

An Overview of Civil Society in Egypt

Civil Society Index Report for the Arab Republic of Egypt

Cairo 2005

Infonex Corp.

Information for Results



FOREWORD

As an introduction to this report, it would be useful, if not essential, to begin with a note of caution to the readers on civil society in Egypt. In recent years, Egypt's civil society has been undergoing rapid and far-reaching changes. Researchers trying to precisely define the state of civil society during such a time would probably appear to be aiming at a fast moving and difficult target to hit. Civil society seems to have transcended its limits and advanced its boundaries to include new members and areas of work, different from the limits and boundaries it previously held. Advocacy for human rights and constitutional changes have created an unprecedented momentum in Egyptian society, introducing new forms of political participation, such as public demonstrations and labour strikes. Also, the release of newspapers and newsletters has become a less common form of civic action. Any research effort to measure the state of civil society at any given moment has, then, to take into consideration the peculiar circumstances facing civil society in Egypt today, the dynamics of the time it lives in and its transforming growth and development.

This report endeavours to use more than 70 indicators for four key dimensions, namely structure, environment, impact and values, to assess the state of civil society in Egypt. The report applies the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) methodology to develop a visual image, a diamond, of what civil society looks like in Egypt today. With more than 50 other countries implementing the CSI, the comparative advantage of this research cannot be understated. We hope that this report serves as a useful resource for all those concerned with civil society in Egypt, and, above all, is taken as a guide for more research to address the gaps in our knowledge, in order to keep up with the pace of its change.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This final report is the culmination of an extensive collaborative effort to adapt and implement the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) as a model approach to assessing the current state of civil society in Egypt. From October 2003 through March 2006, the Center for Development Services (CDS) led this undertaking as the national coordinating organisation selected by CIVICUS. From its founding in 1990, CDS, a nonprofit development research and project implementing agency, has implemented numerous non-governmental organization (NGO) research and community development projects in Egypt and other countries in the Middle East. At CDS' invitation, Infonex Corp, an information services consultancy, joined the study as a full implementing partner. CDS and Infonex jointly planned, but separately completed, all of the research components of this study, sharing all results and analyses. Funding for the research activities was provided by CIVICUS, CDS, Infonex, the NGO Service Center in Egypt and the Participatory Development Programme, a project of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Egypt.

Over this period, many individuals, including CDS and Infonex staff, civil society experts and staff and volunteers of participating Egyptian associations, contributed considerable time and effort to the success of various study activities. We sincerely thank all of them for their contributions. Special thanks and credit go to Waad El Hadidy, Asmaa Shalabi, Dr. Mosaad Radwan, Abdel Hameed, Ali Mokhtar and Dr. Robert J. LaTowsky of CDS and Infonex for their extended leadership, commitment and management in completing this experimental application of the CSI in Egypt.

Dr. Mariz Tadros joined the team to make a seminal contribution by synthesizing the various findings and summary documents of the primary research into this final report. Mahi Khallaf provided ongoing support for our efforts from CIVICUS headquarters in South Africa. Our thanks to you both are heartfelt and enduring.

In our adaptation of the CIVICUS CSI methodology, a National Advisory Group (NAG) of civil society activists and experts were recruited late in the study. They commented on the draft final report, and together scored the indicators of the CSI. We acknowledge with gratitude and sincere appreciation the participation of all thirteen members of this NAG, including Dr. Abdel Aziz Mokhtar, Ms. Amira Howeidy, Dr. Attiya Hussain Affandy, Dr. Magdy Al Sanady, Mrs. Hala El Kholy, Dr. Wafaa El Menecy, Mrs. Sohair Ahmed, Mr. Hassan Youssef, Mrs. Azza Kamel, Dr. Hisham Hilal, Dr. Sherif Ghoneim, Dr. Alaa Saber and Dr. Bashir Abdelgayoum. Mohamed Abdel Hafiz successfully facilitated the meetings and debate of the NAG.

It is our hope that all of these participants will see their efforts in this final report and regard our study as an important contribution to the knowledge and understanding of civil society in Egypt today.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

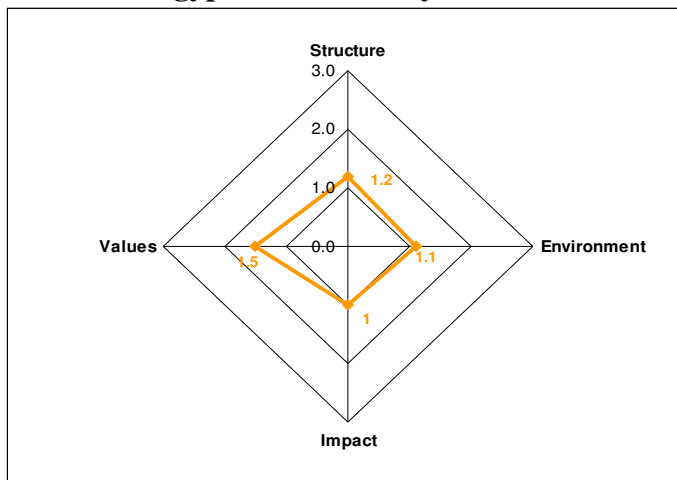
APE	Association for the Protection of the Environment
CAO	Central Auditing Organization
CBO	Community Based Organization
CDS	Center for Development Services
CEOSS	Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services
CSI	Civil Society Index
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CWTUS	Center of Workers and Trade Union Services
EOHR	Egyptian Organization for Human Rights
FID	Forum for Intercultural Dialogue
GC	Global Compact
GONGOS	Government-organized non-governmental organizations
HRCAP	Human Rights Center for Assistance of Prisoners
INP	Institute for National Planning
MOSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
NAG	National Advisory Group
NCO	National Coordinating Organization
NDP	National Democratic Party
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PA	People's Assembly
PARC	Public Administration Research & Consultation Center
PDP	Participatory Development Program
PPC	Political Parties Committee
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the course of 2004 and 2005, the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project collected information and input from a broad range of civil society representatives, citizens, experts and researchers on the state of civil society in Egypt.

Using a comprehensive framework of 74 indicators and drawing on extensive data collected by the project team, the project's National Advisory Group (NAG) assessed the overall state of civil society in the country, which can be summarized in a visual graph, Egypt's Civil Society Diamond (see figure 1). The diamond addresses four critical dimensions of civil society: its structure, environment, values and impact. It indicates that on the whole, there is still considerable room for building a stronger civil society in Egypt. Though the Egyptian diamond is rather well-balanced, it reveals that civil society is quite small and underdeveloped. The diamond reflects civil society's poor **structure** characterized by limited citizen participation and resources, its relatively disabling **environment** rife with political restrictions, rather insignificant **impact** on government and, to a lesser extent, society, and a limited promotion of positive **values** despite more favourable internal practice of these values.

FIGURE 1: Egypt's Civil Society Diamond



One major challenge facing the NAG was determining the make up of civil society in Egypt. Who to include and who to exclude? How should the concept of civil society be applied in Egypt and on what basis? Generally, it was decided that political parties would be excluded from the analysis since their primary objective is to seize political power, and therefore they could not be considered non-partisan. Apart from this, there were no other notable exclusions in the conceptualization of whom and what

constitutes civil society in Egypt. Despite the fact that civil society has sometimes been seen as synonymous with NGOs registered under the non-governmental law, the CSI sought to adopt a broader concept of civil society. The research therefore included organizations such as, service-providing NGOs, human rights organizations, business organizations, professional associations, youth clubs and centres and religious organizations, in addition to churches and mosques. Naturally, it was difficult to give each type of organization equal weight. First, there were significant disparities in available data. For example, there was a lack of up to date research on the state and conditions of trade unions, youth centres and youth clubs and co-operatives. Second, there was a variation in the role and position of different civil society actors to the specific issues covered in this study. The level of heterogeneity in Egyptian civil society is striking. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are diverse in their structure, objectives, size, membership composition, values and nature of their relationship to other organizations and the government. For every general comment that is made about civil society in this report, the reader will be able to list at least one or two exceptions to the rule.

An in-depth examination of civil society's **structure** in Egypt shows that there is a high level of institutionalization of civil activity, characterized by the thousands of CSOs. Some have been noted as inactive, with almost half of the NGOs registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs thought to exist only 'on paper'. However, it is difficult to deny the proliferation of a wide range of CSOs. This study also highlights that Egyptians, driven primarily by religious motives, make significant monetary and in-kind contributions, particularly for charitable purposes. However, the membership of citizens in CSOs and their participation in collective community action is somewhat limited. Moreover, CSOs' membership and leadership indicate that there are many groups of Egyptians who are marginalized and do not participate in CSOs. Another weakness in civil society's structure is the low extent to which CSOs are organised in federations and the latter's ineffectiveness, which leaves plenty of room for improvement. As for communication between CSOs, it tends to take place within the same sector rather than being cross-sectoral, although there are cases of strong cooperation, such as between religious associations and places of worship. There is a plethora of funding sources for CSOs, although the source and size of funding among and within different categories of organizations varies dramatically. Most CSOs felt they were not only short of financial resources, but also of human and technical resources.

In light of the wider political changes currently gripping the country, it is difficult to give a definitive view on how conducive the **environment** is to civil society's growth. In the past, the environment has not been very conducive, due to the legal and political restrictions on CSOs' autonomy and freedom to engage in advocacy activities. Moreover, socio-economic problems also constrain civic engagement, further exacerbated by the generally low levels of public trust and public spiritedness observed in society.

The study found that there is a need to expand, multiply and improve the channels of dialogue between the government and CSOs, whose relations are based on unequal power. The level of cooperation between civil society and business remains fairly weak, with a few exceptions. Until the late 1940s most development efforts were initiated by the business sector, however, this situation gradually ceased to exist by the early 1970s. In the last decade, the relationship between the private sector and civil society has slowly regained some of its previous strength. Most recently, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is being used to revive the relationship between the business sector and the corresponding social development efforts. CSR is still a new concept for the business sector in Egypt; hence its limited contribution to date. Businesses also face difficulties in identifying CSOs that they can create relationships with.

An assessment of civil society's **values** suggests that CSOs' perception of their role in society remains narrowly defined. While there are regulatory provisions in the laws governing most CSOs to ensure that the election of boards are undertaken democratically, this may not be enough to ensure internal democratic governance. Moreover, civil society's actions to promote democracy in wider society are limited and inconspicuous due to a series of external constraints (mainly legal inhibitions in partaking of such activities) as well as internal challenges, such as the absence of a strong pro-democratic culture. It is possible however, that in the wake of the upcoming elections, CSOs will play a greater role in raising the awareness of citizens on the importance of political participation.

The research undertaken for this report also revealed the dearth of information available on the level of transparency and accountability in CSOs. Corruption in CSOs continues to be a taboo subject, making it difficult to draw conclusions on how widespread corruption is within civil society. CSOs have yet to play a prominent or influential role in promoting the values of tolerance and non-violence in society, an area where it would be very much needed. Moreover, most CSOs do not espouse the promotion of transparency and accountability of either the state or the private sector as crucial, which is reflected in the absence of efforts to influence public policy-making.

As for civil society's **impact** on society at large, it is difficult to overlook the scope of non-governmental organizations' (NGOs') engagement in service delivery, or their work in providing social benefits and handouts to the needy. The impact of such activities, in terms of enhancing the quality of life for individuals or individual empowerment, is however, rather modest, possibly due to the continued dominance of the 'charity approach' to community work. There is evidence that new CSOs are adopting a development and/or human rights approach and existing CSOs are incorporating new approaches in their work, seeking to move more towards sustainable development activities. As examined in this report, the impact of civil society on public policy-making remains negligible, due to the restrictions in the environment in which CSOs' function, as well as, due to internal factors relating to the role and function that CSOs' envision for themselves in the community.

The CSI project has raised as many questions as it has sought to provide answers for on the state of civil society in Egypt. The study helped bring to light the gaps in our knowledge of CSOs and on areas in need of particular exploration. Many assumptions that have been taken for granted as fact need further empirical probing. For instance, it has been taken for granted that CSOs' play an instrumental role in poverty alleviation in Egypt; however, the extent to which this applies to a highly heterogeneous sector needs further research, as well as the extent to which poverty reduction efforts are actually fruitful and effective in bringing about long term change. The study highlighted the relative strengths of civil society in Egypt, which lie in the heterogeneity of the types of organizations that exist, their size and scope of membership. It also revealed its weaknesses, which partly stem from an inhibiting environment, but also from CSOs' narrow definition of their *raison d'être*, their scope of work and their focus on one role (i.e. provision of services) at the expense of possible other roles (i.e. state and corporate watchdog, rights advocate and facilitator of people's empowerment).

From the National Workshop, as well as the continued deliberations among the National Index Team, it was possible to arrive at a series of recommendations on ways to promote the strengthening of civil society in Egypt. One prerequisite for effectively engaging in civil society building is the need to promote further research, of a comprehensive and systematic nature, to help fill the gaps in existing knowledge and offer more in-depth information on various aspects of this arena. Moreover, despite the vast number of CSOs registered in Egypt, and the emergence of nascent social groups such as newly created political opposition groups like "*kefai*", there is a need to promote greater citizen participation in civil society. Achieving greater coordination and organization among CSOs would certainly strengthen the mobilising capacity of CSOs as well as their impact. A key recommendation, for which there was much

support among CSI participants, was the need to promote a greater role for CSOs in public policy, in order to address some of the key issues affecting the well being of people living in Egypt. The process of producing a national civil society report has encouraged civil society actors from various backgrounds, fields and interests to engage in a dialogue on the current state and future path of civil society. These deliberations have sparked an interest in further collaboration to share ideas, approaches and experiences on how to further strengthen civil society.

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the results of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) in the Arab Republic of Egypt, carried out from October of 2003 till December of 2005, as part of the international CSI project coordinated by the international civil society network CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation.

The CSI is a participatory action-research project assessing the state of civil society in countries around the world. The project links this assessment with a reflection and action-planning process by civil society stakeholders, aiming to strengthen civil society in those areas where weaknesses or challenges are detected. By seeking to combine valid assessment, broad-based reflection and joint action, the CSI attempts to make a contribution to the perennial debate on how research can inform policy and practice.

In each country, the CSI is implemented by a National Coordinating Organization (NCO), guided by a National Advisory Group (NAG) and the CSI project team at CIVICUS. The NCO in Egypt, the Centre for Development Services (CDS) and its research partner, Infonex Inc., collected and synthesized data and information on civil society from a variety of primary and secondary sources. This information was employed by the NAG to score the 74 CSI indicators, which together provide a comprehensive assessment of the state of civil society. The findings were discussed at a National Workshop, where civil society stakeholders developed recommendations on how to strengthen civil society in Egypt. The international CSI project team at CIVICUS provided training, technical assistance and quality control to the NCO throughout the project implementation.

The CSI is an international comparative project currently involving more than 50 countries around the world. It was conceived with two specific objectives: (1) providing useful knowledge on civil society and (2) increasing the commitment of stakeholders to strengthen civil society. The first objective inherits a certain tension between country-specific knowledge and knowledge comparable cross-nationally on a global scale. CIVICUS sought to resolve this tension by making it possible to adapt the methodology and the set of more than 70 indicators to country-specific factors. CDS made use of this option and chose to adapt the proposed methodology to the context of Egypt. More specifically, it opted to conduct the primary research (the Regional Stakeholder Consultations and the Study on Philanthropy in Egypt) first and then to convene a National Advisory Group, which would propose further guidance for the produced draft report, as CDS saw no point in convening the National Advisory Group without having a concrete product in hand. Apart from this adaptation, CDS followed the project approach and process proposed by CIVICUS.

Structure of the Publication

Section I, “The Civil Society Index Project & Approach”, provides a brief history of the CSI, its conceptual framework and research methodology.

Section II, “Civil Society in the Arab Republic of Egypt”, provides a background on civil society in Egypt and highlights some specific features of Egyptian civil society. It also

describes the use of the concept of civil society in Egypt as well as the definition used by the CSI project.

Section III, “Analysis of Civil Society”, is divided into four parts: Structure, Environment, Values and Impact, which correspond to the four main dimensions of the CSI. The presentation of the results according to individual dimensions and subdimensions is intended to be a source repository.

Section IV briefly summarizes some of the strengths and weaknesses of Egyptian civil society while section V presents the recommendations arrived at by CSI participants as an outcome of a long process of deliberations on the findings. This is followed by the conclusion of the report.

Finally, the conclusion in Section VI maps the Civil Society Diamond and offers an interpretation on the report’s implications for the overall state of civil society in Egypt.

I CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX PROJECT AND APPROACH

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The idea of a Civil Society Index (CSI) originated in 1997, when the international non-governmental organisation CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation published the *New Civic Atlas* containing profiles of civil society in 60 countries around the world (CIVICUS 1997). To improve the comparability and quality of the information contained in the *New Civic Atlas*, CIVICUS decided to embark on the development of a comprehensive assessment tool for civil society, the Civil Society Index (Heinrich/Naidoo 2001; Holloway 2001). Helmut Anheier, then director of the Centre for Civil Society at the London School of Economics, played a significant role in the creation of the CSI approach (Anheier 2004). The concept was tested in fourteen countries during a pilot phase, lasting from 2000 to 2002. Upon completion of the pilot phase, the project approach was thoroughly evaluated and refined. In its current implementation phase (2003-2005), CIVICUS and its country partners are implementing the project in more than fifty countries (see table 1).

Table I.1.1: Countries participating in the CSI implementation phase 2003-2005 ¹

1. Argentina	19. Germany	38. Palestine
2. Armenia	20. Ghana	39. Poland
3. Azerbaijan	21. Greece	40. Romania
4. Bolivia	22. Guatemala	41. Russia
5. Bulgaria	23. Honduras	42. Scotland
6. Burkina Faso	24. Hong Kong (VR China)	43. Serbia
7. Chile	25. Indonesia	44. Sierra Leone
8. China	26. Italy	45. Slovenia
9. Costa Rica	27. Jamaica	46. South Korea
10. Croatia	28. Lebanon	47. Taiwan
11. Cyprus ²	29. Macedonia	48. Togo
12. Czech Republic	30. Mauritius	49. Turkey
13. East Timor	31. Mongolia	50. Uganda
14. Ecuador	32. Montenegro	51. Ukraine
15. Egypt	33. Nepal	52. Uruguay
16. Fiji	34. Netherlands	53. Vietnam
17. Gambia	35. Nigeria	54. Wales
18. Georgia	36. Northern Ireland	
	37. Orissa (India)	

¹ This list encompasses independent countries as well as other territories in which the CSI has been conducted, as of March 2006.

^{2 2} The CSI assessment was carried out in parallel in the northern and southern parts of Cyprus due to the de facto division of the island. However, the CSI findings were published in a single report as a symbolic gesture for a unified Cyprus.

2. PROJECT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The CSI uses a comprehensive project implementation approach and broad range of research methods. At the core of the CSI lies a broad and encompassing definition of civil society, which informs the overall project implementation process. To assess the state of civil society in a given country, the CSI examines four key dimensions of civil society, namely its structure, external environment, values and impact on society at large. Each of these four dimensions is composed of a set of subdimensions, which again are made up of a set of individual indicators. These indicators form the basis for the CSI data collection, which includes secondary sources, a population survey, Regional stakeholder consultations, a media review and a series of case studies. The indicators also inform the assessment exercise undertaken by a National Advisory Group (NAG). The research and assessment findings are discussed at a gathering of key stakeholders, whose task is to identify specific strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations on key priority actions to strengthen civil society. The CSI project approach, conceptual framework, and research and assessment methodology are described in detail in the remainder of this section.³

2.1 Conceptual Framework

How to define civil society?

At the heart of the CSI's conceptual framework is obviously the concept of civil society. CIVICUS defines civil society as the space between the family, state and the market, where people come together to pursue their interests (CIVICUS 2003). In this respect and different from most other civil society concepts, the CSI has two interesting features. First, it aims to go beyond the usual focus on formal and institutionalised CSOs, and to take account of informal coalitions and groups. Second, while civil society is sometimes perceived as a sphere in which positive activities and values reign, CIVICUS seeks to also include negative manifestations of civil society in the assessment. The concept therefore covers not only charitable associations or environmental organisations but also groups such as skinheads and aggressive sports fans. The CSI assesses not only the extent to which CSOs support democracy and tolerance, but also the extent to which they themselves are intolerant or even violent.

How to conceptualise the state of civil society?

To assess the state of civil society, the CSI examines civil society along four main dimensions:

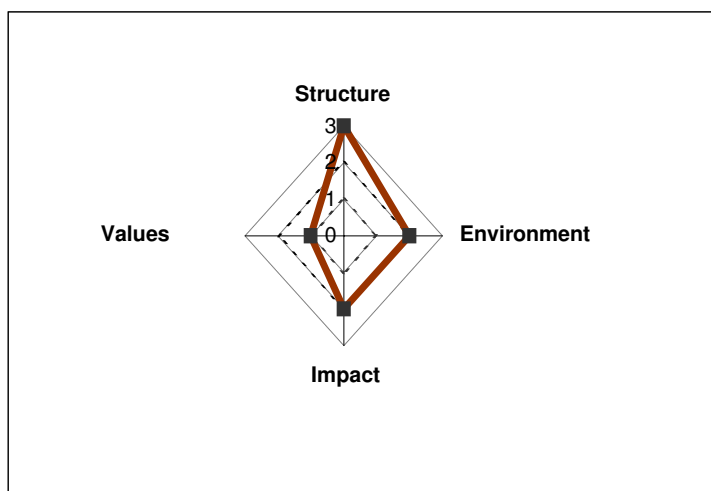
- The **structure** of civil society (e.g. number of members, extent of giving and volunteering, number and features of umbrella organisations and civil society infrastructure, human and financial resources);
- The external **environment** in which civil society exists and functions (e.g. legislative, political, cultural and economic context, relationship between civil society and the state as well as the private sector);
- The **values** practiced and promoted within the civil society arena (e.g. democracy, tolerance or protection of the environment) and
- The **impact** of activities pursued by civil society actors (e.g. public policy impact, empowerment of people, meeting societal needs).

³ For a detailed description of the CSI approach, see Heinrich (2004).

Each of these main dimensions is divided into a set of subdimensions which contain a total of 74 indicators. These indicators are at the heart of the CSI and form the basis of the data presented in this report.

FIGURE I.1: Civil society diamond tool

To visually present the scores of the four main dimensions, the CSI makes use of the Civil Society Diamond tool (see figure 2 for an example).⁴ The Civil Society diamond graph, with its four extremities, visually summarises the strengths and weaknesses of civil society. The diagram is the result of the individual indicator scores aggregated into subdimension and then dimension scores. As it captures the essence of the state of civil society across its key dimensions, the Civil Society Diamond can provide a useful



starting point for interpretations and discussions about how civil society looks like in a given country. As the Diamond does not aggregate the dimension scores into a single score, it cannot and should not be used to rank countries according to their scores on the four dimensions. Such an approach was deemed inappropriate for a civil society assessment, with so many multi-faceted dimensions, contributing factors and actors. The Diamond also depicts civil society at a certain point in time and therefore lacks a dynamic perspective. However, if applied over time, it can be used to chart the development of civil society over time as well as compare the state of civil societies across countries (Anheier 2004).

2.2 Project Methodology

This section described the methods used to collect and aggregate the various data used by the CSI project.

2.2.1 Data Collection

The CSI recognized that, in order to generate a valid and comprehensive assessment of civil society, a variety of perspectives need to be included – insider, external stakeholder and outsider views, ranging from the local, regional to the national level. The CSI therefore includes the following set of research methods: (1) Review of existing information, (2) Regional stakeholder consultations, (3) Population survey, (4) Media review and (5) Fact-finding studies.

It is believed that this mix of different methods is essential to generate accurate and useful data and information, but also to accommodate the variations of civil society, for example in rural vs. urban areas. Also, the CSI seeks to utilize all available sources of information to avoid ‘re-inventing research wheels’ and wasting scarce resources. Lastly, the research methodology is explicitly designed to promote learning and, ultimately, action on the part of participants.

⁴ The Civil Society Diamond was developed for CIVICUS by Helmut Anheier (see Anheier 2004).

Besides feeding into the final national-level seminar, data collection processes also aim to contribute to participant learning. This is done, for example, through group-based approaches that challenge participants to see them as part of a “bigger picture”, think beyond their own organisational or sectoral context, reflect strategically about relations within and between civil society and other parts of society, identify key strengths and weaknesses of their civil society and assess collective needs. It is important to note that the CSI provides an aggregate need assessment on civil society as a whole and is not designed to exhaustively map the various actors active within civil society. Yet, it does examine power relations within civil society and between civil society and other sectors and also identifies key civil society actors when looking at specific indicators under the structure, values and impact dimensions.

For the CSI study in Egypt, it was possible to implement the entire list of proposed data collection methods, yielding an extremely rich information base on civil society. The specific methods are listed here in the sequence of their implementation:

- *Secondary sources*: The project team began with a review of information from the many existing studies and research projects on civil society and various related subjects. This information was synthesised this in an overview report on the state of civil society in Egypt. The research team used the CDS survey on philanthropy in Egypt where a representative sample of 1,200 adults in Egypt was surveyed. Questions were asked regarding their membership in CSOs, their level of giving and volunteering and their opinions of the role of CSOs.
- *Regional stakeholder survey*: 200 representatives from CSOs, government and business, and other stakeholders, were surveyed in four selected regions, namely Aswan, Behira, North Sinai and Sharkiya governorates.
- *Regional stakeholder consultations*: In the same four regions, the same stakeholders who participated in the Regional stakeholder survey were invited to participate in a day-long discussion on the results of the survey and other topics.
- *Media monitoring*: Three newspapers were monitored over a period of three months regarding their coverage of civil society actors, related topics and values.
- *Desk studies*: CDS gathered a mass of important information regarding the topics under consideration.
- *Expert interviews*: CDS also conducted interviews on specific issues which emerged through the various research activities. Most of these interviews focused on issues related to civil society’ policy impact.

2.2.2 Data Aggregation

The various data sources were collated and synthesized by the CSI project team in a draft country report, which was structured along the CSI indicators, subdimension and dimensions. This report presents the basis for the indicator scoring exercise carried out by the NAG. In this exercise, each score is rated on a scale of 0 to 3, with 0 being the lowest assessment possible and 3 the most positive. The scoring of each indicator is based on a short description of the indicator and a mostly qualitatively defined scale of scores from 0 to 3. This NAG scoring exercise is modelled along a “citizen jury” approach (Jefferson Centre 2002), in which citizens come together to deliberate, and make decision on a public issue, based on presented facts. The NAG’s role is to give a score

(similar to passing a judgement) on each indicator based on the evidence (or data) presented by the National Index Team in form of the draft country report.

In Egypt, the scoring process was conducted as follows: First, the members of the NAG scored each indicator individually. Then, an average of the scores was calculated for each indicator, from which the scores for the subdimensions and dimensions were calculated through averaging. For approximately a quarter of the 74 indicators, it was straightforward to determine the final score and it did not require a judgment by the NAG, as these indicators were quantitatively defined and, therefore, did not leave any room for interpretation (e.g. indicators 1.1.1; 2.4.1). There were about 36 indicators, for which the scores of NAG members differed considerably, by more than one point. The NAG debated these controversial indicators and a new vote was taken for each.. The final scores of the four dimensions (structure, environment, values and impact) were plotted to generate the Civil Society Diamond for Egypt. Then, the NAG spent some time discussing and interpreting the shape of the Civil Society Diamond, as well as the potential causal relations among the scores for the four dimensions.

II. CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

1. HISTORY OF EGYPTIAN CIVIL SOCIETY

The emergence of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Egypt has generally been attributed to the establishment of the first NGO in the country in 1821, the Hellenic Philanthropic Association, whose primary aim was to serve the Greek expatriate community residing in the country. However, organized civic and philanthropic initiatives long predate the 19th century, with the Sufi orders, the Endowments system and the religious institutions (mosques and churches) playing crucial roles in supporting social, charitable and cultural initiatives. In fact, some scholars attribute the relatively late emergence of formal non-governmental organizational (NGO) structures to the presence and activism of these alternative initiatives.

The first associations directed towards the wider Egyptian population emerged only 40 years after the establishment of the Hellenic Philanthropic Association. In 1859, the Institut d'Égypte was established, followed in 1868 with the Knowledge Association and the Geographic Association in 1878.⁵ Many of these new organizations were established by Egyptians who had studied abroad and returned home determined to promote culture, scientific thinking and education as important vehicles for national development. Informally, individuals quietly engaged in charitable activities on behalf of the poor to reduce suffering and misery.

The history of civil society in 20th century Egypt is often roughly divided into three phases. The first phase commences from the end of the 19th century and goes up to the 1952 revolution. The second phase commences from the 1952 revolution up to the 1970s, with the abandonment of the state-centered model of development. The 1970s to present is generally described as the third phase.

The pre-1952 revolution era is described as the liberal phase, which witnessed the formation and consolidation of CSOs and movements. Against the backdrop of British colonialism, the 1920s and 1930s saw a proliferation of CSOs, many of which had strong nationalist sentiments and objectives. From 1922 to 1952, the number of CSOs is said to have grown from 300 to more than 800. These included: 650 Private Voluntary Organization (PVOs), eight political parties, 34 labour unions, nine professional associations, seven chambers of commerce and one industrial union.⁶ What was particularly striking about CSOs in this era was their heterogeneity and diversity of interests. Many organizations were active on several fronts, advocating for national independence, as well as the rights of particular groups, while simultaneously playing an active role in providing social services to deprived groups. Of particular salience were the religious organizations, both Christian and Muslim, which were often led by prominent secular as well as religious figures and had wide outreach in the community. In the 1930s, in response to the growing strength of many CSOs, the government introduced legislation aimed at bringing under surveillance charitable activities and regulating politically-oriented CSOs. In

⁵ Kandeel, Amany. *Civil Society in Egypt at the Rise of a New Millennium*. Cairo: Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 2000, p. 15

⁶ Zaki, Moheb. *Civil Society and Democratization in Egypt, 1981-1994*. Cairo: Ibn Khaldun Center for Development, 1996, pp. 36-99

1939, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) was founded. From then on a single administration would oversee the work of CSOs. Law 49 of 1945 entitled the ministry to license NGOs, and to dissolve NGOs whose activities were deemed illegal and those organizations which did not cooperate with MOSA.⁷

Following the July 1952 revolution, Egyptian civil society entered a new era. The Revolutionary Command Council abolished the monarchy, established land reform laws and dissolved political parties. The new government sought to co-opt all autonomous CSOs and movements, through a series of measures. First, laws were introduced which severely curbed the autonomy of CSOs and imposed numerous bureaucratic shackles. Laws 91 of 1959 and 62 of 1964 brought the unions under heavy government control. All labour unions were brought under the supervision of one general union that regulated, and in effect governed, their activities. Moreover, a new NGO law was instated which introduced highly restrictive measures that led to the inhibition of voluntary, autonomous civil activities. The second inhibiting measure taken was the sequestration of property belonging to NGOs, which led to the considerable decline in their activities and of voluntary activism in general. Moreover, the nationalization of the civic *Waqf* (Endowments) system, which was brought under government control, also discouraged many from making philanthropic contributions to CSOs via this important channel. This had significant consequences on the financial sustainability of many organizations. Alternatively, the government promoted the establishment of community-level organizations (community development associations) which worked closely with the government in implementing its national development agenda. The government achieved a high level of success in co-opting these organizations and turning them into instruments for the implementation of national policies and programmes

The third phase in the history of civil society in Egypt, the post-Nasserist era, begins against the backdrop of President Sadat's embrace of an open market economic system, commonly known as *infitah*. Under pressure for political liberalization, the government introduced some modest measures aimed at increasing political space, such as allowing the existence of political parties, granting amnesty to some political prisoners and allowing some groups, which were repressed under the previous regime, to re-emerge. All such measures were cautiously introduced with the clear intention on the part of the government of not forgoing its hegemony on Egyptian political life. The Political Parties law 40 of 1977 imposed a great deal of restrictions on party formation, activities and programmes. In addition, Sadat kept in place all of the laws regulating CSOs. Only Businessmen's Associations grew during this time, as their mandates coincided with his policy of having an open door economic policy.

