government and its relative economic power. This directly denied the previously-strong 'NGOs' the opportunity to possess this legitimacy. At a certain period during the Intifada, NGOs owned symbolic power because of their affiliation with political factions, their economic capital and their social capital i.e., their followers. Following the arrival of the PNA, they have been subjected to new sources of power, which overtly and covertly attempted to impose a new distribution of power. Because the political solution has been based on 'disequilibrium', the results still reflect this imbalance.

It is true that political power puts an end to war, that it installs, or tries to install, the reign of peace in civil society This by no means implies that it suspends the effects of war or neutralises the disequilibrium revealed in the final battle. The role of political power, on this hypothesis, is perpetually to reinscribe [re-register] this relation through a form of unspoken warfare; to re-inscribe it in social institutions, in economic inequalities, in language, in the bodies themselves of each and everyone of us (Foucault 1980: 90).

Most political solutions transform the type of power imbalances and imbed them in new forms. It was not surprising that most segments of society felt this imbalance and felt disoriented. People did not want to volunteer because they did not know what to volunteer for. Agents of change had to carry out twofold tasks. In addition to direct resistance to the new concentrations of power, they had a second task:

That is the partial tragedy of resistance, that it must to a certain degree work to recover forms already established or at least influenced or infiltrated (Said 1994: 210).

One way to 'recover these forms' was by examining the agents' own discourse, how it was influenced by these forms and how it was responding to the 'demands' of these agents' own market or field:

Discourses are always to some extent euphemisms inspired by the concern to 'speak well', to 'speak properly', to produce the products that respond to the demands of a certain market; they are compromise formations resulting from a transaction between the expressive interest (what is to be said) and the censorship inherent in particular relations [...] a censorship which is imposed on a speaker or writer endowed with a certain social competence, that is, a more or less significant symbolic power over these relations (Bourdieu 1982: 78).

The excerpts from the NGOs under study could be thought of in the light of a compromise between what they felt as legitimate interests (i.e., responding to the demands of the field) as well as their own perceptions of what they should say. So the emphasis on civil society, development and gender by the first three organizations expressed these attributes. They responded to the market, which primarily comprised of the PNA and donors and the community on a lower level. The official language that they used showed the sharp division between what was 'political' and what was not. Politics or factional politics in the case of NGOs had a bad connotation in a similar fashion to that described by Al-Ansari (Al-Ansari 1998). He observed that even the origin of the word of *Al-siyasa* (politics) had a negative connotation different from the meaning of the word in other languages (Al-Ansari 1998: 38). It was obvious from the distinctions that the organizations made between 'politics' and 'civil society' that

they have already absorbed the new changes in their environment and the thinkable and unthinkable:

Official language, particularly the system of concepts by means of which the members of a given group provide themselves with a representation of their social relations ..., sanctions and imposes what it states, tacitly laying down the dividing line between the thinkable and the unthinkable, thereby contributing towards the maintenance of the symbolic order from which it draws its authority (Bourdieu 1977: 21).

Civil society historically involved a 'political' vision and division since it was associated with the state, with capitalism, and with democracy. As observed, AF, HF and MCF in some instances associated the concept with democracy. They detached it from politics but attached it to democracy as if democracy was itself detached from politics. This approach has been successful in *maintaining the symbolic order from which it draws its authority*, as mentioned above.

For the fourth organization the difference in the use of terms reflected its different habitus resulting from its different historical background. However, its responses to the current demands of the 'market' were portrayed in its focus on being a well functioning service provider or being strongly committed to supporting the community. All of the selected organizations declined to engage in politics as a way to acknowledge the loss of their power. The organizations aimed to submit to the PNA by clarifying that they were abandoning the bad connotations of 'politics' to engage in 'peaceful' interaction with the newcomers. They needed to show their good intentions as law-abiding citizens to the PNA.

For donors, the message was clear - these organizations shared the same ideals and values of civil society and democracy and were attempting to educate the PNA as well as the public about these values. The message for the community was that the

organizations were attempting to work for them. Although, the community might abandon some of these organizations as a result of the political factionalism or PNA corruption, these organizations were the best that the community could hope for.