President Mubarak's accession to power in 1982 did not bring about any major policy change vis-à-vis the civil society sector. Mubarak continued to pursue a policy of limited political liberalization. However, due to a series of internal and external pressures, CSO activities expanded, particularly in the 1990s, which saw Egypt hosting the UN's International Conference on Population and Development, in 1994, with significant NGO participation and involvement. This increased civic activity is particularly noticeable among development-oriented NGOs and coincides with an increased donor interest in funding non-governmental

⁷ Abdel Rahman, Maha M. Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt. Cairo: The American University Press, 2004, p. 127.

activities working on the ground, in a diversity of areas, such as women's rights, sustainable human development, environmental protection, children's rights and advocacy. In 1998, and after recurrent lobbying, the government showed strong intentions to reform Law 32 of 1964. In 1999, a draft that would have been considered a milestone in the regulation of CSOs in Egypt was enacted. However, it was ruled unconstitutional on un-substantive grounds, but on the premise that as a piece of legislation that touches on basic constitutional freedoms (such as freedom of association), the draft law should have been discussed at the Shura Council (The Lower House) before being presented to the People's Assembly. The current law of associations, Law 84 of 2002, was passed on 3 June 2002.⁸ While some CSO activists praised the law for reducing the bureaucratic obstacles present in previous NGO legislation, others believe that the law is restrictive in spirit and does not, to say the least, encourage advocacy, especially advocacy waged against the government. Nonetheless, NGOs have been innovative in finding ways to survive while circumventing legal obstacles. The manner in which the new Law has been implemented has come under fire from some civil society actors for being either too repressive or imposing the same bureaucratic shackles over civil society activism.

2. THE CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN EGYPT

The term "civil society" remains quite fuzzy, as a concept in Egyptian public and scholarly discussion. In many instances, civil society has been used to refer to civic associations (NGOs) registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs (*gameyat ahleya*). Only recently has there been more reflection on the need to broaden the definition's scope to incorporate a wider array of forms of civic association. However, there is still no consensus on who to include or exclude under the banner of civil society. For example, some analysts in Egypt conceptualize civil society as a set of organizations that share and promote "progressive" values, such as working for a more open society, promoting gender equity and greater civil and political freedom. These analysts would normally exclude civil society movements that are fundamentalist or conservative in orientation from their definition. Other scholars define civil society as an arena that is independent of the state and the market. They tend to see CSOs as a force of resistance against government hegemony, and a space that is independent of the government. For those who espouse such a concept, CSOs that are characterized by a high level of government intervention would not be considered to belong to the non-governmental arena. Under their definition, a significant proportion of CSOs would be excluded on the premise of being considered "Gongos" (Government-organized-non-governmental organizations). Some definitions of civil society tend to focus on the arena being occupied by "non-political actors" and would consequently exclude political parties and particular groups from their definition.

The insinuations from the government's discourse on civil society reflect an official perception of civil society as the set of NGOs (*gameyat ahleya*) that, together with the government and the private sector, work to address a set of social ills and alleviate poverty. However, while the concept of a partnership between CSOs and the government pervades the official discourse, it remains more of rhetoric than a reflection of its real position.

⁸ Human Rights Watch. *Egypt: Margins of Repression: State limits on Non-Governmental Organization Activism*, July 2005, pp.5-6.

Despite the diversity of definitions and their signifiers, it is safe to say that most definitions of civil society do not take into account the full scope and heterogeneity of the sector, a sector that is diverse in terms of organizational structure, mandate, membership composition and position in society and with the government.

3. THE CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY USED IN THIS PROJECT

Putting the civil society definition proposed by CIVICUS into practice in the Egyptian context was no easy task. CIVICUS defines civil society as “the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market, where people associate to advance common interests” (CIVICUS 2004). The concept of an arena that is separate from the family, state and market posed some challenges for the Egyptian context. First, some organizations were established and run by families that wish to channel their resources for philanthropic or other purposes, while directly administering the funds under the legal form of a civil association. Second, the delineation between government and NGO is somewhat blurred in instances when an NGO is partly run by civil servants, relies primarily on government funding for its survival and closely follows a government agenda in terms of setting its priorities. Moreover, the delineation between market and civil society also proved problematic, as many business associations are rooted in the market. Nonetheless, the NIT chose not to exclude any of the above categories whose parameters were not clearly set, and preferred to adopt as broad a definition of civil society as possible. Consequently, it sought to go beyond the conventional definition of civil society, in terms of NGOs registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs, by including a wide array of actors. The NIT also chose to incorporate both the progressive as well as more conservative organizations, in its definition. In other words, religious associations with very conservative agendas were not excluded from the study.

While it was difficult to incorporate civil society movements that do not have an institutional structure in the research, at crucial points, their role and impact was highlighted. Institutions that have not conventionally been analyzed as CSOs, but which nonetheless play a critically important role, such as churches and mosques, were also included in the research.

The only category that the NIT chose to exclude from its definition of civil society was political parties, which was done for two reasons. First, they aim to acquire government power or a share thereof and are therefore conspicuously partisan. Second, in the Egyptian context, although historically they have collaborated and worked closely with CSOs, they have generally been seen as an independent force from CSOs, with a distinctive agenda of their own and governed by different types of dynamics. However, this decision should not be interpreted as a deliberate measure on the part of the NAG to exclude political entities. To the contrary, CSOs that are engaged in advocacy on a variety of issues were explicitly included in the research exercise.

The table below summarizes the types of civil society organizations that were included in the study.

TABLE II.3.1: Types of CSOs included in the research

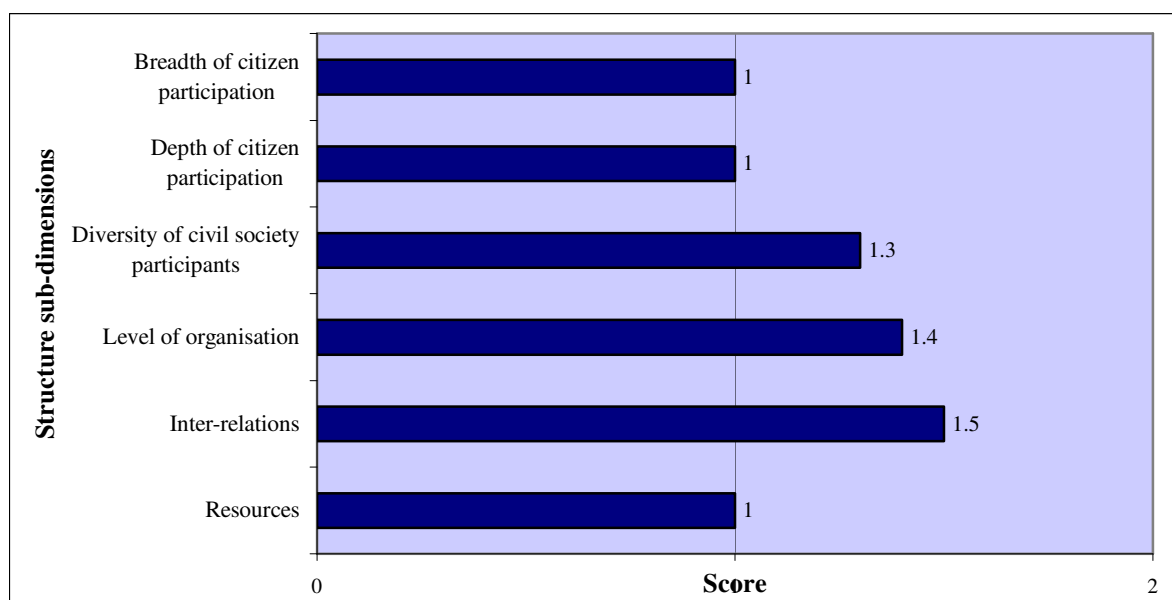
1. Philanthropic Organizations
2. Development Organizations
3. Human Rights Organizations
4. Business Associations
5. Chambers of Commerce
6. Co-operatives
7. Professional Syndicates
8. Trade Unions
9. Youth Centres
10. Sports Clubs
11. Women's Organizations
12. Faith-based Organizations
13. Churches and Mosques
14. Other organizations registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs

III ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

1. STRUCTURE

This section describes the overall size, strength and vibrancy of civil society in human, organization, and economic terms in Egypt.

FIGURE III.1.1: Subdimension scores for structure dimension



1.1 The extent of citizen participation in civil society

This subdimension looks at the extent of various forms of citizen participation in Egyptian civil society, such as non-partisan political action, charitable-giving, membership in CSOs, engagement in voluntary work and involvement in community activities.

TABLE III.1.1: Indicators assessing the extent of citizen participation

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.1.1	Non-partisan political action	1
1.1.2	Charitable giving	2
1.1.3	CSO membership	0
1.1.4	Volunteering	1
1.1.5	Collective community action	1

1.1.1 Non-partisan political action. This series of indicators is particularly useful for the purpose of shedding light on the level of civic non-partisan political action, such as signing a petition, attending a demonstration/march, joining in boycotts or occupying buildings or factories. The table below summarizes the findings on the extent of Egyptians' civic non-partisan political action.

TABLE III.1.2: Extent of Egyptian non-partisan political action

Action	Have done %	Might do %	Would never do %
Signing a petition	20	37	43
Joining in boycotts	37	30	33
Attending lawful demonstrations	2	15	82
Joining unofficial strikes	0	3	97
Occupying buildings or factories	2	2	95

Source: World Values Survey Data Wave 1999 – 2002⁹

The findings indicate that, on the whole, 42% of the population has been involved in one of the above non-partisan political actions. It is noteworthy that since the World Values Survey Data was published in 1999-2000, the level of non-partisan civic action may currently be higher in light of the political events that have shaken the country this year. The year 2005 witnessed a remarkable surge in non-partisan political action, most notably in the form of citizen participation in mass demonstrations.¹⁰

While there are legal channels for participating in non-partisan action for Egyptian citizens, they tend to take place on the premises of organizations or institutions rather than in the public. Also, they must be apolitical in nature: citizens may participate freely in places of worship, NGOs, youth clubs and centres, so long as such action is apolitical. Any non-partisan political action or mobilization in CSOs would be in contravention of the existing laws, which prohibit engagement in political activity of any sort.

The NAG was aware that new movements have appeared in the past few months. However, in assessing the general level of non-partisan action for the entire year, they felt it would be misleading to generalize from the level of political mobilization witnessed in a select few months, and consequently gave a score of 1.

1.1.2 Charitable giving. A recently conducted survey in 2004 on social giving in Egypt indicated that 62% of respondents had made some sort of contribution to charity in the past year.¹¹ Thirty-eight percent had not made any contribution and 0.1% refrained from answering.

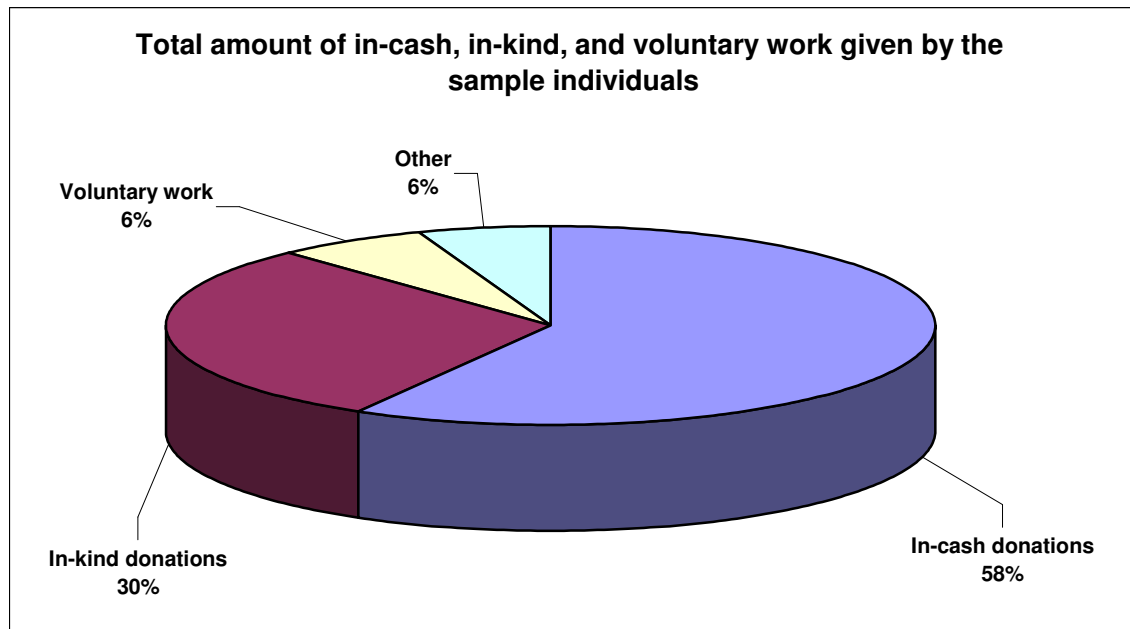
Figure III.1.2 shows that among those who gave to charity, the most common form of donation was of a monetary nature (cash), followed by in-kind donations (58% and 20% of charity givers respectively).

⁹ World Values Survey study was carried out by EMAC Research and Training Center, Cairo and Ain Shams University.

¹⁰ “Non-partisan” can be defined in a variety of ways. For the purpose of this report, we used the definition provided by the New Oxford Dictionary of English in which non-partisan signified “not biased or partisan, especially towards any particular political group” (1999: 1261). In this sense, any movement that comprised more than one political party and did not espouse one particular ideological viewpoint qualified as “non-partisan”.

¹¹ Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004.

FIGURE III.1.2 Total amount of in-cash, in-kind, and voluntary work given by the sample individuals



Source: Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004

With respect to the preferred channel for disbursing aid, the survey indicated that charity-givers were more likely to disburse aid directly to individuals in need rather than through a CSO (64% compared to 15%). One of the reasons explaining this preference lies in the salient socio-religious concept, that charity should be disbursed discreetly and privately, to be seen only by God and second, to avoid social embarrassment for the recipient. Nonetheless, a small percentage of charity givers (15%) said they disburse their aid simultaneously through both channels.

The survey also revealed that charity-givers were primarily driven by religious motives in disbursing aid, as charity was seen as a religious duty or obligation. The most common forms of charitable donations stemming from a religious ethos comprise *Zakat*, which is the obligatory payment by Muslims of a determinate portion of their lawful property for the benefit of the poor and other enumerated classes.¹² Almost all charity givers had made *Zakat* contribution (93%) and contributed to *Zakat el fitr* (92%) which is distributed during Ramadan.

Another form of religious tithing is *Zakat el Mal*, the obligation to dispense of a part of one's income, when it reaches a certain level. It is not as widely practiced as other forms of religious charity, with 46.4% of Egyptians citing having made such a contribution. The reason for the lower contribution rate is that only those Muslims whose earnings have reached a certain level are required to make a tithing on their money.

¹² Definition of *Zakat* from Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2000.

It is noteworthy that, 86% of charity givers donated *sadaka* [voluntary charitable giving], mostly of a financial kind. Although *sadaka* payments are not considered a religious obligation, people make such donations as acts of kindness for those less fortunate, as giving something “for God”.

There was a consensus among NAG members that while the percentage of Egyptians who make an in-cash contribution is very high, the percentage of those who make it a point of contributing on a regular and consistent basis would be considerably lower. Moreover, NAG members suggested that a careful distinction must be made between voluntary work and making in-cash or in-kind donations, the latter being much more prevalent than the former. Irrespective of the type of social giving in question, what is evident is that Egyptians’ sense of passion and/or duty in charitable giving is greatly sustained and nurtured by religious sentiment. The challenge in the future may be how to encourage Egyptians to make charitable donations for non-charitable purposes.

1.1.3 CSO membership. Unfortunately, there is no reliable data on the size of membership in Egypt’s CSOs. Ibrahim believes that a realistic estimate of CSO membership in Egypt is roughly 2.5 million (2000:17). This represents 3.47% of the adult population of Egypt. Ibrahim reaches this figure by calculating one-third of the number given by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA). According to MOSA, 7.5 million Egyptians are members in one of the 27,000 CSOs existing in the country. Ibrahim finds this official figure misleading for a number of reasons (2000:14). First, many of the 27,000 CSOs are inactive and second, membership is not entirely voluntary in some CSOs, and neither is it active. Ibrahim gives the example of professional syndicates where membership is required by law as a condition for practicing in a certain profession, such as medicine, law, engineering and pharmacy. In many cases, registering at the syndicate is the only action adopted by members throughout the entire duration of their membership (2000:14). In light of this, it is no surprise that syndicates attract the largest number of citizens who are members of CSOs (trade unions, professional syndicates and others). Private voluntary organizations or NGOs have the second largest size of membership, followed by clubs (a significant proportion of which are youth clubs). Co-operatives have a membership of about half that of clubs, with consumer co-operatives being the most popular in that category (Ibrahim2000:14).

1.1.4. Volunteering. As cited above, the CDS survey indicated that only a small percentage of respondents cited engagement in voluntary work during the past year (6.4%). This percentage is surprising, given that the majority of NGOs cited volunteers as the backbone of their organizations, responsible for the implementation of many of the activities.

Moreover, the survey results may have underestimated the level of volunteerism because it only measured formal volunteering, due to the salience of certain social values influencing people's responses: respondents conceptualized volunteering as an activity that is undertaken at an institution or organization. If they are volunteering outside such a structure, for example, assisting neighbours or other community members in any way, it is likely that they would not have cited it as voluntary work. If the number of citizens engaged in "informal" volunteering were to be taken into account, it is likely that the percentage of Egyptians volunteering would be much higher than indicated in the survey.

It seems there is, for the most part, a positive correlation between occupation and volunteerism. The higher the occupation an individual holds, the more likely s/he is to be involved in volunteer activity. This is mirrored in the CDS survey which showed that 70% of volunteers occupied white collar professions, such as doctors, engineers, accountants in addition to businessmen. Civil servants represented 19.3% of volunteers, while street vendors, workers, and other groups represented a negligible percentage of those undertaking volunteer work. This raises the question of whether NGOs are exclusive organizations that do not encourage or actively seek the participation of individuals from working class backgrounds, or whether the preoccupation with ensuring livelihoods reduces the time available for volunteer work.

In exploring the motives behind the involvement of individuals in NGO activism, the CDS survey also shed light on what drives volunteers. Interestingly, a variety of motives inspire volunteers. The most popular response (62.3%) was that volunteer work represents a religious duty. The second most popular response, which was cited almost as often, is the sense of personal satisfaction gained from undertaking such work (62.1%). Interestingly, 51.3% cited volunteering for acquiring social status and prestige.

1.1.5 Community action. A recent survey conducted by CDS (Philanthropy in Egypt, 2004) suggests that the scope of collective community action is somewhat limited. Only about a third of the sample respondents had met collectively to discuss a community matter in the past year and a slightly higher percentage (34.9%) had never attended a community event or participation in a community action during the past year. The NAG assigned a higher score to this indicator as it was believed that the survey may not have captured some of the more subtle forms of community action, such as neighbours meeting in the hallway sporadically to discuss what course of action to take regarding garbage disposal or water cuts. What the research revealed on the whole is the dearth of information that is available either on the form or extent of community action in Egypt. This is not to suggest that it does not exist, only that to this day, it has not been adequately documented for analysis.

TABLE III.1.3: Frequency of respondents' participation in collective meetings to discuss an issue affecting the community (Village context)

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes, a lot	167	8.4%
Yes, occasionally	447	22.4%
Rarely	684	34.3%
Never	696	34.9%

Source: Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004

1.2 Depth of people's participation¹³

This subdimension looks at the depth of various forms of citizen participation in Egyptian civil society. Table III.1.4 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

¹³ Indicator 1.2.3 had to be excluded due to lack of data.

TABLE III.1.4: Indicators assessing depth of citizen participation

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.2.1	Charitable giving / contributions	1
1.2.2	Volunteering	1

1.2.1. Charitable-giving. It is difficult to determine what percentage of people's income goes to charity for two reasons: reluctance to openly discuss personal finances and a socio-religious belief that charitable giving is an act to be done in the utmost discretion. Nonetheless, the survey indicates that on average people donated about LE180 during 2004. Given that the estimated average annual income in Egypt is \$ US1,530 (about LE8,415), this suggests that on average, the Egyptian citizen donates 1.96% of their income to charity. However, this figure conceals a wide gap in contributions, which range from LE1 to LE 5,000. Such a discrepancy may be due to the fact that charitable donations are made across socio-economic classes (Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004). The study confirms that the most popular type of charitable giving is making in-cash donations, followed by in-kind donations and, last, volunteer work.

TABLE III.1.5: Types of charitable giving and its amount

Type of charitable giving	# of individuals	Minimum amount	Maximum amount	Average amount	Mean average
In-cash donations	250	1 pound	5000.0	180 pounds	456
In-kind donations	37	3 pounds (what equal of 3 pounds)	1500.0	170 pounds	291
Voluntary work	12	1 (hour)	10	4 hours	

Source: Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004

1.2.2. Volunteering. According to the CDS survey on Philanthropy in Egypt (2004), among those that cited doing voluntary work, they spent on average 2.5 hours a month in voluntary work in NGOs.

1.3 Diversity of civil society participants

This subsection describes and analyzes the level of diversity within civil society, in terms of its representativity and how inclusive or exclusive it is as an arena. It assesses the level of participation and representation of groups that have conventionally been marginalized, and analyses which groups are particularly dominant, as well as those that are most likely to be excluded. It also offers some explanations for such trends.

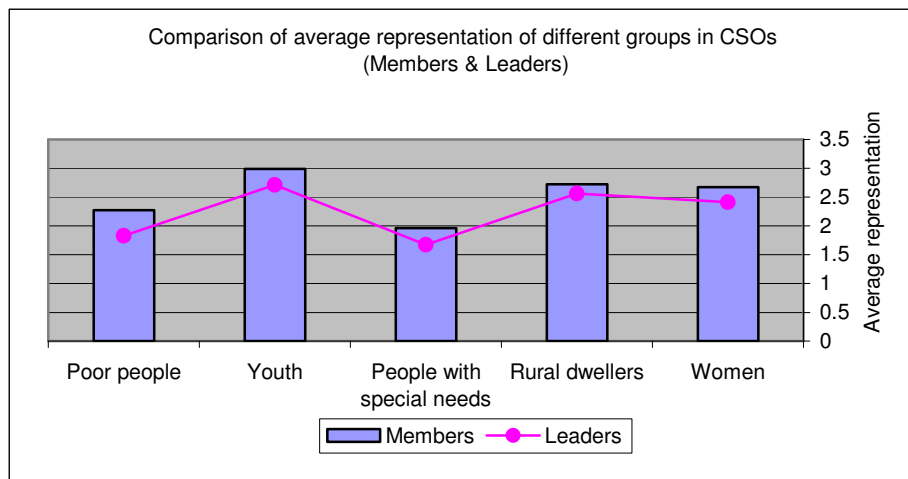
TABLE III.1.6: Indicators assessing diversity of civil society participants

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.3.1	CSO membership	2
1.3.2	CSO leadership	1
1.3.3	Distribution of CSOs	1

1.3.1. CSO membership. The regional stakeholder survey, conducted with CSO representatives in four governorates in Egypt in 2004 identified five distinct groups that have traditionally

suffered from a high level of marginalization: (1) poor, (2) the youth, (3) the disabled, (4) rural inhabitants and (5) women. In general, the survey indicates that the participation of all of these groups in civil society is, to a certain extent, less than what it should be. However, not all groups share the same level of membership in CSOs. As suggested by figure III.1.3 below, the youth fared better than all the other groups mentioned above, followed by rural residents, women and the poor. This may be a good reflection of the rather limited level of marginalization of different groups in society in general. People with special needs tend to suffer from a high level of exclusion from participation in public life. The poor are usually viewed as recipients or objects of civil society activities rather than as its subjects, its leaders and organizers. Moreover, while women and rural inhabitants fare slightly better than people with special needs and the poor, their participation in CSOs as members or leaders is still less than it should be. The gender gap in participation as was also confirmed by the CDS survey on NGOs in Egypt. Of the members of the general assembly, 57% were men, and 43% were women. The membership of the disabled in CSOs is weaker than all the other groups and significantly less than what it should be, perhaps reflective of their overall status in society, where they have not been given adequate opportunities to fulfil their potential. Thus, civil society does not seem to be an arena in which marginalized groups are fairly represented in proportion to their representation in society.

FIGURE III.1.3: Average representation of different social groups*



*Scale is from 1 (exclusion) _ to 4 (proportional representation).

Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey.

1.3.2. CSO leadership. The same discrepancies in participation of marginalized groups as members are evident in CSO leadership. NGOs tend to be seen as elitist organizations, which for the most part, are not led by the most marginalized and vulnerable members of society.

Age, class and gender are major influential factors in determining assumption of leadership positions in CSOs. Numerous studies have suggested that leadership positions in CSOs, to a certain extent, continue to be dominated by older men distinguished by their social standing, financial position or occupation. In a survey of 60 NGOs nationwide, age emerged as an important criterion for the selection of board members. The youngest of the 60 NGO board members was 35 years old and the majority (73%) was over 50 years old. (Abd el Rahman

2004:158). Two reasons were given by NGOs in the survey for this clear bias: the young do not have time to volunteer, being preoccupied with earning a living, and second, they would not have the same credibility in the eyes of the community (Abd el Rahman 2004:158).

The regional stakeholder survey looked at the representation of five vulnerable groups in civil society leadership positions in Egypt: youth, women, rural dwellers, the poor and the disabled. None of these groups is seen as being adequately represented in civil society leadership positions. However, the variation in leadership among the different groups is also quite notable. People with special needs are the least likely to hold leadership positions in CSOs. Their representation on that level is a great deal less than what it should be. The poor are also unlikely to be leaders in CSOs, while women and rural dwellers fare slightly better, but again far from what it should be. The youth's representation in leadership positions is better than all the other groups, possibly because the sample of CSOs included youth centres and sports clubs, although there were also youth leaders in businessmen's associations, and chambers. Some NAG members suggested that while the above represents the typical profile of CSO leadership, a new generation of CSOs is emerging, in which young people are playing an increasingly prominent role in leadership positions. This is evident in the profile of the NGOs that have been established during the past five years, in which young people feature prominently as board members and directors. Despite some NAG members' sense of optimism for change, the general picture continues to point to leadership being a major challenge to CSOs, in terms of its rather exclusive and elitist nature.

1.3.3. Distribution of CSOs nationwide. The CDS' survey of NGO leaders, as well as the regional stakeholder survey both point to the uneven distribution of CSOs across the country, a finding confirmed by other studies undertaken in the past decade (e.g. Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004). Two features are particularly conspicuous in distribution: the heavy concentration of organizations in the governorate of Cairo and a few other high profile governorates, and the urban bias in geographical location. The sample survey of CSOs indicates that Cairo, Qalubiyah and Giza have the lion's share of CSOs (43%) while 23% are based in the capital cities of other governorates, 13% in major cities and only 13% are based in the villages (ibid. 2004).

Another sample study of 1,200 NGOs and places of worship, conducted by CDS, showed a heavy concentration of NGOs in a few select urban governorates. Out of the 1,200 NGOs comprised in the sample survey, 60% were based in the three governorates of Cairo, Giza and Alexandria. NGOs based in the Delta comprised only a third (30%) of the sample organizations, while those situated in Upper Egypt represented the smallest percentage, a sheer 9%. NGOs are by and large an urban phenomenon: 84% of the NGOs in the sample were urban-based, with only 15% situated in rural areas. The discrepancy in distribution is quite striking. For example, Cairo boasted 32.7% of the NGOs in the sample, whereas South Sinai had only 0.8% of the same sample. The urban phenomenon also applies to the geographical location of religious places of worship. For example, 15 of the 19 mosques were urban-based with the rest being in the countryside. Out of the five churches included in the sample, only one was located in the countryside. Thus, the evidence conclusively points to an urban bias in distribution of CSOs, a bias that is particularly skewed in favour of the major cities. This disproportionate distribution of CSOs is particularly pertinent in the light of the diversity and

intensity of need for such organizations in rural areas, especially in the rural governorates of Upper Egypt.

TABLE III.1.7: Distribution of CSOs geographically

Governorates	# of interviews	Percentage
Cairo	392	32.7%
Giza	138	11.5%
Alexandria	197	16.4%
Sharqiya	156	13.0%
Monifya	129	10.8%
Kharbiya	73	6.1%
Aswan	19	1.6%
Minya	64	5.3%
Qena	23	1.9%
South Sinai	9	0.8%
Total	1200	100%

Source: Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004

1.4 Level of organization

This subdimension looks at the overall level of organization within civil society as well as the kind and availability of infrastructure at hand.

TABLE III.1.8: Indicators assessing level of organisation

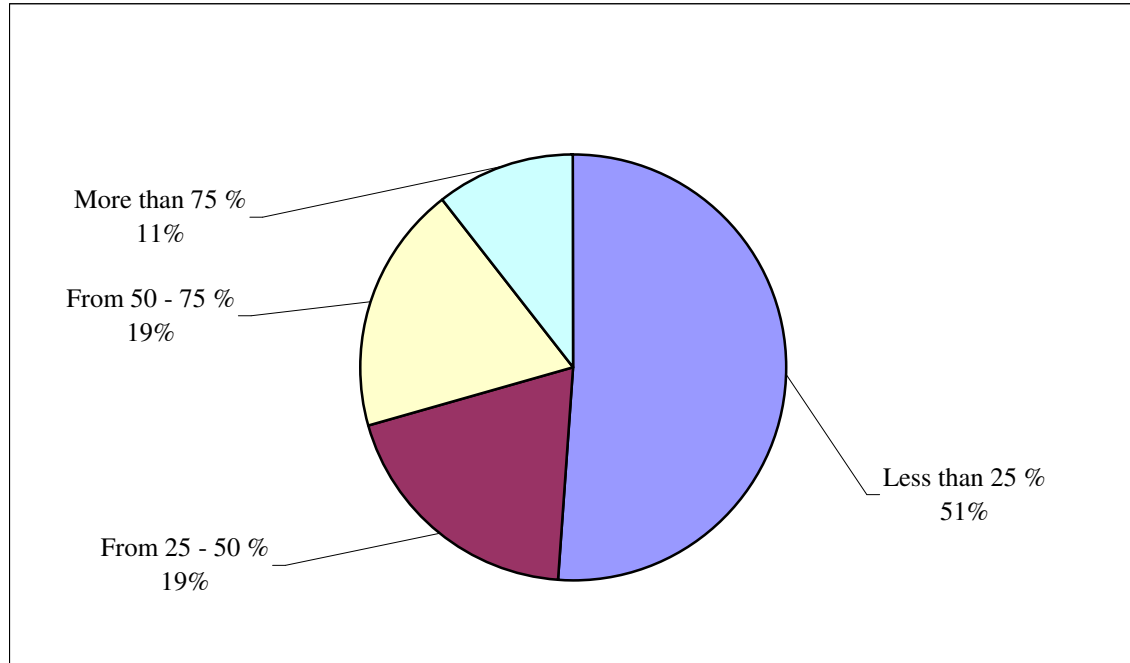
Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.4.1	Existence of CSO umbrella bodies	1
1.4.2	Effectiveness of CSO umbrella bodies	2
1.4.3	Self-regulation	2
1.4.4	Support infrastructure	1
1.4.5	International linkages	1

1.4.1 Existence of umbrella bodies. Participants' views expressed in CSOs' regional stakeholder survey revealed that participation in federations and unions is weak. There are many CSO umbrella bodies in place, for example, there are regional, specialized and national federations for NGOs. The regional stakeholder survey found that CSOs based in the governorates of Aswan and Beheira were more likely to be active in networks and unions than their counterparts in other regions. This is possibly because incentives were introduced to encourage networking. In these two particular cases, as donor agencies actively sought to promote networking. Only 11% of CSO representatives said that they work through networks, while another 19% of CSO respondents claimed that between 50-75% of their work is through networks. Another 19% claimed that between 50 and 25 % of their work is through networks while more than half the respondents (51%) said that less than 25% of their work is conducted through networks (see figure III.1.4).

NAG members expressed concern about the way in which networks and unions are lumped together in the question. They highlighted that in the Egyptian context, participation in networks and unions are not the same thing. Many types of CSOs are required by law, upon

registration, to become members of unions. On the other hand, networks tend to be formed through personal and collective initiatives, in other words, participation in the networks tends to be voluntary. What is clear is that irrespective of whether one is talking about formal unions, where membership is compulsory, or networks initiated through CSO initiatives, there is plenty of room to promote CSO participation in both. Perhaps an examination of successful experiences in sustained networking experiences among CSO would help to understand how to overcome the obstacles and challenges to engaging CSOs in such activities.

FIGURE III.1.4: Percentage of CSOs working currently in networks.



Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey

1.4.2 Effectiveness of umbrella bodies. The regional stakeholder survey showed that many CSO representatives are of the opinion that these unions and networks are effective in achieving some of their goals. However, extensive literature on civil society in Egypt has questioned the effectiveness of umbrella bodies in Egypt in general (see for example Abd el Rahman 2004). Several comments by the NAG also confirmed the conclusions from previous studies that, the government hegemony over federations and unions has deterred genuine CSO participation. There are some issues that will have to be tackled if CSOs are to strengthen their ties with such federations. These include creating the incentives for CSOs to participate, such as addressing issues pertinent to them or providing them with resources that would enhance their work, and introducing measures to increase CSOs' sense of ownership of these bodies, for example, by promoting democratic means of electing the full board of federations, unions etc.

It seems that the challenge in the Egyptian context lies not in the creation of new institutional bodies, for there are many, but in boosting their capacity and restructuring them in such a way that the gap between them and their members is narrowed.

1.4.3 Self-regulation within civil society. CSOs are subject to extensive regulation by the laws that govern them. Various government bodies are responsible for ensuring that CSOs are abiding by the laws and regulations in place. As for self-regulatory measures, the Egyptian experience suggests that, while there have been some efforts made by some activists in CSOs to publish these internal regulations, their application and impact is of a minimal value, and difficult to identify.

Once more, there are variations according to type of CSO. The regional stakeholder survey indicated that business associations and chambers of commerce were an exception, in that they had both internal self-regulatory mechanisms, and their members felt that they were effective and had tangible positive outcomes. Those active in youth centres and clubs and, to a lesser extent, cooperatives, felt that while there were in effect internal regulatory mechanisms, they had limited output. NGOs indicated that there were some efforts to draw internal self-regulatory mechanisms, but they too had limited output. NGOs working in education were the least likely to report the existence of efforts at coming up with internal self-regulatory mechanisms.

The NAG score for this indicator was 2 rather than 1 because members felt that the government-imposed and enforced system of regulation and monitoring was so comprehensive and thorough and all-pervasive that by default, CSO actors internalised these official requirements to the point where they became internally-imposed guidelines, which everyone had to follow all the time. All in all, the concept of introducing self-regulatory policies is still new, perhaps because many CSO members are of the impression that the government-enforced regulations are thorough and comprehensive enough.

1.4.4 Infrastructure. With respect to the level of available support infrastructure for civil society in Egypt, the research indicates that there have been initiatives geared towards building the capacity of NGOs. One such initiative was the NGO Service Centre, which was funded by USAID. However, no impact assessment studies are available to the public evaluating its work. The Participatory Development Program (PDP) is a recently established initiative, set up in 2003 and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency. PDP is a 14.7 Million Canadian Dollar program aimed at developing the capacity of mid-sized Egyptian NGOs. The program is comprised of three 4.9 Million Canadian Dollar sub-project funds: the first is called the participatory development facility, gender equality facility and child development facility. Delivered in partnership with the Egyptian Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs, the PDP will provide NGOs with funding for community-based project delivery, capacity building, research and networking.¹⁴ However, such programs specifically dedicated to boosting the capacity of NGOs do not have an outreach to the entire field.

1.4.5 International linkages. Data from the Global Civil Society Yearbook 2004 to 2005 shows that 2,005 Egyptian CSOs are members in international CSOs, which suggests that only a small proportion of the overall CSO community has international linkages. This is confirmed by findings from the regional stakeholder survey which indicates that very few CSOs have international linkages.

¹⁴ <http://www.pdpegypt.org/English/index.php>.

However, another study suggested that NGOs are able to utilize international linkages for a variety of purposes, such as funding, capacity building, networking and moral support. (Ibrahim et al, 2000). It is probably the case that those that have managed to establish international linkages are able to capitalize on such resources; however, they tend to be a select and small number of CSOs, namely certain development organizations and human rights groups. Challenges to establishing international linkages for NGOs may include: lack of knowledge of international bodies and organizations and networks, lack of linguistic and technical skills needed to establish contacts, and the necessity of obtaining permission from the Ministry of Social Affairs prior to joining any international network or coalition.

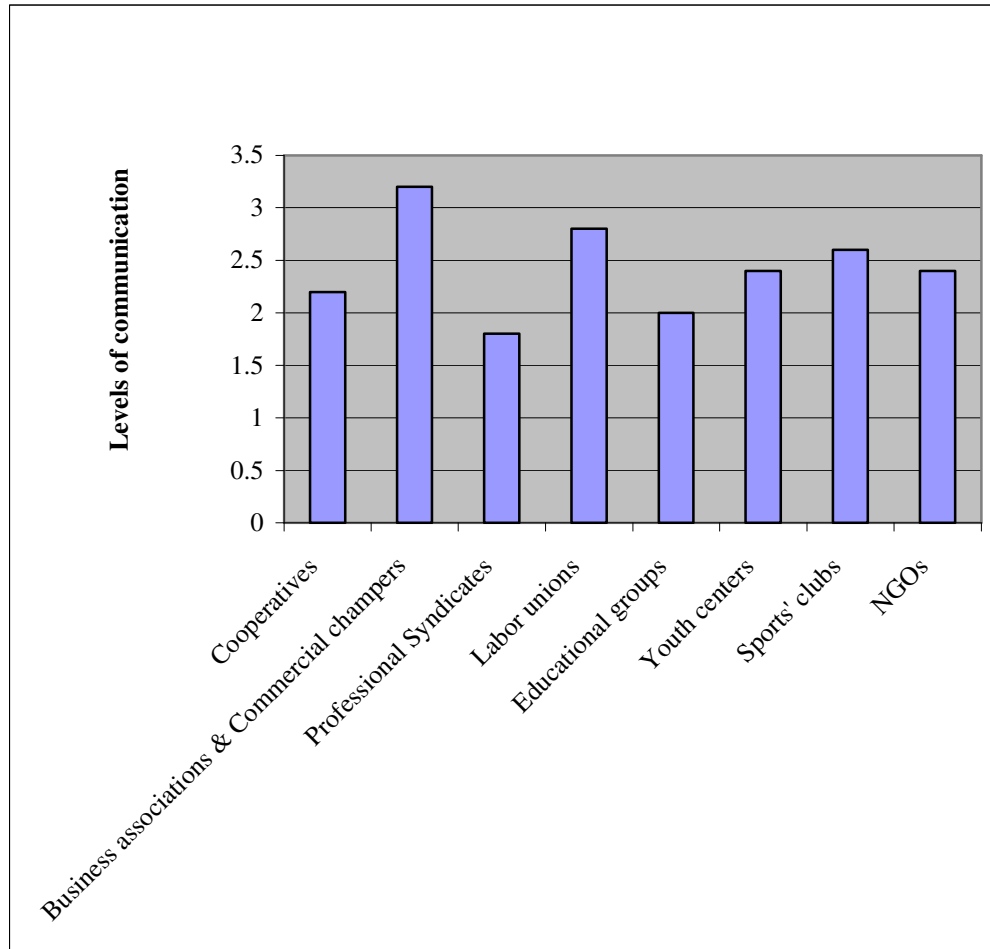
1.5 Inter-relations within civil society

This subdimension analyses the relations among civil society actions in Egypt.

TABLE III.1.9: Indicators assessing inter-relations within civil society

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.5.1	Communication between CSOs	1
1.5.2	Cooperation between CSOs	2

1.5.1 Communication between CSOs. The regional stakeholder survey indicated that on the whole, communications between CSOs is moderate, but tends to be within the same sector rather than cross-sectoral. Often, such communication is built by individuals from various organizations attending joint events. The four governorate survey suggested that the greatest level of communication among CSOs can be observed among the business associations, followed by the trade unions, the sports clubs and youth center (see figure III.1.4 below). The lowest level of interaction among CSOs was observed among the professional syndicates. Further research is required to understand the variations in levels of communication among different types of CSOs. However, one possible explanation is that cross-sectoral interaction occurs when there is an issue or cause of joint interest and impact. When this is lacking, it is difficult to find sufficient incentives to cooperate cross-sectorally. For example, it is difficult to envision much cause for cooperation between the government-controlled teachers' syndicate and the medical (doctors) syndicate. On the other hand, establishing linkages between business NGOs and chambers seems more viable and is high, because chambers are a crucial source of information and resources for business associations. In other words, in order for business associations to effectively serve their members, in terms of providing them with information on import/export and market needs, they have to maintain lines of cooperation with commercial chambers. On the other hand, professional syndicates are highly specialized and differentiated organizations where it would seem, for example, that in order to serve its members, there is no explicitly clear vested interest for the doctors' syndicate to cooperate with the teachers' syndicate.

FIGURE III.1.5: Levels of communication between CSOs*

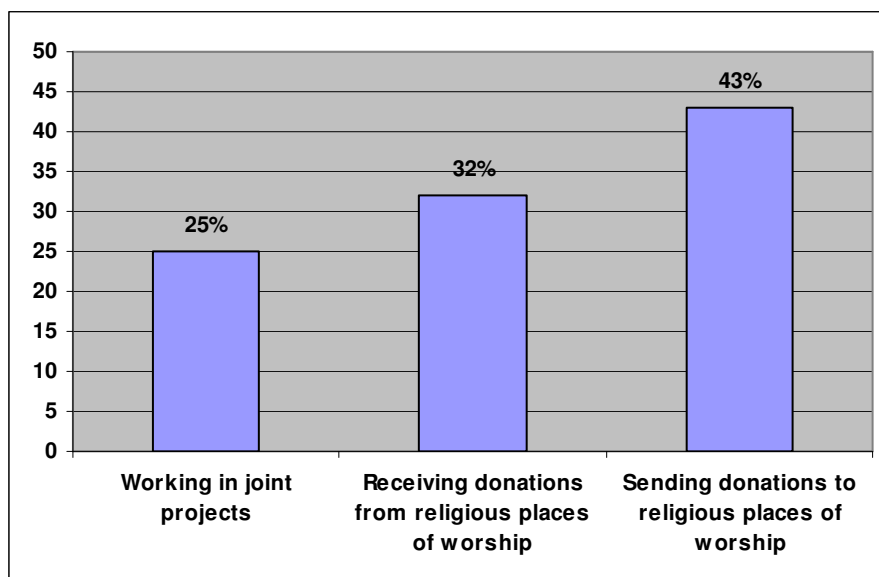
*Scale from 1 (limited) to 4 (high degree)
 Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey.

1.5.2 Cooperation between CSOs. The CDS survey (Philanthropy in Egypt, 2004) suggests that there is substantial cooperation among NGOs and attempts to co-ordinate efforts. For example, one NGO leader pointed out that if a disabled person visits his organization seeking help, he will refer him to one of the NGOs capable of helping him, since his NGO is not specialized in the needs of such a group. The above case suggests that NGOs do make the effort to acquaint themselves with the activities of other organizations, recognizing the benefits of networking for themselves and the communities they serve. In cases where individuals approach an NGO for a service and the NGO refers him/her to another organization, this NGO is gaining credibility in the community even if it did not provide the service itself, it is appreciated for connecting people to sources of such help.

The same survey also indicates another type of strong cooperation that exists between two types of CSOs: the religious-based NGOs and places of worship. The relationship between the two seems to be mutually beneficial and to a large extent complementary. This is applicable to both Christian NGOs, in relation to churches, and Muslim NGOs, in relation to mosques. For example, religious places of worship provide a regular forum for presenting the religious NGOs' charter and for soliciting funds for its activities. A high level of coordination occurs

between church/Christian NGO, mosque/Muslim NGO in order to maximize resources and avoid duplication of activities and beneficiaries. One sheikh, who is also a member of a Muslim association, reaffirmed this view, stressing that had it not been for the supporting role of the mosque, the NGO would not have been established in the first place.

FIGURE III.1.6: Share of available financial resources for CSOs



Source: Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004.

As is indicated in the table above, the relationship between Muslim NGOs and the mosques, and Christian NGOs and churches respectively is particularly important financially. Cooperation takes the form of financial support in 75% of the cases, be it religious NGOs receiving donations from religious places of worship or mobilizing and sending them funds. In 25% of the cases, such cooperation is manifest in joint projects between the church/Christian NGO and the mosque/Muslim NGO. According to the results of the CDS survey, there is also some cooperation between Christian CSOs and their Muslim counterparts in terms of joint action for the assistance of a particular group, such as the handicapped for example, or around a particular issue such as environmental protection.

Thus, generally, there seem to be a moderately strong level of communication and cooperation among CSOs for the sector as a whole.

1.6 Civil society resources

The following subdimension examines the resources available for civil society organizations in Egypt, from financial, human, technical perspective.

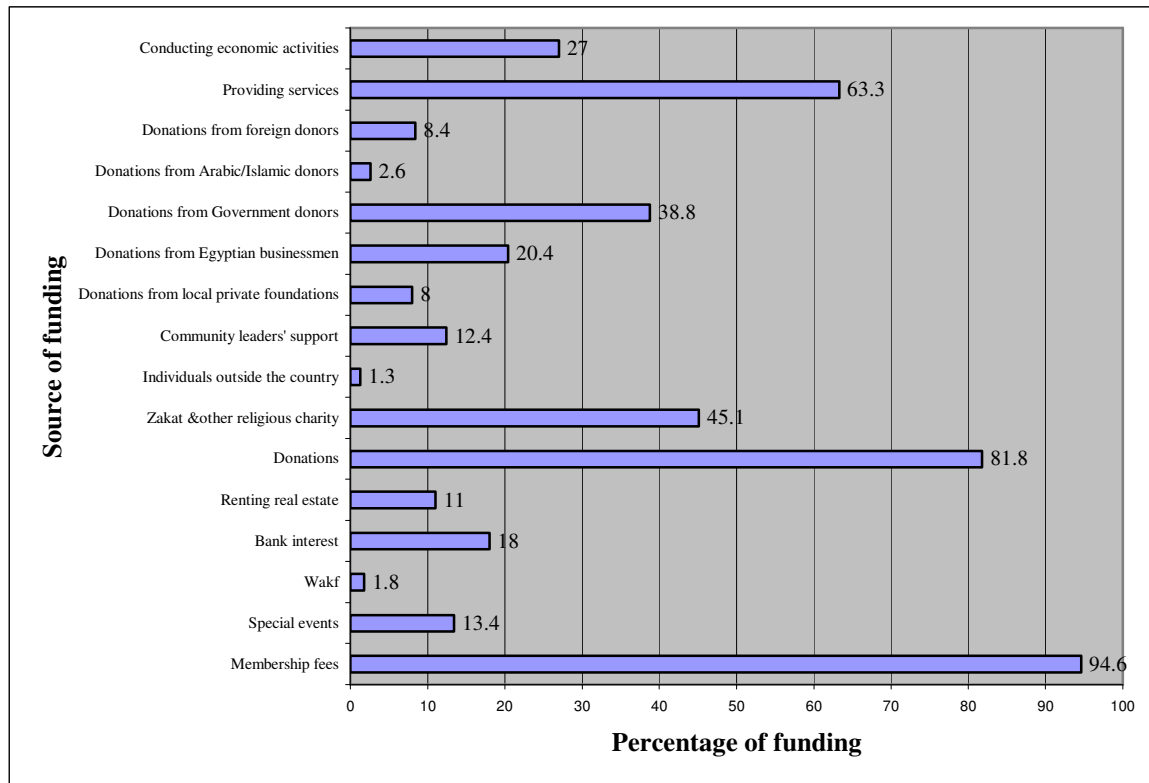
TABLE III.1.10: Indicators assessing civil society resources

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.6.1	Financial resources	1
1.6.2	Human resources	1
1.6.3	Technical and infrastructural resources	1

1.6.1 Financial resources. The sources of funding supporting CSOs are diverse and varied, ranging from the government, the business sector, foreign agencies, individuals, membership fees and fees incurred from services provided. It is difficult to argue that one source of funding predominates for all types of CSOs, as they tend to vary significantly. A large proportion of regional stakeholder survey respondents agreed that the financial resources emanating from the government represented the biggest source of funding.

A nationwide survey with 1,200 NGOs revealed that membership fees represented the prime source of funding in these organizations (94.6%). Donations were another important source of support for NGOs, 81.8% (Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS 2004).

FIGURE III.1.7: Financial resources available to CSOs



Source: Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004

The table above provides the responses to a question about adequacy of financial resources, included in the stakeholder survey. The graph indicates that there is no great variation in responses according to type of CSO. None of the CSOs indicated that they feel that financial resources are adequate to meet their requirements. Most of the respondents' answers suggest that the level of adequacy is average.

The CDS survey (2005) indicated that the severe shortage of financial resources was the most frequently cited major obstacle to the implementation of the organization's activities by respondents (63.3% of respondents). The second most frequently mentioned obstacle influencing the organization's level of activity was the shortage of resources in general, including access to limited donations (56.2%).

The issue of NGOs' reliance on foreign funding is highly controversial in Egypt. While both the above surveys indicated that foreign funding represents only a small proportion of their resources, it is clear that there are some development and human rights NGOs whose budgets rely almost exclusively on foreign funding.

The discrepancy among CSOs' access to funding is due to a number of reasons. First, there is the discrepancy in skills needed to identify donors and fulfil their criteria. Second, many NGOs successful in attracting large funds tend to be intermediary organizations that work with a network of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). Third, some organizations know there are few alternatives in this current Egyptian context for supporting the type of activities in which they are involved. Few citizens have been inspired to donate to development-oriented activities, in particular human rights activities.

Generally, CSO activists felt that the financial resources available did not meet the needs or aspirations of their organizations.

1.6.2 Human resources. The extent to which CSO actors reported to have adequate resources to accomplish their goals elicited some very different reactions.

The regional stakeholder survey indicated that generally, professional associations and organizations working in education were less likely than other groups to feel their work was restricted by financial need. On the other hand, youth centres and clubs noted that poor resources were an obstacle to their work. The same study indicated that while most CSOs have salaried staff, many are poorly trained to undertake the tasks delegated to them. The regional consultations held in the four governorates confirmed these findings, suggesting the need for investing in boosting employees' skills and abilities.

1.6.3 Infrastructure and technical resources. Infrastructure and technical resources refers to the availability of things such as, premise, offices and computers. The qualitative research component of the CDS survey, undertaken with 1200 NGO leaders, indicated that half of the respondents felt that the financial, in-kind and human resources available were not sufficient to cover the needs of the NGOs or for the adequate performance of its role. As described above in indicator 1.6.1, the severe shortage of financial resources was cited most frequently by respondents as the major obstacle to the implementation of the organization's activities (63.3% of respondents). The second greatest obstacle influencing the organization's level of activity was a shortage of resources in general, including access to limited donations (56.2%). Other reasons, unrelated to resources, were cited much less often than the two above reasons. Thus, access to infrastructure and technical resources represents an important obstacle to CSOs performance. .

Conclusion

It appears that one of the most popular forms of citizen participation in Egyptian civil society is making charitable contributions, especially of a monetary or in-kind nature. Engagement in volunteer activities seems to be less popular, although it may have been underestimated in the research. Non-partisan political action has been quite weak in the past half century, however,

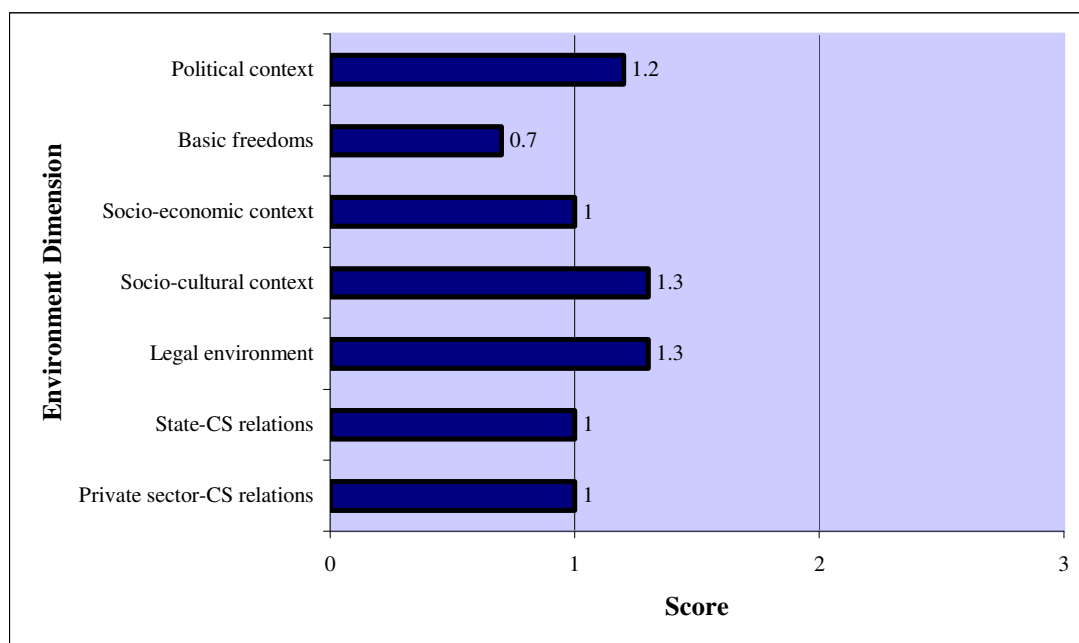
there are signs that the situation is changing. The socio-political environment may have inhibited incentives for genuine voluntary participation in non-partisan political action, voluntary membership in CSOs and involvement in community action, an issue that will be explored in greater detail in the next section.

Overall, the most distinguishable weaknesses within Egyptian civil society's structure include weak formal citizen participation in CSOs and poor resources. Though the existence of CSO umbrella bodies is weak, where umbrella bodies do exist, they function effectively and have relatively strong internal self-regulation mechanism. Relatively strong cooperation among CSOs is also a strength which could be utilized to further develop the structure of Egyptian civil society.

2. ENVIRONMENT

This section describes and analyses the overall political, social, economic, cultural and legal environment in which civil society in Egypt thrives and functions. Until recently, the current situation could not be described as representing an environment conducive to civil society. However, it remains to be seen how conducive it will become in the immediate and medium term future given that the political landscape in Egypt is in the throes of drastic change.

FIGURE III.2.1: Subdimension scores for the environment dimension



2.1 Political Context

This subdimension examines the political situation in Egypt and its impact on civil society.

TABLE III.2.1: Indicators assessing political context

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
<u>2.1.1</u>	Political rights	<u>1</u>
<u>2.1.2</u>	Political competition	<u>2</u>
<u>2.1.3</u>	Rule of law	<u>1</u>
<u>2.1.4</u>	Corruption	<u>1</u>
<u>2.1.5</u>	State effectiveness	<u>1</u>
<u>2.1.6</u>	Decentralisation	<u>1</u>

2.1.1 Political rights. Since the 1950s, Egyptians have enjoyed a limited scope of political rights, and until 2004 Egyptians could not elect their president democratically. They could only confirm in a national referendum on the candidate nominated by the People's Assembly for a six-year term by voting yes or no. No other candidates were allowed to present themselves for nomination. However, on 26 February 2005, President Mubarak called on parliament to amend Egypt's constitution, to allow direct presidential elections in which anyone can stand and all

citizens can vote by secret ballot. Some hailed this as a progressive move, indicating goodwill on the part of the government, as well as a step in the direction of moving towards a multi-party electoral system. Others however, were more sceptical, deeming the move as purely cosmetic. A national referendum was held to decipher the public's view on the proposed amendment. The referendum was boycotted by opposition parties which argued that the election rules enforced would make it very difficult for candidates to nominate themselves.

The right to organize freely in political parties is restricted by the Political Parties Law. In June 2005, a new Political Parties Law was passed by the People's Assembly; however, opposition parties believe that its clauses are highly inhibitive. The new Political Parties law stipulates that any new political party must represent "a new addition to political life", whereas the previous law had required that any new party platform should be "distinct" from existing ones. This amendment was not welcomed by opposition parties which believe that it could be used negatively to obstruct the formation of new parties. Another of the law's articles was amended to make it necessary for would-be parties to obtain 1,000 signatures, rather than the 50 signatures stipulated in the previous law. The amendment also requires that the 1000 signatures belong to people in at least ten different governorates. This also makes meeting the criteria for the formation of new parties more difficult to meet.¹⁵

In addition to the Political Parties Law, opposition parties have identified the Political Parties Committee (PPC), a body solely authorized to regulate and license parties, as obstructing people freedom to organize freely in political parties. Their first objection is to the scope of power enjoyed by the PPC to establish and freeze political parties at its will. Second, they are critical of the make-up of the committee, which they feel is dominated by the ruling national Democratic Party officials and sympathizers. The new political parties' law increased the number of committee members from seven to nine. These will include the ministers of interior and people's assembly affairs (both members of the National Democratic Party), as well as three former judges and three independent public figures (the latter to be selected by the President).

In addition to the new Political Parties Law, in June 2005, the People's Assembly also passed a new law on political participation. A much welcomed amendment to the old law was a new stipulation that a Supreme Electoral Committee be formed to supervise the People's Assembly and Shura Council elections. The new committee, while also including many government officials and headed by the Minister of Justice himself will be solely empowered to supervise the parliamentary elections from start to finish. In a bid to boost voter turnout, which has generally been low in Egypt in previous elections, the law also imposes an LE100 fine on voters who deliberately boycott the vote. In a bid to avoid thuggery and the use of violence, voters who are proven guilty of using force against any electoral committee member can face a five-year prison sentence.¹⁶

Thus, as can be gleaned from these examples, that despite some progress, Egypt's political system is far from being fully liberalized.

¹⁵ Al-Ahram Weekly, "A Controversial Law", 7-13 July, 2005. Issue 750.

¹⁶ Al-Ahram Weekly, "Political Bills Draw Fire", 23-29 June, Issue 748.

2.1.2 Political competition. Political opposition in Egypt remains weak and ineffective, especially when compared to the late 19th and early 20th centuries when political pluralism and activism thrived. The political parties committee recently approved the formation of two new political parties, bringing the total number of parties in Egypt to 21. These parties reflect a wide spectrum of ideologies. The ruling party is the national Democratic Party. The Wafd party espouses a liberal ideology, the Tagammu party embraces a leftist ideology, and the Nasserite party reflects the Pan-Arab Nasserite ideology.

Nonetheless, there have been restrictions on the formation of new parties. A ban on religious parties prevents the Muslim Brotherhood and other mainstream Islamists from organizing politically, although they typically compete in elections as independents or members of secular parties. The PPC has also rejected three times the application for registration from Hizb al-Wasat al Jadid (The New Centralist Party), an Islamic-oriented political party. The application for the establishment of pan-Arabist Hizb al Karama was also refused by the PPC. On the other hand, in July 2005, the Political Parties Committee approved the formation of a new party by the name of the "Peace Democratic Party". Its founder, Ahmed El-Fadaly, is chairman of the Young Muslims Society.¹⁷

2.1.3. Rule of law. Egyptian judiciary, in particular, the Supreme Constitutional Court, has traditionally been held in high regard in Egypt. However, an international rating of the overall state of the rule of law in Egypt provides a mixed assessment. Egypt is ranked slightly above the all-country average, with a score of -0.02 on a scale from -2,5 to + 2,5, indicating that the rule of law is not deeply entrenched in the country.¹⁸

There have been some fears that the executive branch of the government is trying to interfere in the judiciary via the Ministry of Justice. Yet there have also been unequivocal attempts by judges to preserve the judiciary's autonomy and address cases of corruption. The Supreme Constitutional Court has been renowned for making progressive judgments, even if unfavourable to the executive branch of the government. For example, in April 2003, an administrative court issued a precedent-setting decision allowing public demonstrations and criticizing the government for its unconstitutional ban on such gatherings (Transparency International, 2004:188). Moreover, a draft law was presented in March 2005 to the parliament asking the government to give judges independence from the executive branch. This was followed by a call from the Judges Club general assembly gathered in Alexandria in April 2005 to separate the powers of the judicial and executive branches. In response, the government introduced its own law suggesting reforms for the Judges Club without consulting with the Club itself. The proposed Law has yet to be put forward to parliament. Generally, while the rule of law cannot be considered the weakest component of the country's governance system, it could be enhanced by increasing the judiciary's autonomy from the government and boosting its overall accountability to the public.

2.1.4 Corruption. According to Transparency International 2005, the corruption perceptions index score was 3.4 (10 being not corrupt, and 0 being very corrupt). Egypt fared as 69th out of 158 countries appraised, indicating relatively widespread corruption in the public sector.

¹⁷ Al-Ahram Weekly, "A Controversial Law", 7-13 July 2005, Issue 750.

¹⁸ See: <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/kkz2004/>

Traditionally, there have been many government controls which have served to prevent the exposure of corruption cases, such inhibitions include the press law which imposes fines and prison terms for journalists convicted of slander. The press law was used against *al-Shab* newspaper, an Islamist mouthpiece, when it exposed the corrupt practices of a series of officials, most notably an ex-minister. The newspaper was closed down in 2000. Moreover, according to a Transparency International report (2004), while the executive branch has four capable monitoring and auditing agencies that would go a long way towards uncovering and pursuing corruption, they are not institutionally empowered to pursue wrongdoers. The Central Auditing Agency (al-Jihaz al-Markazi li al-Muhasabat) can only make recommendations and issue reports. “One of the problems with many of these agencies, according to the report, is that they are answerable to the president, not to the parliament” (ibid.). The government has publicly announced its commitment to put an end to corruption by taking corrupt officials to court. An important development in the past year is that despite the long conventional silence on certain forms of corruption, there has been a conspicuous surge in press coverage of all forms of corruption: political, economic and social.

2.1.5. State effectiveness. State effectiveness is determined by measuring the level of competency of the bureaucracy and the quality of public service delivery in a country. The World Bank estimate for state effectiveness in Egypt for 2004 was -0.20 (scale from -2.5 to +2.5). This is an improvement from previous years in which the state effectiveness was deemed at -0.35 in 2000.¹⁹ Egypt’s percentile rank for state effectiveness was 49, which indicates that while 49% of countries are ranked below Egypt, more than half the world’s countries scored better than Egypt in terms of state effectiveness. Some of the factors that can account for this include the poor competency of the bureaucracy, the low wages they receive, the poor quality of service delivery characterized by unmotivated civil servants and long drawn procedures for claiming services. The NAG considered the concept of state effectiveness to be very broad and could be interpreted to mean different things. Some NAG members also expressed their scepticism about why they should rely on the World Bank’s conceptualization and mode of measuring state effectiveness.

2.1.6. Decentralization. This indicator examines the extent to which government expenditure is devolved to sub-national authorities. Egypt is divided into 26 governorates under the Ministry of Interior, which is then divided into 126 administrative districts. According to the Egypt Human Development Report whose theme for 2004 was decentralization, “local government does not control the bulk of wage expenditure, it is just the agency responsible for disbursing it on behalf of line ministries” (2004:55). The report alludes to a very limited level of decentralization on the part of the government and very limited autonomy in fiscal and non-fiscal matters on the level of local government. This lack of fiscal autonomy on the sub-national governmental level is also confirmed by the UNDP POGAR program, which indicates that transfers of funds from the central government count for 90% of local revenues. The UNDP report confirms that the absence of capital at the local level undermines the ability of these governments to initiate development projects.²⁰

¹⁹ The higher the estimate, the more positive the situation. The scale is from -2.5 to + 2.5.

²⁰ Data for UNDP POGAR programme, <http://www.undp-pogar.org/countries/decentralization.asp?cid=5> 23 August 2005.

2.2 Basic freedoms and rights

TABLE III.2.2: Indicators assessing basic freedoms and rights

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
<u>2.2.1</u>	Civil liberties	<u>1</u>
<u>2.2.2</u>	Information rights	<u>0</u>
<u>2.2.3</u>	Press freedom	<u>1</u>

2.2.1 Civil liberties. The principles of freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly are enshrined in the Egyptian Constitution. However, in practice, these freedoms are restricted. The Emergency Law restricts many basic rights: Its provisions allow for arresting a citizen without charge. It also restricts the right to freedom of assembly. Organizers of public demonstrations, rallies and protests must receive advance approval from the Ministry of the Interior. Some individuals who attended illegal demonstrations during the year were arrested and detained by State Security Intelligence (SSI) personnel. With respect to freedom of association, a new law regulating nongovernmental organizations that went into effect in 2002 continues to put restrictions on the freedom of NGOs (see 2.5).

2.2.2 Information rights. Currently, there is no Information Rights Law in Egypt. However, various actors such as human rights organizations, researchers and academics are lobbying the government for the promulgation of one.