The process of transformation of the concepts differed from one case to another according to the relevance that each organization gave to these values. For instance, for AF the concept of civil society was a central theme because of the culture and historical background of the organization. The issue of civil society was discussed more than other organizations on both staff and managerial level. For organizations such as MCF and RF, only higher level staff discussed the relationship with the PNA or civil society and it was very rare that lower level staff discussed these issues. This can be partially explained by the difference in the nature of work of both managers and employees and the differences in focus on policy and practice. It can also be explained by the fact that all the directors of the NGOs under study were board members. This generally meant that they were founding members of the organizations and were trying to institutionalize the ideals of civil society and development in their organizations.

As discussed, funding and legislation were issues restricting the role of NGOs. Having two states controlling social actors in Palestine doubled the problem of objectively building civil society. Therefore, one conclusion that could be deducted from the findings was that the weaker the state apparatus, the less space exists for negotiation between the state and societal sectors. Less space for negotiation means that whatever NGOs or other societal sectors do to change the status quo, if not suppressed, would be celebrated. Therefore, the more autocratic the state, the greater the possibility for NGOs to manipulate the public space without carrying out 'real' actions i.e., the difference between discourse and action will be blurred. This would act against society as a whole and against efforts to build civil society, for despite the attempt of NGOs to represent the community, their capabilities could not allow them to fully

realize this goal. Another result was that some of these organizations tended to be isolated and to focus on their own affairs. The focus on internal issues raised the question of how these organizations could balance their immediate needs with their vision of society. Unfortunately, even some of the celebrated civil societies of Eastern Europe have failed to overcome such challenges.

Thought and vision are important but not sufficient for a political triumph [...]. Conditions and an appropriate climate are imperative for the translation of thought and vision into an actuality and the commitment of a power that has the means and seeming legitimacy to do so (Abu-Lughod 1971: 6).

It was obvious that the Israeli occupation, the rise and decline of the Intifada and finally the Oslo agreement have gradually transformed and weakened informal bonds in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These bonds were translated into political affiliations that sometimes replaced familial and neighborhood relations. The weakening of these bonds, which were also taking place due to intentional actions, led these bonds to turn against themselves and against each other. These bonds were not replaced by a new 'imaginary'. Unlike the systematic efforts of modern states to institutionalize a common identity, all indications show that there were attempts to contract any common features of an identity. NGOs have to understand this reality and attempt within their capacity to return some confidence to these relations with the support of their features of flexibility and informality.

5.3 Policy Implications

This section will deduct some policy recommendations based on the findings. As observed above and in other studies (e.g., (Hilal 1998, which also mentioned in Bosman 1998), NGOs do not aim

to oppose the PNA because they cannot afford to. NGOs have identified both constraints and opportunities in their relationship with the PNA. Despite criticism by all the NGOs under study of the practices of some PNA agencies or lack of them, there were apparent attempts to negotiate with the authorities. Some of the organizations depended on the PNA to carry out their work. They have entered into partnerships with the relevant ministries and some have used their informal relations with PNA officials to achieve goals despite their emphasis on the presence of a law that governed the relationship with the PNA. The law was thought to provide them with stability that permitted them to focus and improve their work.

There were attempts by AF, HF and MCF to serve the poor and disadvantaged. As shown in a large number of studies internationally, the concepts of the poor and gender were influenced by the definitions of donors:

Donor conceptualizations also have important implications for 'who' NGOs are seeking to help. Poor people, as in the case of many credit-delivering NGOs, are usually viewed by donors as those currently below an arbitrarily defined 'poverty line', disaggregated only by gender (Hulme and Mosely 1996). Distinctions between the poor, core poor and vulnerable become irrelevant when you are judged by donors ... Almost all women are viewed as 'poor', regardless of class, caste, ethnicity and other factors. Much of the fine tuning that NGOs have sought in their earlier work is gone (Hulme and Edwards 1997: 8-9).

Donors played a greater role in decision-making in Palestinian society and this caused competition for financial resources among different actors such as NGOs and PNA. Another trend that emerged was the dependence of most of the selected organizations on funders for the sustenance of their work. Some NGOs felt secure that this funding would last for years to come.

Despite attempts by some organizations to find alternative sources of funding, existing dependency was apparent in the closing down of a number of NGOs. Financial dependence on donors also created unforeseen results:

The most obvious pressures for co-optation arise from the availability of aid finance: 'he who pays the piper calls the tune'. While funds are important it must be recognized that the influence of utilizing such funds goes well beyond simple finance. The acceptance of increasing volumes of foreign aid involves entering into agreements about what is done, and how it is to be reported and accounted for... Not surprisingly, as NGOs get closer to donors they become more like donors (Hulme and Edwards 1997: 8).