2.2.3 Press freedom. The freedom of expression is enshrined in the constitution. However, several legal codes restrict press freedom such as the press law, the publications law, the penal code and the libel law. Nevertheless, in the past twelve months, the margin of freedom allowed to journalists has significantly widened. Taboo subjects such as official corruption, issues regarding the President and his family and Christian-Muslim tensions have featured widely and openly in many opposition newspapers. Despite this unprecedented level of freedom in broaching controversial issues in the opposition press, there is a level of uncertainty and fear that the government may decide at any one time that a journalist or publication “has crossed the red line” and take actions accordingly, such as closure of a publication and/or the detention of journalists. For example, the press law was used against *al-shaab*, an Islamist leaning newspaper that has often been regarded as a mouthpiece for the Islamist-leaning labour party when it exposed the corrupt practices of a series of officials, most notably an ex-minister. The newspaper was closed down in 2000.

2.3 Egypt’s socio-economic context

This subdimension analyses the socio-economic situation in the Egypt. Table III.2.3 shows the respective indicator score.

TABLE III.2.3: Indicators assessing socio-economic context

Ref.	Indicator	Score
<u>2.3.1</u>	Socio-economic context	<u>1</u>

2.1.3 Socio-economic context. In order to operationalise the concept of socio-economic environment, eight indicators were selected by CIVICUS which represent the different means through which the socio-economic context can potentially impact on civil society. These indicators are as follows: 1) Poverty, 2) Civil War, 3) Severe ethnic or religious conflict; 4) Severe economic crisis; 5) Severe social crisis; 6) Serious socio-economic inequities; 7) Illiteracy and 8) Lack of IT infrastructure.

For each of these indicators there is a specific benchmark, which is presented as a leading question for each one discussed below:

1. *Widespread poverty- do more than 40% of Egyptians live on less than 2 US\$ a day?* Yes, Egypt suffers from widespread poverty. Almost half of the Egyptian population is poor. According to the World Bank Development Report 2005, 43.9% of Egyptians live on less than \$2 a day.
2. *Civil war- did the country experience any armed conflict during the last five years?* No, no armed conflict has taken place in the past five years.
3. *Severe ethnic or religious conflict?* Egyptians are ethnically homogenous. The majority of Egyptians are Muslim with a significant Christian minority (10%). While there are some religious tensions between Muslims and Christians, they do not amount to severe religious conflict.
4. *Severe economic crisis- is the external debt more than the GDP?* The percentage of external debt to the GNI is 38% (the World Bank Global Development Finance 2005). Egypt debt servicing percentage is between 10 to 12 %, so it is not considered one of the countries currently undergoing severe economic crisis.
5. *Severe social crisis?* Egypt has not experienced any severe social crisis in the last two years.
6. *Severe socio-economic inequities, i.e. is the Gini-coefficient >0.4?* While the Gini-coefficient is < 0.4, the level of socio-economies is not low. According to the World Bank *World Development Report* of 2005, the Gini Co-index is 0.34. Indicating a fairly high level of socio-economic inequity. The lowest 20% of the population only share 8.6% of the country's income or consumption levels, while the highest 20% of the population share 34.6% of the country's income or consumption levels.
7. *Pervasive Illiteracy: Are more than 40% of the adult population illiterate?* Yes, 44.4% of adults are illiterate, according to the UNDP Human Development Report 2004.
8. *Lack of IT infrastructure: Is there less than 5 hosts for every 10,000 inhabitant?* In the light of the fact that Egypt's population is 72 million and it was estimated in 2000 that there were 2,240 Internet Hosts in Egypt, this means that there are 0.3 IT host for every 10,000 inhabitants.

The analysis of civil society's socio-economic environment revealed that three out of the eight socio-economic barriers are present in Egypt, namely wide spread poverty, pervasive illiteracy and lack of IT infrastructure. Thus, Egyptian civil society is operating in social and economic conditions that significantly limit the effective functioning of civil society.

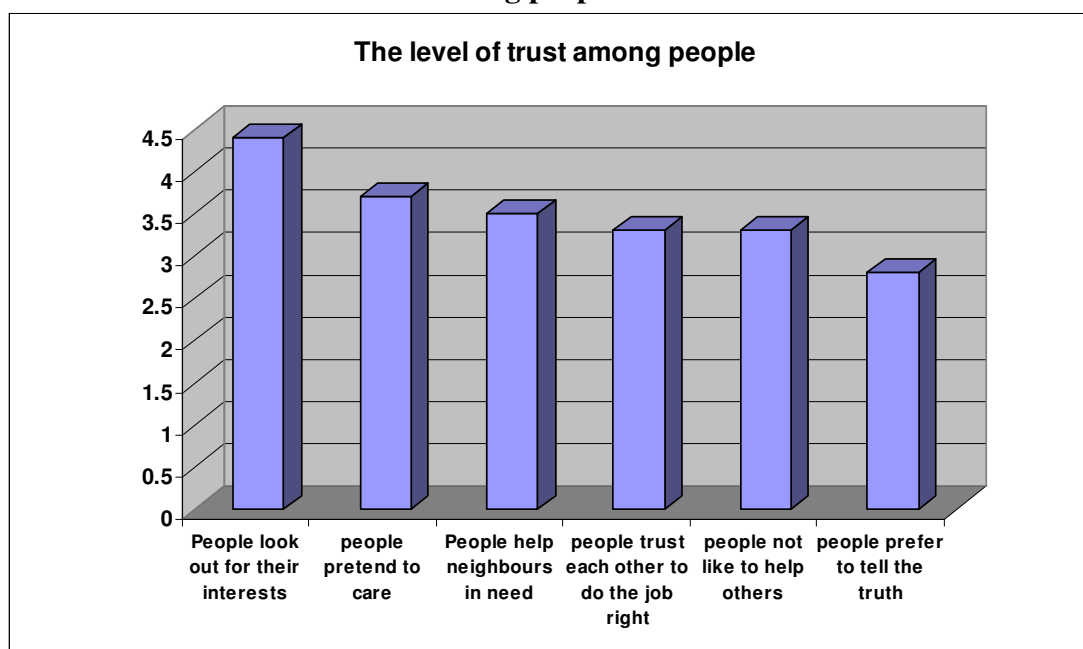
2.4. Socio-cultural context

This subdimension examines to what extent socio-cultural norms and attitudes are conducive or detrimental to civil society.

TABLE III.2.4: Indicators assessing socio-cultural context

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.4.1	Trust	1
2.4.2	Tolerance	2
2.4.3	Public Spiritedness	1

2.4.1 *Trust*. A recent survey conducted by CDS on philanthropy in Egypt sought to assess the level of trust among people.

FIGURE III.2.2: Level of trust among people²¹

Source: Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004

Figure II.2.2 indicates a poor level of public trust, which seems to overshadow some positive indications of public trust in certain areas. The impression that people only look out for their own interests received the highest score, followed by the perception that people pretend to care more than they really do. Also, the notion that people prefer to tell the truth received the minimum average results, indicating that people's poor level of trust in others' sincerity and honesty, and that hypocrisy characterizes human relations.

On the other hand, positive indicators of public trust tended to receive neutral responses. The one that received the highest score among all positive indicators was whether people would help their neighbours undergoing financial crises (3.7). Although still in the middle in terms of neutral responses the notion that people do not like to help others tended to receive a lower average score, almost bordering on disagreement: 3.3 was the average score for this indicator. The World Values Survey (1999-2002) also confirms that the low level of public trust. The question they posed was "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted

²¹ Reading: 1: strongly disagrees; 2: disagrees; 3: neutral; 4: agrees; 5: strongly agrees

or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?” A majority of respondents (62%) said that “you need to be very careful” while 38% of population feel that most people can be trusted.

The NAG was divided in their assessment of the levels of trust within Egyptian society. Despite the fact that the data points towards a score of 2, a slight majority of NAG members felt that levels of trust were low, which swayed the overall average score to a score of 1.

2.4.2 Tolerance. The findings from the World Values survey indicate that there is a moderate level of tolerance in Egypt. The survey asked Egyptians which group of people they would not like to have as neighbours. The results indicated that 76% of the population mentioned at least one of the categories of people below as not wanting them as neighbours.

TABLE III.2.5: Egyptians’ response on people they would not like to have as neighbours

	Mentioned (%)	Not mentioned (%)
People of a different race	66	34
Jews	16	83
Immigrants/foreign workers	42	58
People who have AIDS	2	98
Homosexuals	0	100

Source: World Values Survey Data (Wave 1999 – 2002)

The tolerance index, which is based on an assessment how many times a category from the ones above was mentioned was 1.3 for Egypt indicating a moderate level of tolerance.²²

A CDS initiated survey examined the extent to which people are tolerant towards others belonging to different religions. Respondents were asked whether it is possible to befriend anyone, irrespective of their religious affiliation and whether the respondent would be willing to donate to anyone, regardless of their religious affiliation. The average score for the first question suggested that respondents said they felt neutral about it, in the sense that they were neither willing nor opposed to whether they would befriend someone without consideration for their religious belief. On the other hand, the majority replied in the positive as to whether they would give donations to someone irrespective of their religious affiliation.

The discussion, among members of the NAG on tolerance, mainly revolved around the question of inter-religious relations between the Muslim majority and Christian minority in Egypt. This may reflect the broader public understanding of tolerance in Egypt, which is still quite narrow. In other words, the concept of tolerance has yet to be understood broadly enough to encompass all groups that are different in ways that may represent a threat to the social, cultural or political status quo. In the national workshop, some participants also objected to the notion of tolerance, stressing that it has negative condescending connotations and suggested that we talk about harmony with the “other” as an alternative.

2.4.3 Public spiritedness. To assess the level of public spiritedness, the CDS survey asked participants a series of questions that sought to assess their willingness to accept enjoying benefits or rights, even if illegitimate.

²² On a scale from 0 (high tolerance) to 5 (low tolerance)

One of the questions posed was: whether the respondent would prevent his/her child to cheat in an exam in a context where the majority of students are cheating than to be the only one to fail. The second important question was whether respondents feel that the majority of people would evade paying taxes if they were given the opportunity to do so. In response to the first question, most people strongly disagree about their approval of their child passing by cheating, even if other children were cheating. This indicates that a strong sense of rejection of claiming benefits in illegal or illegitimate ways, even if they were practiced by others (the average score was 1.6 with 1 signifying strong disagreement and 4 signifying agreement). On the other hand, in response to the second question regarding tax evasion, most respondents strongly agreed that people would not pay if they could get away with it (the average score was 4.21 with 4 signifying agreement). This indicates that people are relaying a different message to the one above, namely, that cheating on taxes is accepted by society. The apparent contradiction in the replies to the first and second questions may be explained by the fact that, while the first question asked respondent about their personal reaction or response to illegitimate behaviour, the second question does not ask them whether they would personally cheat on taxes but whether other people do. In other words, the first question asks them about their personal value system while the second, asks them about the prevalence of values in society at large. The replies may have given a more definitive perspective if they consistently asked for respondents' perceptions of the practice of such values in society or their own individual choices.

NAG members commented that the difficulty in assessing public spiritedness lies in the fact that there is no Arabic equivalent to it, and the closest terms that are used to convey the meaning are “public conscience” or “sense of public responsibility”, which do not adequately capture the full insinuations of “public spiritedness”, as used in the English language. Generally, it seems that more research is needed in this area if a more conclusive perspective is to be drawn on the level of public spiritedness in Egypt.

2.5 Legal environment

This subdimension examines the legal environment governing the civil society arena and assesses the extent to which it can be considered enabling or disabling.²³

TABLE III.2.6: Indicators assessing legal environment

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
<u>2.5.1</u>	CSO registration	<u>1</u>
<u>2.5.2</u>	Allowable advocacy activities	<u>1</u>
<u>2.5.3</u>	Tax laws favourable to CSOs	<u>2</u>

2.5.1 CSO Registration. CSOs are governed by different laws, depending on their types. Voluntary civic associations irrespective of their activity (development, charity, human rights) as well as foundations, business associations and self-interest groups are all governed by the same law: Law 84 of 2002. The Ministry of Social Affairs oversees the implementation of the NGO Law and regulates NGO affairs. Each professional association is regulated by its own

²³ This indicator was excluded for absence of sufficient data.

law. As for trade unions, they are regulated by the General Federation for Egyptian workers' unions, whose leadership is appointed by the government. The agricultural cooperatives are registered with the Ministry of Agriculture, housing co-operatives with the Ministry of Housing, and industrial cooperatives with the Ministry of Industry. Sports clubs and youth centres are registered with the Ministry of Youth. Every group of these civil society organizations is regulated by its own special law.

The regional stakeholder survey indicates that the majority of respondents (71%) believe that the procedures for registering CSOs are speedy and take less than 2 months, whereas 29%- a third of the sample- believed that the process is slow. Moreover, 62% of respondents felt that the procedures were simple and did not require external assistance, whereas 38% believed the steps required were complicated.

Respondents were of the opinion that the cost of registering was inexpensive, and were implemented in accordance with the law. They were also of the view that the registration process was the same for all, without discrimination or favouritism. This was particularly evident when asked about what legal changes need to empower them to expand their activities.

The overall positive impression that can be inferred from the regional stakeholder survey may be partly due to the absence of certain types of CSOs in the sample, the type of CSOs which are more likely to suffer from difficulties in registering such as human rights organizations, religious-based organizations and NGOs wishing to register as foundations.

TABLE III.2.7: Needed legal changes for CSOs to expand their activities

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Giving NGOs more freedom to act	101	8.4
Doing away with government routine	92	7.7
Less surveillance	92	7.7
Increased assistance	286	23.8
No hope in change	189	15.8
No need for any change at the present moment	3	0.3
Do not know	68	5.7
Total	1200	100

Source: Philanthropy in Egypt, CDS, 2004

Law 84 of 2002, however, has received wide criticism from some civil society activists, in particular human rights organizations, on account of the Ministry of Social Affairs' power to reject an NGO's application. A recent Human Rights Watch report (2005) indicated that registration has not been an easy process for all. Human Rights Watch obtained data on the experience of thirty Egyptian NGOs, including twenty-two human rights organizations, under the new law. Seven had successfully registered; one (the New Woman Foundation) had been able to do so only after a long legal and bureaucratic battle. Five groups were litigating MISA decisions rejecting their applications, or were seeking enforcement of court judgments. In one case, the Aswan-based Health and Environmental Development Foundation, the government ordered its board dissolved in late 2004, but the group successfully appealed to the dispute

resolution committee to overturn the order. All other organizations were using alternative legal structures, including registering themselves as local branches of international NGOs".

Government legislation and the way in which government bureaucrats interpret the laws and apply them have meant that the government plays a pivotal role in regulating the registration of new forms of civil associations. Civil servants may choose to interpret laws in a restrictive manner, in order to restrict organizations' freedom or opt for a more flexible understanding of the clauses in order and apply them accordingly. In other words, civil servants applying government legal codes have significant powers over civil society organizations. What is evident is that legal obstacles to registration are not pro-forma, but are indeed applied selectively by the government against certain groups.

2.5.2 Allowable advocacy activities. CSO leaders' responses in the regional stakeholder survey as to whether there are obstacles to engaging in advocacy activities were mixed. Forty-four percent of CSO leaders were of the view that there were no impediments to CSO participation in advocacy activities, while 28% felt there are some obstacles, another 16% felt there were a few and 12% of the sample felt there were unjustified obstacles.

TABLE III.2.8: Obstacles faced by CSOs while conducting advocacy activities

	Response	Percentage (%)
1	There are some unjustified obstacles	12%
2	There are some obstacles	28%
3	There are a few obstacles	16%
4	There are no obstacles	44%

Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey

Human rights organizations feel the Law can be used to inhibit advocacy and activities relating to the monitoring of human rights violations. The Law of Associations prohibits the establishment of associations "threatening national unity [or] violating public morals," The clause prohibiting engagement in political activity could potentially be used against NGOs critical of the government. However, since the general situation in Egypt now is allowing more individuals to be critical of the government and its actions, it is likely that NGOs would be no exception.

2.5.3 Tax Laws to CSOs. Article 13 of Law 84 allows NGOs certain exemptions and benefits. For example, NGOs are exempt from registration fees and custom taxes for equipment and material imported as well as donations and grants from abroad. The Law also stipulates that NGO' premises are exempt from real estate taxes and are given a 25% discount when transporting goods on the national railway. According to the NGO Law, they are also given a 50% discount on the electricity, natural gas and water bills.

Unfortunately, in reality NGOs were not always able to benefit from such concessions. For example, because the previous tax law does not stipulate the concessions stated in the NGO Law, NGOs that have sought to import certain goods or receive external in-kind goods have faced difficulties in obtaining custom tax exemption. The new tax law no 91. Issued in 2005 exempts NGOs, civil associations, nonprofit educational organizations or any nonprofit

organization working on any social, scientific, sport or culture purpose completely exempts such organizations from profit tax. Thus, it is not enough to have legislation in favour of exempting NGOs from taxes, but it is also important to have this legislation applied.

2.6 State-Civil Society relations

TABLE III.2.9: Indicators assessing the relations between state and civil society

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
<u>2.6.1</u>	Autonomy	<u>1</u>
<u>2.6.2</u>	Dialogue	<u>1</u>
<u>2.6.3</u>	Cooperation/Support	<u>1</u>

2.6.1 Autonomy. The restrictions for CSOs tend to be more inhibitive of free civil activity than intended to secure legitimate public interests. In the regional stakeholder survey, 47% of respondents were of the view that the government has not taken any initiatives to impose its hegemony over the civil society sector. However, significantly, 53% were of the opinion that the government has sought in varying degrees to infringe upon civil society's autonomy.

According to a report by Human Rights Watch (2005), the current NGO Law goes beyond the enforcement of measures designed to secure NGO accountability to the public, by imposing unreasonable constraints on civil society. These constraints are ingrained in the law. "Under Law 84/2002, the government has the power to block individuals from competing in board elections on unspecified grounds (Article 34), and to dissolve organizations without need for a judicial order (Article 42). The government may dissolve organizations on six broad grounds, including affiliating with foreign organizations or exercising political activities. It also has more limited powers to compulsorily appoint members to a board (Article 40). Human Rights Watch also highlights that "[e]ach of these acts can be appealed to the government-dominated disputes resolution committee and eventually to the State Council. However, by the time the appeal on an organization's dissolution is heard, the group's activities will already have been deemed illegal, its funding frozen and its possessions seized".²⁴ The NGO Law also prohibits NGOs from receiving foreign grants without the approval of the Ministry of Social Affairs, requires members of NGO governing boards to be approved by the ministry and allows the ministry to dissolve NGOs without a judicial order.

Thus, while the NGO Law itself contains inhibitive articles, the level of government hegemony exercised through the repressive enforcement of the legal code varies significantly according to which type of NGO it is handling.

2.6.2 Dialogue. There is plenty of room for expanding and multiplying the channels for dialogue between the government and CSOs. Respondents participating in the regional stakeholder survey considered the scope of dialogue between the government and civil society to be moderate, but pointed out that such dialogue varies significantly from one civil society sector to another.

²⁴ Human Rights Watch, "Egypt: Margins of Repression : State Limits on Non-Governmental Organization Activism", July 2005

While there are formal channels for maintaining dialogue between the government and civil society, there are questions as to the extent to which all CSOs are given an equal opportunity to take part, whether the dialogue is real and has the potential to influence government policy or whether it is just for window-dressing purposes. The Ministry of Social Affairs maintains a strong dialogue with the Federation of NGOs, a national umbrella body representing the NGO sector in Egypt. However, there are concerns regarding the independence of the Federation and the extent to which it legitimately represents the interests of all the different types of NGOs in its dialogue with the government. Various ministries have also institutionalized channels for initiating dialogue with NGOs. The Ministry of Education for example now has an NGO department, which is responsible for creating links with NGOs. The Ministry of Health has also worked with NGOs on certain issues such as gender-sensitive approaches to implementation of reproductive health programs. The Ministry of Youth maintains strong ties with the youth clubs across the country.

One of the preliminary conditions for a fruitful state-civil society dialogue is to establish mutual trust between the two parties. While government is often suspicious of NGOs' motives and agendas, NGOs complain that the government is far from treating them as equal partners, and often assumes the role of patron. NGOs also feel that unequal power relations, manifested in the government's extensive supervisory powers over them, do not provide an environment conducive to healthy dialogue.

2.6.3 Support for CSOs on the part of the state. As mentioned in the regional stakeholder survey, government funding was the number one source of funding for participating CSOs, accounting for 34% of the financial resources available to organizations. Different ministries responsible for overseeing different kinds of CSOs allocate resources to the sector. For example, the Ministry of Youth has a fund to support youth clubs and the Ministry of Social Affairs has funds to support certain types of NGOs. It is worth mentioning that not all NGOs have the same access to government resources. The Ministry is particularly interested in funding community development associations, a trend that has been maintained since the 1950s.

NAG members were divided as to the extent and implications of CSO support on the part of the state. Some pointed out that the need to quantify state support, while others pointed out that state support is often not without strings attached- NGOs that rely substantially on state assistance, suggested one NAG member, tend to become more like government-organized non-governmental organizations (GONGOS).

2.7. Private sector-civil society relations²⁵

Table III.2.10: Indicators assessing private sector – civil society relations

Ref	Indicators	Score
2.7.1	Private sector attitude	1
2.7.2	Corporate social responsibility	1

²⁵ Due to lack of data indicator 2.7.3 was taken out.

2.7.1 Private sector attitude. The majority of regional stakeholder survey respondents were of the opinion that the private sector's attitude towards civil society was neutral. A smaller percentage believed that the private sector's attitude towards civil society was negative and an even smaller percentage thought it to be positive. The welfare pluralist model is one in which the government-private sector-NGO all work collaboratively to address issues of human development in government discourse. However, it is an alien concept among civil society activists and practitioners. The institutional linkages between CSOs and the private sector enterprises and businesses are weak. It is more likely that CSO actors privately approach wealthy individuals working in the private sector to solicit assistance for welfare causes, than seek to establish formal ties or elicit formal commitments on the part of the enterprises or businesses with the CSO. Thus, the relationship between CSOs and the private sector tends to be weak. Where it does exist, it is informal and built on personal connections between individuals working in the CS arena and private sector.

2.7.2 Corporate social responsibility. A separate study conducted for the project indicated that the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has yet to take root in Egypt. The study relied on data collected from interviews with important stakeholders and experts in this sector, as well as a review of the annual reports of Egyptian corporations, to analyze whether CSR featured in their activities, and to determine its prominence. The annual reports for the years 2002 and 2003 of eight of the top 20 publicly traded Egyptian corporations by revenue were analyzed in terms of two criteria: (1) the level of responsibility towards the community (i.e. do they provide occasional charitable donations to external organizations, directly to community members or alternatively do they establish and operate their own services to cater to the community?) and (2) to what extent do they feel responsibility towards the environment?

In six of the eight reports, there was mention of community-related activities or the promotion of higher environmental standards.²⁶ Yet among the companies, there was a significant level of variation in the level of institutionalization and commitment towards these two principles (See annex 3 for full details).

The study revealed that CSR activities feature more prominently among multinational corporations working in Egypt. Since CSR as an integrated set of principles and activities originating in North America and Europe, multinationals from these regions first introduced the concept to the Egyptian market. Their international exposure, wide experience and knowledge on how to adapt CSR packages to a local context make multinational corporations the most visible advocates in this field. Such companies include Shell, British Petroleum, British American Tobacco and Proctor & Gamble.

The lowest level of CSR awareness, or interest, is found among local companies where there is minimal engagement in systematic CSR programs. A business consultant who has held several top level positions in a number of corporations states that, in his opinion, CSR "hardly exists in Egypt and is not part of the business culture here". On the other hand, pragmatically, some companies are beginning to recognize that practising CSR is important for their public image,

²⁶ Of course, there is a possibility that some positive corporate activities may be undocumented in the annual reports, but it is safe to assume that if an activity is not mentioned in the annual report, it is probably not sufficiently important from the management's point of view to bring it to the public's attention.

which is an important factor if they want to conduct business abroad or with foreign corporations.

The Global Compact Initiative, which was launched in Egypt by the UNDP in early 2004, introduced the concept of CSR to representatives of the private sector. According to a UNDP representative, so far, around 35 Egyptian companies, mostly medium-sized, have joined the Global Compact. The companies have joined on a voluntary basis and are working on translating the Global Compact's nine principles into concrete activities. The outcome of their commitment has yet to be appraised.

The modest role of CSR in the Egyptian private sector was also confirmed by the regional stakeholder survey, in which the largest number of respondents' assessment was that the private sector's practice of corporate social responsibility was limited. A small percentage believed that this role was moderate, while another percentage believed that they did not have a role in the first place.

The broader national picture suggests that the majority of Egyptian businesses and companies are still unfamiliar with this new concept, and cases of adopting CSR values are few and scarce. The scope and extent of institutionalizing CSR in these companies is still very limited. The situation may change in the future, especially since in the light of the developments that have taken occurred in the past five years, with more companies exhibiting an interest in publicly embracing CSR and publicizing their commitment to one or more of its component principles. Such companies perceive such principles to be important to their company, whether in terms of relationships with employees, customers, shareholders, prospective investors, officials or with the general public.

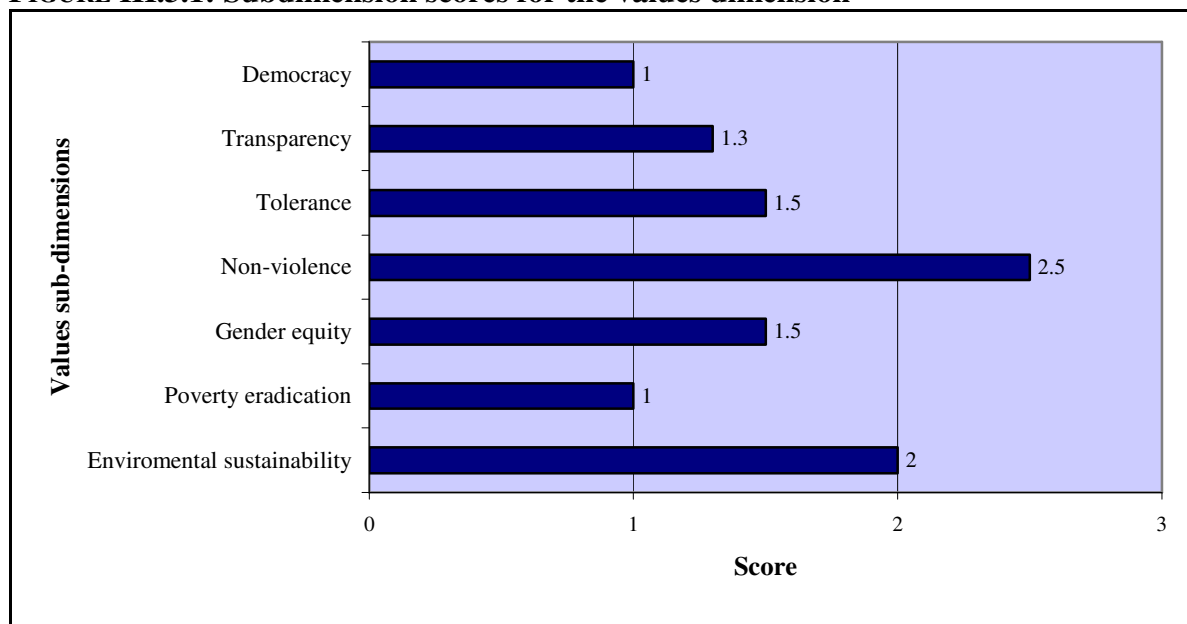
Conclusion

The overall environment has not been particularly conducive to the development of a strong and autonomous civil society in Egypt. Varying levels of political repression, exercised during the past five decades, have had a toll on civil society. For example, the Emergency Law enacted in 1981 prohibits demonstrations without prior government permission. While not specifically targeting civil society, it has affected the political climate and framework within which citizens are allowed to exercise their political rights. This in turn impacts how prepared they are to engage in civil activism either through organizations or movements. Moreover, legislation aimed directly at curbing civil associations' freedom, such as the NGO Law, acts as a deterrent to activists taking the initiative in engaging in any kind of work that could potentially lead to confrontation with the government. While such political restrictions play a significant role in influencing the environment in which civil society organizations and activists exist, other factors also impede the conduciveness of the external environment, such as low levels of public spiritedness and trust, as well as poor socio-economic conditions, such as rising poverty and unemployment. Further, persistent social problems, such as high levels of illiteracy, have presented significant hurdles for the growth of civil society. While it is hoped that the most recent political developments, such as multiparty elections and the reform of many outdated laws witnessed in 2005, may alter the environment and perhaps have a domino effect, such as building stronger rapport between civil society and government as well as civil society and the private sector, which require a concerted effort.

3. VALUES

In this section, the extent to which civil society promotes positive social values is examined. Positive social values explored include promotion of democracy, transparency, non-violence, gender equity, poverty eradication and protection of the environment.

FIGURE III.3.1: Subdimension scores for the values dimension



3.1 Democracy

TABLE III.3.1: Indicators assessing democracy

Ref	Indicators	Score
3.1.1	Democratic practices within CSOs	1
3.1.2	Civil society actions to promote democracy	1

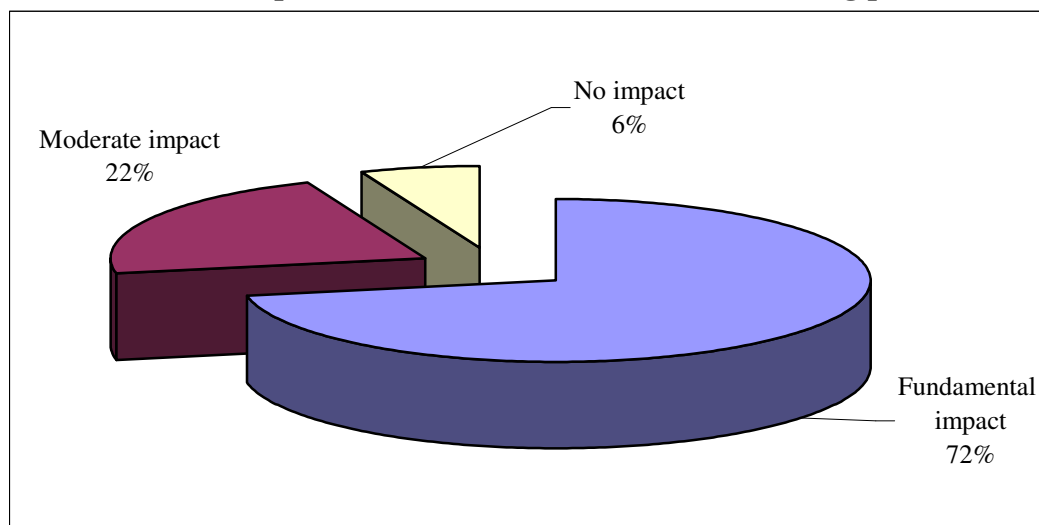
3.1.1 Democratic practices within CSOs. Democratic governance within CSOs has many facets. The legal principles, regulating the internal affairs of CSOs, prescribe a rigorous and systematic process that all organizations must follow. These regulations are not *pro forma*, and are effectively enforced through the government's surveillance of CSO affairs. In the election of board members, CSOs have to closely follow the process prescribed in the law, which requires that the general assembly (or members of the organization) choose candidates for the board from a list of nominees. Failure to observe the very minute details in this process could lead to the election results being declared void. As for the election of the board directors, that too, is subject to the laws and regulations prescribed. Once board members are selected, they are required to elect a board director by majority vote.

A significant proportion of CSO activists (63%), in the regional stakeholder survey, suggested that the election of the board of directors in their CSO was undertaken by majority vote. The results after the regional consultation were very similar: 60% of respondents affirmed that CSOs choose their leaders through democratic processes which allow for the rotation of power.

Yet, it is important not to overlook another significant proportion of respondents (40%) who did not think that leaders were elected through democratic means.

The role of organisational members in the decision-making process was regarded favourably by CSOs in the survey (see figure III.3.2). The majority (72%) reported that the input of the members of the general assembly to the decision-making process was pivotal. A smaller percentage (22%) conveyed their opinion that this input was average, while 6% disclosed that members had no impact at all on the decision-making process within the organizations.

FIGURE III.3.2: Impact of CSOs members on decision making process



Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey

Members of the NAG were divided as to how to score this indicator. Some felt that the level of democratic governance was poor, while others suggested that it has improved significantly in the past two decades and therefore looked favourably upon it. The consensus reached in the end was that, despite the fact CSOs may have witnessed some improvement in the level of democratic governance and despite the government-imposed regulations, a significant number of the manifestations of democratic governance were not genuine but pro-forma to appease the government. Consequently, they gave this indicator a score of 1 instead of 2.