Although NGOs have many pressing problems, they should give attention to their priorities for the future. As shown by NGOs in other place of the world:

Paradoxically, however, the lack of clarity about whether NGOs are best viewed as civil-society or market-based institutions does provide some positive indicators for the future. It reveals that NGOs still have strategic choices open to them: depending on context they have room for manoeuvre to decide how close they get to donors and to examine how extensively they are promoting market-based or society-based strategies for development goals (Hulme and Edwards 1997: 11).

The issue of funding was also reflected in the relationship between NGOs themselves, which ran counter to NGO claims of building civil society. Despite the presence of three unions, these have not qualitatively helped the members in their everyday activities. Funding problems have also led to diversification of activities in most NGOs and have hampered

NGOs from acquiring a niche for themselves. Emphasis on the project by project approach did not optimize the potential of NGOs. Criticisms leveled at governmental institutions could just as well have been leveled at NGOs. This tendency has been clear where funders did not differentiate between NGOs and projects and they have helped governmental agencies in areas known to be the domain of NGOs. Survival in the market requires the building of skills and capacities that stand up to competition. Squandering energy in different areas reduced the possibilities to create a niche.

Despite the emphasis of some of the organizations on lobbying, the overall goal and purpose of it was not clarified. Although some NGOs stated the need to teach 'beneficiaries' this mechanism, it was not clear if this mechanism proved successful in achieving goals within Palestinian society. Moreover, lobbying efforts mentioned by the NGOs under study were limited to certain NGOs and to specific issues. It was also apparent that most of the efforts needed support from donors. There were several factors mentioned as hindering the use of lobbying, including the lack of clarity in PNA policies. The ineffectiveness of lobbying as a policy suggested that other methods might prove to be more successful within the Palestinian context.

If we put aside the definition of civil society and the relevance or irrelevance of the concept in the Palestinian context, it was apparent that a number of NGOs wanted to perceive their role in society as key elements of civil society. This emphasis was not reflected in their relationship with the community. Most of the NGOs under study wanted to educate the community; they were not representatives of it. It is difficult to build civil society while such a distance exists between the agent and the rest of society. Moreover, despite the emphasis on accountability and transparency, these concepts were not mentioned with respect to the community (i.e., downward accountability). The publication of reports in the newspapers did not fully engage people in the activities of the organization.

Although the issue of community participation was emphasized by most NGOs, there was no clarification of how this involvement was reflected on the internal workings of these organizations. Some organizations linked the changes in their governance structure and de-politicization as an indication of the increase of democracy. It was difficult to relate these two concepts together since all the organizations were hierarchical and were accompanied by the presence of a 'charismatic' leader who, with a small group, ran the affairs of the organization. Historically, this has been the case with charitable societies but the new wave of voluntary committees was meant to counteract this style.

Finally, there was one element that may support the claims of those NGOs to carry out their promises despite their compromises. This stemmed from being established either outside or at the periphery of the institutional framework of the [occupying] state, which differed from Western-type societies:

The situation is different in Western-type societies. Here voluntary associations are established within the institutional framework of the democratic constitutional state. And here a different question arises, one that cannot be answered without considerable empirical research. This is the question of whether, and to what extent, a public sphere dominated by mass media provides a realistic chance for the members of civil society, in their competition with the political and economic invaders' media power, to bring about changes in the spectrum of values, topics, and reasons channeled by external influences, to open it up in an innovative way, and to screen it critically (Habermas 1996: 454).

So, the hope for 'associations' is to be able to give alternatives and critical accounts to dominant values for members of civil society. Members of civil society are not only organizations,

they are different classes. These efforts require thorough self-reflection and actual interaction in a sphere only controlled by the power of argument, putting aside other considerations. It is a huge task but the higher the goals, the more people can give.

5.4 Policy Recommendations

This study attempted to provide a framework of analysis to understand the new roles and positions of NGOs in their policy environments. The nature of this study makes it difficult to propose concrete policy recommendations but this section will attempt to make recommendations resulting from observations in the field. The aim of these proposals is to enhance the work of these organizations and improve relations with the PNA, other NGOs, donors, and with the community.

The main priority for NGOs during the coming period is to strengthen themselves internally. This should take place alongside continuous attempts to re-examine their actions and weaknesses. To improve work internally, NGOs could focus on fundraising issues and try to:

Improve fundraising skills that focus on individuals, proved in the past as the most effective way of fundraising for religious organizations despite the existence of poverty. It is known that poorer people give more than the middle classes.
Strengthen the fundraising skills of all staff.

A second area to focus on internally is their management structures where they could:

- ✧ Distribute power more evenly between governing bodies and staff while retaining moral responsibility with management.
- ✧ Expand governing bodies to include more specialized personnel from different fields and industries such as business people and entrepreneurs.

- ✧ Make use of students, especially university students. This would upgrade the skills of volunteers, which is needed.
- ✧ Try to be more innovative in creating systems that staff members are at ease in using rather than complicated procedures because they are the latest innovation.
- ✧ Carry out strategic planning sessions to identify management-related problems.
- ✧ Change directors.
- ✧ Include new board members in governing bodies.
- ✧ Update by-laws to be more specific and stringent.

Externally, NGOs could try to improve relations with the PNA:

- ✧ Try to build coalitions with sympathetic and supportive PNA officials.
- ✧ Try to educate and support or build the capacity of some of the weaker PNA departments.
- ✧ Understand the distribution of power and resources within the different ministries.
- ✧ Focus on neglected areas where the PNA has no access and give support to start up the necessary associations.
- ✧ Strengthen occupational ties with PNA personnel, such as the establishment of specialized unions for specific professions.
- ✧ Attempt to participate in the annual decision-making on development priorities.

NGOs should try to improve relations with other NGOs:

- ✧ Strengthen professional ties with NGOs based on common interests.
- ✧ Try to subcontract NGO functions that are not the specialization of the organization.
- ✧ Enter into partnerships with NGOs that complement the work of the organization.

With regard to relations with donors:

- ✧ Try to better understand the mechanisms and internal policies of donors.
- ✧ Continuously update the organization's database on donors.
- ✧ Monitor closely the development priorities of donors on an annual basis.
- ✧ Try to build direct relations with some communities in the North where NNGOs depend on funding.

With regard to the improvement of relations with the community:

- ✧ Strengthen ties with community leaders and maintain continuous contact with them.
- ✧ Be aware of complaints by the community about the PNA and lack of services and attempt to help them to start up programs.
- ✧ Strengthen ties with students in schools and universities and recruit volunteers.
- ✧ Support people to build informal networks based on issues that concern them.

Recommendations for the PNA with regard to NGOs:

- ✧ Use NGOs more efficiently in the areas of their specialization and make use of their experience.
- ✧ Assign progressively oriented personnel to deal with NGOs.
- ✧ Include NGOs in sectoral planning.
- ✧ Support the start-up of smaller community-based organizations.
- ✧ Coordinate with larger NGOs in policy issues.

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Appendices

INTERVIEWEES

AF-Administrative-Director. March 5, 1998. *AF*. Ramallah.
AF-Director. June 8, 1998. *AF*. Jerusalem.
AF-Field-worker. March 5, 1998. *AF*. Gaza.
AF-Head-of-institution-building-unit. December 6, 1997,
February 23, 1998. *AF*. Gaza.
AF-Head-of-office. December 12, 1997. *AF*. Gaza.
AF-Head-Public-Relations. February 25, 1998. *AF*. Gaza.
Head-of-NGO-unit. November 3, 1997. *Ministry of Health*. Gaza.
Head-of-NGO-unit. October 29, 1997. *Ministry of Planning &
International Development*. Gaza.
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Gaza.
HF-Board-members. November 6, 1997, May 17, 1998. *HF*.
Gaza.
HF-Branch-Manager. May 24, 1998. *HF*. Gaza.
HF-Director. November 11, 1997, May 17, 1998, April 4, 1999.
HF. Gaza.
HF-Head-of-Laboratory. May 24, 1998. *HF*. Gaza.
HF-Head-of-Pediatrics-section. May 7, 24, 1998. *HF*. Gaza.
MCF-Board-member. May 13, 1998. *MCF*. Gaza.
MCF-Director. May 19, 1998. *MCF*. Gaza.
MCF-Legal-advisor. June 13, 1998. *MCF*.
RF-Director. April 29, 1998, April 5, 1999. *RF*. Gaza.
RF-Head-of-nurses. May 17, 1998. *RF*. Gaza.
RF-Head-of-nursing-staff. May 17, 1998. *RF*. Gaza.
RF-Head-of-physiotherapy-unit. April 29, 1998. *RF*. Gaza.