3.1.2 Civil society actions to promote democracy. The initiatives to promote democracy, undertaken by CSOs, have been few and when they do take place they are brief, making it difficult to provide a systematic appraisal of their work. However, there have been some activities, mostly initiated by women and human rights organizations, which qualify as democracy-promoting projects. At least four different women's NGOs have sought to address the gender gap in participation in public life, especially political life by implementing activities aimed at raising poor women's awareness of the importance of participating in the elections and by helping them with the administrative procedures involved in applying for voting cards. Some human rights organizations have also organized seminars and workshops to discuss the current political participation, political system, the constitutions and obstacles to citizens' participation in the political community. They have also sought to organize various seminars to examine how civil society organizations can be empowered to play a more active role in

helping people claim their rights. The attendance at such initiatives, however, has often been limited to the human rights groups, intellectuals, journalists and some professionals. For a variety of reasons, the turnout of members from the general public tends to be extremely low.

More recently, through 2004 and 2005, mass demonstrations were organized by a series of broad-based movements, the most notable of which is the Movement for Change, known as *Kefaya* (Enough). At the heart of the Movement for Change is an opposition to the nomination of President Hosni Mubarak for a fifth term, or as is suggested by its name *Kefaya* “Enough 24 years of presidency”. The movement also calls upon the government to introduce a series of measures aimed at political reform, including the termination of the Emergency Law, the formation of a transitional government and a national assembly to draft a new constitution.

The Movement for Change is considered non-partisan because of its incorporation of several parties from different political currents: Leftist, Islamic, Pan-Arab and liberal, in addition to a number of citizens, comprising intellectuals, journalists, students and more than 300 public figures. While the movement’s slogan *Kefaya* is potentially of mass appeal, it has yet to build a populist base and is still mainly comprised of white collar professionals. Although the movement cannot be considered grassroots in terms of its constituency, nevertheless its emergence is of symbolic value since it suggests that despite the legal and political constraints, citizens are setting a new trend by daring to demonstrate. The Emergency Law which has been in place since the assassination of President Sadat in 1981 prohibits demonstrations except if prior government permission is granted. Official permission for citizen demonstration is difficult to obtain. In some districts, such as Shubra, average citizens spontaneously joined the streets in solidarity with *Kefaya* organizers. This was significant in that it showed that citizens are far less apolitical than has been thought, and that they are not merely passive on-lookers.

There are many reasons behind the relative weakness of CSOs in engaging in democracy-promoting activities. Some of these weaknesses are detailed below.

The common perception is that NGOs are not to “meddle in politics”. This apolitical perspective on NGOs’ role in civil society derives from two important political factors. First, there is a long history of NGO engagement in charity work, especially since the government engineered de-politicisation of CSOs and movements under Nasser in the 1950s. Second, many organizations feel that in the light of acute poverty, NGOs should focus their attention on meeting people’s basic needs rather than engaging in political work that does not have an immediate impact on people’s social welfare. According to Law 84 of 2002, NGOs are prohibited from engaging in political activity. Although the executive regulations of the Law specify political activity to be engagement in activities undertaken by political parties and trade unions, the definition is still broad enough to potentially encompass a lot of advocacy-oriented work. For example, the employees of a human rights organization, working on a project to inform community members of the constitution and their rights, through community-based activities and home visits, reported being subject to interrogations by the state security organization, told to desist such activities and warned of the consequences of engaging in political activity.

Another pertinent factor is that even if Egyptian CSOs wish to promote democracy, the majority would not know how to design and implement policies and activities of such a nature

on a grassroots level. While they may have a long tradition of engaging in charity and development, most CSOs do not have the experience or expertise necessary to undertake such activities. Many human rights organizations, which were established for the ultimate goal of promoting democracy, have focused their efforts on monitoring and documenting human rights abuses committed by the government, and responding accordingly, with advocacy campaigns on a policy-making level. Promoting democracy by working with people on a grassroots level does not seem to have been high on the agenda. This is reflected in the focus of their activities.

Another issue is the fact that some CSOs work so closely with the government. They can best be described as government-organized non-government organizations (GONGOs), inhibits the chances that they would engage in activities that may be interpreted as anti-government.²⁷

These weaknesses in CSO actions promoting democracy was one of the points raised in NAG meetings, in which some members suggested that aside from some activities initiated by a few women's and human rights' organizations, there is very little on the ground to show an active role in this domain.

3.2 Transparency

The practice and promotion of transparent policies and behaviour by civil society organizations was assessed in terms of prevalence of corruption within organizations and scope of financial transparency as well as CSOs' involvement in activities intended to promote transparent behaviour by government and the corporate sector.

TABLE III.3.2: Indicators assessing transparency

Ref	Indicators	Score
3.2.1	Corruption within civil society	2
3.2.2	Financial transparency of CSOs	1
3.2.3	CS actions to promote transparency	1

3.2.1 Corruption within civil society. The real level of corruption within civil society is difficult to discern. It is an unspoken issue that civil society practitioners and activists are aware of; however, it has yet to be brought out into the open within civil society. One reason for the silence shrouding the issue is that many civil society activists fear that if openly discussed corruption, opponents of civil society and regressive forces would use any information to slander CSOs, their leaders and the credibility of the sector as a whole. In short, some CSO activists suggested that the general environment is not conducive to an open and honest discussion of such a sensitive issue.

Another dilemma, relating to the assessment of the level of corruption in civil society, is the ambiguity regarding its exact meaning. It is difficult to reach a consensus on what kind of practices and behaviour amount to corruption in civil society. For example, when civil servants simultaneously occupy decision-making positions and are active in a CSO, and use their government status to ensure that the correspondence and communication between the CSO and

²⁷ A term borrowed from Alan Fowler.

the relevant government body are smooth and hassle free, does this amount to corruption or is it a case of maximizing social capital? Many such difficult issues would arise if the discussion of corruption is opened.

Moreover, the responses that CSOs gave at the regional stakeholder meetings signalled a mixed message on respondents' sentiments on the subject: 42% believed that there was transparency and accountability within CSOs, while another 35% believed that both transparency and accountability were absent. The remaining 23% did not have an opinion or perhaps may not have felt comfortable disclosing their opinion, given the sensitivity of the matter.

One should bear in mind that the high score given by NAG may be due to the fact that many of them are activist-practitioners in this arena and, therefore, may be speaking from their own personal experience in their organizations rather than for the sector as a whole.

3.2.2 Financial transparency of CSOs. From the CDS survey with NGO leaders, it is clear that the majority of respondents have a limited understanding of the concept of transparency, often defining it as simply "being straightforward and honest". The problem is two-fold. The concept of the importance of transparency for a CSO's work vis-à-vis the public has yet to take root and few organizations have taken active steps to institutionalize the policy of promoting transparency by introducing special by-laws or policies to ensure that it is applied at all times. How this is institutionalized in their organizations and daily practice has yet to take root.

A large proportion of participants (70%) were of the opinion that CSOs do provide their general assemblies and communities with an annual report comprising a detailed budget reviewing the year's finances. Another significant proportion of participants (30%) argue that CSOs do not openly publicize their financial undertakings. Perhaps if the question was broken down into two: one on the availability of annual budgets to the general assembly and the other on the dissemination of such reports to the CSOs' constituencies or public, respondents might have had different types of responses. While an equally high proportion of participants would argue that their budgets were available to the general assembly, they have reported that they do not necessarily feel obliged to make their budgets available to any member of the public.

Moreover, the practice of transparency within CSOs is intrinsically associated with the concept of accountability, and some NGOs' sense of accountability is geared more towards their donors than their constituency, or the public at large. This is evident in their concern for publishing and sending annual reports to their donors and providing them with government auditing accounts. The CDS survey indicated that, with respect to the NGOs examined, individual donors seems to rely less on institutionalized measures and more on their personal contacts within the organization to ensure accountability and transparency. Knowing an "insider" from within the organization and receiving regular accounts from him/her seemed to provide them with security that the resources were channelled fairly and honestly.

Consequently, it comes as no surprise that in the regional stakeholder survey, when asked about the extent of accountability and transparency within civil society, respondents' answers varied. Thirty-five percent were of the view that neither accountability nor transparency were

practiced, 23% did not express any view, while 42% conveyed the opinion that these two values were present.

3.2.3 CSOs' actions to promote transparency. CSOs have yet to initiate programs or small scale projects concerned with government or private sector transparency. This may be partly due to the fact that with the exception of some human rights organizations, the idea of CSOs espousing the role of watchdogs is yet to take root. This is mirrored in the results of the regional stakeholder survey, in which 59% of respondents stated that they believed that CSO activities to promote more transparent practices by the government were weak, and that CSOs' role in this area was, in general, limited. The same views were reiterated in terms of promoting transparency in the private sector: 72% of respondents believed that CSOs played no role in endorsing principles of transparency in the private sector.

The explanations for the inconspicuous existence of activities aimed at promoting transparency relate to both internal weaknesses and political challenges.

One of the first "internal" hindrances to CSOs' involvement in activities aimed at enhancing a transparent policy and practice by government and the private sector is, as with corruption, the fact that many CSOs do not believe that monitoring the government and private sector is their mission or their *raison d'être*. Yet, assuming that a certain proportion of CSOs are sensitized to the importance of transparency-enhancement activities in public life, there would still be a problem with the lack of expertise on how to engage in such activities and how to monitor their implementation.

The external constraints are similar to the ones relating to the issue of CSOs' involvement in the promotion of democracy: namely, fear of antagonizing a government that is suspicious of organizations "meddling in politics". Some human rights organizations are involved in monitoring how the government handles certain issues affecting the rights of particular groups, such as prisoners, dissidents and terrorists. Insofar as such groups demand that the government be transparent on any violations of rights, it is demanding greater transparency. However, the price for groups engaging in such activities can be high. Such CSOs become susceptible to media campaigns ostracizing them for exposing the country's dirty linen abroad and for being "foreign agents".²⁸ CSOs engaging in corruption or transparency monitoring would also have to consider that the government would retort by waging accusations of attempts at defaming Egypt's image abroad.

On the other hand, the political risks associated with engaging in transparency-related activities may be reduced if CSOs would partner with other institutions, such as national independent research centres. A case in point, whose impact is still too premature to evaluate, is an initiative undertaken by UNIFEM in cooperation with the Public Administration Research and Consultation Centre (PARC) at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science in the University of Cairo. UNIFEM and PARC developed two specialized modules on gender responsive budgeting and gender performance auditing, which ultimately serve to contribute to

²⁸ See for example, the press campaign by Al-Osbou newspaper against the secretary general of the human rights organization accusing him of treason for reporting on a case of government abuse of power and unjust treatment of citizens in the Upper Egyptian village of Al-Kosheh.

government transparency in the process of allocating resources and its output. One expected outcomes of the project is that civil society become empowered to engage in issues of gender sensitive plans and budgets, thus, opening an avenue for CSOs promoting budget transparency.

3.3 Tolerance

This subdimension examines the extent to which Egyptian civil society actors and organizations practice and promote tolerance.

TABLE III 3.3: Indicators assessing tolerance

Ref	Indicators	Score
3.3.1	Tolerance within the civil society arena	2
3.3.2	CS activities to promote tolerance	1

3.3.1 Tolerance within civil society arena. On the whole, participants in the regional stakeholder gatherings expressed a positive opinion on CSOs espousal of tolerant behaviour. They felt that CSOs worked harmoniously in society and did not display any violent behaviour against each other or in the civil society arena in general. While the election process for the appointment of members of the board of directors of a CSO can sometimes be quite intense, with supporters for a particular nominee resorting to slamming and defaming the characters of other nominees and their supporters, these tend to be exceptional cases, rather than representative of the dynamics of the civil society arena as a whole.

3.3.2 Civil society activities to promote tolerance. While there are many organizations that wish to challenge negative stereotypes entrenched in the public's psyche towards certain groups, and hence, encourage them to adopt more tolerant attitudes, it is difficult to list any organizations that were established specifically for that reason. Nonetheless, there are organizations that, for example, wish to educate and inform the public about refugees and their predicament and promote tolerant attitudes towards them.

There have also been some NGOs that have received substantial media coverage for their activities promoting inter-religious tolerance. For example, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services' (CEOSS) Forum for Intercultural Dialogue (FID) has received extensive media coverage in the past years. One of FID's activities is the engagement of young Muslim and Christian religious leaders in open-minded dialogue with intellectuals, media experts and civil society leaders to promote understanding of the multifaceted social concerns. The target group (Christian and Muslim religious leaders) is pertinent given the role of religious institutions in shaping the perceptions and values of Egyptians in general. The fact that the initiative focuses on young religious leaders is also significant in its potential outreach to youth and new generations of Egyptians. Another program implemented by FID is the "Regional Groups program", which aims to promote ideas of citizenship and a culture of peace and co-existence beyond the boundaries of metropolitan Cairo. According to CEOSS' 2004 annual report, meetings were organized for community leaders and representatives of Upper Egypt and the Delta regions. Such activities are crucial for promoting acceptance of the other, and civil society organizations are particularly well placed to facilitate such religious encounters.

On the whole, in light of the level of intolerance towards particular groups in Egyptian society, there is certainly a conspicuous need for the establishment and growth of organizations committed to promoting values of tolerance. However, CSOs that are actively engaged in such activities at the moment are very rare and exceptional.

3.4 Non-violence

This subdimension briefly addresses the extent to which Egyptian civil society actors and organizations practice and promote non-violence.

TABLE III.3.4: Indicators assessing non-violence

Ref	Indicators	Score
3.4.1	Non-violence within the CS arena	3
3.4.2	CS actions to promote non-violence	2

3.4.1 Non-violence within the civil society arena. There are no reported cases of violence within the civil society arena. The overwhelming majority (82%) of surveyed stakeholders affirmed that there are very few examples of violent instances within civil society and they do take place they are usually denounced by civil society actors.

3.4.2 Civil society actions to promote non-violence. The Egyptian government has experienced bouts of violence in its battle with Islamic militant groups especially in the period in the 1990s. Since then, and especially since 9/11, there have been concerted efforts on the part of the government to reach out to CSOs and form partnerships that would help them to work with youth in order to raise their awareness of the true precepts of Islam. The Ministry of *Awqaf* (Endowments) has been particularly active in this area, disseminating anti-terrorism messages through civil society organizations and institutions such as mosques, youth centres and clubs on terrorism being anathema to Islam. Activities have included awareness seminars, discussion groups and the invitation of reputed religious and public figures to deliver lectures to the wider public.

3.5 Gender equity²⁹

This subdimension analyses the extent to which Egyptian civil society actors practice and promote gender equity.

TABLE III.3.5: Indicators assessing gender equity

Ref	Indicators	Score
3.5.1	Gender equity within the CS arena	1
3.5.3	The role of CS in the promotion of gender equality	2

3.5.1 Gender equity within the civil society arena. Insofar that Egyptian culture is by and large patriarchal in values, traditions and practices, civil society, as an arena, is no different. Rather, civil society mirrors this in many ways, perpetuating and re-enforcing gender inequity. In one study conducted among NGOs in a village in the Sharqiya governorate, the larger proportion of

²⁹ Indicator 3.5.2 was taken out due to lack of data.

respondents (61%) replied to the question: who do you think would make a better leader of an NGO, a man or a woman? by choosing men, which evidence of a clear gender-biased viewpoint.

Nonetheless, there are important elements within civil society that have challenged and openly contested unequal power relations between the genders and have sought to redress gendered injustice. In a nationwide survey of 1048 NGOs, men's membership was twice that of women, although there were some discrepancies based on geographical location and type of NGO (El Amry 2005:360). Women's membership in NGOs tended to be lower outside the borders of greater Cairo governorates, and was particularly poor in Upper Egypt. Women were also more likely to be members of NGOs engaged in conventional mother-child care services than other non-traditional fields, although the environment is one exception where the gender gap is better.

Moreover, there is also a significant gap in gender representation in decision-making positions. The same survey mentioned above indicated that women occupied around a fifth of all decision-making positions within these NGOs (El Amry 2005:360).

3.5.3 CS actions to promote gender equity. The regional stakeholder survey (2004) indicated that CSOs' activities in the area of promoting gender equity were moderate, meaning that there are a few initiatives to promote gender equity within CSOs. However, over 200 NGOs were established with the specific mandate of promoting women's rights. They are active in a wide plethora of areas ranging from advocacy and legal aid to grassroots development initiatives in addition to conventional mother-child welfare activities. There are also initiatives begun that aim to promote networking among NGOs promoting gender equity such as the Women and Development Forum. Coalitions are also formed around particular issues, for example, on the issue of domestic violence. The press does publish features and news items on the conferences, seminars and workshops held by various women NGOs on issues relating to gender equity. Television programs also occasionally feature events held by CSOs in the area of gender equity. On the whole, there is an active interest in promoting women's issues, an interest that has grown in the past years, although it has yet to be mainstreamed across all CSO work.

3.6 Poverty eradication

This subdimension assesses the extent to which CSOs in Egypt promote poverty eradication.

TABLE III.3.6: Indicator assessing poverty eradication

Ref	Indicators	Score
3.6.1	CS actions to eradicate poverty	1

3.6.1 CS actions to eradicate poverty. CSOs, for the most part, have not been engaged in policy debates on a national level regarding poverty alleviation. CSOs have not been visible in analyzing, deliberating or lobbying the government on community-level implications of macro policies, such as the adoption of economic reform and structural adjustment policies on the poor. As suggested by Assaad and Rouchdy, “for a variety of reasons, Egyptian NGOs have been unable to act as strong advocates for the poor either in national policy circles or in local government arenas” (1998:65).

There are many reasons for this: first, despite the official rhetoric about NGOs as partners with the government, the civil society sector is not seen as a key social safety net provider for the poor, by the government. Resources for poverty alleviation are channelled to other agencies and institutions such as the Social Fund for Development which is a government body established in 1991 under the auspices of the Cabinet in order to work to mitigate the negative implications of structural adjustment. Its mandate is to address poverty by working to promote job creation and income-generation opportunities for marginalized groups such as women and youth. It is noteworthy that NGOs do not have any decision-making power over the process of how government resources are allocated for poverty alleviation. Second, many donors continue to channel their core resources for poverty alleviation to the government and only set aside marginal funds for project implementation by NGOs, if any at all. Third, there are few CSOs that take a rights-based approach to poverty alleviation. Human rights organizations have tended to focus more on political rights which affect all Egyptian citizens rather than social and economic rights which would touch more specifically on issues of deprivation affecting the poor. Nonetheless, a growing number of human rights organizations and some development-based organizations are establishing projects intended to provide free legal aid to the poor. Some of these activities include providing legal aid for vulnerable women to issue official documents (such as ID cards) in addition to assistance in the legal process leading to the issuance of these documents in addition to filing lawsuits for a variety of purposes.

Civil society organizations' engagement in poverty alleviation has generally been on the level of service delivery. It is estimated that 32% of all NGOs in Egypt aim to provide direct assistance to the poor (Kandeel 2004:14). It is noteworthy that CSOs adopt different approaches to poverty alleviation, the overwhelming majority being charity oriented, although more NGOs are now shifting towards development, and a few, especially human rights based organizations are engaged in advocacy. There is a general move from charity to development in some governorates. For example, in Cairo, Alexandria and Minya, religious-based NGOs (both Christians and Muslims) joined in a network co-ordinated by CEOSS to engage in development work for the purpose of upgrading squatter settlements, improving rural conditions, boosting the performance of local administration bodies (Kandeel 2004:267). Another initiative undertaken through the coordination of the National Council for Women involved working with 300 local development and women based NGOs in order to improve the predicament of poor female headed households nationwide (Kandeel 2004:268).

Activities in the area of poverty alleviation include provision of small loans for income-generating purposes, in addition to the provision of credit and technical assistance to small and micro-enterprises. Activities in this area have been the most common form of intervention in recent years (Assaad and Rouchdy 1998:43). Other poverty alleviation activities implemented by CSOs includes the provision of health and education services, as well as the running of literacy classes. Some NGOs have also focused their attention to the problems of rural and urban development by selecting particular communities for efforts, on the part of NGOs, to upgrade the facilities available in their communities. Some CSOs have also been active in upgrading school facilities with the aim of making the school environment more attractive for pupils living in poor communities.

The media coverage of poverty-alleviation projects undertaken by CSOs has in recent years focused more on schemes providing loans for the establishment or expansion of small and micro enterprises, although there is a media interest in CSO activities in assisting street children and sponsorship of orphans. On the whole, CSO approach to poverty alleviation is still stifled by the conventional top-down charity approach

3.7 Environmental sustainability

This subdimension analyses the extent to which Egyptian civil society actors practice and promote environmental sustainability.

TABLE III.3.7: Indicator assessing environmental sustainability

Ref	Indicators	Score
3.7.1	CS actions to sustain the environment	2

3.7.1 CS actions to sustain the environment. The regional stakeholder survey suggested that there is a very high degree of awareness among civil society organizations of the concept of environmental sustainability.

There are some examples of CSO activities aimed at promoting environmental sustainability, such as annual seminars undertaken by youth centres, and awareness-raising seminars on environmental protection held by NGOs as well as advocacy campaigns against environmental degradation. NGOs have been active in working with communities to help them improve their direct environmental conditions as well as advocating for their rights through legal and media means. Below are two examples of two NGOs, the first working on a grassroots level to improve the environmental conditions of poor, marginalized communities in Egypt, and the other working on a policy-making level, through advocacy, networking and community awareness raising efforts.

One good example of an NGO with a long history of working to improve the people's environment is the Association for the Protection of the Environment (APE). APE is a nonprofit organization serving the communities of garbage collectors in Cairo, Hurghada, Tora and Wadi El Natruun in Egypt. Garbage collectors' communities in Egypt live in a particularly difficult environment because in some areas, there is no separation between their garbage separation activities and their living quarters (i.e. garbage collected is dumped in their personal homes where women and children participate in sorting out the garbage). Living in such environmentally hazardous conditions has exposed garbage collectors and their families to serious health problems. APE sought to work in partnership with the garbage collectors' communities, which have historically been marginalized and lived on the fringes. Through health interventions as well as the development and design of environmental projects specially addressing disposal and recycling of garbage, as well as a series of development interventions, APE has helped the community make its environment more liveable and safe.

A good example of an NGO that has worked on advocating for the rights of people, particularly the poor to a better environment is the Habi Centre for Environmental Rights. Habi was established in 2001 with the aim of defending the rights of the poor to a healthy and secure environment in which to live. Their work has primarily focused on advocacy, seeking to bring

the environmental legislation in effect and have it respected, train NGOs on how to defend the right of the poor to a better environment through the law, and initiating campaigns to raise the public's awareness on environmental issues. Habi launched a campaign, in coordination with other NGOs, which lobbies the government to stop allowing the use of the harmful chemical asbestos in the construction industry. Their efforts culminated in increased media coverage of the issue and helped bring about government revision of its policy vis-à-vis allowing factories to use asbestos. While CSOs working to promote environmental sustainability are still in the minority, they are likely to be increasing in the future as development organizations' awareness of the environment increases and as human rights organizations become increasingly aware of the link between human rights violations and environmental degradation.

Conclusion

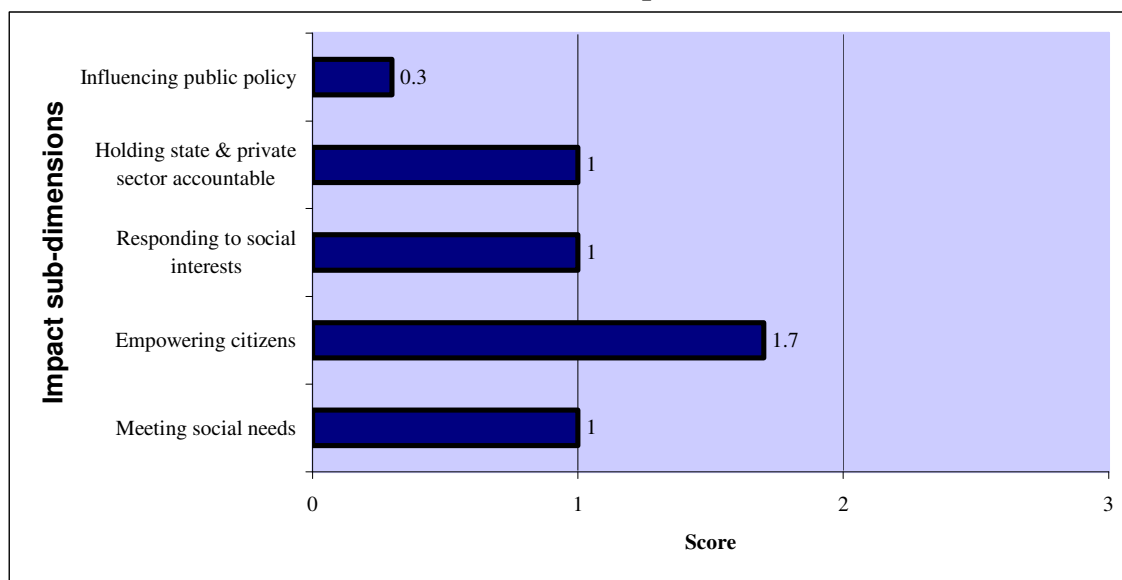
The civil society values dimension received the highest score (1.5) among the four dimensions, of the Egyptian Civil Society Diamond. CSOs' efforts to promote positive values in society at large are weakest in the areas of advancing democratic values, promoting transparency and tolerance. They are strongest in the areas of promoting non-violence, gender equity and environmental sustainability. These values, such as non-violence and poverty eradication, are crucially important in Egypt and deeply rooted in civil society. They are most noticeably practised through charity.

In general, it is evident from the assessment of civil society's practice and promotion of values, that civil society is more inclined to internally practice values, such as democracy, transparency and tolerance, than it is to promote these values. This is a somewhat predictable phenomenon, given the political restrictions confining civil society and also the nascent and slightly weak character of its structure, which impedes civil society's capacity to promote values. Lastly, civil society's focus on service provision, as opposed to advocacy and lobbying, also limits the extent to which values are promoted within society at large.

4. IMPACT

The purpose of this section is to describe and analyze the extent to which civil society is active and successful in fulfilling four essential functions: .influencing public policy, holding the state and private corporations accountable, responding to social interest, empowering citizens and meeting societal needs.

FIGURE III.4.1: Subdimension scores for the impact dimension



4.1 Influencing public policy

This subdimension assesses the extent to which civil society is active and successful in influencing public policy. The regional stakeholder survey served as the principle tool for identifying the first two policy issues pertinent to the Egyptian context. Two policy issues came to the fore. First, the rise in prices and its impact on people's livelihoods was selected as an important social policy issue. Second, the role of CSOs in eliciting change in violent practices committed against detainees in prison. The third policy issue which was selected by CIVICUS was the role of civil society organizations in informing the national budget.

TABLE III.4.1: Indicators assessing influencing social policy

Ref	Indicators	Score
4.1.1	Social policy impact	<u>0</u>
4.1.2	Human rights impact	<u>1</u>
4.1.3	Impact on national budget process	<u>0</u>

4.1.1 Social policy impact. Research conducted for the CSI report sought to analyze the extent to which civil society was active in addressing the impact of inflation on people's livelihood as a prime issue of social policy in Egypt. To do so, desktop research was complemented with interviews with leading scholars and public figures who shed light on the scope and intensity of CSOs' involvement in addressing this issue. The research revealed that CSOs did not play any role in monitoring inflation rates or communicating with the government in either policy implications or possible recourse of actions. This is not to suggest that CSOs are oblivious to

the impact of inflation on people's livelihood, participants at the regional stakeholders stressed the importance of the impact of inflation on people's livelihoods as a social policy theme, but they were not aware of any initiatives on the part of CSOs to address this issue.

4.1.2 Human rights impact. In the field of human rights, the topic chosen by respondents in the regional stakeholder survey was the role of civil society in Egypt in influencing policy, with regards to violence in detention. International and local human rights organizations have been lobbying the government for years to put an end to torture in prisons. While the government admits to occasional scattered incidents of torture and abuse by security forces, it denies that it is systematic.³⁰ CSOs, spearheaded by human rights organizations, such as the Human Rights Center for the Assistance of Prisoners (HRCAP), the Egyptian Association against Torture and the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR), campaigned to bring to the public's attention the widespread use of torture in prison.

Several key measures were undertaken by human rights organizations as part of their campaign against torture in prisons. The thorough and meticulous documentation of cases of prisoners who were tortured was important for providing evidence for developing a case against the Ministry of Interior officers. Second, human rights organization sought to disseminate this information as widely as possible through various channels, including international human rights organizations and the local as well as international media. Third, organizations lobbied for the perpetrators and accomplices of torture to be put on trial. They have also issued reports with recommendations to the government on how to improve the human rights situation in prison in general.

In February 2002, the government passed a new law, Law 153, repealing the use of flogging as a penal measure in Egyptian prisons. The government explained such a move in terms of its respect for citizens' rights enshrined in the constitution and its respect for human rights in general, and did not concede that this bill was a response to pressures from CSOs. The evidence for a direct relationship between locally induced pressure and the new law is difficult to decipher, especially since it was the Egyptian government, rather than parliament members, that introduced the draft law. However, human rights organizations applauded the initiative as a policy that is in the right direction and believe that their campaign was successful in putting pressure, both internal and external, on the Egyptian government to take action, even if they have not been given official credit for their work in this area.

On the whole, only a limited number of CSOs are active in seeking to influence public policy at a national level. The impact of their campaigns and lobbying is very difficult to decipher because the government never acknowledges that policy changes are a response to civil society activism. While these campaigns are not always successful, they are important in the opportunities that they provide for CSO activists to learn how to engage in advocacy, and to work to change the structural causes of injustice. The impact of their advocacy campaigns however, have not been so discernible as to earn them a reputation among the public for being important vehicles for pushing for policy change.

³⁰ Cairo Times, "The Official Take on Torture", 14-20 November 2002.

4.1.3 Impact on national budgeting process. Research conducted for the CSI report sought to analyze the extent to which CSOs and activists were engaging in the debate on the budget and seeking to influence policy directions in this arena. To do so, desktop research was complemented with interviews with key informants and players. Generally, the role of CSOs in Egypt in influencing the national budget is very limited.

Several factors relating to the external environment and the internal weaknesses of CSOs account for this weakness in shaping the national budget. First, the political process associated with determining and influencing the budget allows CSOs a very narrow margin within which to manoeuvre. In all stages of the budget process, only political parties have leverage in influencing the budget and its policy which means that if CSOs want to influence the proposed budget content, they would have to influence political parties to take up the matter with their MPs in parliament. Ultimately, much will depend on how influential they can be in forcing the NDP, which holds a clear majority in Parliament, into taking their concerns into consideration.

Second, the legal restrictions in place may inhibit civil society activity in challenging budget policy. For example, restrictions on engaging in activities can be interpreted as being of a political nature. Contesting the government's allocation of resources could be interpreted as a direct political action, especially if it touches on the more sensitive components of the budget such as the military. Some CSOs may also fear that by openly criticizing the government's budget policies or organizing around it, their involvement would be interpreted as meddling in politics, which is prohibited by the NGO Law.

Third, CSOs which were primarily established with the objective of influencing policy (which happen to be largely, though not solely, human rights organizations) have focused their attention primarily on issues relating to political freedom and freedom of expression, this is well reflected in the priorities determined in their agenda, and in the choice of policy issues they campaign for. While budget policy is certainly a highly political issue, it is also inextricably associated with economic and social rights. To date, economic and social rights have not featured prominently on the agenda of advocacy organizations.

Another important internal weakness relating to the role of CSOs in influencing the budget is their lack of technical expertise in the processes and mechanisms involved in analyzing the national budget. Civil society practitioners need a solid training in the economics of the budget and its social bearings. This is an area where CSOs and activists have not received training. Such training is also not readily available in Egypt, where budget analysis remains an activity mainly undertaken by specialized academics in university settings.

A major determinant of CSOs' ability to play a role in the budget process is the availability of information on the content of the national budget. While the government does publish some general figures from the proposed budget, it usually does so only very shortly before the budget is due for discussion in the parliament, and no detailed figures or disaggregated data is publicized. This lack of transparency, on the part of the government in sharing the budget with the wider public, presents a major obstacle to civil society's engagement with such an issue. In the absence of concrete disaggregated data, CSOs are prevented from playing any credible role in influencing budget. For example, CSOs would not be able to use the media as a

legitimate channel for voicing their concerns over the budget, when they don't have the necessary information to express their opinion on it.

It is safe to conclude that civil society is active only in selective areas in trying to influence public policy, such as human rights. Civil society activism in trying to influence economic policies of the country is negligible or altogether non-existent with no signs of campaigns or actions prevalent in this field. Where they have taken initiatives in human rights, it seems that their campaigns have contributed to a change in government policy, albeit of a limited nature (i.e. change in some decrees and policies pertaining to treatment of prisoners) rather than any structural changes in overall government policy.