Appendix I

Part A

Fieldwork Phase

The fieldwork phase was carried out in two tracks which extended from August 1997- June 1998. The first track focused on collecting information on the general context and the main issues that preoccupied NGOs. The initial stage of this track aimed to select the cases. It included interviews with some of the main actors that determined the status of NGOs such as departments in the Palestinian Authority. It also included international NGOs, NGO networks, as well as community leaders. This stage was mainly aimed to help to understand the context that the organizations under study worked in. The second track, which overlapped with the first focused on collecting information from the organizations under study, from their staff and board members.

The first contact with these organizations was with the managers to get information on the general policies and directions of the organizations. They were mostly generous in their time and it was rarely that the interviews were cut short. The minimum length of interviews was an hour and a half. Some of these interviews were taped because some interviewees preferred not to be taped. Therefore, these tapes were transcribed during the collection of the data in order to get a clearer idea of the main topics. The main questions revolved around five main themes:

- ❖ the main changes they saw in the role of their organization;
- ❖ their relationship with the PNA;
- ❖ their relations with donors;
- ❖ their relations and views of their community and beneficiaries; and

- ◇ the impact of the above changes in relations on organizational issues.

In some cases, the first theme led the organizations to discuss their role in civil society or in society as a whole and whether they had good or bad relations with the PNA. Then they would start discussing the organizational issues and activities. They also identified other employees to meet with, the departments of the PNA that they interacted with and some names of donors. In organizations that had branches, they suggested which branches to visit. This prepared the grounds for the second set of interviews.

The second round of interviews with the selected organizations were generally with the second person in the hierarchy or in the actual management of the organization. In two organizations (HF and MCF), this was a board member who also occupied an administrative position in the organization. The third and fourth sets of interviews were with heads of departments. At this stage, the focus was more on organizational issues and the problems the staff faced in their daily activities. Therefore, specific questions started to arise to each organization and were included with the main questionnaire. Interviewees at this stage started to become more personal and would reveal personal experiences. They started to discuss their backgrounds, their own feelings and concerns. In the meantime I was spending more time within the organizations. In some cases, there were field trips to remote areas with some fieldworkers (e.g. AF) or there were visits to branches such as the hospital or health centers of either HF or MCF. There was also meetings with groupings of staff discussing organizational issues and exchanging views.

During this stage there were also interviews with some PNA departments, some donors, PNGO, and UN organizations. NGOs in the first stage or the organizations under study identified the officials and donors to be influential on the work of NGOs. Examples were the ministries of Social Affairs and

Interior. The meetings with these officials were usually difficult to arrange because of the multiplicity of responsibilities of these officials. Moreover, it was rarely that these interviews revealed information on how these departments felt about the individual organizations. As a matter of fact most of them focused on the problems facing the ministries. Therefore, these interviews were helpful in understanding the context. The initial meetings with donors did not prove also to be very helpful. There were also meetings with the beneficiaries of the organizations. In some cases such as RF there were some individual meetings with a number of beneficiaries.

Part B

Table 1: Participants In The Research

	Organization	Position/Event	Unit/Activity	No. of times
Track I				
	NGOs	Directors/ Coordinators		10
	PNA	Officials	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation/Health/I nterior/Social Affairs/Agriculture	5
	NGO networks	Coordinators		3
	International agencies	Coordinators		5
	Writers on NGOs and civil society			5
				28
Track II				
	AF	General- Director & Board member	General management	1
	AF	Administrative Director	Administration	1
	AF	Branch manager	Management	1
	AF	Head of unit	Institutional building	2
	AF	Public relations	& women's project	1
	AF	Fieldworker	Women's project	1
	AF	Field trip with donors		1
	AF	Beneficiaries seminars		2
	AF	Beneficiaries discussions		0
	HF	Director & board member	Management	2
	HF	Board member	Children's library	2

	Organization	Position/Event	Unit/Activity	No. of times
		and project coordinator		
	HF	Board member		1
	HF	Administrator	Hospital	1
	HF	Head of unit	Health awareness	1
	HF	Administrative Assistant	Administration	1
	HF	Donor		1
	HF	Beneficiaries seminar		1
	HF	Beneficiaries discussions		0
	MCF	Director and board member	Management	1
	MCF	Board member and financial coordinator	Financial issues	1
	MCF	Project coordinator	All projects	1
	MCF	Project coordinator	Women's income project	1
	MCF	Project manager	Health center	1
	MCF	Legal counselor	Health center	1
	MCF	Fieldworker	Health center	1
	MCF	Donor		1
	MCF	Beneficiaries workshop		0
	RF	Director	Management (hospital and home)	2
	RF	Head of unit	Physiotherapy & hydrotherapy	1
	RF	Head of unit	Women nurses	1
	RF	Head of unit	Men nurses	1
	RF	Staff member	Men' section	1
	RF	Donors		2
	RF	Beneficiaries (individuals)		0
				36

Appendix II

Description of the Selected Organizations

Table 2: Main Characteristics of Selected Organizations

	AgriFriends	HealthFriends	Mother&ChildFriends	RehabFriends
Start up date	1983 in Jerusalem, 1987 in Gaza	1985	1992	1982
Geographical area	Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza	Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza	Southern part of the Gaza Strip	Gaza city
Number of Employees	95 full time 150 on project bases	86 full time 65 part time 265 volunteers	52 full time	90 full time
Main Units	1) agricultural roads; (2) land reclamation; (3) job creation project; (4) cultivation of trees; (5) water projects; (7) bee distribution; (8) distribution of desalination equipment; and (9) the women's loans project	(1) The health awareness unit; (2) the health centers which are four in the Gaza Strip; (3) the children's library; (4) the hospital.	(1) Recreational center for children; (2) a cultural recreational center for teenagers run by the youth themselves; (3) a community cultural center; (4) a women's loan project; and (5) a women's health center.	(1) The physiotherapy section; (2) occupational therapy; (3) rehabilitation of the disabled; (3) the medical center; and (4) the home for the elderly.
General Focus	Agriculture with focus on food security, land reclamation, encouragement of food processing, development of the agricultural sector	Health awareness and education, primary health care, mother and child health centers, children's library, environmental health awareness, hospital	Informal Education for children and teenagers, cultural activities for the community	Home for the elderly, specialized medical rehabilitation center for the physically disabled, and general health center
Activities related to women	Technical and institutional support for rural women, loans to rural women related with agriculture and food processing	Health awareness courses for women, a woman center	Reproductive health center for women, loans to women	General services of both the home and the medical center
Origins	Started in the form of voluntary committees associated with a leftist faction Main concern was the Israeli occupation and the control over land and water	Started in the form of voluntary committee associated with a leftist faction Main concern was Israeli occupation and the deteriorating health conditions Lack of health services	A group of women activists associated with the major secular political factions Main concern was the control of political factions of the Palestinian society and their neglect of social concerns like development and education of children and gender inter-	A charitable society established by religiously motivated individuals Main concern was lack of care and neglect of elderly Lack of specialized services for the elderly Income generation

	AgriFriends	HealthFriends	Mother&ChildFriends	RehabFriends
			relationships	
Emphasis in Mission statement	Focus on sustainable development civil society and democracy	Focus on community health services and civil society and democracy	Focus on cultural, social, educational and health conditions to achieve a civil society	Rights to live, welfare, work and services. Equality of opportunity for all human beings
Initial Development Approaches	Initial development approach 'household economy' was dictated by political considerations Emphasis on relief and short-term goals	Short-term goals and temporary services Opening health centers for political considerations rather than health needs of the population	Political considerations overruling development goals	Welfare approach
Current Development Approaches	Sustainable development	Community-based health services	Comprehensive development Focus on informal education	Emphasis on specialization
PNA ministries that they deal with	The ministries of agriculture and interior	The ministries of health and interior	The ministries of culture, health And interior	The ministries of health, interior and social affairs
Phases in relationship with the PNA	Bad relations upon the arrival of the PNA 1997-98 improvement in relations	Good relations upon the arrival of the PNA 1997-98 deterioration of relations	Good relations Further improvement in relations	Problems in relations End of 1998, improvement in relations
Ideal Type of Relations with the PNA	Al-Takamul (integration)	Al-Takamul	Al-Takamul	Al-Takamul
Actual Type of relationship	Coordination in planning and negotiation of general policies	Referral of health cases	Partnerships in donor funded projects	Referral of health cases
Funding	European funding sources have helped the organization since the start up of its work	European funding sources have helped the organization since the start up of its work but in a lesser degree than AF	The organization would not have been started without the partnership with a European NGO	The organization had depended on Arab and local sources of income