4.2 Holding the state and private corporations accountable

TABLE III.4.2: Indicators assessing holding state and private corporations accountable

Ref	Indicators	Score
4.2.1	Holding state accountable	1
4.2.2	Holding private corporations accountable	1

4.2.1 Holding state accountable. This indicator describes and analyzes the extent to which civil society is active and successful in holding state accountable. It is difficult to describe the scope of CSOs' activism in holding the state accountable. For one, some CSOs prefer not to engage in open confrontations with the government when making their demands. Rather, they seek to negotiate and mediate their demands behind the eyes of the media, and often behind closed doors. Some CSOs believe this is more effective in eliciting the results they wish, especially if they have cordial relations with officials in various capacities that are acquiescent to their concerns. On the other hand, some CSOs, most notably human rights organizations, have openly contested the government on its policies and have sought greater accountability on its part for human rights violations. For example, two human rights organizations, the Hisham Mubarak Law Centre and Al-Nadeem Centre for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture organized a demonstration in front of the Ministry of Justice quarters in downtown Cairo, to demand an end to the use of torture and other human rights violations committed against citizens in detention. The demonstration, which involved more than 150 people, was organized in collaboration with various new formed activist groups, such as "Youth for Change" and the "Street is Ours". The campaigners demanded that police and detention officers responsible for human rights violations be held accountable by the government.³¹ Yet, most CSOs' energies are not directed towards holding the state accountable, an impression that was confirmed by the regional stakeholder survey which showed that more than half the participants (59%) were of the view that CSO engagement in activities to promote more transparent practices by the government were weak. Therefore, the current situation suggests that only a minority of CSOs are involved in activities aimed at holding the state accountable, and perhaps because of their small number, they have had limited success in this area.

4.2.2 Holding private corporations accountable. The incidence of CSOs holding private corporations accountable are few, and tend to be the exception rather than the rule. There are few visible initiatives in this area, which is confirmed by the regional stakeholder survey which

³¹ Al Ahram Weekly, "Zero Tolerance for Torture", 30 June-6 July 2005, Issue No. 749.

indicated that the overwhelming majority of respondents (72%) were of the view that civil society organizations played no role in endorsing principles of transparency in the private sector.

Environmental organizations have become increasingly active in the past five years, organizing campaigns intended to put pressure on private corporations whose practices violate the environmental. For example, Egyptian environmental and human rights organizations, in cooperation with French trade unions, pressured the government to prohibit the use of asbestos in industrial production. Asbestos is used by some private corporations despite being a chemical known for its serious health hazards, including cancer and being banned worldwide. Following pressures to put an end to its use, the Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade, issued Decree 336 in September 2004, prohibiting use of asbestos in industrial production.³²

More recently, in 2004, the Helwan-based Centre of Workers and Trade Union Services (CWTUS) filed a complaint against Ora-Misr, a privately owned asbestos product plant, and against other privately owned businesses forming part of the Egyptian asbestos industry for their practices which put the lives of an estimated 10,000 workers at risk. In the same year, CWTUS lodged a complaint with the International Labour Organization demanding compensation for the Ora-Misr workers.³³ These are two exceptional examples of the kind of CSO activism in holding private corporations accountable, that is for the most part lacking in the CSO sector as a whole.

4.3 Responding to social interests

This subdimension analyses the extent to which Egyptian civil society actors are responsive to social interests.

TABLE III.4.3: Indicators assessing responding to social interests

Ref	Indicators	Score
4.3.1	Responsiveness	1
4.3.2	Public trust in CSOs	1

4.3.1 Responsiveness. The major concerns affecting the Egyptian population vary depending on gender, age and socio-economic status. However, it is safe to say that one of the main concerns affecting a large number of Egyptians, across class, gender and age, is unemployment. The situation is particularly acute vis-à-vis youth. CSOs' efforts, if assessed on a national level, tend to be quite limited in responding to this problem, possibly because they do not perceive their role as strictly one of employment generation.

Other social concerns include poverty alleviation, an area where CSOs have been active through service delivery and social assistance programs. However, poverty is not an area where all CSOs are equally active; there are geographical disparities as well as wide variations in the scope of work undertaken to alleviate poverty and its effectiveness.

³² Al Ahram Weekly, "Twice As Dead" 7-13 July 2005, Issue No. 750.

³³ Ibid.

Another social concern is the quality of educational and health services in the country. However, the level of responsiveness to these two priority social concerns has been limited, perhaps because they do not see that they have a role to play when these services are, for the most part, run by either the government or the private sector. The media survey indicated that there were 25 news items out of 587 on the responsiveness of CSOs to people's needs.

4.3.2 Public trust in CSOs. Various studies have examined one or two particular indicators of public trust in CSOs, compared to other types of organizations³⁴. One important indicator is whether the public would trust CSOs more or less with their philanthropic donations and charitable giving than channelling this money to government institutions. The main finding is that people would trust particular CSOs more with their money or goods than government-controlled or run counterparts. Substantial evidence attest to this: one of the most significant is members of the public making endowments to CSOs, which are usually in the form of real estate or land for a particular worthy cause or the service or a vulnerable group. Historically, the government's sequestration of the civic public endowments in the early 1950s led to a notable drop in members of the public making any bestowments (*Awqaf*) to the civil society. There are two important reasons for this loss of trust accompanying the transfer of *Awqaf* from civic to government management. First, people lost the freedom to decide how their endowments are to be dispensed, since it became the prerogative of the government to direct the endowment to whatever cause or group it deemed fit. Second, while people often made endowments because they were familiar with the leadership and the activities of those running the civic endowments, the new leadership was impersonal and unfamiliar to them, thus reducing the margin of trust and security that they could feel. World Values Survey data 1999-2000 show that trust in CSOs is very high in the Egyptian society. 86% of the population have trust in some groups or organizations of civil society (not included political parties). Faith based organizations and churches are the most trusted organizations in civil society and the second most trusted institutions in Egyptian society at large (right after the police). Environmental groups are also widely perceived as trustworthy, as well as women's groups. Two citizens out of three also have confidence in the trade unions.

4.4 Empowering citizens

This subdimension describes and analyses the extent to which Egyptian civil society is active and successful in empowering citizens, particularly groups that have traditionally been marginalized.

TABLE III.4.4: Indicators assessing empowering citizens

Ref	Indicators	Score
4.4.1	Informing / educating citizens	<u>1</u>
4.4.2	Building capacity for collective action	<u>1</u>
4.4.3	Empowering marginalized people	<u>2</u>
4.4.4	Empowering women	<u>2</u>
4.4.5	Building social capital	<u>2</u>
4.4.6	Supporting livelihoods	<u>2</u>

³⁴ The World Bank study of the Egyptian NGO sector, LaTowsky 1994

4.4.1 Informing/educating citizens. While CSOs have been active for over two decades in the area of adult literacy, especially in communities where illiteracy levels are high, their role in educating citizens about government policy and programs that affect them or their rights and responsibilities is limited. Some CSOs do inform their communities of government services/programs that may be of benefit; however, this is often done informally and is contingent upon the level of awareness of the persons in charge. For the most part, there are no institutional channels existing within the organizations to systematically disseminate information to citizens. Some development organizations have sought to incorporate themes relating to citizens' rights and responsibilities through various projects, such as in adult literacy classes. However, only a few of these initiatives exist. Moreover, a handful of organizations specializing in legal aid been established since the 1990s with a view to raising citizens' legal awareness on various subjects and providing them with free of charge information regarding ways of responding to their rights violation.

4.4.2 Building capacity for collective action. The mobilization of citizens and communities to work together to solve common problems is not an activity that is on the agenda of the majority of CSOs. The main reason for this is that CSOs do not operate with a mindset or vision to build the capacity of people to organize themselves and solve problems together. Most CSOs work with people as beneficiaries or subjects of programs run by the organizations not as actors in their own right.³⁵ This mentality has stifled CSO activism in the area of helping people work collectively to address problems and seek solutions collaboratively. The research undertaken for this study could only identify a handful of cases in which CSOs' were engaged in building the capacity of citizens for collective action. There are perhaps more cases of CSOs seeking to mediate between citizen groups and the government by negotiating demands on their behalf. Successful examples of such initiatives include the Street Vendors' Association which mediated between the government and street vendors in order for officials to recognize their rights and reach an agreement with public health officials over maintenance of food quality control.

4.4.3. Empowering marginalized people. The poor have traditionally been a marginalized group in Egypt, suffering from various forms of social, political and economic exclusion. The CDS survey "Philanthropy in Egypt" (2004) sought to examine the views of beneficiaries of NGO assistance on what the aid they receive signifies to them. Unfortunately, the research did not indicate how the assistance empowered its recipients. The most frequently cited response (87.3%) was that the aid received contributed to their living a better life, although there was no elaboration on how this took place. The second most frequently cited response was that the assistance given convinced the beneficiary that "the world is still a good place and there is still hope in life". Very closely tied to the second response, both in frequency of replies and in theme was the third most popular reply: "it proved to me that love and social (class) solidarity still existed". Moreover, 71.8% of responses linked the aid they received to their spiritual state of being, indicating that it played a role in increasing their faith. A rather surprising response was that given by 49.2% of respondents, in which they stated that the aid "helped my family

³⁵ Mariz Tadros, "NGO-State Relations in Egypt: Welfare Assistance in a Poor Urban Community of Cairo", Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, June 2004.

and I from social deviance”. This stems from the popular notion that if the poor do not find legitimate channels for meeting their basic social and spiritual needs, they will resort to illegitimate means of surviving. The second to last response given in the survey provided a concrete impact of aid on the lives of beneficiaries: 44.3% said that assistance helped them keep their children in school. The least frequently cited response (19%) was that aid given, provided the seed money to start up an income generating project for the sustenance of the person and his/her family.

There are several challenges facing CSOs’ involvement in people’s empowerment, however, they all suffer from one common characteristic: the perception of citizens and community members as objects of their charity, development projects or activities. Individuals are rarely perceived as active participants with a role to play in the decision-making process or agenda-setting, they rarely feature as actors in their own right.³⁶

4.4.4 Empowering women. The indicators of civil society promotion of women’s empowerment are two-pronged. The first deals with power: to what extent are CSOs active in empowering women to have real choice and control over their lives, while the second addresses responsiveness to basic needs and interests identified by women. In most cases, CSOs in Egypt are very active in responding to the latter: they seek to address the socio-economic needs of women in a variety of ways. For example, NGOs have been active running day care centres at affordable costs, which help fulfil a basic need for working women who have no access to alternative child care. More NGOs have now established micro credit programs which provide women with loans to start up their own income generating projects or expand existing ones. Such projects help to narrow the gender gap in women’s access to credit, which has generally been channelled to men. Female-headed households, particularly widows raising children are now the target of NGO charity programs, which usually disburse a monthly stipend as a form of family support.

Civil society organizations actions to challenge the structural causes behind gender inequity in Egypt are limited. Most CSOs adopt a basic needs approach to women’s needs, and rarely seek to challenge the gender hierarchy that perpetuates inequality against women. Nevertheless, there is a growing interest among women-based NGOs to challenge and contest discrimination in the laws which have been identified as sources of oppression or as tools with which gender inequity is legitimized and enforced. In practice, there are a handful of NGOs that seek to empower women to attain their rights from their spouses and families or from the state, by providing them with information on their different options or with free of charge legal aid should they wish to file lawsuits. One discernible impact of CSO efforts in the area of empowerment and the law is the reform of the nationality law in 2005. The old law prohibited Egyptian women married to foreign men from passing on their nationality to their children. The impact of this law on these women and their children was far reaching and grave, denying them the fundamental right of citizenship. After extensive NGO lobbying and mediation with the government, as well as coverage in the media, the law was overturned so that both Egyptian men and women share an equal right to pass on their nationality to their children, irrespective of the nationality of their spouses.

³⁶ Ibid.

The overall situation seems to suggest that, while CSOs are responsive to a wide array of women's practical needs, their initiatives in addressing the structural factors which inhibit women's choices and opportunities are very limited.

4.4.5 Building social capital. Social capital greatly influences the choices available to Egyptians of all classes, and is particularly important as a survival mechanism for the poor. The poor's survival network is expansive and diverse, including a wide array of informal and formal institutions in addition to individuals. CSOs represent one source of social capital for some of the poor. Many civil society organizations, particularly service-providing NGOs working in poor communities actively seek to widen their network of contacts and resources in order to be able to help citizens acquire services and types of aid that they cannot provide directly themselves. Often, an important criterion for selecting NGO leaders is the scope of social capital that the person brings with him/her to the association through their connections and contacts.³⁷ Beneficiaries of NGO assistance are often referred to NGOs, mosques and even civil servants working in various government institutions and ministries for assistance. Moreover, NGOs also offer beneficiaries the opportunity to widen their social network through various activities, such as literacy classes which provide participants with a forum to meet new people. On the other hand, it is notable that despite the importance of social capital for NGOs and the beneficiaries they serve efforts to build networks are often informal and are not institutionalized within the NGOs or their plan of action.³⁸

Places of worship, such as churches and mosques, also represent an important source of social capital for people across classes. While intensive case studies of the role of NGOs in building social capital have been conducted on a community-level, there is currently no research available comparing the level of trust, tolerance and public spiritedness for members of CSOs compared to non-members.

4.4.6 Supporting livelihoods. In light of the poverty situation in Egypt, NGOs in particular have sought to support livelihoods among those living below the poverty line, principally through two means: First, training and education, with a view to providing participants with a trade or a marketable skill and second, the extension of credit to existing and new projects and enterprises. The second has been widely implemented in Egypt by local and international NGOs. One such initiative is being undertaken by the Alexandria Business Association, which began its work in 1989 with assistance from USAID. Its principle activity has been the disbursement of loans for the purpose of supporting existing enterprises. The program has expanded dramatically, such that by 2004, they had disbursed over 397,310 loans through their various programs. They have also started a special program targeting unemployed youth *Bashayer el Kheir*, providing them with LE100 seed money (as grants not loans) to invest in any project or sectoral activity that they wish. Once they succeed in setting up their project, and they wish to continue they are given another LE100 to support their activity. The project is funded by the Local Zakat Fund and the Small Enterprises Fund. So far, they have made 5,958 grants, with 75% of the youth still participating in the program.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

While initiatives along the lines described above are emerging almost every day, the level of demand for such interventions on the part of CSOs far exceeds the scope of CSO work currently on the ground.

4.5 Meeting social needs

This subdimension examines the extent to which civil society is active and successful in meeting societal needs, especially those of poor people and other marginalized groups. Table III.4.5 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.4.5: Indicators assessing meeting societal needs

Ref	Indicators	Score
4.5.1	Lobbying for state service provision	0
4.5.2	Meeting societal needs directly	2
4.5.3	Meeting needs of marginalized groups	1

4.5.1 Lobbying for state service provisions. There are few cases in the media of CSOs lobbying the government to meet pressing social needs (there were 22 news items on this topic out of a total 587 news items surveyed). The debate on the appropriate division of labour among providers of social services, such as the state, market and civil society does not feature prominently in the media. There are several reasons for this. Perhaps the most prominent is that CSOs have not perceived their role as advocates for their communities' social needs. Moreover, the external environment in which they operate combined with their preoccupation with meeting their own set of specific goals and objectives, have inhibited the process of encouraging reflection, deliberation and debate on where they stand as CSOs vis-à-vis the state and the market in terms of social service provision.

Neither the NAG nor the research team was able to identify any significant civil society initiatives in this area that were successful in lobbying the state to meet social needs.

4.5.2 Meeting needs directly. While a significant proportion of CSOs are engaged in charitable activities and service delivery, it is difficult to generally decipher the full impact of their work on Egyptians. Several factors would have to be taken into account when considering their role in meeting needs. Recent research suggests that, despite the increasing privatization of the welfare state in Egypt since the 1970s, and particularly since the implementation of economic reform and structural adjustment policies in the 1990s, the government continues to be the main social safety net provider for a variety of services and benefits. While NGOs often work in marginalized communities, they do not always serve the poorest of the poor. It is also worthy to mention that some services are not originally intended to serve the poor, but the lower-middle class or even the middle class. Lastly, even in cases where their outreach was successful in reaching the poorest in a community, the scope of their assistance may be so modest as to have a limited impact on people's lives. However, it is safe to say that CSOs provide a wide diversity of services, ranging from medical services (in-patient and to a lesser extent, outpatient care), educational (literacy, group tutoring for those at school), financial aid (monthly stipend), loans for income-generating purposes, family planning services, services catering for the needs of the youth, including leisure and computer training, and day care

services for mothers. The quality of services tends to differ depending on the type and leadership of CSO providing it.³⁹

4.5.3 Meeting needs of marginalized groups. Due to the legacy of welfare state in Egypt, the government continues to be seen as the main provider for the social needs of the Egyptian people. However, it is fair to say that among the CSOs most active in meeting the needs of marginalized groups, such as poor female-headed households, are NGOs, mosques and churches. A recent community study conducted in one of Cairo's poor urban communities suggests that for poor widows heading households, the monthly stipends they receive from various NGOs and mosques combined are less than the pension they receive from the government, despite the modest quantity of the latter.⁴⁰ The only exception was women receiving a stipend from Mustapha Mahmoud Association, which exceeded that of the government pension. On the other hand, the poor found the outpatient health services more accessible and of better quality than their government counterpart. The government however, continues to be the main provider of outpatient health care in this community, possibly because economies of scale make it less financially sustainable for NGOs to run subsidized in-patient health care for the poor. In basic and higher education, the government continues to be the principle provider of such services to the poor. NGOs are increasingly playing an active role in providing subsidized extra-curricula group tuition for students in primary through to secondary school. These group classes however, run complementary to the government-provided school education, rather than as a substitute to them. Thus, CSOs are engaged in efforts to meet the needs of marginalized groups such as female-headed households and the poor. While they feature as important social safety net providers for these groups, they are part of an elaborate system of welfare provision which features both informal and formal sources of assistance, governmental and non-governmental.

Conclusion

In terms of overall impact on state and society, the study brought to light the limited impact that CSOs have on influencing public policy. This is particularly evident in their non-existent role in addressing the issue of inflation, despite substantial evidence suggesting that it is one of the issues that is likely to negatively affect Egyptian society and many CSOs' constituencies in very tangible and complex ways. Likewise, civil society has a very limited impact on and plays an insignificant role in engaging with government budgeting policy. Civil society takes a stronger role, and has slightly greater impact, in defending human rights. This is largely because human rights organizations have taken a lead in addressing human rights issues by campaigning for changes in government policy. However, despite these efforts the impact of CSO activities on government is not entirely clear.

In general, CSOs that focus on responding to people's immediate, day-to-day needs seem to have a more noticeable impact. While much work remains to be done to empower people, civil society has sought to redress social problems and empower people. Civil society positively impacts livelihoods and individual's well-being through service provision, but this has yet to be done using a sustainable approach to empower citizens themselves. In general, the

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

assessment reveals that civil society has a greater impact on people's lives in a direct sense, by providing welfare services, and less impact on people's lives in an indirect sense, by influencing government policy and acting as a watchdog. Service provision CSOs have a much greater impact than politically oriented, lobbying or advocacy CSOs attempting to influence public policy. Improvements in civil society's structure and environment are necessary to improve the overall impact of Egyptian civil society and to strengthen the health, vibrancy and sustainability of the sector.

IV STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

In this section the main strengths and weaknesses identified through the CSI assessment are highlighted. These strengths and weaknesses draw on secondary data, stakeholder consultations, NAG discussions and the discussions of 75 participants at the National Workshop. They critically analyze the main strong and weak points of Egyptian civil society and set the stage for the recommendations put forward by the CSI assessment in the following section.

Strengths:

- Egypt has a long history of civil society, dating back to the 19th century with the establishment of indigenous forms of organizations, which have played a highly influential role in the history of the country, particularly in the first half of the 20th century. In other words, CSOs are by no means a new phenomenon in Egypt. On the contrary, they have strong indigenous roots that predate the establishment of government attempts at institutionalizing social work through the establishment of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The establishment of CSOs in Egypt also predates western interest in supporting indigenous organization in the African continent following the Second World War. This is one of the strengths of civil society in Egypt, because it gives Egyptians a sense of pride in having a heritage where CSOs played a very resourceful and influential role in the history of the country. It is also reflected in the NAG participants' perception that civil society is an arena where positive values thrive, and where individuals strive to promote them. Thus the embeddings of values, such as non-violence and tolerance, are a strength that civil society can appeal to and promote in society at large.
- The number of CSOs in Egypt is large, and, for particular types of CSOs, such as NGOs, the number is increasing. The institutionalization of civic activities in Egypt suggests that there is significant citizen interest in forming organizations to enable them to play a role in the civic life of the country. Irrespective of the current state of a large number of these organizations, they do in themselves present a significant untapped potential for a variety of measures that could aim at activating them and expanding their capacity.
- Diversity is a noted strength of the civil society arena in Egypt. This diversity is typified in its form, vision, *raison d'etre*, activities, constituency and relations with different segments of society. There is a plethora of organizations to cater to different interests and concerns of citizens from a quantitative point of view. However, there is a need for these organizations to develop a fair and proportional representation of marginalized groups, and a fair distribution of power in leadership positions.
- There has been an increased interest in better understanding and supporting civil society strengthening initiatives in Egypt. These parties include universities and research institutions, both local and foreign, as well as the media, public opinion makers and intellectuals. This manifests in the wealth of literature that has appeared,

particularly in the past 15 years, on civil society in Egypt. Such material could potentially play a role in keeping civil society issues high on the agenda and in strengthening the role of civil society in general.

- The pivotal role played by religion in motivating citizens in charity-giving remains an untapped resource, with huge potential. Given Egypt's large population, if the religious incentive is channelled towards encouraging Egyptians to contribute to a wider array of civil society activities and organizations, this would financially strengthen the sector and provide it with substantial human and financial resources.

Weaknesses:

- A long history of state centralization of power and limited political freedom has meant that CSOs have functioned in a highly inhibitive environment that is not conducive to unrestricted civil action. This is reflected in the level of autonomy enjoyed by CSOs, in the possible roles they can play and the scope of influence they can hope to have on policy and decision makers.
- Despite a sizeable civil society sector or arena, CSOs are not equally accessible to all Egyptians citizens. They still tend to be focused in urban centres, particularly large cities and towns. Many also suffer from being elitist institutions, in terms of membership and, more so, in terms of leadership, leading to the exclusion of significant proportions of Egyptians, such as the poor and women. Overall, levels of citizen participation and, specifically, CSO membership, remain low despite the presence of many CSOs. The weak citizen base in the civil society arena remains problematic to the development of a vibrant, active and widespread civil society.
- The role of CSOs in seeking to influence public policy is limited. This is symptomatic of a wider problem, namely CSOs' narrow perception of the role they could play in the public life of the country. Many CSOs see their *raison d'être* as catering, in one way or another, to the immediate practical needs of citizens. While this is important, it restricts their arena of influence. Few organizations perceive their potential role as seeking to address the structural causes behind the problems that citizens are facing day to day. Few organizations assume the role of watchdog, to monitor the actions of CSOs, the government or the private sector. A minute percentage of CSOs assume the role of seeking to hold the government or the private sector accountable for their actions and still fewer engage with these two sectors to advocate for the rights of their constituencies.

V RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented in this section derive from the most pronounced challenges and opportunities facing civil society in Egypt that emerged from this study. The purpose of this section is to present readers and civil society stakeholders with areas and issues where intervention is possible, and where it could significantly enhance the strength of the civil society arena.

A series of recommendations is listed below. However, if there is one main recommendation which can be gleaned from this report it is the need for further research on civil society in Egypt. It is evident that the research available only covers certain types of CSOs (most notably NGOs) and there are serious gaps in knowledge about other types of CSOs, such as youth centres, clubs, trade unions and cooperatives. Moreover, existing research only covers certain aspects of civil society, for example, while there are some serious studies on the environment in which civil society functions and certain aspects relating to its structures, comprehensive data on the values of civil society is for the most part rather modest.

Consequently, the recommendations for **promoting further research** on civil society in Egypt include:

- Promoting collaborative research between universities, research centres and NGOs on areas where gaps are particularly evident.
- Encouraging CSOs to document their work, with a view to building a national database.
- Encouraging federations and unions, such as the General NGO Federation, to share data on civil society with the public and civil society stakeholders, and to make an effort to publicize it and make it accessible.
- Improving the coordination between CSO scholars and researchers, in order to not duplicate research, but rather strive to have a complimentary research agenda that builds on each other's research.

Recommendations regarding **promoting citizen participation** in civil society are listed below. Since the report confirmed that a significant percentage of Egyptians make charitable contributions out of religious conviction, it is highly recommended that:

- Civil society stakeholders consider ways to raise awareness among Egyptians on the importance of funding development-oriented activities, rather than only charitable works, in order to help the poor.
- Investigate ways to secure that Egyptians' contributions to charity are regular and sustained, even if in smaller amounts.
- Develop ways to promote volunteerism, and study successful CSO case studies that are able to recruit and keep volunteers.

Recommendations to **promote greater organization among CSOs** are listed below.

The study identified two principle forms of CSO organizing: the government established unions and federations, for which membership is compulsory and networks and coalitions, which are initiated by CSOs.

Based on the above, this study recommends that:

- CSOs work with government to reform existing unions and federations, with a view to making them more responsive and reflective of CSO needs.
- Successful cases of CSO networking and coalition building be widely disseminated and publicised in order to identify best practices to facilitate collective action among CSOs.
- Investigate ways of promoting cooperation, not just among CSOs working in the same sector or performing the same function, but also promote wider communication among CSOs working in different sectors and working to fulfil different missions and objectives.

Recommendations to **promote a greater CSO role in public policy** are listed below.

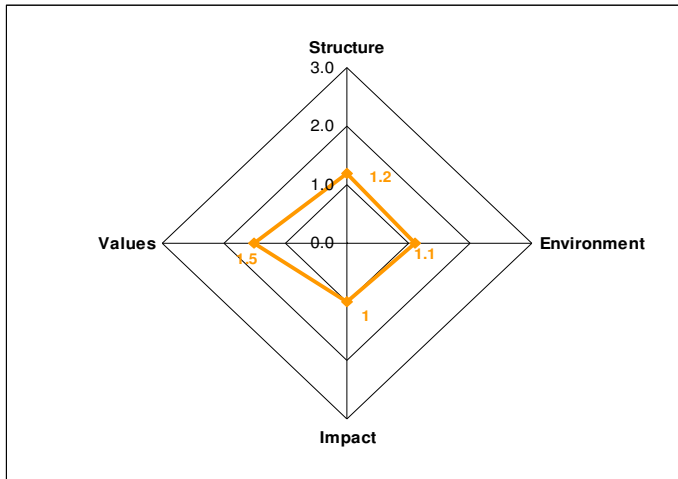
The findings of this study indicate that CSOs' role in policy-formulation and implementation is limited and efforts to address the structural causes behind people's day to day problems and dilemmas is almost non-existent. Accordingly, it is strongly recommended that:

- The government recognize the important role CSOs can play in the policy arena, and, remove the legal, political and practical obstacles which inhibit CSOs from engaging in advocacy for policy change, monitoring government performance or seeking to hold the government accountable.
- Efforts must be made to increase CSOs' awareness of the potential role they can play in advocacy, and help them to work simultaneously on several levels, such as service-provision, research and campaigning.
- Encourage action-oriented research to help CSOs understand the root causes behind the daily problems they encounter in the community, such as unemployment, inflation, poverty and social deprivation, and disseminate this information widely. It is only by CSO actors and activists being made aware of the link between policy and practice that they might reconsider adopting alternative approaches in their work.

VI CONCLUSION

This conclusion highlights the most pertinent issues raised by the CSI project in Egypt. It offers a brief interpretation of the CSI diamond and then engages in a more in-depth manner on some of its implications.

FIGURE VI.1: Civil Society Diamond for Egypt



The Civil Society Diamond for Egypt suggests that it is an arena that is still in an embryonic stage, in terms of having a strong structural basis, working in a conducive environment, reflecting positive values and having significant external impact. With the exception of the values dimension, the other dimensions of the diamond are close to the score of 1, indicating civil society's relatively weak state. Although the diamond is rather well-balanced, civil society is quite small and exhibits a poor **structure** with limited citizen participation and resources, a relatively

disabling **environment** with political restrictions, rather insignificant **impact**, particularly on public policy, and limited promotion of positive **values**, despite a relatively strong internal practice of these values by CSOs themselves.

An examination of the weakest dimension in the CSI diamond, its **structure**, indicates that despite the thousands of existing CSOs in Egypt, citizen participation is still quite limited. This is especially so, if forms of compulsory membership (such as unions) are excluded. The reasons behind this limited citizen participation in civil society are many. Some are related to the very institutions themselves, such as the limited ability of CSOs to engage wide sections of the public, and others are socio-cultural, such as charitable giving in-money or in-kind, which is still seen as the preferred mode of engaging with poverty and other developmental issues that many CSOs are involved in. Other factors relate to the environment, which still has remnants of the first half century of the country's history, in which citizen's civic participation was not promoted and a centralized state sought to control all aspects of civil life. Civil society actors also highlighted their limited financial resources as one of the most important impediments to their ability to function effectively, as well as their need for improved organisational infrastructure and on the job training.

The **environment** in which Egyptian civil society exists is in the midst of undergoing tremendous political change. For the first time in the history of the country, CSOs were given official permission to monitor the parliamentary elections of 2005. CSOs formed coalitions and networks to work together to organize nationwide election monitoring. Equally important is that the official media, which had generally ignored these watchdog and advocacy CSOs, or at the very least not given them positive coverage, referred to their monitoring reports, approached them for analysis of the situation and covered their work. This indicates that the

enlargement of political space witnessed in the country this year has had a positive impact on the environment for CSOs. Nonetheless, legal and political restrictions, economic hardship and social problems still negatively influence the work of CSOs, especially the work that requires a high degree of political openness, citizen engagement and mobilization, such as advocacy work.

The weaknesses in the environment and structural dimensions clearly contribute to the limited **impact** of CSOs in Egypt. However, the limited impact should not be interpreted as an indicator of a limited presence. To the contrary, many CSOs play a crucial role in service delivery, supporting the poorest through regular charitable hand-outs and striving to meet the daily needs of the community, either through formal means (i.e. direct means of support) or through informal networks (i.e. helping citizens access services and other forms of social assistance). The gap between the strong CSO engagement in poverty alleviation and social welfare, and the limited impact of their work may be due to the approach used by the majority of CSOs in addressing chronic problems in society. Charity continues to be the principal mode of operation, despite the fact that some CSOs have adopted more developmental approaches to their work. Yet, the extent to which even development-oriented NGOs have strived to empower people is still low. Since engaging in development work is still a new territory for many CSOs, it is still too early to capture the full impact of their work. Yet, if a developmental approach is beginning to take root among CSOs, the same cannot be said for advocacy or policy interventions, which continue to be very limited in scope and do not enjoy the support of the majority of CSOs. As indicated throughout this report, factors pertaining to the environment play an important role. However, there are also pertinent challenges to changing the mindset of the CSOs themselves in terms of their awareness of, and responsiveness to, adopting non-traditional modes of addressing the problems of the poor. So far, many continue to see their role as confined to direct service delivery.

Of the four dimensions, civil society's **values** received the highest score. Does this mean that values are the strongest attribute of civil society in Egypt? This higher score for values could be interpreted in a variety of ways. To begin with, solid, impartial and current data on many features of this dimension was missing, such as level of corruption within CSOs, which meant that the NAG had to capture a dimension that was "amoeba-like" and difficult to pin down. This made the scoring process rather challenging. In light of that, the NAG often ruled favourably - more favourably perhaps than was anticipated - on many of the dimensions' features. This positive assessment of civil society's values by the NAG may have been influenced by the fact that many NAG members are civil society activists and practitioners, and deeply believe in civil society and its causes. For many indicators, they were more likely to see the glass half full than half empty. Nonetheless, the score of 1.5 clearly indicates that there are significant challenges to strengthening the values of CSOs and particularly the need to strengthen the promotion of these values in society at large, beyond the internal practice of these values.

Civil society' engagement with values of democracy leaves much room for improvement. Similarly, despite the social need for CSOs to promote values of non-violence and tolerance in Egyptian society, this role remains modest. The fact that CSOs cannot even perceive the possibility that they might have a role to play in holding the state or private sector accountable

for their actions may limit their ability to have a greater impact on the key issues facing Egyptian society.

The CSI project presented the project team with the challenge of having to bring together many pieces of the puzzle of the civil society arena in Egypt, in its totality, heterogeneity, complexity and chaos. Undertaking this exercise has been revealing, and made the team focus on identifying the missing pieces of the puzzle and ponder the reasons behind their absence and the inadequacy of information on them. Is it that they have been deliberately pushed aside for political or other reasons? Is it that the information missing reflects new visions, approaches and perspective on exploring civil society that civil society in Egypt is not yet familiar with, or is it that our conceptualization and understanding of civil society in Egypt has been quite narrow, inhibiting us from seeking to capture a holistic perspective on a vast sector?

In collecting and analyzing the data for the CSI project, other than the gaps in our knowledge of civil society, the study revealed three specific areas where efforts are needed to strengthen civil society: (1) capitalizing on citizens' religious incentives to partake in charity for wider and greater participation in other civil society activities, (2) the need to promote greater coordination among CSOs, through government and non-governmental initiatives and, most importantly and (3) the need to explore ways in which CSOs can play a greater role in public policy and advocacy beyond their current service provider role in society.

A final concluding remark to emphasize here is that the Civil Society Index produced for Egypt should not be taken as an end in itself. We hope that this report will stimulate further research to improve our knowledge about civil society and to guide actions that would enable CSOs to play a larger role in Egypt's development.

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APPENDIX 1: LIST OF NAG MEMBERS

1. Dr. Abdel-Aziz Mokhtar - Dean of Faculty of Social Service, Cairo.
2. Mrs. Amira Howeidy - Assistant Editor-in-Chief of Al Ahram Weekly Newspaper
3. Dr. Ateya Husain Afandi - Professor of Public Administration & NGOs Management, Faculty of Economics & Political Science, Cairo University.
4. Mr. Magdy Al-Sanady - Health & Nutrition Officer, UNICEF.
5. Mrs. Hala Al-Kholy - Regional Director of Institute of Cultural Affairs.
6. Mrs. Sohair Ahmad - Consultant in Family Development, Center for Egyptian Family Development.
7. Dr. Wafaa Menaisy - Professor of Education, Alexandria University, Director of Environment Pioneers Association.
8. Mr. Hasan Yousef - Lawyer , Trainer & Researcher in Human Rights and Disability Legislations, Director of Shomou Human Rights & Disabled Association.
9. Mrs. Azza Kamel – Managing Director of Appropriate Communications Techniques.
10. Dr. Alaa Saber - Director of Center for Development Services.
11. Mr. Hesham Helal - Director of Union of Child Care Association, Qena.
12. Dr. Sherif Ghonaim - Chief Executive Officer of the Egyptian NGO Support Center

APPENDIX 2: Description of CSI Process in Egypt

1. Secondary data review is conducted by CDS and a draft **overview report** is prepared and distributed to CIVICUS for comment/inputs.
2. Four **regional stakeholder consultations** (with approximately 40 participants each) is conducted in Aswan, Behira, North Sinai and Sharkiya. Participants respond to individual questionnaires and subsequently participate in a day-long group discussion about the state of civil society in Egypt.
3. Simultaneously, other primary research is carried out. The primary research carried out in Egypt was:
 - A review of prominent print **media** is conducted to gather information on civil society activities as well as attitudes and values expressed by civil society and other actors in the public.
 - Fact finding studies were researched and compiled about civil society's impact on policy issues as well as Corporate Social Responsibility.
 Key informant interviews were carried out with prominent stakeholders, namely:
 - Interview with Dr. Samir Abdel Wahab, Director of Public Administration Research Center, Cairo University
 - Interview with Dr. Heba Handoussa - Director and lead author of UNDP Egypt Human Development Report 2004.
 - Interview with Dr. Hisham Fahmy, Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt.
 - Interview with Yasser Zarei and Ehab Sallam from the Human Rights Center for the Assistance of Prisoners
 - Interview with Dr. Ashraf Eldoadoa from the UNDP's Human Rights Capacity Building Project in Egypt.
4. All findings are submitted to the civil society expert (and/or drafting team) who prepares draft country report.
5. The NAG meets to **assign scores** for indicators based on research inputs and according to scoring guidelines. These scores are aggregated to come up with subdimension and dimension scores.
6. **National workshop** (composed mainly of civil society actors but including representatives from government, media, academic institutions and business sectors) is convened. Participants receive draft country report prior to workshop. The goals of the workshop are to review and validate Index research findings, to analyse principal strengths and weaknesses of civil society and to identify potential civil society strengthening activities.
7. Scoring and national workshop results are incorporated into a final country report.

APPENDIX 3: POLICY IMPACT STUDIES⁴¹

The role of Egyptian civil society in influencing policy with regards to violence in detention.

Introduction

Topics of the policy impact study were chosen according to a survey of stakeholders, who picked torture in prison as the most important human rights issue, while the rise in prices and its impact on people's livelihoods was chosen as the most important policy issue. In order to investigate civil society's role in influencing policy with regards to decreasing violence in detention, we used a desktop research review of literature developed by numerous sources, including newspapers clippings and interviews with some stakeholders who work on violence in detention.

International and national human rights organizations have repeatedly stated and affirmed that people in detention in Egypt are at the risk of torture. Furthermore, "the government admits there are occasional scattered incidents of torture and abuse by security forces; however, they deny it is 'systematic'."⁴²

Human Rights Environment in Egypt

The current human rights environment reveals that the government is working on improving the situation. In February 2002, Law No. 152 was issued, repealing flogging as a penal measure in prisons in Egypt. According to the Human Rights Association for the Assistance of Prisoners (HRCAP) annual report of 2003, "[t]he parliament approved it after it discovered the contravention of this penalty to article 42 of the Constitution", as well as its contradiction to Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.⁴³ Furthermore, the government also introduced a draft law on the creation of a National Council of Human Rights. The Council was established in February 2004 and surprised many observers in April 2005 by publishing a critical report on human rights in Egypt and particularly by tackling the issue of violence in detention.

That said, Human Rights organizations are caught by the NGO law of 2002, which does not leave much room for freedom of operation and keeps them at the mercy of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Law No. 84 of 2002 currently regulates CSOs and their activities in Egypt. The new law is seen as restrictive on NGO activities and their fundraising ability. In fact the law grants the Ministry of Social Affairs, and not courts, the right to disband NGOs that are deemed to be engaged in illegal activities.⁴⁴

The Egyptian Association against Torture, whose activities would be directly relevant to our study, was denied registration in the summer of 2003; for fear that it might interfere with policy.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Egyptian authorities have been recurrently criticized for arrests relating to supporters of the Palestinian intifada or to opponents to the war in Iraq. More recently, many reproaches were made regarding the arbitrary detention of a great number of suspects with regards to the Taba bombings of October 2004.

Violence in Detention

According to Human Rights Watch, "Torture and ill-treatment are known or suspected to be the cause of at least seventeen deaths in detention in 2002 and 2003, including at least three cases at the hands of the State Security Investigations (SSI) branch of the Ministry of Interior, and additional cases of deaths

⁴¹ This study was conducted and written by Ms Asmaa Shallabi.

⁴² "The Official Take on Torture", *Cairo Times*, 14-20 November 2002, p. 8.

⁴³ Detention and Detainees in Egypt 2003: Sixth Annual Report on the Condition of Prisons and Detention Centers. Human Rights Association for the Assistance of Prisoners, p. 12.

⁴⁴ <http://www.pogar.org/countries/index.asp?cid=5>.

⁴⁵ Human Rights Watch World Report for 2004.

in detention were reported in 2004.”⁴⁶ “The Egyptian citizen is treated with disdain inside police stations because it has become the only method known by the officers of the Interior Ministry”.⁴⁷ If this is the case, then fighting violence in detention is more than a challenging task for civil society actors working on the issue. While the media is increasingly bringing to light cases of torture, the perpetrators are often seen as being sentenced *pro forma*. In fact, the majority of cases do not make it to courts. In 2001; about 60 officers were investigated, and most perpetrators receive administrative penalties.⁴⁸

Civil Society Activities

To resolve these problems, Egyptian civil society has engaged in various activities. The Human Rights Center for the Assistance of Prisoners (HRCAP) is the most relevant NGO to this study, as it exclusively works on the welfare of detainees. They are currently engaged in two campaigns, one against torture and the other against the emergency law. HRCAP attempts to influence policy by publishing studies and sharing them with MPs who also attend their seminars. A number of MPs are currently working with HRCAP’s campaign to end the emergency rule enacted since 1981. Furthermore, HRCAP’s publications contain recommendations to policy makers and government officials. This has led to a process where feedback from the government is provided, hence creating a dialogue, and mutual recognition between the two.

But the other side of the coin is that civil society itself also needs to become familiar with the human rights culture in order to better defend it. The media, parliamentarians, lawyers, women, journalists and CSOs have been attending capacity building workshops engaged in spreading the culture of Human Rights, by UNDP via training sessions given by civil society actors among others.

Flogging Case Study

It is realized that Egyptian civil society has little impact on changing policy with regards to violence in detention. In fact, regarding the elimination of the flogging penalty, their 2003 annual report clearly states that: “This is one of the rare occasions when the People’s Assembly addressed in its general session issues and concerns regarding Egyptian prisons and their conditions. It is important to note that the Egyptian government, rather than parliament members, introduced the draft law.”⁴⁹ In January 2002, the Flogging penalty was legally eliminated as a penalty in Egyptian jails. This law was adopted by the People’s Assembly on 23 December 2001, and came following a decree by Minister of Interior. The instance of this change in policy, with regards to violence in detention, reflects the aspect that the government likes to take credit for taking the initiative, which doesn’t leave much room for civil society to influence policy. In fact, the decree was announced before a bill could be introduced in the People’s Assembly. In this regard, HRCAP shares the view that policy changes with regards to violence in detention will probably be linked to pressures (both internal and external), as well as the evolution of the whole reform environment, but not necessarily through official procedures like in western democratic systems (i.e. lobbying parliamentarians, who then introduce a bill to the parliament). Competition over foreign funding does prevail within Egyptian civil society and has led to its fragmentation, despite denial from various human rights organizations.

⁴⁶ Human Rights Watch World Report for 2004

⁴⁷ Mohamed Zarei, Director of the Human Rights Center for the Assistance of Prisoners in “Banning the Beatings”, *Cairo Times*, 14-20 March 2002, p 11.

⁴⁸ “Police Torture Under Scrutiny”, *Cairo Times*, 18-24 July 2002, p. 9

⁴⁹ Detention and Detainees in Egypt 2003: Sixth Annual Report on the Condition of Prisons and Detention Centres. Human Rights Association for the Assistance of Prisoners, p. 12

The role of Egyptian civil society in influencing policy with regards to the national budget

Introduction

The impact of civil society on the national budget process is particularly important, due to the relevance of the budget on all policy areas. In order to investigate civil society's role in the budget process in Egypt, desktop research was used and interviews with some key informants on the issue were held.

Budget Policy Making Process in Egypt

Articles 86 and 115 of the Constitution stipulate that the draft national budget must be submitted to the People's Assembly (PA) two months before the closure of the fiscal year (i.e. 30 June).⁵⁰ "Each provision is approved separately. The plenary session must not close until the budget is approved."⁵¹ As for the auditing stage, the Central Auditing Organization (CAO) presents an annual report to the PA.⁵² In all stages of the budget process, only political parties have leverage in influencing the budget and its policy. It is difficult to see how they can introduce changes to the budget when out of the 454 members of the PA only 27 are not members of the ruling party, and when the auditing body is itself affiliated with the government.

Civil Society and Budget in Egypt

In July 2004, a reshuffle of the Cabinet brought Mr. Ahmed Nazif to the post of Prime Minister. The economic challenges faced by the current Cabinet are numerous and important, among them the priority of putting a halt to the deteriorated status of public finances. Despite the Cabinet's decision to reduce customs tariffs (raising consumption and hence income tax and custom revenue) and raise interest rates of the pound, to counter inflation and support the pound, the overall deficit is expected to rise sharply from 6.1% of GDP to 8% of GDP.⁵³ The government is also considering reducing its spending by taking away subsidies on certain goods. Although there is ample media coverage about public finances and the challenges of reducing the budget deficit, there was no study case identified whereby civil society tried to influence budget policies.

According to the policy making scheme described above, there is a narrow margin whereby civil society can play a role in shaping policy with regards to the budget in Egypt. In fact, the only means is for political parties to play a role, or for civil society stakeholders to lobby members of parliament. Contrary to civil society groups who work on human rights and are heavily involved in advocacy and activism, groups who work on economic issues are not as vocal. In addition, lobbying political parties seldom takes place, as civil society does not have access to enough information to engage in a debate or to engage in a full fledged campaign. Furthermore, the real debates take place in the cabinet which is a governmental institution. The absence of a national debate is also explained by the government's behaviour of acting by stealth. This has been the modus operandi with regards to issues that would have an important social impact. In fact, this was the lesson learned from the 1977 revolts which erupted when the government wanted to take away bread subsidies in order to comply with the World Bank's structural adjustment scheme.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ <http://www.sis.gov.eg/eginfnew/politics/parlim/html/pres0304.htm>.

⁵¹ <http://www.pogar.org/countries/finances.asp?cid=5>.

⁵² Ibid. Law No. 144, of 1988, stipulates that the CAO is "an independent body that has corporate public stature and is affiliated to the People's Assembly. Its task is to control the government funds and those of other public companies as stipulated in that law. It helps the People's Assembly in the financial control of both the accounting and legal sections monitoring performance, following up the implementation of the plan and legal control of decisions issued on financial irregularities".

⁵³ The Economist Intelligence Unit, Egypt - Country Report, January 2005, p. 3.

⁵⁴ Interview with Dr. Heba Handoussa - Director and lead author of the Egypt Human Development Report 2004.

Efforts exist to try to implicate civil society actors, namely the media in the process of budget making. The Public Administration Research Center and Consultation Center (PARC), is one of very few organizations which provides training on financial management and the national budget. However, due to its affiliation to Cairo University the centre is considered a semi-official organization. Furthermore, it does not provide MPs with training, as the latter only attend the training sessions as observers. In addition, the evaluation of the impact of training on the trainees is very difficult to measure.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Interview with Dr. Samir Abdel Wahab, Director of PARC. It was only mentioned that training beneficiaries conducted an evaluation of the training received at the end of each training.

APPENDIX 4: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Introduction

The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has gained prominence internationally over the past decade as international NGOs and multilateral agencies are increasingly drawing attention to the social and environmental behaviour of private companies. Although CSR is more prominent in the West, the concept is beginning to gain credence in the developing world. In Egypt, CSR is an emerging trend in the business community and has become more visible over the past five years or so.⁵⁶ While it can be argued that the importance of charitable work has been embedded in the country's cultural and religious heritage for centuries, it is only relatively recently that CSR, as a distinct set of values and principles, has begun to be publicly reported by companies and become institutionalized in corporate activities.

This study aims to provide a brief overview of CSR in Egypt, in order to determine the nature of the corporate environment in which civil society actors operate, for example to what extent does the private sector assist or hinder civil society in its activities. This study will review the annual reports of leading Egyptian corporations to analyze the prominence of CSR, and will draw on interviews with business leaders and experts to examine the activities of other companies, as well as the corporate environment in general. It should be noted that although broader definitions of CSR include responsibility towards corporations' employees and shareholders (embracing principles such as equity in hiring practices, fiscal transparency and many others), this study is concerned primarily with corporate actions that affect the external community and environment. This is because these issues are more relevant to the majority of civil society actors in Egypt, and will thus be better indicators of the relationship between the private sector and civil society.

Review of Leading Companies

This study reviewed the annual reports for the years 2002 and/or 2003 of eight of the top 20 publicly traded Egyptian corporations by revenue.⁵⁷ The reports were analyzed for reference to activities related to CSR. Mention of community-related activities or the promotion of higher environmental standards was made in the reports of six of these companies (please see the appendix for a breakdown of the reports by company name and type of activity). The study does not overlook the possibility that some positive corporate activities may be undocumented in the annual reports. Nevertheless, it is safe to assume that if an activity is not mentioned in the annual report, it is probably not sufficiently important from the management's point of view and there is therefore no institutionalized attitude in the company towards CSR.

Of course, the data in the appendix does not indicate the precise nature of corporate social or environmental activities performed, nor the degree of each company's commitment to CSR. This information is reflected to some degree in the annual reports, where it is evident that there are considerable differences between the attitudes and approaches of different companies.

Some of the companies reviewed have undertaken more consistent and wide scale activities than others, indicating a more developed and institutionalized CSR culture. For example, OCI, OT and Mobinil are involved in a broad range of community activities, such as providing scholarships to outstanding

⁵⁶ Interview with Dr. Hisham Fahmy, Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt.

⁵⁷ Source: *Business Today Egypt*, vol.9, issue 2, February 2003, p. 76. The companies selected for this review are private-sector companies for which annual reports are published and available. Other companies in the top 20 were public sector companies (excluded from the study because it can be argued that their social responsibilities are undertaken by other government agencies), companies whose reports were not easily accessible to the researchers, or companies who claimed not to publish annual reports.

students, training programs for youth and sponsoring a broad range of cultural and community services through donations to NGOs and government agencies.⁵⁸ These companies have also clearly stated their concern for the environmental consequences of their activities and have taken measures to that effect. OCI has gone even further, being one of a handful of Egyptian corporations to join the UN's Global Compact initiative, promoting the principles of CSR.

Other corporations, such as CIB, highlight their considerable charitable contributions, but do not have programs for working directly with the community. The reports of the privatized Suez Cement Company focus on the measures the company has taken to mitigate the environmental damage caused by its production process, and less on the company's assistance to the community. In fact, Suez Cement appears to be merely paying lip service to the notion of assisting the community. Its 2002 report notes a relatively small in-kind donation, but no mention of any such activity was found in the 2003 report.⁵⁹

Faisal Islamic Bank of Egypt is an interesting case, because it exemplifies the correlation between the concept of CSR and core Islamic precepts, such as *zakat* (almsgiving). The Bank's Zakat fund has been active for many years in channelling both the Bank's own contributions as well as the donations of external benefactors to community services. The Bank actually funds one of the most progressive CSR programs reviewed because it operates a vocational training centre and is building (and planning to operate) an orphanage.

Finally, it is interesting to note that, among the eight companies that were reviewed, there was no uniformity across sectors in engaging in CSR. For example, CIB has a visible CSR operation while MIBank does not. The commitment to social responsibility appears to occur on a company-by-company basis.

Broader Picture of CSR in Egypt

Within the Egyptian private sector, as in all countries, there is a considerable difference in the level of CSR exhibited by different companies. Recent years have seen a very small, but growing, number of Egyptian companies publicly embracing CSR and publicizing their commitment to one or more of its component principles. They perceive that these principles are important to their company, whether in terms of their relations to employees, to customers, to shareholders or prospective investors, to officials, or to the general public.

Yet, as seen above, even amongst the nation's leading corporations, there is a significant gap in the type of activities undertaken and in their reporting of such activities. This gap is perhaps even greater in the business community at large, where a large proportion of local companies do not engage in systematic CSR programs.

This is reflected in the perceptions of most members of the public and even many business people, who have marginal awareness of CSR. A business consultant who has held several top-level positions in a number of corporations stated that, in his opinion, CSR "hardly exists in Egypt and is not part of the business culture here." Others may regard CSR with scepticism or not be fully aware of its nature. For example, a common misconception is that private charitable donations and foundations established by wealthy businessmen are the same as CSR when, in fact, they are not. This is because foundations established by an individual or a family are almost always separate legal entities from the companies

⁵⁸ Although these three companies are legally separate entities, they are led by members of a single family, the Sawirises, who founded OCI and OT and are either majority shareholder, or largest Egyptian shareholder, in all three companies.

⁵⁹ L.E. 26,000 worth of cement was donated to government agencies and charitable associations, compared to the millions of pounds donated by other corporations reviewed.

with which these individuals or families are associated and have their own budgets and mandates. CSR, on the other hand, is an integral part of a company's activities and should be reflected in its reports and financial statements.

The situation is quite different, however, in the case of multinational corporations. Since CSR as an integrated set of principles and activities originated in North America and Europe, it was multinationals originating in those regions that first introduced the concept to the Egyptian market. To a large extent, these corporations remain the leaders in practicing and promoting CSR. Due to international exposure, lengthier experience and greater facility in adapting existing CSR packages to a local context, companies such as Shell, British Petroleum, British American Tobacco and Proctor & Gamble are among the most visible advocates of CSR in Egypt.⁶⁰

At the same time, it is becoming increasingly recognized by Egyptian companies that CSR will not only provide moral and ethical validation of their activities, but will also reinforce their reputation locally and help put them on the map globally. It is probably due to this last consideration that many of the companies pioneering the CSR trend in Egypt are those that conduct (or hope to conduct) business abroad or with foreign corporations. One of the most prominent examples is SEKEM Holding, a group of companies that produce organic vegetables and fruit, spices, herbal remedies and phyto-pharmaceuticals, mainly for export. The company also has a visible presence in the local market and is widely known for its philosophy of caring for the environment and investing in the community, an approach it has been following since the early 1980s.

There are also indications that smaller Egyptian companies operating mainly in the local market are beginning to show a greater appreciation of CSR. The Global Compact (GC) initiative, launched in Egypt by UNDP in early 2004, introduced the concept of CSR to representatives of the private sector.⁶¹ According to Guillaume Delalande, of the UNDP office in Cairo, around 35 Egyptian companies, mostly of medium size, have joined the GC so far. The companies have joined on a voluntary basis and are working on translating the GC's nine principles into concrete activities.⁶²

Concluding Remarks

In Egypt, CSR as an institutionalized concept is still very much in the early stages of its development. Most companies do not have CSR programs incorporated into their structure. Yet CSR is gaining prominence in the business community as traditional notions of charitable giving combine with Western-style social responsibility and environmental standards to encourage more Egyptian companies to adopt CSR as part of their business culture.

⁶⁰ Companies mentioned by Dr. Hisham Fahmy, Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt.

⁶¹ 'Good for Business,' *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Issue No. 677, 12-18 February 2004.

⁶² However, as of early 2005, the authors of this report had no knowledge of specific achievements within this process, which was still in its early stages.

Table A.1: Information Contained in Annual Reports of Companies Reviewed

Company Name	Responsibility towards Community				Responsibility towards Environment
	Occasional charitable donations to external organization	Consistent charitable donations to ext.	Direct donations to communit	Establish and operate own service	
1. Orascom Telecom (OT)		√	√		√
2. Mobinil		√	√		√
3. Orascom Construction Industries (OCI)		√	√		√
4. Commercial International Bank (CIB)		√			N/A
5. Suez Cement	√				√
6. Faisal Islamic Bank of Egypt		√	√	√	N/A
7. Oriental Weavers					
8. Misr International Bank (MIBank)					N/A

APPENDIX 5: STUDY ON CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE MEDIA

1. Introduction

In order to examine and analyze the media's treatment of civil society organizations, a media monitoring exercise was undertaken for a period of three months, from February to April 2004. The media review process sought to shed light on the quantity and visibility of reporting on civil society in the media, as well as the thematic areas which receive special attention in media reporting on civil society. It also draws on which groups of civil society actors, and which issues specific to civil society, are prominent in the media.

Three press publications were monitored: *Al-Ahram*, *Al-Wafd* and *Al-Osbou*. *Al-Ahram* newspaper is owned by Egypt's lower House, the Shura Council and generally represents the government viewpoint, while *Al-Wafd* newspaper is owned by the liberal Wafd party and represents its views. *Al-Osbou* newspaper, while not directly owned by the Nasserite party, is led by sympathizers with the party's views and reflects them as such. These three press publications are among many others, with a wide diversity of political and ideological stances and views. In particular during the past year, Egypt has witnessed a massive proliferation of publications appearing on a daily or weekly basis. The Press Council has also recently approved, in July 2005, the release of 12 new publications.

There are some general observations applicable to all three newspapers examined. It is safe to say that none of the newspapers examined had a "civil society slot/page" as such, possibly because the newspaper leaders have not conceptualized civil society as one monolithic entity worthy of its own distinctive space.

It is difficult to overlook the fact that the political perspective of a newspaper often shapes the way civil society issues are reported. The implications of the party line on the press' coverage of civil society are far reaching. The impact is quite conspicuous in terms of two important features: (1) the kind of CSOs, and their activities that are considered meriting reporting and (2) how the story is reported and the extent to which it is given salience in the newspaper, in comparison to other types of stories. The following may provide a case in point of an example of the ways in which the political line, pursued by the editorial policy, influences how a story is reported: Coverage of a story involving a dispute between the government and a human rights organization is likely to have a different slant in each of these newspapers. *Al-Ahram* may be keen to give the official perspective on the dispute and *Al-Wafd* may present it as a case of government encroachment against civil society and its autonomy, while *Al-Osbou* may report it as a case of defending national interest against western-inspired and funded entities.

It is noteworthy to point that the general "rules" of the press apply to civil society issues as to all other issues, namely, they are tied to notions of news values and news worthiness. The outcome is that certain types of civil society organizations are more likely than others to feature in the press, whether positively or negatively. Certain professional syndicates, such as those representing lawyers, doctors, journalists and engineers, are likely to receive significant news coverage compared to that received by some other types of CSOs, because they are active in holding public events, deliberations and their representatives are often making public statements, and participating in the political life of the country. By comparison, small remote youth centres are less likely to receive press attention, primarily because their activities are important to an immediate community rather than of relevance to the public at large.

2. Research Findings

The following sections presents the way the media reported on civil society organizations and their activities.

2.1. Main features of civil society reporting in the media

Frequency and placement of reporting: Out of a total of 363 articles reviewed *Al Ahram* carried 69.15% of civil society's coverage, *Al Osbou* 7.71% and *Al Wafd* 23.14%. One needs to be cautious when reporting on the "amount" of civil society coverage in the three newspapers. *Al-Ahram* newspaper's last page, often known as the society news is often full of stories of an NGO about to hold an exhibition or a conference. These stories tend to be more like news announcements and have little substance, yet they still count numerically as news items in the survey. On the other hand, neither *Al-Osbou* nor *al-Wafd* have a set society news column nor do they regularly feature announcements of events of CSOs, with the exception of events to be held by political parties and syndicates.

Out of 363 news items monitored, 357 got prominence in the media. In other words 98% of the monitored items were featured on prominent pages. More precisely, 14.29 % of the 357 were featured on the first page, 32.21% on the second page, 50.98% on the third page, and only 2.52% were featured in Op-eds.

Forms of reporting: Of all items monitored, 31.40% were news stories relevant to civil society. In second place comes in-brief/short 23.14%. Only 14 articles or 3.86% of all items monitored were opinions pieces. There are several factors that can help account for this: first, as daily newspapers, it is only natural for *Al-Ahram* and *Al-Wafd* to focus on news stories. Moreover, the space for opinion articles is somewhat limited in these pages, with a certain amount of space normally reserved for particular columnists with specific interests. As for *Al-Osbou*, due to its focus on events and happenings it considered to be of "political importance", CSO activities would be likely to be considered insufficiently political to make it to the news or opinion articles. However, when there is a clear political angle to the story, such as a confrontation between the government and a CSO (such as a syndicate, human rights organization etc.), then it is more likely for CSO-related stories to appear on the newspaper's pages.

The remaining news items got very minimal coverage (between 1 and 2 %). It is noteworthy that of all the op-eds, 78.5% were published by *Al Osbou*, while *Al Ahram* only published one op-ed article. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to point that *Al Osbou* is a weekly paper, while daily news papers like *Al Wafd* and *Al Ahram* featured a negligible amount of op-eds about civil society. The coverage of civil society in *Al Ahram* and *Al Wafd* was presented in the form of news stories and in-briefs/short.

Another general feature of press coverage of civil society is that, for the most part, stories with a political dimension/angle are more likely to receive coverage and analysis. For example, conflict between a civil society organization (such as a syndicate) and the government, or over the legal environment, is likely to receive attention in all three newspapers as a political issue. For the most part, day-to-day activities of civil society organizations are not likely to receive as much attention, or if they do, they often take the form of an announcement reported in no more than a couple of lines. Activities of large organizations sponsored by prominent political figures may also stand a better chance than those of smaller less conspicuous associations.

2.2. Thematic focus

Main Themes: Over the monitoring period, 32 new items (8.79%) were concerned with **advocacy** issues (including marches, petitions, sit-ins, civil disobedience, protest, demonstrations, lobbying, mass meetings/gatherings), mainly covering syndicates' demands for a third mobile company. This is followed by the coverage of the **justice system** (which includes court rulings, constitutional issues, new laws and bill amendments, judicial system and cases), representing 7.69% of articles surveyed. In third place comes **sports** news covering clubs activities. **Service delivery and welfare** articles came next,

with 4.67% of articles surveyed and then **corruption** was the theme of 4.4% of all items covered. Finally, **civil society specific issues** were covered in 4.12% of all surveyed articles.

Secondary topics' coverage is identical with primary topics' coverage (i.e. advocacy, justice, sports, welfare and corruption), the only difference however, is that local governments are also getting increasing attention as secondary topics (6.08% coverage of all secondary topics). *Al Ahram* and *Al-Wafd* are on equal par in covering the issue of advocacy (12 items in both newspapers). *Al-Osbou*, gave it a slightly lower prominence with 8 items covered during the survey period.

As for the justice system, *Al-Ahram* gives it a substantially high coverage, 19 items were featured about it, while *Al-Osbou* and *Al Wafd* carried four and six items respectively.

Local governments (including news pertaining to national governments, national issues, parliament, and political events) were widely covered by *Al Ahram*, 14 news items, while *Al Wafd* comes second with 10 news items and *Al Osbou* had 3 news items on the issue. As *Al Ahram* is a semi-official news paper with a policy of covering government-related events and news in particular, it is only expedient that local government related issues would be seen as worthy of coverage and given weight accordingly. With regards to service delivery and welfare, *Al Ahram* and *Al Wafd* have tended to report more news stories about civil society services delivery and welfare than *Al-Osbou*. As mentioned, this is partly due to the focus on issues deemed as political by *Al-Osbou*, with only a limited space reserved for social, cultural or sports issues. Interestingly sports was widely covered by *Al Wafd* (20 articles), while *Al Ahram* featured only 8 articles on the topic. One possible explanation is that *Al-Wafd* newspaper has sought in recent years to give the impression of being a populist newspaper- catering to a broad audience. On the other hand, *Al-Ahram* is still very much recognized as a newspaper that primarily reports on government affairs, thus, having less general space allocated for non-official related news and matters (including sports). Finally, 98% of all monitored items were featured on the three most prominent pages of the newspapers.

Geographic Focus: Of articles monitored, 52.25% spoke of civil society issues on the national level with, local civil society issues receiving 27.53% of the coverage (98 news items). Civil society issues on the governorate level amounted to 72 items, (20.22% of all items monitored). It is interesting to note that there is no coverage of Egyptian civil society activities on the international level (i.e. 0 items were surveyed on this issue). All three newspapers gave prominence to the coverage of civil society issues on the national level. Local civil society issues were covered more extensively than governorate level civil society issues. However, it is important to note that *Al Wafd* gave more prominence to governorate-level related issues compared with *Al Ahram* and *Al Osbou*. The issues of the advocacy, the judicial system, corruption, service delivery were widely covered on the national level. As expected, civil society issues relating to the local government received more coverage in locally focused news items. Interestingly, the issue of civil society in education only received national coverage.

2.3. Civil society Actors and Issues

Civil Society Issues: In terms of the three newspapers' coverage of issues relating to civil society structure, support for civil society's infrastructure received the lion's share of news coverage. Coverage of citizen engagement in community action featured less, but was the second most salient subdimension covered under the civil society structure component. Coverage of civil society's environment was salient across all three months. Between the months of February and April, the issue of the autonomy of CSOs elicited by far the most attention. Civil society values featured very little across all three months in the press. For example, between the months of February and April, there was not a single story on civil society's promotion of tolerance or anything relating to the extent to which it cherishes and

upholds values of gender equity, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability. There were also no stories on violence within the civil society arena or civil society efforts to promote non-violence, possibly because the existence of both on the ground in the past few years has been non-existent. The press coverage of civil society impact was selective. Lobbying for provision of state services was the impact issue that was most covered during the months of February to April. The second most salient impact issue featured in the press in the same period was civil society efforts to meet societal needs directly. CSOs efforts to educate or inform citizens received slightly less coverage than the two other issues. Stories relating to civil society attempts at influencing public policy or empowering citizens were very sparse within that period. It is also interesting that there were no stories about civil society efforts at holding the state or the private corporations accountable either in the entire four months period under review.