Table 3: Comparison among Organizations within Main Themes¹

Elements of civil society	AF	HF	MCF	RF²
<i>Democracy</i>	5	5	5	0
<i>Policy making</i>	5	0	2	0
<i>No politics</i>	5	5	5	5
<i>Accountability and transparency</i>	5	5	5	0
<i>Community Participation</i>	5	5	5	2
<i>Institutionalization of community work</i>	5	0	0	0
<i>Justice</i>	2	3	5	5
<i>Social aspects are more important than political</i>	5	5	5	5
<i>Has to occur along with national liberation</i>	2	5	5	3
Total	39	33	37	20
Problems encountered				
<i>People were not ready</i>	5	0	0	0
<i>Could not involve people</i>	5	3	3	0
Total	10	3	3	0
Elements of socio-economic development				
<i>Focus on the unemployed</i>	5	3	3	0
<i>Focus on women</i>	5	5	5	0
<i>Focus on disabled people</i>	0	0	0	5
<i>Focus on the poor</i>	2	5	2	5
<i>Focus on the elderly</i>	0	0	0	5
<i>Focus on children</i>	0	5	5	0
<i>Focus on farmers</i>	5	0	0	0
<i>Focus on cultural aspects</i>	0	0	5	0
<i>Focus on educational role of NGO</i>	5	5	5	2

¹ Please note that these were not all the differences mentioned by the interviewees. Please note that the numbers given in the table are weights and that they do not represent any value. They are used in a descending order i.e. 5 is the highest and 0 is the lowest. (3) was given when the organization expressed its intention regarding the topic and tried to implement it. Meanwhile, (2) was given when the organization expressed its intentions without substantiating it in actions. It also meant that the interviewees did not directly discuss the issue but it was implied from the discussions.

² Although RF did not use the term civil society, it referred to some elements that others included within civil society. These elements were given weights.

Elements of civil society	AF	HF	MCF	RF²
<i>It is a vehicle for national liberation</i>	0	5	0	0
Total	22	28	25	17
<i>Strategies</i>				
Income generation projects for women	5	0	5	0
Opening up health centers for women	0	5	5	0
Community participation	5	5	5	2
Services free of charge	0	5	2	5
Collaboration and coordination with other NGOs	0	0	0	5
Being an efficient service provider	2	2	2	5
Commitment of staff	2	2	2	5
Total	14	19	21	22
<i>Problems Encountered</i>				
<i>No coordination among NGOs</i>	0	0	0	5
<i>People did not understand NGOs roles</i>	2	0	0	5
<i>The community was not cooperative</i>	3	3	5	3
<i>The organization could not withdraw</i>	5	0	0	0
Total	10	3	5	13
<i>Relations with PA</i>				
<i>Tensions due to:</i>				
Lack of Legal codes	5	5	5	5
Funding	5	5	0	5
Control of media	5	5	0	0
Inefficiency of PA	5	5	3	5
Negative views of PA regarding NGOs	5	5	0	0
Israeli control and lack of sovereignty	5	5	5	5
Total	30	30	13	20
<i>Strategies with PA</i>				
Subcontracting and referrals	3	5	5	5
Lobbying	5	0	2	0
Informal contacts	5	5	5	5
Total	13	10	12	10
<i>Constraints in financial resources due to:</i>				
<i>Diminishing aid</i>	0	5	0	5
<i>Increasing operating costs</i>	0	5	0	0
<i>Lack of community donations</i>	5	5	0	0
<i>Lack of support from other NGOs</i>	0	0	0	5
<i>Biases of donors</i>	0	5	0	5

Elements of civil society	AF	HF	MCF	RF²
Total	5	20	0	15
<i>Strategies to reduce the problem</i>				
Income generation programs	5	5	0	5
Partnerships with PA, donors or UN agencies	5	0	5	0
Capital investment initiatives	5	0	0	0
Local fundraising	3	5	0	5
Increasing accountability	5	5	5	2
Total	23	15	10	12
Disappointment from community and lack of social capital				
Diminishing volunteerism	5	5	5	5
Increasing conservatism in community	0	0	5	0
Lack of will to learn	5	5	0	0
Indifference of the community	5	5	5	5
Lack of democratic behavior in society	5	0	5	0
Lack of democratic behavior in NGOs	5	0	0	0
Lack of coordination among NGOs	0	0	0	5
Total	25	15	20	15
Self-reflections				
<i>Previous shortcomings due to emphasis on factional politics</i>	5	5	5	0
<i>Previous shortcomings due to lack of emphasis on social aspects</i>	5	5	0	0
Total	10	10	5	0
<i>Strategies</i>				
Form boards of directors	0	5	0	0
Form general assemblies	5	0	0	0
Diversifying board members & inclusion of other political affiliations	5	5	3	0
Expand boards	5	3	3	5
Including PA members	5	5	5	5
Total	20	18	11	10

Table 4: Comparison among Organizations within Main Data Themes

	NGO Generation AF = Com. Dev.1 HF = Com. Dev. 2 MCF =Professional RF = Charitable Society		Establishment date AF=2 nd HF=3 rd MCF=4 th RF=1 st	Political affiliation AF = Leftist 1, HF = Leftist 2, MCF = Combination RF = Religious
Concept of civil society	AF MCF HF RF	Com. Dev. 1 Professional Com. Dev. 2 Charitable Society	2 nd 4 th 3 rd 1 st	Leftist 1 Combination Leftist 2 Religious
Emphasis on development	HF MCF AF RF	Com. Dev. 2 Professional Com. Dev. 1 Charitable Society	3 rd 4 th 2 nd 1 st	Leftist 2 Combination Leftist 2 Religious
Criticism to the PA	AF & HF RF MCF	Com. Dev. 1 & Com. Dev. 2 Charitable Society Professional	2 nd & 3 rd 1 st 4 th	Leftist 1 & 2 Religious Combination
Financial constraints	HF RF AF MCF	Com. Dev. 2 Charitable Society Com. Dev. 1 Professional	3 rd 1 st 2 nd 4 th	Leftist 2 Religious Leftist 1 Combination
Disappointment from community	AF MCF HF & RF	Com. Dev. 1 Professional Com. Dev. 2 & Charitable Society	2 nd 4 th 3 rd & 1 st	Leftist 1 Combination Leftist 2 & Religious
Self-reflections	AF & HF MCF RF	Com. Dev. 1 & Com. Dev.2 Professional Charitable Society	2 nd & 3 rd 4 th 1 st	Leftist 1 & 2 Combination Relief

Appendix III

References

List of Interviewees³

Administrative-Director. March 5, 1998. *AF*. Ramallah.
Director. June 8, 1998. *AF*. Jerusalem.
Field-worker. March 5, 1998. *AF*. Gaza.
Head-of-institution-building-unit. December 6, 1997. *AF*. Gaza.
Head-of-institution-building-unit. February 23, 1998. *AF*. Gaza.
Head-of-office. December 12, 1997. *AF*. Gaza.
Head-Public-Relations. February 25, 1998. *AF*. Gaza.
Board-members. November 6, 1997. *HF*. Gaza.
Board-members. May 17, 1998. *HF*. Gaza.
Branch-Manager. May 24, 1998. *HF*. Gaza.
Director. May 17, 1998. *HF*. Gaza.
Director. April 4, 1999. *HF*. Gaza.
Director. November 11, 1997. *HF*. Gaza.
Head-of-Pediatrics-section, and Administrative-official. May 7,
1998. *HF*. Gaza.
Head-of-Pediatrics-section. May 24, 1998. *HF*. Gaza.
Head of Laboratory. May 24, 1998. *HF*. Gaza.
Board-member. May 13, 1998. *MCF*. Gaza.
Director. May 19, 1998. *MCF*. Gaza.
Legal-advisor. June 13, 1998. *MCF*.
Board-member. May 13, 1998. *MCF*. Gaza.
Director. April 29, 1998. *RF*. Gaza.
Director. April 5, 1999. *RF*. Gaza.
Head-of-nurses. May 17, 1998. *RF*. Gaza.
Head-of-nursing-staff. May 17, 1998. *RF*. Gaza.

³ Please note that the names listed below are the interviewees who were quoted in this text. As shown in Appendix I, they comprised a part of the whole participants in the research.

Head-of-physiotherapy-unit. April 29, 1998. *RF*. Gaza.
Mother-of-patient. May 17, 1998. *RF*. Gaza.
Coordinator. May 7, 1998. *World Bank-NGO Trust Fund*. Gaza.
Head-of-NGO-unit. November 3, 1997. *Ministry of Health*. Gaza.
Ex-head of Palestinian development plan unit. *Ministry of
Planning & International Co-operation*, October
29, 1997.
Head-of-NGO-unit. October 29, 1997. *Ministry of Planning &
International development*. Gaza.
NGO-unit, Head-o-. May 21, 1998. *Ministry of Interior*. Gaza.