Dimensions: All dimensions of the methodology (i.e. structure, environment, values and impact) received more coverage on the national level than at the governorate level and finally, on the local level. This is reflected in the media survey which indicates that stories relating to the impact of civil society organizations feature less prominently than stories about civil society's environment and structure. In the period between February and April, civil society's environment received the most attention (39.88% of all civil society coverage). The second most prominent component was structure, which captured 23.99% of all civil society covered within the same period. Stories on impact of CSOs received 22.74% of attention. For all three months, civil society's values featured the least prominently, receiving only 13.40% of all press coverage for the months of February to April. The modest weight of stories on civil society values in the press can be explained by several factors, the most notable of which is that newspapers are more inclined to report on new or timely events and issues than civil society values which do not constitute news.

2-4 Civil society's image in the media

The media's reporting on civil society news is rather positive with a score of 0.54 on a scale from -1 (negative) to + 1 (positive). The majority of monitored news items about civil society in Egypt show positive representation, as 218 (59.89%) of all articles showed positive representation, while 5.77% (21 news items) represented civil society negatively in the media. The remaining articles represented civil society in a neutral fashion.

Of the negative coverage on civil society in Egypt, Al Wafd leads with 11 of the 21 news items, while the rest is equally divided between Al Ahram and Al Osbou newspapers. Positive coverage is highest in Al Ahram. In addition 66.8% of all articles monitored in Al Ahram were positive, 60% of articles monitored in Al Osbou were positive and only 41% of articles featured by Al Wafd provided a positive image of Egyptian civil society.

TABLE 12: Civil society's image by type of news story

Type of news story	Average scores
News stories	0.63
In brief/short	0.49
Editorial	-1.00
Opinion piece	-0.21
Feature/News analysis	0.14
Interview	0.25
Letters to the editor	0.00
Other	0.64

Source: Media survey

Civil society's image was portrayed negatively where news stories lend themselves to the opinion of the author or an institution (e.g. opinion pieces, editorial). However, in cases where the news items leaves little room for opinion, such as news stories, civil society's coverage was very positive. Hence, the more factual the reporting, the more positive the image of civil society.

As for topics: Advocacy was mainly reported on positively, out of the 32 items, 21 were positive. Similarly, the justice system was mainly reported on positively or in a neutral light. It is noteworthy to point that it was mainly reported on in Al Ahram. Corruption for its part mainly gained a negative coverage, with 10 out of the 16 items covering corruption being negative. Local governments and Service delivery were mainly reported on positively or in a neutral light. The same applies for sports, with only 2 negative items in the coverage. Finally, civil society specific issues were reported on positively with a few neutral items.

With regards to dimensions: Environment and values received some negative coverage. Interestingly, with regards to values, the negative coverage is equal to the positive coverage. Impact has high positive coverage in general, just like the structure dimension.

3. Conclusion

As this is the first time that the media survey was conducted in Egypt, it has proven to be a learning experience on the challenges and opportunities for analysis of the media's coverage of civil society. The media survey has its limitations, which can be improved upon in the years to come. First, only the press was reviewed while other important media channels, such as the television, radio and the internet were left out. Second, the survey was only conducted during a period of three months, which is insufficient to capture a holistic appraisal of the issue. Third, only three publications were analyzed, despite the proliferation of important and influential independent newspapers in Egypt in the past five years. Fourth, the period of media surveillance preceded the contemporary phase of rapid political change, greater civic activism and increased CSO activity. Thus, the survey's results may not be as timely or nuanced as intended. On the other hand, despite these limitations, the media survey served to present analysts with a bird's eye view of how some of the most prominent press publications relate to CSOs and matters.

The media survey served to reinforce some prevailing impressions, such as the notion that civil society is most likely to feature in the press in the form of news stories, and that news stories on civil society are most likely to make it if they have a political dimension to them, as indicated by the thematic salience of advocacy issues. On the other hand, the media survey also revealed some important trends—namely, that civil society reporting in the press is on the whole positive, but that it tends to be parochial focusing almost exclusively on national issues. One of the interesting highlights of the study is that when local or national CSOs feature in the international press, this is not covered or highlighted in the domestic press.

Many NGO-supporting schemes are currently working on capacity-building for NGOs. The activities involved include training on how to engage with the media. It is hoped that such training would empower NGOs to seek out relations with the media and seek ways of working co-operatively with them on issues of mutual interest and concern. At the same time, it is hoped that as NGOs become more visibly active, the media would come to realize the potential benefit of working with NGOs in terms of access to information, contacts, and opinions. There are already some modest signs of such collaborate work between the media and certain NGOs, for example the Association for the Enhancement and

Development of Women, a Cairo-based development NGO working on empowering poor women was able to successfully work through the press to raise the public's attention and in particular the attention of policy-makers to the importance of equal rights for men and women to pass on their nationality to their children. While such examples are few and limited, they testify to the possibility of building such collaborative relations for the mutual benefit of both civil society organizations and the media.

ANNEX 6: THE CSI SCORING MATRIX

1 – STRUCTURE

1.1 - Breadth of citizen participation

Description: How widespread is citizen involvement in civil society? What proportion of citizens engage in civil society activities?

1.1.1 - Non-partisan political action

Description: What percentage of people have ever undertaken any form of non-partisan political action (e.g. written a letter to a newspaper, signed a petition, attended a demonstration)?

A very small minority (less than 10%).	Score 0
A minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A significant proportion (31% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.2 - Charitable giving

Description: What percentage of people donate to charity on a regular basis?

A very small minority (less than 10%)	Score 0
A minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A significant proportion (31% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.3 - CSO membership

Description: What percentage of people belong to at least one CSO?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.4 - Volunteering

Description: What percentage of people undertake volunteer work on a regular basis (at least once a year)?

A very small minority (less than 10%)	Score 0
A small minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A minority (31% to 50%)	Score 2
A majority (more than 50%)	Score 3

1.1.5 - Collective community action

Description: What percentage of people have participated in a collective community action within the last year (e.g. attended a community meeting, participated in a community-organised event or a collective effort to solve a community problem)?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% -50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.2 - Depth of citizen participation

Description: How deep/meaningful is citizen participation in civil society? How frequently/extensively do people engage in civil society activities?

1.2.1 - Charitable giving

Description: How much (i.e. what percentage of personal income) do people who give to charity on a regular basis donate, on average, per year?

Less than 1%	Score 0
1% to 2%	Score 1
2.1% to 3%	Score 2
More than 3%	Score 3

1.2.2 - Volunteering

Description: How many hours per month, on average, do volunteers devote to volunteer work?

Less than 2 hours	Score 0
2 to 5 hours	Score 1
5.1 to 8 hours	Score 2
More than 8 hours.	Score 3

1.2.3 - CSO membership

Description: What percentage of CSO members belong to more than one CSO?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.3 - Diversity of civil society participants

***Description:* How diverse/representative is the civil society arena? Do all social groups participate equitably in civil society? Are any groups dominant or excluded?**

1.3.1 - CSO membership

Description: To what extent do CSOs represent all significant social groups (e.g. women, rural dwellers, poor people and minorities)?

Significant social groups are absent / excluded from CSOs.	Score 0
Significant social groups are largely absent from CSOs.	Score 1
Significant social groups are under-represented in CSOs.	Score 2
CSOs equitably represent all social groups. No group is noticeably under-represented.	Score 3

1.3.2 - CSO leadership

Description: To what extent is there diversity in CSO leadership? To what extent does CSO leadership represent all significant social groups (e.g. women, rural dwellers, poor people, and minorities)?

Significant social groups are absent / excluded from CSO leadership roles.	Score 0
Significant social groups are largely absent from CSO leadership roles.	Score 1
Significant social groups are under-represented in CSO leadership roles.	Score 2
CSO leadership equitably represents all social groups. No group is noticeably under-represented.	Score 3

1.3.3 Distribution of CSOs

Description: How are CSOs distributed throughout the country?

CSOs are highly concentrated in the major urban centres.	Score 0
CSOs are largely concentrated in urban areas.	Score 1
CSOs are present in all but the most remote areas of the country.	Score 2
CSOs are present in all areas of the country.	Score 3

1.4. - Level of organisation

***Description:* How well-organised is civil society? What kind of infrastructure exists for civil society?**

1.4.1 - Existence of CSO umbrella bodies

Description: What percentage of CSOs belong to a federation or umbrella body of related organisations?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 70%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 70%)	Score 3

1.4.2 - Effectiveness of CSO umbrella bodies

Description: How effective do CSO stakeholders judge existing federations or umbrella bodies to be in achieving their defined goals?

Completely ineffective (or non-existent)	Score 0
Largely ineffective	Score 1
Somewhat effective	Score 2
Effective	Score 3

1.4.3 - Self-regulation

Description: Are there efforts among CSOs to self-regulate? How effective and enforceable are existing self-regulatory mechanisms? What percentage of CSOs abide by a collective code of conduct (or some other form of self-regulation)?

There are no efforts among CSOs to self-regulate.	Score 0
Preliminary efforts have been to self-regulate but only a small minority of CSOs are involved and impact is extremely limited.	Score 1
Some mechanisms for CSO self-regulation are in place but only some sectors of CSOs are involved and there is no effective method of enforcement. As a result, impact is limited.	Score 2
Mechanisms for CSO self-regulation are in place and function quite effectively. A discernible impact on CSO behaviour can be detected.	Score 3

1.4.4 - Support infrastructure

Description: What is the level of support infrastructure for civil society? How many civil society support organisations exist in the country? Are they effective?

There is no support infrastructure for civil society.	Score 0
There is very limited infrastructure for civil society.	Score 1
Support infrastructure exists for some sectors of civil society and is expanding.	Score 2
There is a well-developed support infrastructure for civil society.	Score 3

1.4.5 - International linkages

Description: What proportion of CSOs have international linkages (e.g. are members of international networks, participate in global events)?

Only a handful of "elite" CSOs have international linkages.	Score 0
A limited number of (mainly national-level) CSOs have international linkages.	Score 1
A moderate number of (mainly national-level) CSOs have international linkages.	Score 2
A significant number of CSOs from different sectors and different levels (grassroots to national) have international linkages.	Score 3

1.5 - Inter-relations

***Description:* How strong / productive are relations among civil society actors?**

1.5.1 - Communication

Description: What is the extent of communication between civil society actors?

Very little	Score 0
Limited	Score 1
Moderate	Score 2
Significant	Score 3

1.5.2 - Cooperation

Description: How much do civil society actors cooperate with each other on issues of common concern? Can examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances/coalitions (around a specific issue or common concern) be identified?

CS actors do not cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. No examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances/coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 0
It is very rare that CS actors cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Very few examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 1
CS actors on occasion cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Some examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 2
CS actors regularly cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Numerous examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 3

1.6 – Resources

Description: To what extent do CSOs have adequate resources to achieve their goals?

1.6.1 - Financial resources

Description: How adequate is the level of financial resources for CSOs?

On average, CSOs suffer from a serious financial resource problem.	Score 0
On average, CSOs have inadequate financial resources to achieve their goals.	Score 1
On average, CSOs have most of the financial resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average, CSOs have an adequate and secure financial resource base.	Score 3

1.6.2 - Human resources

Description: How adequate is the level of human resources for CSOs?

On average, CSOs suffer from a serious human resource problem.	Score 0
On average, CSOs have inadequate human resources to achieve their goal.	Score 1
On average, CSOs have most of the human resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average, CSOs have an adequate and secure human resource base.	Score 3

1.6.3 - Technological and infrastructural resources

Description: How adequate is the level of technological and infrastructural resources for CSOs?

On average, CSOs suffer from a serious technological and infrastructural resource problem.	Score 0
On average, CSOs have inadequate technological and infrastructural resources to achieve their goals.	Score 1
On average, CSOs have most of the technological and infrastructural resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average, CSOs have an adequate and secure technological and infrastructural resource base.	Score 3

2 - ENVIRONMENT⁶³

2.1 - Political context

Description: What is the political situation in the country and its impact on civil society?

2.1.1 - Political rights

Description: How strong are the restrictions on citizens' political rights (e.g. to participate freely in political processes, elect political leaders through free and fair elections, freely organise in political parties)?

There are severe restrictions on the political rights of citizens. Citizens cannot participate in political processes.	Score 0
There are some restrictions on the political rights of citizens and their participation in political processes.	Score 1
Citizens are endowed with substantial political rights and meaningful opportunities for political participation. There are minor and isolated restrictions on the full freedom of citizens' political rights and their participation in political processes.	Score 2

⁶³ For most of the indicators, secondary data sources are available for a broad range of countries. For each indicator, the scores indicate how to translate the original secondary data into the 4-point scale of the CSI scoring matrix.

People have the full freedom and choice to exercise their political rights and meaningfully participate in political processes.	Score 3
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2.1.2 - Political competition

Description: What are the main characteristics of the party system in terms of number of parties, ideological spectrum, institutionalisation and party competition?

Single party system.	Score 0
Small number of parties based on personalism, clientelism or appealing to identity politics.	Score 1
Multiple parties, but weakly institutionalised and / or lacking ideological distinction.	Score 2
Robust, multi-party competition, with well-institutionalised and ideologically diverse parties.	Score 3

2.1.3 - Rule of law

Description: To what extent is the rule of law entrenched in the country?

There is general disregard for the law by citizens and the state.	Score 0
There is low confidence in and frequent violations of the law by citizens and the state.	Score 1
There is a moderate level of confidence in the law. Violations of the law by citizens and the state are not uncommon.	Score 2
Society is governed by fair and predictable rules, which are generally abided by.	Score 3

2.1.4 – Corruption

Description: What is the level of perceived corruption in the public sector?

High	Score 0
Substantial	Score 1
Moderate	Score 2
Low	Score 3

2.1.5 – State effectiveness

Description: To what extent is the state able to fulfil its defined functions?

The state bureaucracy has collapsed or is entirely ineffective (e.g. due to political, economic or social crisis).	Score 0
The capacity of the state bureaucracy is extremely limited.	Score 1
State bureaucracy is functional but perceived as incompetent and / or non-responsive.	Score 2
State bureaucracy is fully functional and perceived to work in the public's interests.	Score 3

2.1.6 – Decentralisation

Description: To what extent is government expenditure devolved to sub-national authorities?

Sub-national share of government expenditure is less than 20.0%.	Score 0
Sub-national share of government expenditure is between 20.0% and 34.9%.	Score 1
Sub-national share of government expenditure is between 35.0% than 49.9%.	Score 2
Sub-national share of government expenditure is more than 49.9%.	Score 3

2.2 - Basic freedoms and rights

***Description:* To what extent are basic freedoms ensured by law and in practice?**

2.2.1 - Civil liberties

Description: To what extent are civil liberties (e.g. freedom of expression, association, assembly) ensured by law and in practice?

Civil liberties are systematically violated.	Score 0
There are frequent violations of civil liberties.	Score 1
There are isolated or occasional violations of civil liberties.	Score 2
Civil liberties are fully ensured by law and in practice.	Score 3

2.2.2 - Information rights

Description: To what extent is public access to information guaranteed by law? How accessible are government documents to the public?

No laws guarantee information rights. Citizen access to government documents is extremely limited.	Score 0
Citizen access to government documents is limited but expanding.	Score 1
Legislation regarding public access to information is in place, but in practice, it is difficult to obtain government documents.	Score 2
Government documents are broadly and easily accessible to the public.	Score 3

2.2.3 - Press freedoms

Description: To what extent are press freedoms ensured by law and in practice?

Press freedoms are systematically violated.	Score 0
There are frequent violations of press freedoms.	Score 1
There are isolated violations of press freedoms.	Score 2
Freedom of the press is fully ensured by law and in practice.	Score 3

2.3 - Socio-economic context⁶⁴

***Description:* What is the socio-economic situation in the country and its impact on civil society?**

2.3.1 - Socio-economic context

Description: How much do socio-economic conditions in the country represent a barrier to the effective functioning of civil society?

Social and economic conditions represent a serious barrier to the effective functioning of civil society. More than five of the following conditions are present: 1. Widespread poverty (e.g. more than 40% of people live on \$2 per day) 2. Civil war (armed conflict in last 5 years) 3. Severe ethnic and/or religious conflict 4. Severe economic crisis (e.g. external debt is more than GNP) 5. Severe social crisis (over last 2 years) 6. Severe socio-economic inequities (Gini coefficient > 0.4) 7. Pervasive adult illiteracy (over 40%) 8. Lack of IT infrastructure (i.e. less than 5 hosts per 10.000 inhabitants)	Score 0
Social and economic conditions significantly limit the effective functioning of civil society. Three, four or five of the conditions indicated are present.	Score 1
Social and economic conditions somewhat limit the effective functioning of civil society. One or two of the conditions indicated are present.	Score 2
Social and economic conditions do not represent a barrier to the effective functioning of civil society. None of the conditions indicated is present.	Score 3

2.4 - Socio-cultural context

***Description:* To what extent are socio-cultural norms and attitudes conducive or detrimental to civil society?**

⁶⁴ This sub-dimension/indicator is not broken up into individual indicators to facilitate and simplify scoring. The sub-dimension/indicator consists of 8 socio-economic conditions which are of importance to civil society. The scores for this indicator are designed in such a way that they indicate how many socio-economic obstacles are there for civil society (max: 8; min: 0). The task for the NAG scoring meeting is to simply verify the number of obstacles (as identified by the secondary data) and assign the score accordingly.

2.4.1 - Trust

Description: How much do members of society trust one another?

Relationships among members of society are characterised by mistrust (e.g. less than 10% of people score on the World Value Survey (WVS) trust indicator).	Score 0
There is widespread mistrust among members of society (e.g. 10% to 30% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 1
There is a moderate level of trust among members of society (e.g. 31% to 50% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 2
There is a high level of trust among members of society (e.g. more than 50% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 3

2.4.2 - Tolerance

Description: How tolerant are members of society?

Society is characterised by widespread intolerance (e.g. average score on WVS derived tolerance indicator is 3.0 or higher).	Score 0
Society is characterised by a low level of tolerance (e.g. indicator between 2.0 and 2.9).	Score 1
Society is characterised by a moderate level of tolerance (e.g. indicator between 1.0 and 1.9).	Score 2
Society is characterised by a high level of tolerance (e.g. indicator less than 1.0).	Score 3

2.4.3 - Public spiritedness⁶⁵

Description: How strong is the sense of public spiritedness among members of society?

Very low level of public spiritedness in society (e.g. average score on WVS derived public spiritedness indicator is more than 3.5).	Score 0
Low level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator between 2.6 and 3.5).	Score 1
Moderate level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator between 1.5 and 2.5).	Score 2
High level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator less than 1.5).	Score 3

2.5 - Legal environment

***Description:* To what extent is the existing legal environment enabling or disabling to civil society?**

2.5.1 - CSO registration⁶⁶

Description: How supportive is the CSO registration process? Is the process (1) simple, (2) quick, (3) inexpensive, (4) following legal provisions and (5) consistently applied?

The CSO registration process is not supportive at all. Four or five of the quality characteristics are absent.	Score 0
The CSO registration is not very supportive. Two or three quality characteristics are absent.	Score 1
The CSO registration process can be judged as relatively supportive. One quality characteristic is absent.	Score 2
The CSO registration process is supportive. None of the quality characteristics is absent.	Score 3

2.5.2 - Allowable advocacy activities

Description: To what extent are CSOs free to engage in advocacy / criticize government?

CSOs are not allowed to engage in advocacy or criticise the government.	Score 0
There are excessive and / or vaguely defined constraints on advocacy activities.	Score 1
Constraints on CSOs' advocacy activities are minimal and clearly defined, such as prohibitions on political campaigning.	Score 2
CSOs are permitted to freely engage in advocacy and criticism of government.	Score 3

⁶⁵ The score is derived by averaging the means for the three variables (1. claiming government benefits, 2. avoiding a fare on public transport and 3. cheating on taxes).

⁶⁶ This indicator combines a number of individual quality characteristics of the registration, namely whether the registration is (1) simple, (2) quick, (3) inexpensive, (4) fairly applied and (5) consistently applied. The process of using these five 'Yes/No' variables for the scoring of the CSO registration indicator by the NAG follows the process outlined for sub-dimension 3. The indicator scores are defined by how many of these five quality characteristics are existent/absent.

2.5.3 - Tax laws favourable to CSOs

Description: How favourable is the tax system to CSOs? How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that are eligible for tax exemptions, if any? How significant are these exemptions?

The tax system impedes CSOs. No tax exemption or preference of any kind is available for CSOs.	Score 0
The tax system is burdensome to CSOs. Tax exemptions or preferences are available only for a narrow range of CSOs (e.g. humanitarian organisations) or for limited sources of income (e.g. grants or donations).	Score 1
The tax system contains some incentives favouring CSOs. Only a narrow range of CSOs is excluded from tax exemptions, preferences and/or exemptions, or preferences are available from some taxes and some activities.	Score 2
The tax system provides favourable treatment for CSOs. Exemptions or preferences are available from a range of taxes and for a range of activities, limited only in appropriate circumstances.	Score 3

2.5.4 - Tax benefits for philanthropy

Description: How broadly available are tax deductions or credits, or other tax benefits, to encourage individual and corporate giving?

No tax benefits are available (to individuals or corporations) for charitable giving.	Score 0
Tax benefits are available for a very limited set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 1
Tax benefits are available for a fairly broad set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 2
Significant tax benefits are available for a broad set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 3

2.6 - State-civil society relations

Description: What is the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the state?

2.6.1 – Autonomy

Description: To what extent can civil society exist and function independently of the state? To what extent are CSOs free to operate without excessive government interference? Is government oversight reasonably designed and limited to protect legitimate public interests?

The state controls civil society.	Score 0
CSOs are subject to frequent unwarranted interference in their operations.	Score 1
The state accepts the existence of an independent civil society but CSOs are subject to occasional unwarranted government interference.	Score 2
CSOs operate freely. They are subject only to reasonable oversight linked to clear and legitimate public interests.	Score 3

2.6.2 - Dialogue

Description: To what extent does the state dialogue with civil society? How inclusive and institutionalized are the terms and rules of engagement, if they exist?

There is no meaningful dialogue between civil society and the state.	Score 0
The state only seeks to dialogue with a small sub-set of CSOs on an ad hoc basis.	Score 1
The state dialogues with a relatively broad range of CSOs but on a largely ad hoc basis.	Score 2
Mechanisms are in place to facilitate systematic dialogue between the state and a broad and diverse range of CSOs.	Score 3

2.6.3 - Cooperation / support

Description: How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that receive state resources (in the form of grants, contracts, etc.)?

The level of state resources channelled through CSOs is insignificant.	Score 0
Only a very limited range of CSOs receives state resources.	Score 1
A moderate range of CSOs receives state resources.	Score 2
The state channels significant resources to a large range of CSOs.	Score 3

2.7 - Private sector-civil society relations

Description: What is the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the private sector?

2.7.1 - Private sector attitude

Description: What is the general attitude of the private sector towards civil society actors?

Generally hostile	Score 0
Generally indifferent	Score 1
Generally positive	Score 2
Generally supportive	Score 3

2.7.2 - Corporate social responsibility

Description: How developed are notions and actions of corporate social responsibility?

Major companies show no concern about the social and environmental impacts of their operations.	Score 0
Major companies pay lip service to notions of corporate social responsibility. However, in their operations they frequently disregard negative social and environmental impacts.	Score 1
Major companies are beginning to take the potential negative social and environmental impacts of their operations into account.	Score 2
Major companies take effective measures to protect against negative social and environmental impacts.	Score 3

2.7.3 - Corporate philanthropy⁶⁷

Description: How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that receive support from the private sector?

Corporate philanthropy is insignificant.	Score 0
Only a very limited range of CSOs receives funding from the private sector.	Score 1
A moderate range of CSOs receives funding from the private sector.	Score 2
The private sector channels resources to a large range of CSOs.	Score 3

3 - VALUES

3.1 – Democracy

***Description:* To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote democracy?**

3.1.1 - Democratic practices within CSOs

Description: To what extent do CSOs practice internal democracy? How much control do members have over decision-making? Are leaders selected through democratic elections?

A large majority (i.e. more than 75%) of CSOs do not practice internal democracy (e.g. members have little / no control over decision-making, CSOs are characterised by patronage, nepotism).	Score 0
A majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 50%) do not practice internal democracy (e.g. members have little/no control over decision-making, CSOs are characterised by patronage, nepotism).	Score 1
A majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 50%) practice internal democracy (e.g. members have significant control over decision-making; leaders are selected through democratic elections).	Score 2
A large majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 75%) practice internal democracy (e.g. members have significant control over decision-making; leaders are selected through democratic elections).	Score 3

3.1.2 – Civil society actions to promote democracy

Description: How much does civil society actively promote democracy at a societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a democratic society. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

⁶⁷ The NAG's task in scoring the indicator is to assess the significance of corporate support to civil society. Here, the score descriptions focus on two elements: (1) the overall size of corporate support to civil society and (2) the range of CSOs supported by the corporate sector. Both elements are combined in the indicator score descriptions.

3.2 – Transparency

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote transparency?

3.2.1 - Corruption within civil society

Description: How widespread is corruption within CS?

Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are very frequent.	Score 0
Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are frequent.	Score 1
There are occasional instances of corrupt behaviour within CS.	Score 2
Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are very rare.	Score 3

3.2.2 - Financial transparency of CSOs

Description: How many CSOs are financially transparent? What percentage of CSOs make their financial accounts publicly available?

A small minority of CSOs (less than 30%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 0
A minority of CSOs (30% -50%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 1
A small majority of CSOs (51% -65%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 2
A large majority of CSOs (more than 65%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 3

3.2.3 – Civil society actions to promote transparency

Description: How much does civil society actively promote government and corporate transparency?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and/or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in demanding government and corporate transparency. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.3 – Tolerance

Description: To what extent do civil society actors and organisations practice and promote tolerance?

3.3.1 Tolerance within the civil society arena

Description: To what extent is civil society a tolerant arena?

CS is dominated by intolerant forces. The expression of only a narrow sub-set of views is tolerated.	Score 0
Significant forces within civil society do not tolerate others' views without encountering protest from civil society at large.	Score 1
There are some intolerant forces within civil society, but they are isolated from civil society at large.	Score 2
Civil society is an open arena where the expression of <i>all</i> viewpoints is actively encouraged. Intolerant behaviour is strongly denounced by civil society at large.	Score 3

3.3.2 – Civil society actions to promote tolerance

Description: How much does civil society actively promote tolerance at a societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and/or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a tolerant society. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.4 - Non-violence

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote non-violence?

3.4.1 - Non-violence within the civil society arena

Description: How widespread is the use of violent means (such as damage to property or personal violence) among civil society actors to express their interests in the public sphere?

Significant mass-based groups within CS use violence as the primary means of expressing their interests.	Score 0
Some isolated groups within CS regularly use violence to express their interests without encountering protest from civil society at large.	Score 1
Some isolated groups within CS occasionally resort to violent actions, but are broadly denounced by CS at large.	Score 2
There is a high level of consensus within CS regarding the principle of non-violence. Acts of violence by CS actors are extremely rare and strongly denounced.	Score 3

3.4.2 – Civil society actions to promote non-violence and peace

Description: How much does civil society actively promote a non-violent society? For example, how much does civil society support the non-violent resolution of social conflicts and peace? Address issues of violence against women, child abuse, violence among youths etc.?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions actually contribute to societal violence.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a non-violent society. CS actions in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility	Score 3

3.5 - Gender equity

***Description:* To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote gender equity?**

3.5.1 - Gender equity within the civil society arena

Description: To what extent is civil society a gender equitable arena?

Women are excluded from civil society leadership roles.	Score 0
Women are largely absent from civil society leadership roles.	Score 1
Women are under-represented in civil society leadership positions.	Score 2
Women are equitably represented as leaders and members of CS.	Score 3

3.5.2 - Gender equitable practices within CSOs

Description: How much do CSOs practice gender equity? What percentage of CSOs with paid employees have policies in place to ensure gender equity?

A small minority (less than 20%)	Score 0
A minority (20%-50%)	Score 1
A small majority (51%-65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

3.5.3 – Civil society actions to promote gender equity

Description: How much does civil society actively promote gender equity at the societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions actually contribute to gender inequity.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a gender equitable society. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.6 - Poverty eradication

Description: To what extent do civil society actors promote poverty eradication?

3.6.1 – Civil society actions to eradicate poverty

Description: To what extent does civil society actively seek to eradicate poverty?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions serve to sustain existing economic inequities.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in the struggle to eradicate poverty. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.7 - Environmental sustainability

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote environmental sustainability?

3.7.1 – Civil society actions to sustain the environment

Description: How much does civil society actively seek to sustain the environment?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions serve to reinforce unsustainable practices.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in protecting the environment. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

4 - IMPACT

4.1 - Influencing public policy

Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing public policy?

4.1.1 – 4.1.2 - Human Rights and Social Policy Impact Case Studies

Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing public policy?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.1.3 - Civil Society's Impact on National Budgeting process Case Study

Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing the overall national budgeting process?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and focused only on specific budget components. ⁶⁸	Score 1
Civil society is active in the overall budgeting process, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role in the overall budgeting process. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

⁶⁸ The term "specific budget component" refers to a single issue or sub-section of the budget, such as the defence budget or welfare grants. Higher scores are assigned for those civil society activities, which provide an analysis, input and advocacy work on the overall budget.

4.2 - Holding state and private corporations accountable

Description: How active and successful is civil society in holding the state and private corporations accountable?

4.2.1 - Holding state accountable

Description: How active and successful is civil society in monitoring state performance and holding the state accountable?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.2.2 - Holding private corporations accountable

Description: How active and successful is civil society in holding private corporations accountable?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.3 - Responding to social interests

Description: How much are civil society actors responding to social interests?

4.3.1 - Responsiveness

Description: How effectively do civil society actors respond to priority social concerns?

Civil society actors are out of touch with the crucial concerns of the population.	Score 0
There are frequent examples of crucial social concerns that did not find a voice among existing civil society actors.	Score 1
There are isolated examples of crucial social concerns that did not find a voice among existing civil society actors.	Score 2
Civil society actors are very effective in taking up the crucial concerns of the population.	Score 3

4.3.2 - Public Trust

Description: What percentage of the population has trust in civil society actors?

A small minority (< 25%)	Score 0
A large minority (25%-50%)	Score 1
A small majority (51%-75%)	Score 2
A large majority (> 75%)	Score 3

4.4 - Empowering citizens

Description: How active and successful is civil society in empowering citizens, especially traditionally marginalised groups, to shape decisions that affect their lives?

4.4.1 - Informing/ educating citizens

Description: How active and successful is civil society in informing and educating citizens on public issues?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.2 - Building capacity for collective action

Description: How active and successful is civil society in building the capacity of people to organise themselves, mobilise resources and work together to solve common problems?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.3 - Empowering marginalized people

Description: How active and successful is civil society in empowering marginalized people?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.4 - Empowering women

Description: How active and successful is civil society in empowering women, i.e. to give them real choice and control over their lives?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.5 - Building social capital⁶⁹

Description: To what extent does civil society build social capital among its members? How do levels of trust, tolerance and public spiritedness of members of civil society compare to those of non-members?

Civil society diminishes the stock of social capital in society.	Score 0
Civil society does not contribute to building social capital in society.	Score 1
Civil society does contribute moderately to building social capital in society.	Score 2
Civil Society does contribute strongly to building social capital in society.	Score 3

4.4.6 - Supporting livelihoods

Description: How active and successful is civil society in creating / supporting employment and/or income-generating opportunities (especially for poor people and women)?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.5 - Meeting societal needs

***Description:* How active and successful is civil society in meeting societal needs, especially those of poor people and other marginalised groups?**

4.5.1 - Lobbying for state service provision

Description: How active and successful is civil society in lobbying the government to meet pressing societal needs?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.5.2 - Meeting pressing societal needs directly

Description: How active and successful is civil society in directly meeting pressing societal needs (through service delivery or the promotion of self-help initiatives)?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

⁶⁹ To score this indicator, we make use of the measure of trust (see sub-dimension socio-cultural norms in Environment dimension): 1) Compute the three measures for two sub-groups of the population: (1) CSO members and (2) non-CSO members and 2) Compare each measure's score for the two sub-groups and establish which sub-group has the better score (i.e. indicating higher trust).

4.5.3 - Meeting needs of marginalised groups

Description: To what extent are CSOs more or less effective than the state in delivering services to marginalised groups?

CSOs are less effective than the state.	Score 0
CSOs are as effective as the state.	Score 1
CSOs are slightly more effective than the state.	Score 2
CSOs are significantly more effective than the state.	Score 3

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